Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

Urban consumption spaces and practices of women in low-income urban settlements: A case study in Khlong Toey, Bangkok

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of

Masters of Philosophy
in
Development Studies

at Massey University, Palmerston North,
New Zealand.

Jennifer Finlayson

2015

Abstract

Consumption related research focuses strongly on the experiences of the Anglo-American middle classes, and less is known about what consumption spaces and practices represent to those living in developing countries. Low-income urban women in developing countries seem particularly invisible, and more especially so rural-urban migrant women. Using a qualitative approach, this thesis explored the role and significance of urban consumption spaces and practices in the everyday lives of low-income women living in Khlong Toey, Bangkok.

Findings show that consumption practices represent more than provisioning, they are a way that women meet the families' basic needs and demonstrate their care and strong connections for both their rural and urban families. Consumption practices contribute to the role that women have in making consumption related household decisions and active engagement in consumption promotes improving autonomy. The adoption of urban consumption practices affects both the women's sense of belonging and their perception of fitting in to their urban environment. Furthermore, the adoption of urban ways by the women, including new ideals, behaviours and material goods are also exported back to their rural villages, subsequently improving women's families' social status and blurring traditional lines of social delineation that exist between rural and urban society. Consumption practices enable women to invest in their families' futures.

This thesis demonstrates that it is not only through women's production that development outcomes are enabled, but through consumption as well. This is significant, as framed within development discourses, consumption contributes to women gaining autonomy within gender development; and consumption practices demonstrate provisioning and maintaining familial commitment within urban and rural livelihoods.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to my supervisors Dr Maria Borovnik and Dr Juliana Mansvelt, who both persevered with limitless patience to guide and advise me, and were always ready to provide constructive feedback in both the planning and the writing of this thesis.

I also want to thank both Kamanmaan and Lek, whose assistance and insights during the fieldwork were invaluable.

Thank you to my partner Tony, for your constant support. Thank you also to Geordie Mac, for being part of my thesis journey, even in utero. Also thanks to Sahara Rose for the way you have motivated me to complete this thesis. And thank you to my grandmother Thora, for your many wise questions and suggestions.

Last but certainly not least, I want to express my humblest thank you to all of the women in Khlong Toey who gave me their time and shared with me their experiences.

Table of Contents

Abstract i

Acknowledgements iii

1 Introduction 1

1.1 Thesis aim and objectives 2

1.2 Thesis outline 3

2 Connecting urban development, urban consumption, and women and consumption 7

2.1 Introduction 7

2.2 Urban development 8

2.2.1 Rural-urban migration 8

2.2.2 Low-income settlements and urban development issues 9

2.2.3 Urban development management 12

2.2.4 Women and urban development 13

2.3 Urban consumption 15

2.3.1 Urban consumption spaces 15

2.3.2 Urban consumption practices 18

2.3.3 Consumption and identity 19

2.3.4 Consumption in developing countries 20

2.4 Women and consumption 21

2.4.1 Feminisation of spaces 22

2.4.2 Household roles 23

2.4.3 Identity reconstruction 25

2.5 Summary 28

3 Thailand in context: Situating urban consumption and gender roles in Khlong Toey, Bangkok 29

3.1 Urban Thailand 29

3.1.1 Urban development in Thailand: Historic context 31

3.1.2 Rural-urban migration and the urban poor 32

3.1.3 Bangkok and its low-income settlements 35

3.1.4 Khlong Toey low-income settlement: Research setting 37

3.2 Thai urban consumption spaces and practices 40

3.2.1 Contemporary Thai urban consumption spaces: Significance, perceptions and etiquette 41

3.2.2 Virtual consumption spaces 43

3.2.3 Consumption practices: Shopping and eating out 43

3.3 Women in Thailand 46

3.3.1 Traditional roles 46

3.3.2 Low-income urban migrant women: Obligations and expectations 48
3.3.3 Consumption and identity construction 50
3.4 Summary 51
4 Methodology 53
4.1 Qualitative methodology 53
4.1.1 Reflecting on issues of research bias 54
4.1.2 Positionality 55
4.2 Methods 56
4.2.1 Observations 56
4.2.2 Open-ended semi-structured interviews 57
4.3 Ethics 58
4.4 Fieldwork 59
4.4.1 Fieldwork site 59
4.4.2 Participants 60
4.4.3 Research assistants 62
4.4.4 Gatekeepers 63
4.5 Data analysis 64
4.5.1 Transcripts 64
4.5.2 Thematic analysis 64
4.6 Reflections on limitations 65
4.7 Summary 66
5 The significance of consumption spaces 67
5.1 Introduction 67
5.2 Urban consumption Spaces 67
5.2.1 Spaces for everyday provisioning: Markets 67
5.2.2 Spaces for life's luxuries: Hypermarkets 73
5.2.3 Spaces for 'going past and dropping in': Convenience stores 78
5.2.4 Spaces of security: Gold shops and pawn shops 81
5.3 Discussion: The interconnections across consumption spaces 86
5.3.1 Location and proximity of spaces 86
5.3.2 Every space has its purpose 87
5.3.3 Placing trust and loyalty in spaces 90
5.3.4 Urban spaces that embodied civilised society 91
5.3.5 Spaces that were clean and fresh 93
5.4 Summary 93
6 Consumption practices in the changing lives of urban low-income women 95

6.1 Introduction 95
6.2 Different consumption practices for rural and urban 95
6.2.1 Rural expectations 96
6.2.2 Urban practices 99
6.2.3 Mothering practices 102
6.2.4 Identities and self-perception: Becoming urban 106
6.3 Discussion: Providing through consumption 108
6.3.1 Providing for family 109
6.3.2 Improving social status of the family 110
6.3.3 Providing for self 111
6.4 Discussion: Urban identities 111
6.4.1 Shaping identities 112
6.4.2 Positive gains and returns through consumption 113
6.4.3 Urban exclusions and marginalisation 113
6.5 Summary 114
7 Thesis conclusions: Interrelations between development, women and consumption 117
7.1 Consumption is significant in everyday lives 117
7.2 Meanings of consumption spaces in everyday lives of women in Khlong Toey 118
7.2.1 Negotiation and navigation of geographies 118
7.2.2 Trust and loyalty 119
7.2.3 Places of inclusion 120
7.3 Roles and function of consumption practices in women's changing lives 120
7.3.1 Providing for family 121
7.3.2 Active engagement in household decision making 122
7.3.3 Adopting urban ways 122
7.3.4 Shaping identity 123
7.4 Reflections 124
8 References 127
9 Appendices 135
9.1 Appendix 1 – Transcriber confidentiality form 135
9.2 Appendix 2 – Information sheet 136
9.3 Appendix 3 – Participant consent form 138

List of Tables

Table 1 - Urban poor housing settlements 11
Table 2 – Modes and spaces of consumption 16
Table 3 – Interview participant details..... 61
Table 4 - Reasons for the selection for a ‘space of security’ 82

List of Figures

Figure 1 – The effect consumption practices have on self-definition for women..... 26
Figure 2 - Map of Southeast Asia 30
Figure 3 - Map of Thailand: Five largest urban centres..... 34
Figure 4 - Map of Bangkok: Low-income settlements 36
Figure 5 - Map of Bangkok: Showing Khlong Toey low-income settlement..... 38
Figure 6 - Map of Khlong Toey District: Retail and housing precincts..... 39
Figure 7 – Approaches for selecting interview participants..... 62
Figure 8 - The process of thematic analysis..... 65

1 Introduction

Over the past few decades, research and literature on both development studies and consumption theory has become vast. However, little is known about what consumption represents within the context of developing countries. Furthermore, much consumption research undertaken in developing countries has focused on the practices of the emerging middle classes, and not low-income cohorts. Consumption practices are often gendered activities, so knowing more about the role of consumption in the lives of low-income women in developing countries is important because the experiences of low-income female consumers are significant to the economic and cultural livelihoods of families and communities. The intention of this thesis is to contribute to and extend understanding for both fields by exploring consumption and development theories in the context of the everyday lives of urban low-income migrant women.

In order to better appreciate the everyday lives of urban low-income migrant women, the women's situation needs to be understood with the context of environmental, economic and social factors. The processes of urbanisation are directly linked to urban management issues, such as the positive and negative effects of rural-urban migration, the pervasiveness of urban poverty, the prevalence of informal economies, the uneven distribution of wealth and low-income housing settlements. For women in particular, the issues surrounding urban development influence the women's work opportunities, potential for discrimination, limitations in mobility, and importantly determine how women can provide for their families.

Thailand is considered to be a developing country, and has an uneven population distribution coupled with a disparity in economic growth. Each year, the capital city of Bangkok attracts many rural-urban migrants who originate from the poorer provinces in the Northeast of Thailand, collectively known as *Isaan* (National Statistics Office, 2010). Over the past few decades, as the number of rural-urban migrants to Bangkok have increased, a number of low-income settlements have emerged. Little is known about the experiences of the rural-urban migrants, and the kind of adjustments made in adapting to new consumption contexts and livelihoods.

1.1 Thesis aim and objectives

This research examines how consumption spaces and practices are understood in the everyday lives of women living in low-income urban settlements. The low-income urban settlement of Khlong Toey, Bangkok is used as a case study and location for the research fieldwork. Consumption practices and spaces influence everyday routines and decisions, and so this research seeks to understand consumption in the context of the everyday lives of the low-income living in Khlong Toey. As such, the main aim of the research is:

> ***To explore the role and significance of urban consumption spaces and practices in the everyday lives of low-income women living in Khlong Toey, Bangkok.***

To achieve the research aim, the following two research objectives have been identified:

Research Objective 1: To examine what urban consumption spaces represent and what they mean for women's everyday lives in Khlong Toey.

Research Objective 2: To investigate the roles and functions of consumption practices for rural women who have migrated to urban Khlong Toey.

In order to answer the above objectives, this thesis draws on the conceptual frameworks from both consumption and development disciplines. These theories are discussed in the following 2 chapters. The overall outline for this thesis is provided in the below section.

To meet both the research aim and objectives, a qualitative approach towards data collection was used for this study. Two qualitative methods were used for the data collection. The first was semi-structured open-ended informal interviews. The interviews were conducted with 11 women aged between 25 and 40, living in the low-income settlement Khlong Toey. The women interviewed came from *Isaan* and Central Thailand, and all of the women noted that they were in Bangkok for

economic reasons. Many women had left their children back in their home village, although some had brought their children with them to Bangkok. In addition to interviews, observations were undertaken across a number of consumption spaces. The analysis of interview and field notes was conducted using thematic analysis and is presented in Chapters 5 and 6.

The fieldwork site for this research is Khlong Toey, located in Bangkok, Thailand. Khlong Toey is a low-income settlement, which has a variety of consumption spaces, including markets, malls and hypermarkets. Since 1998 I have often travelled to Thailand for holidays and have been attracted to the variety of consumption spaces in Bangkok. More specifically, as I have always stayed close-by to Khlong Toey, I have been interested in the changing urban landscape around the Khlong Toey district as new and larger consumption spaces have emerged.

1.2 Thesis outline

This thesis is structured into seven chapters. This chapter introduced the gap in understanding in regards to what consumption represents to low-income women in developing countries and then outlined the aims and objectives of the thesis.

Chapter 2 explores the interconnectedness between urban development, urban consumption, and women and consumption. This chapter begins by exploring urban development, and applies Askew's (2002) term 'low-income settlements' to include the diverse urban housing arrangements for the urban poor. The impact that urban development has for poor urban women is explored, including the issues that are encountered when trying to provide for their families. The literature on consumption practices and spaces is then reviewed, and the emerging literature in regards to consumption within a developing context is discussed. Finally, this chapter explores the interrelatedness between women and consumption, including the feminisation of consumption spaces, household gender roles and the shaping of identity.

The context for the fieldwork in Thailand is explained in Chapter 3. This chapter discusses urban Thailand from both a development and a consumption perspective.

Low-income settlements are defined within a Thai context, specifically the low-income settlement of Khlong Toey, the location for the fieldwork. Following this is an examination of the changes to the urban environment that rural-urban migration has had, and the role of urban development within the lives of the urban poor. This chapter then identifies the significance of contemporary urban consumption spaces in Thailand, and explains the perceptions and etiquette that surround these spaces. This chapter concludes with an examination of women in Thailand, and identifies their familial roles, and more specifically, the ensuing obligations and expectations placed upon low-income urban women.

Chapter 4 describes the methodology used to investigate my research objectives during the fieldwork that was undertaken in Thailand in July-August 2012. This chapter begins with an explanation of the qualitative methodology selected and the importance of actively managing my own biases and subjectivities. Following this is a description of the methods used for data collection and analysis. The two data collection methods were researcher observations and semi-structured open interviews. This chapter continues with describing the ethical considerations, fieldwork preparations, interview participants and the thematic approach to analysing the data. Finally, this chapter concludes with my reflections on the limitations of the fieldwork.

Chapters 5 and 6 analyses and discusses the data that was collected during the fieldwork. Chapter 5 explores the array of consumption spaces that low-income women in Khlong Toey regularly go to, and how the women interact with each space. This chapter discusses what the consumption spaces represent and the significance of these consumption spaces in the women's everyday lives, drawing on current understandings of consumption spaces from existing literature.

Chapter 6 continues to analyse the semi-structured interview data and observations. The first section of this chapter focuses on consumption practices, and how these practices are linked with the roles that the women undertake in order to provide for their urban and rural families, and for themselves. The following section discusses the changing lives of urban low-income women as they continue to balance familial expectations while trying to assert their own sense of urban identity.

The final chapter, Chapter 7, highlights the key findings that were provided in Chapters 5 and 6, in order to determine the relations between the changing urban lives for low-income migrant women, and consumption spaces and practices. Consumption spaces and practices are shown to be a meaningful or important part of low-income women's lives.

2 Connecting urban development, urban consumption, and women and consumption

2.1 Introduction

Low-income urban women account for almost ten per cent of the global population (World Health Organization, 2014). Women typically consume on behalf of their families (Fisher & Combs, 2007). The aim of this thesis is to understand the role and significance that urban consumption spaces and practices have in the everyday lives of urban low-income women.

The first section of this chapter explores the complexities that are associated with urban development in developing countries and examines how urban development affects everyday lives of urban low-income women. As mentioned in Chapter 1, issues surrounding urban development include rural-urban migration, poverty, the prevalence of low-income settlements, and the effects of urban development on the lives of low-income women.

Urban consumption includes both spaces and practices, and these are discussed in Section 2 of this chapter. The role of consumption spaces and the significance of consumption practices are situated socially and culturally, and are examined in the context of people's everyday lives. Both consumption spaces and practices have a means to include or exclude the participation of specific cohorts of society. As a result, consumption becomes a means for 'fitting in', or for people to situate themselves socially, and provides the capacity to self-determine identity.

The chapter concludes with an explanation of the relationship that women have with consumption. This section starts with a discussion regarding the feminisation and negotiation of urban consumption spaces. Following this is an examination of the gendering of role for women within the household in regards to their household's consumption practices. Practices include the decision making processes and the responsibilities that women undertake on behalf of their families, such as grocery shopping, budgeting, and the acquisition of product and price knowledge.

Consumption is an important process in the way that women perceive themselves and continually maintain, disrupt or affirm their identities (Ogle, Tyner, & Schofield-Tomschin, 2013), a practice which has been relatively unexplored in relation to low-income urban women.

2.2 Urban development

Urban development is the process of how a city organises itself as it grows or expands (Tacoli, 1998). More often than not, this is an organic process that involves government, corporate and social influences. In developing countries, many cities have faced a number of development related issues as the pressures of urban industrialisation and rural-urban migration have occurred. As urban populations have increased, the urban poor have become a common demographic, often working within the informal economy and living in low-cost accommodation in low-income settlements.

Women living in low-income settlements are often vulnerable to financial shocks and stresses and lack decision-making roles within their household and community (Greenwood, 2013). This section concludes with examining the challenges that low-income women have within the urban environment. It looks at urban development within the context of the everyday lives of low-income women, and how women socially construct themselves within their urban environment.

2.2.1 Rural-urban migration

Rural-urban migration relates to the movement of people and capital from rural areas to urban areas, which more often than not occurs for financial gain. Industrialisation and urbanisation are "two attributes of modernization" (Sadorsky, 2014, p. 392). In many urban centres around the world, as rural-urban migration occurs, newly arrived migrants seek a combination of work opportunities and nearby cheap housing options (Tacoli, 1998).

Lacroix (2011) suggests that for rural communities, rural-urban migration has both disadvantages and compensations. Disadvantages include the "brawn drain" (Lacroix, 2011, p. 17), or migration of family members who are physically able to work on the land; and the disruption to family units, including the disruption to gender roles, and the creation of new rural income disparities (Lacroix, 2011). Siddiqui (2012) also explains that as urban dwellers, rural-urban migrants tend to be 'poorer people', they are a cohort who are unable to demand labour rights, and can be subject to abuse (Siddiqui, 2012, pp. 13-15). Furthermore, Siddiqui observes that when rural women migrate to urban centres, it often creates a "vacuum for care" (Siddiqui, 2012, p. 20) of elderly family members in rural areas.

However, migration to urban areas remains attractive due to the potential of improving the lives of family members through remittances (Korinek, Entwisle, & Jampaklay, 2005). Rural-urban migration creates two types of remittances that visibly affect the rural households. Firstly, the financial remittances provide rural households with a safety net by improving food security; these also contribute to household related consumption for establishing and maintaining the rural home, and ensures that children are more likely to receive an education (Lacroix, 2011). The second type of remittances are social remittances, and include "ideas, symbols and sociological patterns" (Lacroix, 2011, p. 26) Furthermore, for women migrants in particular, social remittances are evident when the women return to the rural environment importing new practices that shape gender roles, relations and expectations (Lacroix, 2011, p. 26). Brickell (2011) states that as young rural migrant women adapt to their urban lifestyles, which includes different types of abodes, work opportunities and working out how to meet the needs of their families, there are "multiple ambiguities in which tradition and modernity coexist" (Brickell, 2011, p. 453).

2.2.2 Low-income settlements and urban development issues

Rural-urban migrants initially seek out members of their family and social networks who have already migrated (De Jong, 2000). As a direct result, a number of informal, squatter and slum areas have been established and continue to expand. The

World Health Organization (2014) estimate that half the world's population live in urban centres, of which one third of all urban dwellers live in 'slum' accommodation (World Health Organization, 2014, p. 1). These areas "represent the most visible and enduring face" of urban development related poverty (UNHABITAT, 2013, p. 1). Mahony (2010) determines the term 'slum' is often applied to represent both 'slum' and 'squatter' settlements, which as defined by the United Nations (and is noted below in Table 1), suggests that slum settlements can be formalised tenements whereas squatter settlements are often informally built by the occupiers (Mahony, 2010). An

> *"interpretation of the slums of the metropolis as multi-layered economic, social and spatial formations, spaces of survival, accumulation, status and inequality"* (Askew, 2002, p. 140).

Askew (2002) suggests that housing arrangements for the urban poor are diverse. Terms such as slum communities (Mahony, 2010; Brody, 2006), squatter settlements (Boonyabancha, 2008; Daniere & NaRanong, 2009) and low-income settlements (Askew, 2002) have been adopted by different authors, and often are applied interchangeably to describe the same urban poor housing settlements.

Table 1 - Urban poor housing settlements

Slums	Squatter settlements	Low-income settlements
•Consisting of "run-down housing in older, established, legally built parts of the city" (UNCHS, cited by Mahony, 2010, p.33). •"Most of the residents rent their accommodation, although owners occupy some space or detached structures" (UNCHS, cited by Mahony, 2010, p.33). •"Dirty, damp, swampy or unhealthy area with overcrowded buildings and dwellers" (Thai National Housing Authority, cited by Mahony, 2010, p.34).	•Consisting of "mainly uncontrolled low-income residential areas with ambiguous legal status regarding land occupation" (UNCHS, cited by Mahony, 2010, p.33). •Typically "built by the inhabitants themselves using their own means and are usually poorly equipped" (UNCHS, cited by Mahony, 2010, p.33.	•Applied to incorporate 'slum' areas, low-income neighbourhoods, squatter settlements, squatter slums and slum settlements (Askew, 2002, p.141). •Includes the spectrum of the poorest ("struggling to meet bare subsistence needs") to those "who are relatively more secure", albeit still relatively poor (Askew, 2002, p.141). •Households are characterised by lack of education, irregular and insecure work and low social status (Askew, 2002, p.141).

Sources: UNCHS (as cited in Mahony, 2010, pp33-34); Thai National Housing Authority (as cited in Mahony, 2010, p.34) and Askew (2002, p.141).

Askew's all-encompassing term of 'low-income settlement' is applied in this research to cover the categories of slums, squatter settlements and informal housing. As above, 'Table 1 - Urban poor housing settlements', the definition of low-income settlements covers the varying nature of housing (from makeshift to permanent), work opportunities (typically in the informal sector, but also in low-skilled roles within the formal sector) and community solidarity (Askew, 2002). Askew (2002) applies this term in the context that he suggests 'poverty' and 'poorness' are not distinctly quantifiable concepts (Askew, 2002). Douglass, Ard-Am and Ki Kim (2001) extend this by noting that each settlement has tremendous contrasts, including household composition and the length of time that households have been in the settlements. Despite the interchangeable labels, low-income settlements are characterised by low household incomes and education, limited opportunities for work, dense populations,

tenure insecurity, inadequate housing and poor access to necessary services and infrastructure (Mahony, 2010; Duranton, 2008;). Many low-income urban households live in unsound abodes, on either public or private land, that have been constructed with an absence of planning development (Laodumrongchai, Chaiyapa, Ariyasuntorn, & Chantavanich, 2010, p. 37). The insecure nature of low-income settlements results in challenges for the residents, including no legal right to tenure and housing remaining an impermanent arrangement (Laodumrongchai, Chaiyapa, Ariyasuntorn, & Chantavanich, 2010, p. 37).

Key issues of urban development relating to low-income settlements are that the urban poor typically do not have ready access to electricity, water (Laodumrongchai, Chaiyapa, Ariyasuntorn, & Chantavanich, 2010), sanitation, health care, education services, fuel and transportation infrastructures (Hollnesteiner & Tacon, 1983). The cost of living for those living in poor settlements is often relatively high due to the lack of public infrastructure, with a need for a user-pay approach in order to get such services informally delivered or supplied (Duranton, 2008). For example, having drinking water delivered often costs more for urban occupants who do not have access to the appropriate infrastructure (Duranton, 2008). Secondary and informal markets have arisen in poor urban areas that include the piracy of electricity, cable television and other utilities (Laodumrongchai, Chaiyapa, Ariyasuntorn, & Chantavanich, 2010). Due to the lack of access to formal lines of credit, residents of low-income settlements typically rely on their extended families, social networks and informal debt providers. The latter include loan sharks, often charging exorbitant daily interest rates (Laodumrongchai, Chaiyapa, Ariyasuntorn, & Chantavanich, 2010).

2.2.3 Urban development management

The livelihoods and health of poor urban dwellers are challenged by the degradation of their surrounding urban environment, which is expressed in air pollution, also affecting the urban ecology, water sources, and general environmental sustainability (Barles, 2010, p. 439). Suzuki, Cervero and Luchi (2013) suggest urban development is problematic as urban centres are continually growing and forever shrinking natural

spaces from the fringes. Environmental degradation is linked to not only accessibility to infrastructure such as waste management, but also a lack of formal urban planning and affordable clean transport options (Suzuki, Cervero, & Luchi, 2013).

By continually marginalising the urban poor, cities continue to be sites of social injustice, which in turn affects both protection of the environment and economic development strategies (Campbell, 1996). Challenges include having the ability to live in low-cost permanent housing, finding work opportunities, actualising self-empowerment, remaining healthy and living in a clean environment (Basiago, 1999). When the urban environment does not provide access to infrastructure such as clean water, rubbish disposal or sanitation, then residents need to consume these services through informal providers.

2.2.4 Women and urban development

The experience migrant women have in urban settings differs to those experienced by men (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2009). Everyday life for low-income urban women in developing countries is fraught with insecurities, gender based violence and the threat of eviction from informal housing settlements (Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions, 2008). Traditionally, poor women migrate to join family members for work opportunities, but there is a definite increase in the trend of women migrating individually (Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions, 2008). Gender power relations (including lack of decision making roles, domestic violence and expected reproductive roles), low resilience to financial shocks and stresses and poor legal protection all result in poor migrant women having a propensity to be marginalised and vulnerable (Greenwood, 2013). Furthermore, poor women encounter inequity when looking for work which is typified as unskilled and poorly paid (Chant & McIlwaine, 2013). Often poor unskilled women are excluded from work opportunities in the formal economy, and because of this they experience a lack of job security, dangerous working conditions and are not covered by social security legislation (Chant & McIlwaine, 2013). For many single women, it is difficult to find and secure affordable housing, and for those who do find somewhere to live are often at risk to health issues as the levels of pollution, lack of sanitation and

population density are the worst within the cheapest settlements (Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions, 2008).

When the surrounding infrastructure is lacking, everyday survival becomes both an arduous and time consuming duty (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2009). Women living in low-income settlements are more likely to suffer health issues as the division of labour in their everyday routine is significantly affected by the stresses and pollutants inherent in low-income settlements (Chant & McIlwaine, 2013). Environmental issues affect their health, but also their livelihoods (UNHABITAT, 2013). The women who do not have strong social networks available, their ability to recover from shocks and stresses is made more difficult (UNHABITAT, 2013). Within low-income settlements, there are different "power dynamics and social structures" (Ward & Mouyly, 2013, p. 313) which women need to adapt or conform to. When the power dynamics are across the female population, access to resources and social networking groups can empower or disempower women, enabling them to feel socially included or excluded (Ward & Mouyly, 2013). Furthermore, social norms and cultural restrictions often emanate from patriarchal relations, resulting in the level of mobility that poor urban women in developing countries to expect being far more restricted than their male counterparts (Chant & McIlwaine, 2013).

Cultural and social discrimination also often mean that the little money low-income women are able to make is often taken out of their control, despite women being the main provisioner for their family (Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions, 2008). In addition to trying to earn money, low-income urban women are also expected to carry out a predominantly large share of the unpaid work within the household or community. Unpaid roles include "cooking, cleaning, caring for others and community work" (Khosla, 2012, p. 5). Another household role undertaken by low-income urban women includes shopping in order to feed and clothe their families. Due to their urban environment, women are unable to produce their own foods and often cannot afford healthy food options for themselves or their children (Kumar, et al., 2013).

2.3 Urban consumption

Urban landscapes are epitomised by a number of different types of consumption spaces. Urban residents interact with these spaces in different ways. Consumption spaces are not limited to conventional retail shops, but also include alternative, conspicuous and virtual spaces. The concept of consumption as discussed here is not limited to practices and moments of economic exchanges, but also includes social relationships, experiences and symbolic meanings that are associated with purchase and use of commodities in places (Mansvelt, 2005). Consumption spaces vary considerably, they can be physical or virtual, first hand or second hand, leisure based, work-related or within the home. Consumption comprises of acquisition, possession or use, and disposal of commodities. Acquisition and possession or use are the focus for this research.

What is evident in the literature is that consumption practices and spaces are inherently linked to social constructs such as gender, self-identity, perception of others and status (Gregson, Crewe & Brooks, 2002; Gregson, Metcalfe & Crewe, 2007; Gregson & Crewe, 2003; Jackson & Holbrook, 1995). Much of the existing research focuses on the white affluent Anglo-American context (Mansvelt, 2005) and so there has not been as much as a focus on either the experiences of urban low-income women, or those people living in developing countries. The consumption related research that has emerged recently from different developing countries (for example, Hill, 2010; Stillerman & Salcedo, 2012) informs and expands understanding about the experiences and influences of consumers in these countries, but there has been little work on low-income urban dwellers (Stillerman, 2012).

2.3.1 Urban consumption spaces

Research regarding consumption practices and spaces has in the last couple of decades extended beyond the purchase transaction and success of marketing campaigns (Clarke, 2010). It incorporates a much more holistic and richer view of how consumption plays a significant role in our everyday lives (Clarke, 2010). Although consumption has in the past been commonly referred to the

commoditisation and transactional aspects of goods and services, the practices and spaces that surround consumption are more than just signifiers of capitalist transactions (Clarke, 2010). Listed below in Table 2 are a number of different types of consumption spaces that are typically found in contemporary urban environments. The advancement of technology means that the prolific use of consumption spaces is not limited to physical spaces like shopping malls, but also includes virtual spaces like the Internet.

Table 2 – Modes and spaces of consumption

Physical conventional spaces	• Malls • Department stores • Supermarkets
Alternative or ethical spaces	• Second hand shops or markets • Charity shops • Fair trade stores
Conspicuous or leisure spaces	• Cinemas • Theme parks • Bowling alleys
Own home	• Television shopping channels • Mail out catalogues • Kerbside recycling
Online or virtual	• Mobile apps • Online websites (Internet)
Informal spaces	• Street stalls • Hawkers • Flea markets

Source: Mansvelt (2005); Gregson & Crewe (2003); Ho (2005).

The plethora of consumption spaces within the urban landscape play an integral role in contemporary society as they incorporate not only people's shopping experiences, but are also normalised places for socialising, leisure activities and as part of our

everyday existence (Mansvelt, 2005). Socialisation and leisure occurs in many forms, including family outings where leisure activities, eating, drinking, shopping and family time together all converge (Karstena, Kamphuisb, & Remeijnseb, 2013, p. 1).

Many enclosed urban spaces are managed retail spaces. By entering these spaces, a number of rules or regulations on how to act or behave are expected. Voyce (2006) notes that in managed spaces, such as in malls, the rights as a consumer do not necessarily confer to the rights as a citizen (Voyce, 2006, p. 270). By looking at the control mechanisms that are implicitly in place in these spaces, Voyce (2006 p.270) suggests that certain cohorts are excluded, including the homeless, delinquent children and many lower socioeconomic or marginalised groups. This exclusion suggests that behaviours emanating as "middle class values and lifestyles" (Clarke, 2010, pp. 85-86) are expected and accepted upon entering a controlled or managed consumption space, and unless the poor behave in this way, are not otherwise tolerated (Voyce, 2006). The control of behaviours within managed consumption spaces is pertinent to this thesis. It provides an understanding of how people are expected to interact within different spaces, and situates both identity reconstruction and the nature of social inclusion or exclusion. This concept of accepted behaviours also informs how people feel differently about themselves in each space.

There seems to be two prevailing views towards the interactions of consumers and consumption spaces. The first is the predominant view as discussed by Gregson and Crewe (2003), Gregson, Metcalfe and Crewe (2007) and Jackson and Holbrook (1995), suggesting that there are social and cultural associations or relations that shape how people interact with consumption spaces. Gregson, Crewe and Brooks (2002) note that many consumption spaces have clear social distinctions as to who uses them and what they represent.

The second view by Bauman (2005) and Woodruffe-Burton and Wakenshaw (2011) suggests that because consumption practices are as much embedded within the thoughts or feelings of the consumer, they remain unique and are not necessarily a product of what the space reflects. According to Bauman, the significance of consumption to a person is influenced by internal thought processes and feelings, as much as what the space is representing (Bauman, 2005).

2.3.2 Urban consumption practices

Consumption practices refer to more than just financial transactions. Consumption practices also include activities associated with shopping (such as browsing, choosing and buying), socialising (such as eating out, 'hanging out' and meeting up for leisure activities) and the possession and use of commodities (such as what and how attire is worn, the music that is listened to and items that are collected). In addition, the activities and practices that are undertaken across both physical and virtual spaces contribute to the manner in which consumption influences the creation of identity, self-perception and the perception of others (Mansvelt, 2013).

Jackson and Holbrook (1995) note that a person does not always have the ability to participate in consumption practices, indicating that consumption practices are either enhancing or diminutive (Jackson & Holbrook, 1995). Featherstone (1991) suggests that practices such as shopping and buying have become important activities within western neoliberal values and systems as a means of defining social inclusion, even though these activities are often veiled by desired perceptions or images (Featherstone, 1991). These perceptions are encoded in brand messages, promotions and advertisements and enable people to construct their own identity (Grayson & Martinec, 2004). Shopping is often influenced by an on-going education through media and advertising about brand awareness, status and acquiring "social and cultural capital" (Gregson, Metcalfe, & Crewe, 2007, p. 694). This research will help inform how important it is for low-income women to consume in order to improve their own sense of self or status.

In addition to the activities surrounding purchases, Schor (2001) proposes that social inclusion is also defined within Anglo-American lifestyles through the possession of material goods. Although the emphasis in consumption literature focuses on middle class consumers (Jackson & Holbrook, 1995; McIntosh, 2013), works by Gregson and Crewe (2003) and Wiig and Smith (2008) provide an insight to the consumption practices of western lower socioeconomic demographics. Gregson and Crewe (2003) write about second hand consumption practices in Britain and determine that how second hand goods matter to people in both positive and negative ways. Meanwhile, Wiig and Smith describe the importance for low-income women in America to select

affordable and appropriate nutritional foodstuffs and groceries that do not take up a lot of storage space in the home (Wiig & Smith, 2008, p. 1729). Both sets of research demonstrate that the possession of goods matter and possession has as much importance as the purchase for low-income consumers.

Baudrillard's (1998) notion is that the contemporary and globalised world we live in is one that imparts a level of significance upon participation and symbolism, Gregson and Crewe (2003, p.3) also note the importance of the representation that both goods and experience have. This representation can reflect many things including nostalgia, familial devotion or a desired status and is evident in both the "the presence and absence of consumer goods" (Gregson, Metcalfe, & Crewe, 2007, p. 688).

Perceptions of urban lifestyle are defined through middle class values and changing norms (Clarke, 2010). Much is written about the affluent middle classes who are "younger, better educated, have higher income, and are more time constrained" (Farag, Weltevreden, van Rietbergen, Dijst, & van Oort, 2006, p. 60), and with their growing disposable income are able to make clear distinctions about the consumption practices, such as eating out, which they have the capacity to indulge in (Gregson, Crewe & Brooks 2002). Bauman (2005) suggests that middle class expectations, through the definition and normalisation of the ideals of what constitutes a good life into value systems influences what it means to be a consumer. This can result in social exclusion, which is determined by the inability to afford certain material goods or to participate in middle class ideals, such as socialising or leisure activities (Bauman, 2005). It is unclear whether or not the concepts that are applicable to western middle classes can also be applied to low-income persons within developing countries. This research seeks to assert whether these ideals are also reflected in the desires and experiences of those outside of the affluent white western demographic.

2.3.3 Consumption and identity

Consumption practices are a medium for identity construction. The interactions people have with each other through consumption practices influence how identities are constructed and reconstructed. Jackson and Holbrook (1995) note that identities

can be shaped differently according to the space that people are in, and can be both a source of pleasure or anxiety (Jackson & Holbrook, 1995). Identities are constructed and reconstructed within different spaces (Jackson & Holbrook, 1995). Furthermore, identities are influenced in everyday practices by the transformation of meanings that are encoded in brand messages, promotions and advertisements (Grayson & Martinec, 2004). Products and services increase both desirability and value as consumers receive on-going education through media and advertising about brand awareness, status and acquiring the unknown quantum of the preferred level of "social and cultural capital" (Gregson, Metcalfe, & Crewe, 2007, p. 694). From this perspective, retail practices and their spaces are actively involved in the construction of identities, meanings and worldviews; they shape, to some extent, the way people view the world and themselves (Fuentes, 2012, p. 1). Modern life is said to be charged "with the task of self-construction", which is essentially how one builds their own social identity (Bauman, 2005, p. 27). Although the process of consuming is said to confirm both position and identity within societies it is also the interaction within a space that shapes identity which is further defined through value system and changing norms (Clarke, 2010; Jackson & Holbrook, 1995; Woodruffe-Burton & Wakenshaw, 2011).

2.3.4 Consumption in developing countries

Often it is assumed that the process of consumption evident in an Anglo-American context also exists in a similar form in developing countries too. Maddison (2002) suggests that in order for 'western' approaches to consumption to exist, similar ideologies, lifestyles and aspirations also need to be apparent. There are a small number of researchers who have focused on the role of consumption practices and spaces on the everyday lives of their participants across different developing countries (Hill, 2010; Stillerman & Salcedo, 2012). Although with the "emergence of a middle class that can now purchase inexpensive consumer products" (Hawkes, Blouin, Henson, Drager, & Dube, 2010, p. 107) research emanating from developing countries also typically focuses on practices of the middle classes.

Hill's (2010) research identifies that recently introduced spaces in Kolkata such as cinema complexes have become places that reinforce notions of social exclusion for

the poor. Similar to the controlled consumption spaces in the west, the cinema complexes require certain behaviours and social norms in order to participate (Hill, 2010). Stillerman and Salcedo (2012) remark on the importance that accessibility and proximity of malls has in Chile. Furthermore, due to the malls' locations, they "facilitate cross-class interactions" (Stillerman & Salcedo, 2012, p. 309), which is in contrast to Hill's research which notes that cinema complexes are spaces where different social classes do not interact with each other.

Other authors have focused on the effect that foreign brands and western styled shops have in urban centres of developing countries (Potter, 2002; Mahoney, 2010). Effects include the association of foreign brands with status and progress, and the increased use of foreign products by the middle class (Potter, 2002; Mahoney, 2010). This study will add to this literature, as the experiences, if any, of low-income urban women exposed to foreign brands and shops is explored.

Although not yet as extensive as the literature from the west, the research available regarding consumption spaces in the developing world helps provide an understanding to the cultural, economic, political and social influences on the everyday lives of its consumers. Hill (2010), Kumar et al. (2013) and Stillerman and Salcedo (2012) represent the diversity that consumption spaces have across developing countries. Despite this, much of the consumption literature situated outside of a western context does not provide insight to the everyday practices of consumers living in the developing world. These practices are important as they help establish gender roles, socio-cultural norms, class and ethnic influences, while also informing needs, activities, priorities and perceptions. This thesis seeks to bridge some of this gap by focusing on the everyday consumption practices within the context of women living in an urban low-income settlement within the developing world.

2.4 Women and consumption

The feminisation of consumption spaces and gendered household roles for provisioning indicate an interrelatedness between women, women's roles and

consumption (Duffy, 2012a). Consumption practices, through cultural and social norms, are often assumed to be feminised (McIntosh, 2013). There is an expectation that the activities and behaviours in consumption spaces conform to what is socially constituted as gender appropriate (Duffy, 2012a).

As well as consumption spaces being feminised, the home, within the context of consumption, is also often considered to be a gendered space (Duffy, 2012a). Women are often allocated the specific gendered role as a nurturing provisioner (Wiig & Smith, 2008). Women consume in order to provide for their families and to show affection (Cockburn-Wotton, Pritchard, Morgan, & Jones, 2008). Yet at the same time, consumption practices are often used to define a woman's status and social standing (McIntosh, 2013).

In addition to attaining one's own social standing, the role as the household consumer affects consumption practices for the family, as consumption becomes a representation of self and family identities (Silva, 2007). Both self-identification and the perception of others are socially constructed processes that are constantly challenged by existing and emerging sub-cultures within the social environment (Duffy, 2012a). This section concludes with examining the significant role that consumption has for women in maintaining and affirming their identities within the context of their social environment.

2.4.1 Feminisation of spaces

Contemporary researchers suggest that western consumption practices that encapsulate or represent desires and pleasures, instead of need, and that they are inherently feminised (Goodman, Goodman, & Redclift, 2010). Western consumption spaces such as malls, department stores and beauty salons are often viewed as places for feminised behaviour. Feminisation of these spaces originated from being "historically important as a way which women can create their own freedom, and celebrate their social spaces" (Paterson, 2006, p. 184). Consumption practices are also considered to be feminised as there is an interrelated relationship between the emergence of consumer culture, consumerism as a leisure activity, and the acceptance

and visibility of women in public spaces through consumption (and also escaping their domestic environment) (Paterson, 2006). The feminisation of consumption practices, and by extension of consumption spaces, has extended the domesticated role of women from their home to these spaces (Rappaport, 2000). This role is often reinforced through images and articles in women's magazines (Rappaport, 2000). Consumption practices have become an integral part of the identity of a contemporary western urban woman (Rappaport, 2000).

Despite spaces being gendered, there is a constant negotiation of gendered space that results in both status and identity being continually reconstructed (Duffy, 2012a). The gendering of consumption spaces is culturally or socially constructed (Duffy, 2012a). As society changes, everyday household consumption practices are adjusting. The negotiation of gendered space is most evident in western countries in what has been the traditional domain of women, the grocery store (Mortimer & Clarke, 2011). For example, as more women enter the workforce, the role of purchasing food for the family becomes less gendered (Mortimer & Clarke, 2011). Likewise, as women interact in perceived masculine spaces, there is a need to legitimise their motivations, often by establishing new reasons (Duffy, 2012b).

Radner (1995) theorises that for affluent middle class Anglo-American women, the feminisation of consumption spaces is attributed to a way in which women knowingly participate through their own outlay with an expectation of gain. By investing their own time and their money, women expect a return. Women's return can be their own pleasure from consuming, or by acquisition of material goods to be used in exhibiting the women's ideal of her own identity. It is expected that because this thesis is undertaken within a low-income context, Radner's theories that women consume for a personal gain or return is less likely to apply.

2.4.2 Household roles

Though changing, generally the typical roles within households are gendered and women are expected to meet the needs of the family through nurture and provisioning. A woman's household role often includes everyday practices such as

teaching, nursing, cleaning and shopping (Fisher & Combs, 2007). It is estimated in the United States of America that women make approximately eighty per cent of all consumption related decisions for their household (Fisher & Combs, 2007). The intrinsic duty as household provisioner through consumption is often intergenerational learnt behaviours that identify appropriate social interaction and participation (Fisher & Combs, 2007). Intergenerational learning of consumption reinforces the notion that consumption provides a means to confirm a person's ethnic, religious or class identity. However, this notion assumes that social expectations and lifestyles remain consistent across generations (Ho, 2005, p. 146). As rural-urban migration can result in generations of families being separated for periods of time, intergenerational learning may be interrupted, and affect participation in consumption related decisions.

For women with limited disposable income, providing for their family often takes precedence over their own desires (Gregson & Crewe, 2003). It is contended by Parkin (2006) that shopping on behalf of one's family is a feminised role. This role is inherently linked to how women can show their family affection (Cockburn-Wotton, Pritchard, Morgan, & Jones, 2008). Mundane consumption spaces like grocery stores and supermarkets have an association as places of "essential activity of housewives as they nurture their families" (Cockburn-Wotton, Pritchard, Morgan, & Jones, 2008, p. 409). Parkin (2006) notes the role of women as the key grocery shopper is highly influenced by socially constructed marketing messages.

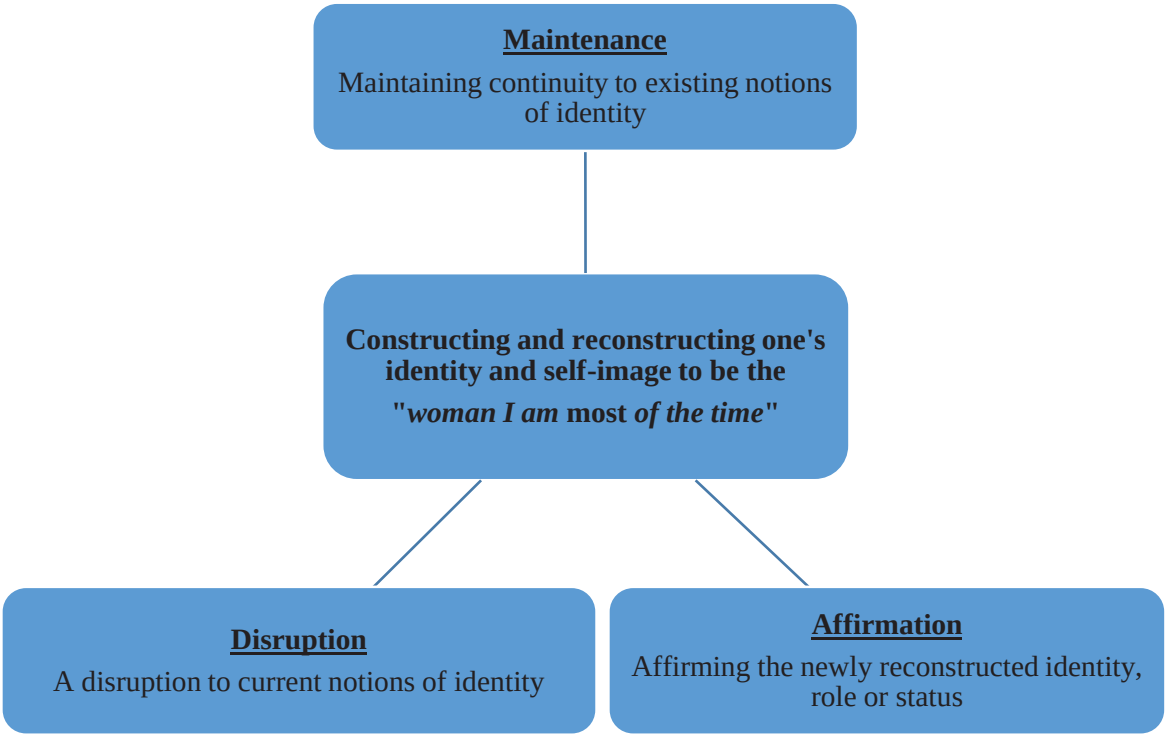
Western households are typically work rich and time poor (Silva, 2007), and so consumption practices are often prioritised based on their elements of convenience, where they fit in the family routines or rituals, and who is best suited to participating in the consumption activities. The literature suggests that for women, the significance of consumption is two-fold. On one hand, it "provides escape from the confines of home and housework" (Cockburn-Wotton, Pritchard, Morgan, & Jones, 2008, p. 432). On the other hand, women consume for their families to not only provide them with their needs or desires, but to also enable the family to fulfil their ideal of what they are or what they desire (Silva, 2007). The acquisition of material goods, the selection of food and the way in which the family are dressed are all examples of consumption decisions that women make that enable the family to represent the class

they identify with, and thus situate themselves socially (Silva, 2007). Being socially situated through such representations, are as Bauman notes, markers of belonging (Bauman, 2005, p. 83).

2.4.3 Identity reconstruction

Throughout the family lifecycle, a woman's role is constantly being reconfigured, and for women to continue to belong there is a need to navigate their ideal of new and different identities (Hogg, Maclaren, & Curasi, 2003). Family role transitions can include wife, expectant or nursing mother, empty nester or teenage confidante (Hogg, Maclaren, & Curasi, 2003). Ogle, Tyner and Schofield-Tomschin (2013) identify that there are generally three effects that bind consumption practices with a woman's sense of self-identity. The effects to a woman's identity whenever she engages in consumption practices are of maintenance, disruption or affirmation (Ogle, Tyner, & Schofield-Tomschin, 2013). Although their research was specific to the consumption practices of first-time mothers purchasing maternity wear, these themes apply across consumption practices for women. Maintenance, disruption and affirmation of identity, as can be seen in Figure 1, refers to the notion that as a woman's family role changes, how she identifies herself can be either maintained, disrupted, or a new identity be adopted and affirmed.

Figure 1 – The effect consumption practices have on self-definition for women



Source: Ogle, Tyner and Schofield-Tomschin (2013)

The physical presence within a space, the acquisition of goods or product knowledge, the management of one's own physical appearance management, and maintaining social appearances or interactions are all attributed to how identities are formed and reformed (Ogle, Tyner, & Schofield-Tomschin, 2013). The acquisition of goods in order to belong or conform can disrupt a woman's self-image of who she sees herself as most of the time. Similarly, Hogg, Maclaren and Curasi (2003) write about the expectation for women who become empty nesters to change their lifestyles to include more non-family oriented leisure activities.

Both sets of research indicate that as women adapt to changes in their lives, then consumption practices reflect this adaption. Disruptions to one's current identity can also be financial (a need to be frugal) or feeling the need to conform to social expectations (Ogle, Tyner, & Schofield-Tomschin, 2013). However, the acquisition of goods can also be a form of affirmation that a newly reconstructed identity is essentially defining one's ideal status or role (Hogg, Maclaren, & Curasi, 2003). Furthermore, consumption practices can enable women to maintain the persona of

who they see themselves as, or how they wish to be defined. (Ogle, Tyner, & Schofield-Tomschin, 2013).

The manner in which women view themselves is often a mixture of maintenance, disruption or affirmation, depending on the given environment or social peer group. A person's identity through consumption can be for reasons to 'fit in' or to be notably different (Gregson & Crewe, 2003, p. 92). Gregson and Crewe (2003) indicate that for British low-income women, shopping for second hand clothes can enable poor women to afford to fit in with their social peers. At the same time, by having to purchase second hand clothes out of necessity, some women feel that the representation to their identity (or their family's identity) through second hand consumption habits becomes inferior, and socially not accepted (Gregson & Crewe, 2003, p. 92). Understanding the effect of consumption practices on low-income women's identity is therefore critical. This research endeavours to expand on the understanding of these concepts within a Thai context, and to help determine how Thai low-income women maintain, disrupt or affirm their identities through consumption.

For many women, the style of clothing or accessories that are chosen are subject to showing social conformity and are paramount to how people interact with others (Ogle, Tyner, & Schofield-Tomschin, 2013). As women reconstruct their self, they participate in a form of "symbolic consumption" that results in seeking to display meanings and representations of one's own self or identity (Ogle, Tyner, & Schofield-Tomschin, 2013). This can be a process of anxiety, empowerment or coping. As a process of anxiety, a number of identity related issues may be left unresolved (Jackson & Holbrook, 1995); whereas as a form of empowerment through the ability to fit in social groups or circumstances, women have the confidence to promote their own identity as an individual (Ogle, Tyner, & Schofield-Tomschin, 2013). In contrast, the process can also be a means to cope or manage the uncertainty of what role is most appropriate or suited, or a means to bridge different identities (Ogle, Tyner, & Schofield-Tomschin, 2013). During the process of creating an identity while meeting family and social demands, women are constantly learning and negotiating their social environment and where they are situated in that environment (Ogle, Tyner, & Schofield-Tomschin, 2013).

2.5 Summary

This chapter has explored the challenges associated with urban living for women in low-income settlements. Low-income women often face inequity, a lack of job security, and work for minimal wages within the informal economy. In addition to earning money, low-income women are also expected to care for family members and look after their household, including cooking and shopping.

The participation in consumption contributes to how people socially situate themselves. Women often consume on behalf of their household, and their consumption practices influence both self and familial identities. Furthermore, consumption practices can be regarded as feminised through the combination of a rising consumer culture, leisure driven consumerism and the prominence of women in public consumption spaces. For women who do not have the luxury of time for leisure activities, and who consume out of need and not desire, it is unclear whether consumption is practiced in the same way. Likewise, it is unclear whether the identity of a woman living in the developing world is also constantly maintained, disrupted and affirmed.

The emergence of consumption spaces within the urban environment are often viewed as characteristics of urbanisation and modernisation. Despite consumption spaces being varied and diverse, much of the literature has focused on British and American spaces, such as malls and supermarkets. Likewise, consumption spaces are often framed as spaces that embody the ideals and experiences of middle class cohorts, which are not necessarily reflected by those living in low-income households, particularly for those living in the developing world.

In order to contextualise urban consumption spaces and practices within the everyday lives of urban low-income Thai women, a geographical contextualisation of urban Thailand is presented in the following chapter.

3 Thailand in context: Situating urban consumption and gender roles in Khlong Toey, Bangkok

This chapter provides geographic and social context to the research and situates urban Thailand in relation to development, consumption spaces and gender roles. It is necessary to understand the significance of socio-cultural and economic developments that have occurred across Thai history in order to contextualise contemporary consumption practices and the roles of low-income Thai women in urban contexts.

The first section in this chapter focuses on the emergence of modernisation in Bangkok, the capital of Thailand, and the primary urban Thai centre of economic activity, consumption and development. The following section then explores the significance of urban consumption spaces in Thailand. This section looks at the social context of consumption, including the validation of social exclusion through consumption spaces. Finally, this chapter considers how low-income Thai women balance the expectations of rural gender roles with their lives as rural-urban migrants by meeting familial, financial and social obligations.

3.1 Urban Thailand

Thailand is situated on the Indochina Peninsula in Southeast Asia and as shown in Figure 2, shares it borders with Malaysia, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Laos) and the Republic of the Union of Myanmar (Myanmar). Major industries for Thailand include agriculture (namely rice production), rubber, tourism and manufacturing.

Figure 2 - Map of Southeast Asia

Source: The Philatelic Database (2014)

In Thailand, the concept of urban development is coupled with the ideal of progress. Characteristics of civilised and progressive society are epitomised by urban modernisation, and have an association with social class (more specifically, the means to afford to participate in an urban modern lifestyle). In Thai, this is referred to as *gan pattana* (Brody, 2006), and its interpretation is governed by progress corresponding to modernisation and being a positive form of development. It is driven by socio-cultural constructs that correlate geographic location and social status. Brody (2006) provides a translation for the Thai term *khwam siwilai* as a desire to be perceived as and to become civilised and progressive. The antonym of *khwam siwilai* is *la samai,* and has associations with living in the provinces being viewed as 'backwards', uncivilised and belonging to a lower class (Brody, 2006). Development in Thailand is founded within *khwam siwilai,* and the process of becoming civilised is essentially the key goal of both economic and urban physical development (Brody, 2006). Within this "ultimate goal of civilization" (Brody, 2006, p. 539) Bangkok leads the way and exemplifies *gan pattana* through its industrialisation and modern buildings (Brody, 2006). Development programs

continue to be unevenly distributed across rural-urban, class and income stratums. The northeast rural provinces in *Isaan* comprises of close to one third of the population and remains the poorest area (McCargo & Hongladarom, 2010). Development across *Isaan* is "placed at the tail-end of this trajectory" (Brody, 2006, p. 539), and because of its lack of *gan pattana* continues to be viewed both socially and in Thai development discourse as backward, rural and dirty (Brody, 2006).

3.1.1 Urban development in Thailand: Historic context

Since the 1800s, to establish Bangkok as the key urban centre, there has been a tendency for development in Thailand to be focused in Bangkok (Jongudomkarn & Camfield, 2006). The combination of early urbanisation and the adoption of an "emerging capitalist economic system" (Askew, 2002, p. 31) reinforced existing concepts of social status for the urban elite, signified through their accumulation of material goods (Askew, 2002). Sternstein (1974) suggests that during this time, as the Thai economy still relied on rice production, and rice farming netted relatively high incomes in the provinces, there was little need for internal migration, and so the disparity between rural and urban or rich and poor was less pronounced.

Post World War II, dictatorship rule in Thailand came to an end. At this time, as part of a World Bank supported shift in policy, Thailand moved from relying solely on agricultural commodities "towards an export-oriented industrial economy and the commercialization of the agricultural sector" (Askew, 2002, p. 49). As a result, Thailand entered the global economy selling rice and manufacturing factories were set up in Bangkok. As farming related incomes decreased, a large number of rural dwellers migrated to Bangkok, seeking opportunities for work, effectively catalysing economic and socio-cultural change (Askew, 2002).

Sternstein (1974) suggests during this period, the initial motivators for rural-urban migration included the generally held view that Bangkok offered more work opportunities. Furthermore, urban work was casual and could be fitted in with the provincial farming workload. By the 1980s, Thai development policies remained skewed to manufacturing activities in Bangkok (Glassman & Sneddon, 2003), while

Brody (2006) notes that at the same time, incomes driven by rice farming had plummeted. Not surprisingly, a major urban-rural division emerged (Brody, 2006), caused primarily by the disparity in income and work opportunities between Bangkok and the rest of Thailand (Glassman & Sneddon, 2003). The number of newly arrived urban migrants seeking employment, originating mainly from the poorer provinces outnumbered those from Bangkok (Glassman & Sneddon, 2003), and migrants typically squatted or settled in informal housing areas. As a consequence, these migrants became a new emerging demographic now recognised as the urban poor (Glassman & Sneddon, 2003).

The financial crisis of the 1990s left most of the Thai population fraught with financial stresses, increased cost of living and a decrease in wages. The International Monetary Fund fiscal austerity measures prescribed in 1998 did not stimulate the economy (Rigg, 2002, p. 27). Over the following decade, the pressures on the poor were particularly immense. One key issue was that as casual wages dropped, urban migrants were unable to remit funds back to their dependent families (Chantavanich, Laodumrongchai, Than, & Wong-a-thitikul, 2009). The population of the urban poor soared as those in Bangkok lost their jobs, coupled with an increase in poverty in the poorer provinces, resulting in more rural-urban migrants desperate to find work (Laodumrongchai, Chaiyapa, Ariyasuntorn, & Chantavanich, 2010).

3.1.2 Rural-urban migration and the urban poor

The increase in rural-urban migration resulted in further uneven urban development, demonstrated through income disparity, lack access to necessary infrastructure and sanitation, and a dearth of affordable and sustainable housing (Glassman & Sneddon, 2003). Brody (2006) suggests that not only does rural-urban migration alter the urban landscape, but also the provincial socio-cultural and traditional constructs. The rural exodus has resulted in village populations being skewed towards dependent elderly and children, causing a breakdown in traditional social roles both in *Isaan* and for those able adults migrating to Bangkok (Brody, 2006). Brody argues that this causes juxtaposition for urban migrants. While migrants want an ideal urban lifestyle that is laden with work opportunities, have exposure to new experiences and a means of

enhancing their social status, migrants also need to balance the needs and expectations of their family back in the provinces (Brody, 2006).

Many migrant workers in Thai urban centres find their work opportunities within the informal sector. Informal economies provide workers with minimal wages (Todaro & Smith, 2006). In Thailand, urban work opportunities in the informal economy include marketplaces, street vending or setting up microbusinesses (Albright, et al., 2011). Informal workers do not have job security as they are not covered by Thai Labour laws and often do not receive the minimum wage (Chantavanich, Laodumrongchai, Than, & Wong-a-thitikul, 2009). Urban development in developing countries relies on the participation from both the informal and formal economies, with the informal economy employing nearly half the urban population and generating nearly one third of all urban income (Todaro & Smith, 2006). The combination of urban economic growth and the absence of social security systems enable the informal economies to flourish (Todaro & Smith, 2006). However, the increase in casual working practices associated with the informal economy in urban environments is attributed to polarising the distribution of income between the informal and formal economies (Sassen, 2000). Workers tend to live day-to-day, and often struggle to accumulate any savings (Chantavanich, Laodumrongchai, Than, & Wong-a-thitikul, 2009).

As mentioned in Chapter 1, Thailand is a developing country. With a population of almost 67 million inhabitants (World Bank, 2014), almost 15 per cent of Thai people are located in the capital city, Bangkok (Askew, 2002). In contrast, Bangkok accounts for 40 per cent of the Thai economy (Jongudomkarn & Camfield, 2006). Urban centres across Thailand attract many rural-urban migrants with 16 per cent of the Thai population living in urban centres outside of Bangkok (UNHABITAT, 2012). The five largest Thai urban centres are shown in Figure 3 (based on the 2010 Population Census Data). Bangkok is not only centrally located, it has a considerably higher population than any other Thai urban centre. While Samut Prakan is also centrally located across the Chao Phraya River from Bangkok, the remaining urban centres are ethnically different to Central Thailand. The cities of Nakhon Ratchasima and Udon Thani are both located in *Isaan*, and are ethnically Laos.

Due to how data is collected in Thailand, it is difficult to determine specific statistics to compare Thai cities. However, it is known that approximately 13 per cent of the Thai urban population live in poverty (UNHABITAT, 2012), and that 62 percent of those living in low-income settlements are in Bangkok (UNHABITAT, 2012). It is estimated that around three per cent of the total Thai population are living in low-income settlements (UNHABITAT, 2012).

Figure 3 - Map of Thailand: Five largest urban centres

1 BANGKOK
- Population: 8.3 million
- 13% live in low-income settlements

2 CHIANG MAI
- Population: 960,000
- 4% live in low-income settlements

3 SAMUT PRAKAN
- Population: 518,787
- 12% live in low-income settlements

4 NAKHON RATCHASIMA
- Population: 444,000
- 2% live in low-income settlements

5 UDON THANI
- Population: 315,000
- 3% live in low-income settlements

Source: Auffrey, (2002); National Statistical Office (2010); The Philatelic Database (2014)

As discussed in Chapter 2, the definition of low-income settlement will be applied to define 'slums', 'squatter areas' and 'informal settlements'. Internal migration has resulted in the erection of a number of low-income settlements, which houses migrants who seek affordable housing options which is in close proximity to the opportunities for low-skilled work. The low-income settlements are densely populated and often there is an amplification of the issues that arise from urban development. Issues include access to infrastructure, clean drinking water and sustainable housing.

Settlements for the urban poor have been described as places for hope, rather than places of despair due to the

> *"recognition that people actively engage in shaping their own worlds, rather than their actions being wholly pre-ordained by capital or the intervention of the state"* (Gardner & Lewis, 1996, p. 59).

Settlements can potentially provide the agency for change and migrants often use their own ethnic resources to assist locating work opportunities (Todaro & Smith, 2006).

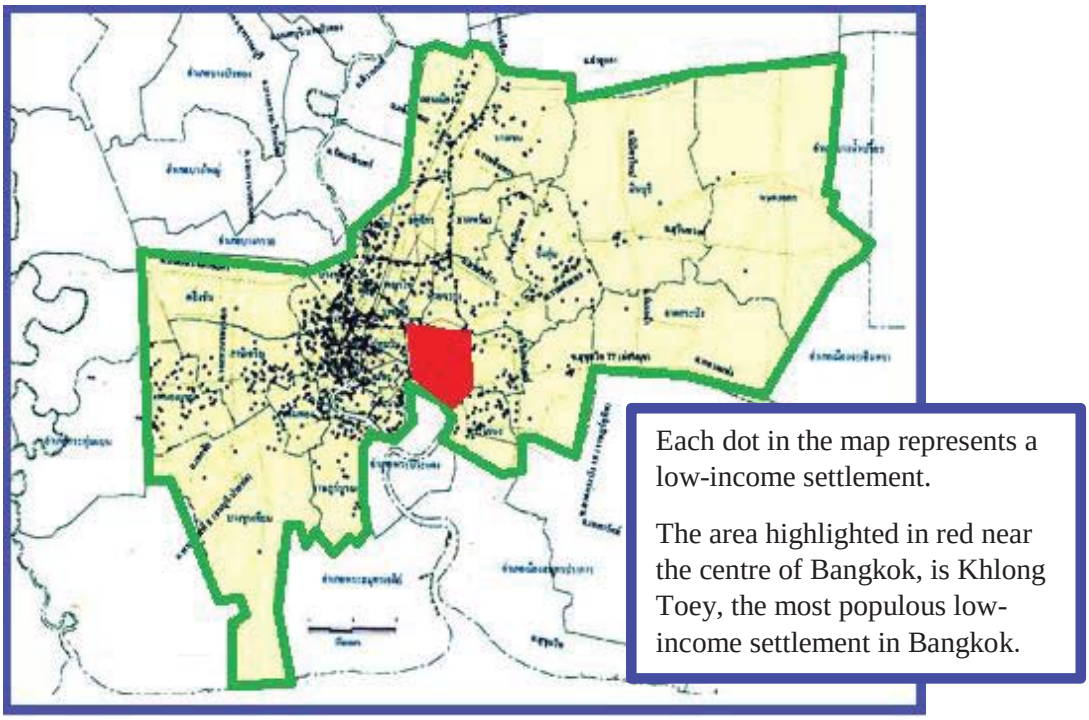
3.1.3 Bangkok and its low-income settlements

The capital city Bangkok continues to have the highest population growth rate in Thailand, and as mentioned in Chapter 1, each year it continues to attract many rural-urban migrants (National Statistics Office, 2010). A key attraction is that the minimum wage in Bangkok is 20 per cent higher than in other Thai urban centres (Fernquest, 2012). Many migrants in Bangkok originate from *Isaan*, which literally translates as 'the Northeast' and includes the poorest Thai provinces. (McCargo & Hongladarom, 2010). *Isaan* borders both Laos and Cambodia, and has one third of the Thai population and make up half of the urban poor in Bangkok (McCargo & Hongladarom, 2010). McCargo and Hongladarom (2004) argue that people from *Isaan* concurrently identify themselves as both Thai and Laos – being of Thai nationality but of Laos ethnicity. Furthermore, differences between Thais from *Isaan* compared to Bangkok include language and diet. In addition to ethnic differences, the lack of development across *Isaan* has resulted in a perception that Thais in urban centres such as Bangkok are 'more modern' with a higher social status (McCargo & Hongladarom, 2010).

The more than 1,200 low-income settlements in Bangkok house over 1.6 million residents (Daniere & NaRanong, 2009). As Bangkok grows (physically and economically), so do the number of low-income settlements (Daniere & NaRanong,

2009). As shown in Figure 4, there are a lot of low-income settlements scattered across central Bangkok, with the largest settlement, Khlong Toey highlighted in red near the centre of Bangkok. Low-income settlements in Bangkok are characterised by minimal incomes and education, limited opportunities for work (Mahony, 2010), dense populations, tenure insecurity, poor quality housing and poor access to necessary services and infrastructure (Duranton, 2008).

Figure 4 - Map of Bangkok: Low-income settlements



Source: Community Organizations Development Institute, (2014, p. 1)

For those from the poor provinces coming to Bangkok to work, existing social and family networks are often used to secure both work and accommodation. A key issue relating to the everyday lives of the urban poor is that many areas where they reside do not always have access to electricity, water (Laodumrongchai, Chaiyapa, Ariyasuntorn, & Chantavanich, 2010), sanitation, health care, education services, fuel and transportation infrastructures (Hollnesteiner & Tacon, 1983). The cost of living for those living in poor settlements is often higher due to this lack of public infrastructure, and the need to pay informal for services to be delivered (Duranton, 2008). For example, water often needs to be purchased at higher prices (Duranton,

2008) than what other urban occupants with access to appropriate infrastructure would pay.

Secondary markets have arisen that include the piracy of electricity, cable television and other utilities (Laodumrongchai, Chaiyapa, Ariyasuntorn, & Chantavanich, 2010). Due to the lack of availability of formal lines of credit, residents of low-income settlements rely on their extended families and informal debt providers. The latter include loan sharks, who often charge interest daily at high rates (Laodumrongchai, Chaiyapa, Ariyasuntorn, & Chantavanich, 2010). In Bangkok, residents of low-income settlements are often living in makeshift unsound abodes that have been constructed with no planning development, on either public or private land, with no legal right to tenure due to the insecure nature of their housing arrangements (Laodumrongchai, Chaiyapa, Ariyasuntorn, & Chantavanich, 2010).

3.1.4 Khlong Toey low-income settlement: Research setting

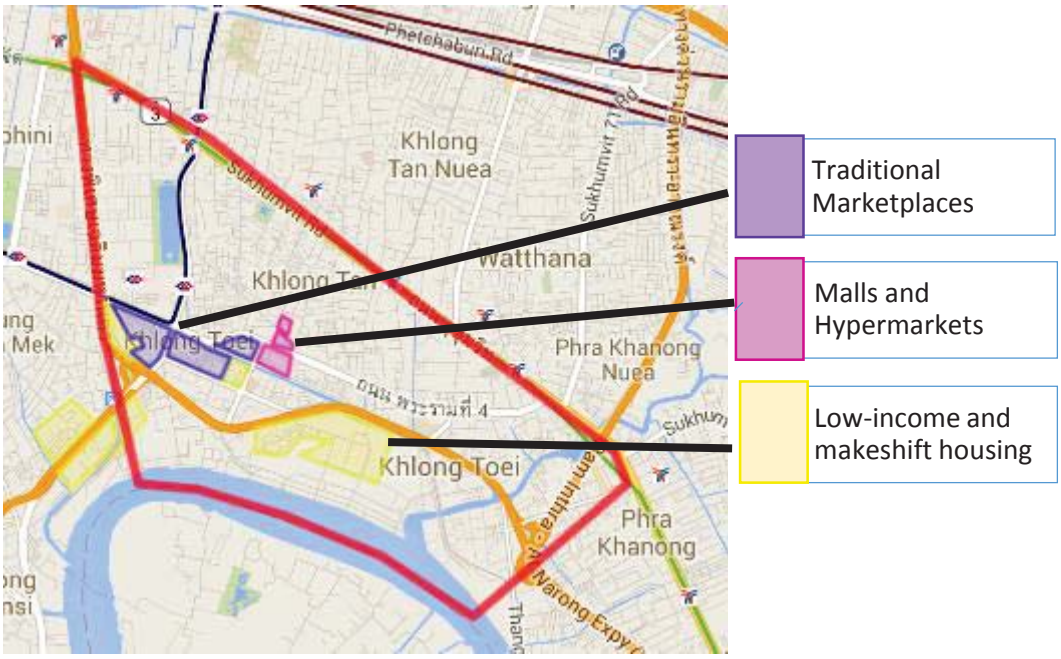
The low-income settlement that is the focus of this thesis is the largest in Bangkok, and is a district called Khlong Toey. As shown in Figure 5, Khlong Toey is located on the Chao Phraya River in the Southern part of Bangkok (Albright, et al., 2011). The settlement is on land owned by the Port Authority of Thailand (Douglass, Ard-Am, & Ki Kim, 2001) and due to its central location, the area is considered to have valuable land (Tinsley, 1997).

Figure 5 - Map of Bangkok: Showing Khlong Toey low-income settlement

Source: Askew (2002); The Philatelic Database (2014)

Khlong Toey was formed as a low-income settlement in the 1930s, as unskilled workers migrated to Bangkok to work within the port and dock zones. As the settlement developed, it became more attractive for migrant workers due to the work opportunities and low cost housing (Albright, et al., 2011, p. 10). Chantavanich, Laodumrongchai, Than and Wong-a-thitikul (2009) note that Khlong Toey provides many informal work opportunities, primarily in the port and wholesale market areas, both of which rely on the availability of unskilled labour.

Figure 6 - Map of Khlong Toey District: Retail and housing precincts



Source: Askew (2002); The Philatelic Database (2014)

It is estimated that there are more than 80,000 residents living within the 1.5 square kilometres that make up Khlong Toey district, living in a combination of legal and illegal housing (Albright, et al., 2011). As the map in Figure 6 shows, Khlong Toey is surrounded by the Bangkok Port on one side and major arterial roads on the other. Splitting the district into two distinct areas is a main road called Rama IV Road that is straddled by two modern malls (both of which have their own hypermarkets). A pedestrian overpass provides links the two malls Adjacent to one of these malls is the largest wholesale fresh and wet food market in Bangkok. The proximity of both modern style retail precincts and traditional marketplaces to where the residents of Khlong Toey live makes it an ideal location for examining the role and significance of retail spaces in the lives of low-income women.

Everyday living in Khlong Toey is characterised by juggling financial commitments with survival in Bangkok and remitting money back to their families in the provinces (Chantavanich, Laodumrongchai, Than, & Wong-a-thitikul, 2009). Households are often reliant on pawn shops and indebted to loan sharks in order to balance the household finances (Chantavanich, Laodumrongchai, Than, & Wong-a-thitikul,

2009). This suggests that many residents do not have their own financial savings and there is a very fine margin between having and not having, eating and not eating. When financial shocks and stresses occur, for example the Asian Financial Crisis in the 1990s, they have limited resources to support their everyday expenses.

3.2 Thai urban consumption spaces and practices

Urban consumption spaces have emerged in Bangkok as icons of modernity, development and progress (Isaacs, 2009). This section explores the manner in which Thai people interact with these spaces, and more specifically, the significant socio-cultural elements that influence and inform both social perceptions and appropriate behaviours. Consumption spaces in Bangkok historically were occupied by riparian vendors and hawkers; as roads emerged, so did roadside stalls, pawn shops and marketplaces (Askew, 2002). As shown in Figure 6, a large marketplace in Khlong Toey adjoins other consumption spaces. Marketplaces are now considered to be 'traditional' Thai consumption spaces and important roles for social gatherings, networking and community support, and essentially have helped to establish a culture of entrepreneurship (Askew, 2002).

Ockey (2004) expands on the notion that the roles of consumption spaces were socially important, and notes that by the twentieth century, as they expanded, the spaces reflected emerging social and class delineation. The nascent middle classes were able to distinguish themselves from those who they considered lower through the accumulation of conspicuously western or modern goods (Ockey, 2004). By the 1970s, social distinction for the Thai middle classes became entrenched within a culture of consumerism, identified through how one dressed, consumption of western fast-food, holidays and leisure time, or the possession of technological advances, such as computers (Ockey, 2004). Subsequently, the middle classes have become the focus of much of the literature that has examined Thai consumption patterns or the role of consumption spaces (Ockey, 2004; Isaacs, 2009; Cai & Shannon, 2012). This thesis seeks to expand on this understanding by focusing on the consumption experiences of urban low-income women.

3.2.1 Contemporary Thai urban consumption spaces: Significance, perceptions and etiquette

Consumption spaces in Thailand are typically defined between the 'traditional' and the 'non-traditional' or 'modern' spaces. Traditional spaces are characteristically crowded, and include marketplaces, areas with hawkers, street vendors and pawn shops (Isaacs, et al., 2010, p. 425). In traditional spaces, people are expected to negotiate the price and question the quality or origin of foods (Isaacs, 2009). Whereas, modern spaces are associated with more recent western influenced additions to the retail landscape (Askew, 2002), including supermarkets, hypermarkets, department stores, malls and convenience stores (Isaacs, et al., 2010). In modern spaces, hawkers are not free to roam around, but set up stalls and operate in an orderly fashion. The hypermarkets, provide small kiosks located in the fresh produce aisles that sell cooked Thai meals (Isaacs, 2009).

Consumers who can afford to participate in modern spaces are perceived to be those of social standing or influence (Isaacs, 2009). Within this context, the modern spaces have become icons to suggest modernity and progress, while at the same time continue to encapsulate the notion of 'Thai-ness' (Isaacs, 2009, p. 349). These are illuminated spaces, where everyone can easily push a shopping trolley, and the interior is spotlessly clean (Isaacs, et al., 2010). Additionally, modern spaces are regarded as places for fun, pleasure and leisure (Cai & Shannon, 2012).

It is possible that socio-cultural restrictions and exclusions do apply for low-income classes to specific modern consumption spaces, through either the level of acceptance by the space management, or the level of comfort or ease low-income earners have when visiting. Promoting spaces such as malls (which have a number of small shops in a single enclosed area) and hypermarkets (which are owned and dominated by a single retailer) as progressive and modern that are subject to management controls has reinforced social hierarchies and division that non-urban areas and people are backward. Bangkok residents measure their own levels of cultivation against their perception of those who they consider as *la samai*, particularly for those from *Isaan* (Brody, 2006).

Additionally, modern spaces are correlated to concepts of quality, cleanliness and food safety assertions, assuming that the standardisation of food is supposed to represent strict quality control (Isaacs, Dixon, & Banwell, 2010; Isaacs, et al., 2010). Within Thai culture, supposed levels of dirt or cleanliness are signifiers for being civilised and developed. Brody (2006) studied how modern malls in Bangkok embody the cultural elements associated with cleanliness, and notes these perceptions are a metaphor for progress and modernisation, and are visible within the mall interior (Brody, 2006). In contrast, the author noted that rural Thailand is associated with being dirty and backward, and "combating dirt has become central to many Thai visions of what it means to talk about the development of a 'modern' way of life." (Brody, 2006, p. 535). Isaacs (2009) also describes traditional markets as being considered as dirty compared to the cleanness of modern spaces.

Spaces in Bangkok embody and represent traditional social hierarchies that define cohorts of society who are perceived as having power, status or prestige (Askew, 2002). Askew expands on this by suggesting that the "urban experience is grounded in socio-cultural processes and practices" (Askew, 2002, p. 4). In addition to material items, practices and behaviours within consumption spaces also signify status. A Thai term called *khawrop sathaan thii*, means to respect the place (Askew, 2002) primarily refers to how one is expected to dress and behave within certain environments. The association of modern spaces with the middle class and traditional spaces being for the lower classes reverberates across consumption related literature from Thailand. Ockey (2004) suggests that modern spaces have become alternatives for their traditional counterparts and belong to a "middle class culture where those who aspire to this status can see the types of furniture they should own, the clothes they should wear, and the places where they should dine" (Ockey, 2004, pp. 162-163).

Unlike traditional markets, where there is less emphasis on how to behave, Vorng (2011), Mills (1998) and Askew (2002) all note that modern spaces implicitly require customers to adhere to a set of expected social norms and behaviours. Brody (2006) determines that the management and control mechanisms that are evident in modern consumption spaces have been adopted with the intention "to prevent undesirables from entering the mall and spoiling its exclusive environment" (Brody, 2006, p. 542). Furthermore, in the mall, there are tacit codes of conduct such as eating meals with

cutlery and not one's hands, which is the predominant method of eating for the Thai poor, who are often uncomfortable and unused to using cutlery. (Isaacs, 2009, p. 353). Both cultural expectations and rules of entry reinforce the social divisions. Cai and Shannon (2012) expand on this and suggest that while the social norms and attitudes reinforce social divisions, they also represent changing value systems, including importance placed on consumption practices for self-indulgence, self-actualisation and social relationships (Cai & Shannon, 2012).

3.2.2 Virtual consumption spaces

Some Khlong Toey residents are able to access the internet for purchase either on their mobile phones or computer. Jongudomkarn and Camfield (2006) note that mobile phones are now prevalent across Thailand and have become an important signifier of status. However, with inconsistent levels of access to the internet, virtual spaces is a consumption space that is no doubt still emerging. Areas in Bangkok that have low-income settlements are noted for not yet having accessibility to the internet infrastructures (Thaichon, Lobo, & Mitsis, 2014), so it is unlikely that internet purchases will be a significant part of low-income settlement consumption.

3.2.3 Consumption practices: Shopping and eating out

As previously mentioned, urban development in Thailand is framed and understood through *khwam siwilai* and *la samai*. Isaacs et al. (2010) suggests that in urban Thailand there is an "amicable collision of two social institutions" evident between traditional marketplaces and hypermarkets (Isaacs, et al., 2010, p. 414). Vorng (2011) expands on this view with the suggestion that it is

> *"the culture of materialistic status display in the malls, restaurants, and other exclusive spaces in downtown Bangkok articulates a desire for inclusion into the new physical and ideological center of Thailand's neoliberal modernity, enacted through the conformative and performative expression of its symbolic language of consumerism."* (Vorng, 2011, p. 68).

Such consumerism is not limited to the act of shopping, but also involves practices that are perceived to be associated with modern urban middle class lifestyles, including eating out and socialising (Brody, 2006, p. 534). In addition to these activities, urban consumption also includes the learning of 'suitable' modern and middle class behaviours and which material goods signify looking good, being trendy or epitomise urbanity (Isaacs, 2009, p. 353).

Vorng (2011) also suggests that it is not only through purchases that Thais use to self-identify themselves as middle class, but also how their time is spent within the space, such as the luxury of time to meaninglessly wander or browse. Vorng (2011) states that wandering around consumption spaces

> *"plays an important role in middle class identity construction and illuminates some of the important intersections between consumption, space, and status display in Bangkok"* (Vorng, 2011, p. 78).

Vorng (2011) researched the young aspiring middle class cohort and found that their self-perception of belonging to the middle class (and hence, identifying those who did not or could not belong) was based on the combination of consumption practices, consumer lifestyle, employment opportunities and level of education. Vorng (2011) continues that as enclaves for social status, they simultaneously act as "instruments of social division" (Vorng, 2011, p. 68), as one's wealth denotes one's status, and is assumed through the acquisition of material goods such as branded clothes, shoes and computers (Jongudomkarn & Camfield, 2006). Interestingly, more recently items such as cosmetics and dairy products have shifted from being a signifier of middle class status to being adopted by those below this stratum (Ockey, 2004). This indicates that perceptions of social distinction are being constantly shaped by both the product and the consumer.

There are contrasting views as to the social acceptance of shopping in traditional spaces. On one hand, it is suggested that for those who do shop in marketplaces are deemed as belonging to a cohort who cannot afford otherwise, and go to markets for no more than their small daily purchases (Isaacs, Dixon, & Banwell, 2010).

However, Isaacs et al. (2010) note that most of the middle class cohort in Chiang Mai city do not restrict themselves to shopping in only one space, as they still prefer to purchase their produce from local markets as their quality judgements are rooted in the levels of trust that they have within their own social networks and not in the modern concepts of quality control (Isaacs, 2009). This suggests that although there is an elevated level of social status attached to shopping at modern consumption spaces, the middle classes still validate or justify practices at traditional styled markets too. These sentiments are limited as they are framed from a middle class perspective and do not explain the practices of low-income groups.

Eating out is one consumption practice that is enjoyed by both low-income and middle-income groups. Bhowmik (2005) states that "the most observable fact about Bangkok is its street vendors", wherever one walks in Bangkok, there are people eating out at street vendors who are preparing and selling affordable ethnic and local meals (Bhowmik, 2005). Lefferts (2005) examined the politics of food in *Isaan* and found that going out to consume traditional foods for those from *Isaan* living in Bangkok is a way to reconfirm their ethnicity which is associated "with readily identifiable symbolic identity," (Isaacs, et al., 2010, p. 427). Migrants from *Isaan* often prefer to buy meals as they do not have the time or the facilities to prepare food themselves (Bhowmik, 2005), and they seek a more comfortable and familiar experience (Isaacs, et al., 2010, p. 424). In contrast, middle class consumers devote their afternoons and evenings in mall food-courts to eat, socialise or do other leisure activities (Isaacs, et al., 2010). Likewise, Brody (2006) proposes that the same food-court areas have also become havens for low-income families, though not to eat, but to escape extreme weather (Brody, 2006). While occupying the same space, there is nothing written that explains the differences in their consumption practices. This suggests that existing literature on the exclusive and divisive nature of consumption spaces does not include spaces that are used by more than one cohort.

Consumption spaces in Bangkok comprise of traditional marketplaces and emerging modern spaces. Modern spaces encapsulate and epitomise the Thai ideals of progress, development and modernity. Furthermore, modern spaces are understood to reinforce existing social divisions. However, it is evident that middle classes continue to shop at traditional markets, and low-income groups also go to modern

spaces, though they do not always do the same activities as middle class consumers. The cross-class interactions in consumption spaces will be discussed in more detail as they provide an indication of social exclusion or inclusion.

3.3 Women in Thailand

Consumption practices in Thailand are traditionally considered a gendered activity. Women are expected to manage both the finances and the purchasing. In order to provide sufficient background information on the lives of women in Thailand, this section first addresses the traditional roles of Thai women, particularly for women who originate from low-income rural areas. This section then considers the familial and financial obligations and expectations for low-income women after migrating to Bangkok. In particular, the consternation that these women often have when they try to balance their family's expectation to fulfil the traditional role of the dutiful daughter, whilst also trying to maintain their own urban aspirations and lives.

3.3.1 Traditional roles

Thai women are traditionally expected to maintain strong ties with their natal home remain local and look after their parents. Curran and Saguy (2001) note that even after marriage, the cultural matrilocal and matrilineal influences assign women to a family based role of domestication which reinforce the expectation that Thai women will carry out their familial duties and obligations (Curran & Saguy, 2001). Women's roles are governed by social norms, including which behaviours are acceptable (Jongudomkarn & Camfield, 2006). Esara (2004) expands on this noting that within Thai cultural constructs, there is an inherent obligation that children, particularly daughters, show their gratitude to their parents through financial or material provisioning (Esara, 2004). Financial provisioning is within Thai culture "an important gauge of successful womanhood and personhood" (Brody, 2006, p. 550). Often the financial assistance is pooled into the household finances and helps to pay for male education or household production (De Jong, Richter, & Isarabhakdi, 1996). De Jong, Richter and Isarabhakdi (1996) explain that the expectation of financial

provisioning is a social and cultural norm, which allows women to demonstrate their virtuous nature through combining financial provisioning with obedience, deference and ongoing gratitude.

The gendered nature of financial provisioning encourages women to work away from the home. In the 1960s, Thailand led the world in the number of women employed in the labour market (Thorbek, 1988). Rural Thai women are not limited to working outside of the home, but are also expected to contribute to household production (Brody, 2006), including actively working alongside their male relatives in family rice paddies and other subsistence farming (Curran, Garip, Chung, & Tangchonlatip, 2005). The reliance on women from low-income households working away from the home is paramount to survival. Labour participation rates for Thai women remains constantly high at 64 per cent (World Bank, 2014), suggesting that women enjoy a level of gender equity and equality (Esara, 2004).

Although women are expected to contribute to the household finances, they also have an important role as the controllers of the family finance (Brody, 2006). Often the women become the main decision maker for allocating the household budget and making the purchases on behalf of the family (Curran, Garip, Chung, & Tangchonlatip, 2005). Isaacs, Dixon and Banwell (2010) note that in many Thai households, the women will either prepare the meals or purchase each day for their family affordable prepared meals from street vendors, resulting in them being referred to as 'plastic bag housewives' due to the meals being sold in plastic bags. In addition to provisioning and budgeting, Thai women often use the services of local pawn shops to assist with family the cash flow (Chantavanich, Laodumrongchai, Than, & Wong-a-thitikul, 2009). As household disposable income decreases, the consumption practices of women will typically adjust to reduce the number of times a family eats meals and a woman will forego or limit unnecessary purchases of clothes, electronic goods, cosmetics, accessories (Isaacs, Dixon, & Banwell, 2010).

3.3.2 Low-income urban migrant women: Obligations and expectations

For low-income rural women, an option for improving the family's financial situation is to migrate to Bangkok, often leaving their children behind. De Jong (2000) notes that Thai women with high economic responsibilities from poor provinces are more likely to migrate to Bangkok (De Jong, 2000). Osaki (2003) suggests that women are more likely to migrate for the sole purpose of improving their family finances, and not for any self-aspiring reason (Osaki, 2003). Curran and Saguy (2001) disagree and suggest that in addition to having a means to remit money, the women also wish to participate in a modern urban environment where one can look good (Curran & Saguy, 2001). Likewise, as villages have had more female residents migrate to Bangkok, it seems that families are becoming less restrictive towards their own female members in leaving (Garip & Curran, 2010). Forty years ago, there were very few women leaving for Bangkok, and then their absence was seasonal (Sternstein, 1974). However, migration trends to Bangkok are now less gendered. In 2011, 52 per cent of rural to urban migration was dominated by women, with the main destination for women being Bangkok (Huguet & Chamratrithirong, 2011, p. 109). Curran and Saguy (2001) suggest that as the occurrence of females migrating to the cities has become less uncommon, families are less concerned about their welfare and the impact on their own life, especially as men have taken up some of the women's household roles.

As mentioned, women who migrate to Bangkok typically do so to improve their financial well-being, and so Bangkok becomes their destination to find work. Culturally, women are expected to migrate to Bangkok do so within an existing family or village migrant network (Curran & Saguy, 2001) . Often parents will only consent to the migration when such a network is in place (Curran, Garip, Chung, & Tangchonlatip, 2005). Migrant women often receive much lower wages than the migrant men (Osaki, 2003); however Bangkok offers a significantly higher wage than they could otherwise earn (Esara, 2004). Furthermore, the nature of their work is typically unskilled and informal, there is little job security (and for many, they are not covered under the Thai Labour Law), work long hours and receive less than the minimum wage (De Jong, 2000). Once the women start earning money in Bangkok, there is considerable expectation that they will remit the money back to their family

members in the provinces. While their parents judge the level of gratitude and virtue that the women have based on their remittances (Jongudomkarn & Camfield, 2006, p. 519), the women also traditionally consider remittances as their duty and familial responsibility (Osaki, 2003). Women are customarily expected to remit more back to their own families than men (Curran & Saguy, 2001), and often for those of Laos ethnicity their remittances are almost double of their male counterparts (Barney, 2012). Curran et al. (2005) note that the women are also more reliable and consistent in their remittances than men (Curran, Garip, Chung, & Tangchonlatip, 2005). Furthermore, Women are more likely to meet familial expectations to maintain contact (Curran, Garip, Chung, & Tangchonlatip, 2005), and the women with children left behind in the provinces remit significantly higher amounts (Osaki, 2003).

As more women become urban migrants and are exposed to a different lifestyle in Bangkok, the relationship that the women have with their parents traditional expectations in the provinces is constantly being reshaped (Knodel & Saengtienchai, 2007). Curran and Saguy (2001) suggest that the attraction of urban life is resulting in less monies being remitted back to their families. Furthermore, the women now prefer to personally take their remittances back to the provinces, and not send it (Knodel & Saengtienchai, 2007). The remittances are often spent on one-off expenses, such as repairs to the family house; or items of conspicuous consumption, such as motorcycles or mobile phones, that help to reconstruct the social status of the family in the village, enable connectivity and status (Knodel & Saengtienchai, 2007). Jongudomkarn and Camfield (2006) note that in *Isaan*, material goods such as mobile telephones and vehicles are key indicators of status and well-being, and are often used to measure one another's wealth and happiness (Jongudomkarn & Camfield, 2006).

As poor migrant women engage in new social networks, they are also empowered by their new level of decision making, sense of financial security and confidence in their own assertions. However, their opportunities for work and education remain limited (Jongudomkarn & Camfield, 2006). Women's gender identity is being reformed and affirmed, influenced by new freedoms, exposure to cheap and new fashions and material goods and the capacity to

> *"translate their experiences and earnings into forms of social capital that, though derived from a 'modern', urban context, are nevertheless meaningful in a rural one*" (Brody, 2006, p. 538).

The sense of autonomy that low-income migrant women in Bangkok are said to gain is often challenged when they return to their province to resettle (Esara, 2004). Mills (1998) notes that prior to leaving for Bangkok, women's roles were well defined and understood. While in Bangkok, they gain a new level of influence in the household decision making processes. The family's expectations of females are to remain dutiful and fulfilling their parent's wishes, Mills (1998) suggests that for women, their own expectations drastically change. Many women have been empowered through their physical separation from traditional expectations and found that in Bangkok they can gain autonomy and control of both their wages and lifestyle (Mills, 1998). Moreover, they are simultaneously contesting and maintaining an evolving set of values and norms. This is resulting in Thai cultural understandings of gender roles and identities being constantly challenged and reformed. Brody (2006) argues that in order to meet their family expectations for familial obligations and their own expectations of urban life, the women do not actually get to fulfil either and are continually juggling the two.

3.3.3 Consumption and identity construction

Migrant women in Bangkok are seeking to adopt new styles by indulging in fashions, cosmetics or leisure activities in order to both fit in with their perception of being modern and urbanised, as well as wanting their family and peers to perceive them as successful modern women (Curran & Saguy, 2001, p. 64). At the same time, the women continue to show their affiliation with their ethnic background (Brody, 2006) and maintain traditional ideals. Low-income women are

> *"confronted with new, urban concepts of gender identity, which stress autonomy, sexuality, and consumerism"* (Curran & Saguy, 2001, p. 64).

Subsequently, the women become more aware of cultural judgements on their physical presence, well-being and social status within both their own social network and within Bangkok in general. In addition to the consumption practices in order to meet their perception of fitting in to Bangkok, such as what they wear, an important practice of changing one's identity from that of rural peasant to urban dweller is the use of skin whitening creams. It is estimated that more than 58 per cent of Thai women use these creams, which for a long time were associated with only middle class women (Bird, Caldwell, & DeFanti, 2010). However, this practice has also been adopted by low-income women, and by applying the cream, it has become a means for women to see themselves and project themselves as urban. The women's urban identity defines their aspirations, femininity, modernity (Aizura, 2009), success (Bird, Caldwell, & DeFanti, 2010), well-being and happiness (Karnani, 2007).

3.4 Summary

This chapter explained that the Thai economy has emerged within development discourse that is steeped within cultural concepts of civilisation, progress and modernity. These cultural aspects have been influential in confirming the divide between rural and urban Thailand. When poor rural citizens migrate to Bangkok, through necessity they live in existing low-income settlements, and bring with them their own ethnic identity, as well as their own set of expectations and perceptions of what it means to live in urban Thailand. Combined with the perceptions of urban Thais, spaces of consumption have taken on socio-cultural significance by being places of both exclusion and identity reconstruction. One theme explored in this chapter related to the roles that low-income Thai urban women have in regards to their families and within their consumption practices. Within these roles, the women are expected to not only behave in certain ways, but also become financial provisioners. Women who migrate to Bangkok, continually balance between providing for their families back in the provinces, providing for their household in Bangkok and living their ideal of an urban life. Their urban aspirations include not only what they purchase, where they consume, but also what consumption practices mean in their everyday lives.

4 Methodology

The preceding chapters have examined the existing literature regarding the role and significance that consumption practices and spaces have in a person's everyday life. This chapter is specific to the fieldwork undertaken and outlines the methodological approach, being the plan or strategy for the research methods employed (Stordy, 2012, p. 98). As this research is focused on Thailand, a developing country, the methodological framework needs to be applied in a way that is both relevant and mindful of cultural imbalances or hierarchies and researcher foreignness. Following this, the importance of practicing reflexivity, mitigating researcher subjectivity and acknowledging positionality are explored. Interpretation of research can be wrought with preconceptions and biases, and mitigating the potential issues regarding power imbalances is important (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009).

This chapter then examines the qualitative methods of open-ended semi-structured interviews and researcher observations that were used. In order to prepare for this study, ethical considerations were examined. Following this, is an examination of the selection of the fieldwork preparation, including site selection, selecting participants, finding research assistants, managing gatekeepers and utilising appropriate data analysis approaches. This chapter concludes with a reflection from the fieldwork of the limitations that were encountered.

4.1 Qualitative methodology

The examination of consumption practices and spaces in the everyday lives of low-income women within the context of a developing country lends itself to a qualitative methodology for two key reasons. Firstly, in order to explore the everyday consumption practices and spaces from the perspective of low-income women, the data is best collected within each woman's "natural settings" (Stewart-Withers, Banks, McGregor, & Meo-Sewabu, 2014, p. 59). Furthermore, research in developing countries "is often undertaken in a geography and culture that is foreign to the researcher, often in a second language" (Murray & Overton, 2014, p. 20).

Qualitative research enables descriptive data to be collected, and according to Stewart-Withers et al. (2014, p. 59), is conducive to elucidating responses that can be applied in order to both generate and expand theoretical understanding.

Furthermore, qualitative approaches enable data to be rich and inductive, and accepts that there are multiple versions of experiences or truths (O'Leary, 2010, p.105; Stordy, 2012, p.99). Qualitative methodology allows topics to be explored through "a variety of lens which allows for multiple facets" to be identified (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 544). Qualitative methods also delves into "social complexities" (O'Leary, 2010, p. 113), and informs based on observations or interviews by appreciating subjectivities (O'Leary, 2010, p.113), while providing a "means for making apparent the voices and concerns of the poor or marginalised" (Stewart-Withers, et al., 2014, p.78). Qualitative approaches are pertinent with this research as each women's experiences, ideals and interpretation of events can be explored (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). All of these are factors likely to be associated with this research.

The aim of this research is to examine the role and significance of urban retail spaces and practices in the context of the everyday lives of Thai low-income women. This aim includes a need to understand not only which spaces the women go to, but their motivations in doings so. This research is essentially an investigation into these women's lives to gain an understanding of how urban retail spaces influence not only their physical actions across the day, but also their perspectives, emotions and other interactions.

4.1.1 Reflecting on issues of research bias

Dwyer and Buckle (2009) notes that when research is interpreted with preconceptions, there is a risk of it becoming subjective and the researcher influencing the final outcome. It is really important for researchers to be reflective, as studies by Dwyer and Buckle (2009) and O'Leary, (2010) have identified that researchers come in as outsiders. Researcher subjectivity refers to the way in which a researcher can incorporate their own preconceptions, perspective and expectations into their research (O'Leary, 2010). O'Leary (2010) suggests that by not recognising

and actively managing one's own subjectivity, a researcher can potentially introduce discriminatory or inconsiderate views towards social standing, gender, ethnicity or race. To reduce the potential for researcher subjectivity, interview participants were encouraged to expand on their own responses in order to provide context to their own experiences and perspectives. Interpretive qualitative research is based on the socially constructed elements that influence "what meanings people give to reality" (Bachman & Schutt, 2013, p. 74). Therefore, the interpretive nature of the interviews for this research provides a snapshot to the context that consumption has in each participant's life. Stordy (2012) recommends that "reflexivity should be practiced by the researcher during all stages of the research process" (Stordy, 2012, p. 94). For this study, reflexivity was also sought by not focusing on interviews that had already been completed, but on each interview as it occurred, and allowing each woman to tell their own experiences in their own way. Reflexive practices enabled strategies that questioned existing assumptions acknowledged knowledge limitations (Bolton, 2010).

O'Leary (2010, p.28) suggests that all researchers hold inherent and sometimes unrecognisable biases when they start their research and that it is not only necessary to expose and divulge those biases, but also to mitigate the impact that such biases can have on the research. To mitigate these biases, it was important to be aware of situations of bias. Murray and Overton (2014) suggest that as "development researchers from the first world will often enter local society further up the hierarchy than their respective position at home" (Murray & Overton, 2014, p. 21), minimising hierarchical relations need to be taken into consideration during both the planning stage and fieldwork. For this research, both the fieldwork and analysis had the potential for bias. Therefore, it was important to avoid making comparisons between developed and developing countries, dress plainly in similar attire to those being interviewed and to listen to the women's responses.

4.1.2 Positionality

My positionality is that as a western, white middle class female, I love shopping and since 1998 I have often holidayed in Thailand and indulged myself. As I work in a

bank, my comfort zone is usually quantitative, but communication and social aspects are also of interest to me. The combination of both my professional and personal interests has led me to want to know more about consumption in developing countries, particularly in the changing urban landscape in Bangkok. DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006) note that there is an imperative to incorporate the concept of mutual respect for interviewees, by acknowledging their culture and traditions, and to build up both level of trust and camaraderie. A challenge that I had was that I wanted to show respect and trust to the women I interviewed, and also ensure that my own experiences and personality did not duly influence either the interviews or the analysis. Being twenty weeks pregnant provided a great way to initiate communication with the women as Thai women tend to view pregnancy as a primal basic function of being a woman, which was a great leveller between me, a middle class white Anglo-female and them.

4.2 Methods

Qualitative methods have their own challenges. Primary challenges include ensuring that the data is reliable and can be disseminated in a robust and transparent manner, ensuring that the authenticity of the data is not lost in the analytical process (Stordy, 2012). Furthermore, as qualitative methods often include descriptive or explanatory data, this can be complicated by the language and cultural differences. The correlation of multiple data sources means that the data can be contextualised, validated and the authenticity of the research is preserved (Stordy, 2012, p. 108). For this research, involving more than one data source was done by conducting both researcher observations and open-ended semi-structured interviews. This combination provided me with a greater understanding and context in regards to both consumption practices and spaces.

4.2.1 Observations

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (2014) suggest that observations complement and provide contextualisation to semi-structured interviews. Observations are a

means of gaining "valuable insights about specific cultures and practices" (Colby, 2010, p. 2). To gain insight about consumption practices, observations for this research were undertaken passively across a number of different consumption spaces. As the observations were "on the scene" (Colby, 2010, p. 7), there was no interaction with the people under observation, enabling me to observe as an outsider. Spaces under observation included the hypermarkets, supermarkets, the fresh food market, convenience stores, street vendors, gold shops and pawn shops. During the observations, notes were taken according to how people interacted with each space, and the consumption practices that were undertaken (for example, browsing, buying, pointing and socialising). Each space was frequented at different times of the day to minimise introducing time bias. The risks of observations include misinterpretation or misunderstanding the practices and interactions that I observed (Colby, 2010, p. 8). However, as the observations were being used to provide context to the interview responses, I felt that observations added depth to both my knowledge and understanding of consumption practices, spaces and socio-cultural interactions. Field notes taken during observations were used in the research to substantiate consumption practices within spaces, particularly for those that were unfamiliar to my own experiences.

4.2.2 Open-ended semi-structured interviews

Open-ended semi-structured interviews were undertaken with eleven women living in Khlong Toey. Semi-structured interviews were chosen due to the appropriateness to the research topic and objectives (how low-income women express or discuss in their own words the role and significance of consumption practices and spaces in their everyday lives) and environment (not being guaranteed that a person could be interviewed more than once) (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2014).

Interview preparations included planning a list of interview topics to explore so that interview questions were structured in an open-ended way that encouraged open answers, and not yes or no answers. The interview topics that were prepared are provided in an interview template (in Appendix 1). This template provided guidance

and direction during the interview process by indicating an outline of the topics which were of interest.

4.3 Ethics

According to the Massey University risk assessment process and guidelines, this research topic was considered as low-risk. During the fieldwork I was mindful of the *Massey University Human Ethics Committee Code of Ethical Conduct for Research, Teaching and Evaluations involving Human Participants*. Given the interview demographic, participants would not necessarily be literate. Therefore both the information sheet and consent form were both given and read out by the research assistant in either Thai or a Laos dialect (pertinent to *Isaan*) to each participant. It was explained to each participant (both prior and during each interview) that consent to participate could be revoked at any point with no further explanation required. The methods and ethical guidelines hold important roles to ensure that the integrity of the research was maintained.

An unforeseeable and unavoidable breach of ethics occurred when the unofficial management of Khlong Toey listened in to part of an interview in order to ascertain if my line of questioning was controversial or provocative. The management were initially curious and concerned that a foreigner was interviewing local residents. Unbeknown to myself, my research assistant or the participating woman, a representative of the unofficial Khlong Toey management had listened in for part of an interview. Due to the research topic not being controversial, I was advised that they were happy for my research to continue providing I did not include questions about planned new development zoning or corruption, or interview any of the development protestors. Once the management were aware of the intent of my interviews, they did not concern themselves with me again. The unfortunate situation of the Khlong Toey management is described in more detail in the Gatekeeper section of this chapter.

4.4 Fieldwork

This section refers to the processes associated with the fieldwork that was undertaken. This includes the selection of an appropriate fieldwork site, the identification of a target participant demographic, and how to find participants meeting the selection criteria. Finally, this section looks at the research assistants that were required to complete the fieldwork, and the practices involved for transcribing and analysing the data.

4.4.1 Fieldwork site

As explained in Chapter 3, Khlong Toey is located in Central Bangkok. Khlong Toey was chosen for the fieldwork, as it is a low-income settlement that has a variety of urban consumption spaces within the precinct. Khlong Toey is the largest low-income settlement, and has primarily rural migrants living and working there.
Prior to arriving in Bangkok to conduct the fieldwork, I was already familiar with Bangkok, and to a lesser degree, with the Khlong Toey low-income settlement. Within Khlong Toey, interviews and observations were limited to the vicinity around the marketplace, the hypermarkets and residential areas within approximately one kilometre of the marketplace. The reason for this was according to the Khlong Toey Police, areas past one kilometre, particularly towards the port area were unsafe as they were experiencing a spate of criminal activity and violent protests (in response to planned redevelopment of the port area). To ensure the safety of the participants, my research assistant and myself, all interviews were conducted only during daylight hours.

The fieldwork was conducted in the months of July and early August, 2012. This timing suited me both professionally and personally and meant that the fieldwork would coincide with the monsoonal months in Bangkok. The monsoon season provided the opportunity to observe how seasonality or wet weather affected the use of urban retail spaces and incorporate these observations as context to this research.

4.4.2 Participants

For the purposes of this research only adult women were approached and invited to participate in the interviews. As noted in Chapter 2, women are more likely to shop on behalf of their families (Fisher & Combs, 2007). For this reason, the target group of women who I selected was narrowed to women residing in the Khlong Toey sub-district, aged between 25-45 years old. The demographics of the women are listed below in Table 3. As noted in Chapter 3, most rural-urban migrants to Bangkok originate from the poor provinces known as *Isaan* and are of Laos ethnicity, and nine of the eleven interview participants originated from *Isaan*. The remaining two women originated from the provinces in Central Thailand and define their ethnicity as Thai.

Furthermore, the women also all worked within the Khlong Toey precinct in a variety of jobs, including vendors, hawkers, stall holders, or porters. It took each woman between 20 and 30 minutes to walk from their abode in Khlong Toey to their work. As noted in Table 3, seven of the women had their children living with their families in *Isaan*, three women had their children living with them in Khlong Toey, and one women had children in both Khlong Toey and *Isaan.* Each interview was conducted in an area as chosen by each woman, including outdoor coffee stands, on plastic stools on the pavement, close to their abode or place of work, or on vacant stools in the outdoor food market.

In addition to the women who I interviewed, I was also introduced to a number of their female extended family members, friends and neighbours. While their family members' comments are not included in this research, their comments were important in clarifying or contextualising some of the discussions. Although the demographic that I had selected for interview were not necessarily literate, each and every one of them signed or initialled the consent form before the start of the interview.

Table 3 – Interview participant details

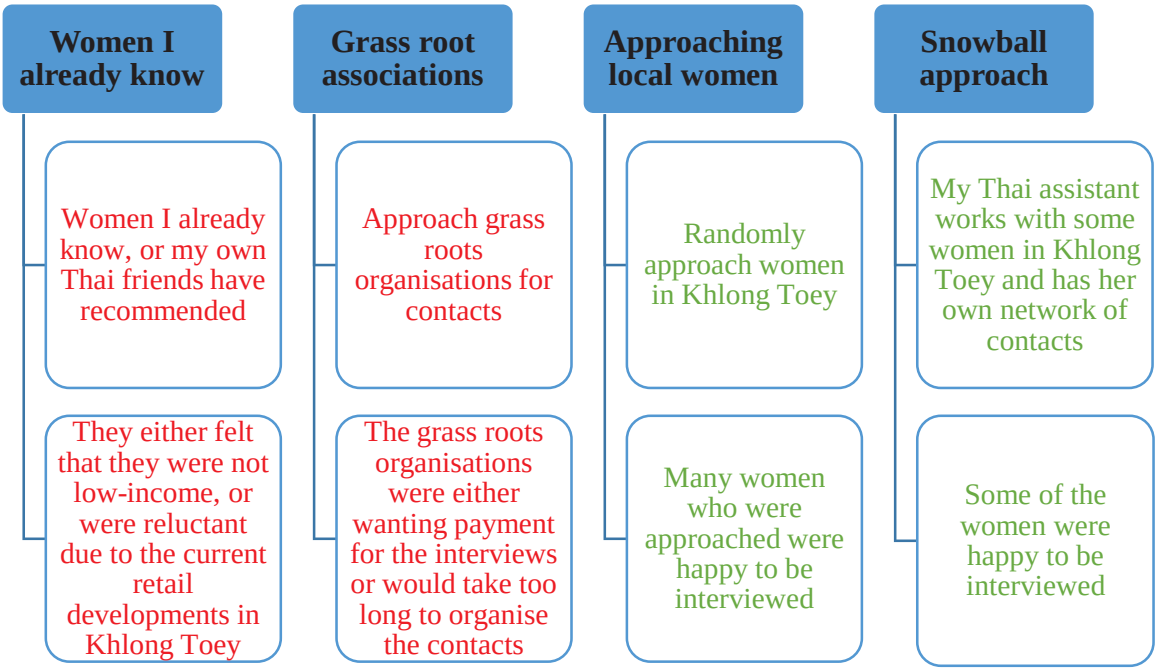
Code name	Age	No. of people in household	Number of children in Khlong Toey	Number of children outside of Khlong Toey
Woman A	41	1	0	1
Woman B	38	5	2	0
Woman C	25	4	0	2
Woman D	35	3	2	0
Woman E	26	2	0	3
Woman F	25	2	0	2
Woman G	26	3	0	2
Woman H	32	10	7	0
Woman I	28	2	0	3
Woman J	42	10	2	5
Woman K	26	3	0	1

Source: Author (2012)

The process of interviewing took between 60-90 minutes for each interview. I felt that the women did not find it difficult answering the questions that were posed to them. The women seemed keen to explain and expand on their explanations of both their consumption practices, and their experiences within consumption spaces.

Initially, I planned to use four different approaches to recruit women to interview. My attempts to recruit participants through grass root associations were not successful, so only two of the approaches were subsequently both appropriate and feasible. As noted below in Figure 7, the Snowball approach (utilising the agency network of my Thai research assistant) and randomly approaching women in Khlong Toey were the two approaches where I was able to source interview participants from.

Figure 7 – Approaches for selecting interview participants



Source: Author (2012)

Three of the women as listed in Table 3 were selected through the snowball approach, and all other women were randomly selected.

4.4.3 Research assistants

I had two research assistants during the fieldwork. Both assistants were required to sign a confidentiality agreement (as provided in the Appendix 1).

Firstly, Kamanmaan[1], a friend who has lived in or around Khlong Toey since migrating to Bangkok, was my primary research assistant. Kamanmaan was skilled and experienced at interpreting and conversant in a number of the Laos, Thai and Khmer dialects, and was able to adjust her dialect depending on where the participant originated from. During the interviews, Kamanmaan explained to the potential participants the research subject matter (reading from the information sheet as provided in Appendix 2). For the participants who provided oral consent, the

[1] Kamanmaan provided consent for her to be referred to by her first name.

research assistant then read through with each woman the consent form (as provided in Appendix 3) and explained their rights to cease involvement. She also assisted me in finding interview participants and providing context to some of the replies.

My second research assistant, also a Thai friend, called Lek[2], migrated to Bangkok from *Isaan* 20 years ago. Lek confirmed the translation of phrases, particularly in relation to the verbal nuance, and gave context to references made in interviews to the Thai culture.

4.4.4 Gatekeepers

As mentioned in the Ethics section of this chapter, early on in the fieldwork I was approached by the unofficial management of the Khlong Toey precinct. Although not formally employed, these managers informally oversee the general area and have unofficial authority that is respected and adhered to by the residents and business owners in Khlong Toey. I was concerned for the woman with whom her interview had been interfered with, and confirmed that she was fine to continue. Furthermore, I explained to every woman interviewed thereafter that I had been approached by the management. However, the Khlong Toey management became an informal gatekeeper as upon receiving their support, I found that consistent with Seidman (2013) the management were "widely respected and looked to for guidance" (Seidman, 2013, p. 49) and thereafter, the women who I approached were less reluctant to be interviewed. The women openly discussed that the management were part of their daily experience living in Khlong Toey, and that they were comfortable with the management approaching me.

[2] Lek is the nickname of my second research assistant, and was the preferred name for any references in this thesis.

4.5 Data analysis

The data analysis consists of two processes. The first process is the transcribing of interview data. The second process is the thematic analysis of the data from both interviews and observations.

4.5.1 Transcripts

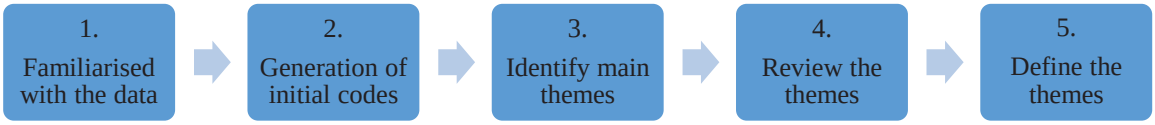
The research process included the recording of interviews and the noting of researcher observations. The transcripts from the interviews and observations were electronically transcribed or written up at the earliest convenience. Although, on occasion Bangkok experienced electrical black-outs, and so sometimes there was a delay of a couple of days before the transcribing process could be completed.

After all the interviews were completed, to ensure research confidentiality, each interview participant was allocated a code. This meant that any subsequent discussions, translations or clarifications maintained the research confidentiality of my participants. As the interview transcripts are both private and important to the research, ensuring that they were safely stored at all times was paramount. Once I returned to Australia, all electronic and physical documents, including recorded transcripts, electronic copies of the research notes and observations were securely stored, and all electronic files had password protection applied and were backed up.

4.5.2 Thematic analysis

Data analysis refers to the activities that after the collection of data, enables the data to be converted "into information and knowledge", and relationships explored (Balu, 2005, p. 1). For qualitative methodological approaches, data analysis utilises the data that is produced to describe and "uncover and/or understand the big picture" (University of Surrey, 2014, p. 1). The role of the researcher during the data analysis process is to collect and code data so that themes can be discerned "in a consistent and reliable way" (Atlas.ti, 2014, p. 1).

Figure 8 - The process of thematic analysis



Source: Braun and Clarke (2006)

The analysis of the interview transcripts included classification according to the themes or patterns that emerged. These themes were used as a basis for the analysis. As per Braun and Clarke's (2006) approach to thematic analysis, the process (as noted in Figure 8 included the identification of main themes based on the responses given, which were then clustered or classified based on similarities or patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 82).

4.6 Reflections on limitations

Applying a qualitative approach lent itself to utilising open-ended semi-structured interviews and observations. The former enabled the interviews to be informal and flexible. The observations complemented the interviews as they provided context and visual confirmation to the interview responses. A drawback was the time consuming nature of open-ended semi-structured interviews, resulting in only a small number of low-income urban women could be interviewed. However, despite conducting only eleven interviews, the interview responses are detailed and informative.

Conducting this fieldwork was a humbling experience, as despite the women all being low-income, they were happy to share their personal experiences with me and discuss how they felt about themselves within the context of consumption. The interview responses were comprehensive and provide a representation of consumption in the everyday lives of the women who were interviewed at this point in time.

4.7 Summary

This chapter discussed the methodology that was selected for this research, including the qualitative methods or tools that were applied: open-ended semi-structured interviews with 11 low-income women in Khlong Toey and researcher observations.

The following chapter will discuss the results from the qualitative methods and show how the women responded in regards to their interaction with consumption in their everyday lives. Within the responses, there are a number of themes or patterns that have clearly emerged, providing glimpse into the socio-cultural and self-identifying nature that consumption has, and how consumption is incorporated into their everyday lives.

5 The significance of consumption spaces

5.1 Introduction

This chapter addresses Research Objective 1 by presenting the findings of the fieldwork conducted, with the aim of understanding what it was about consumption spaces that was significant in the everyday lives of low-income women. The research was directed by qualitative methodological framework as described in Chapter 4. Section 5.2 will provide the analysis of the interview data and Section 5.3 will then discuss the implications of the data in context to the literature reviews in Chapters 2 and 3.

5.2 Urban consumption Spaces

In exploring the significance of consumption spaces in their everyday lives, participants were asked about not only where did they go to consume, but what these spaces represented to them, including how and why they decided upon different spaces. Consumption spaces factor in their everyday lives as through circumstance. The women interviewed have reason to go to at least one consumption space on a daily basis. Spaces include fresh food markets, hypermarkets, malls, clothing markets and pawn shops.

5.2.1 Spaces for everyday provisioning: Markets

The purchase and provisioning of household meals and household essentials was for everyone, a daily occurrence. For fresh food and meals, women go each day to the local Khlong Toey fresh food market. Whereas, for other items such as dry foods, personal goods and household cleaners, most of the women preferred to shop at one of the nearby hypermarkets. For example, 'Woman B' bought daily on behalf of her household of five and noted that not only did she shop across the two separate spaces, she had also allocated a separate budget for each space as well.

"I have two budgets, one for the fresh food and one for the other items in the house, including dried foods."

The market was described as a place of convenience, as across the market precinct are many clusters of food stalls and vendors offering a variety of fresh foods and ready to eat affordable ethnic dishes. The women described their preference to purchase fresh food each day from the market as they wanted to ensure that their families were eating quality food and that they did not possess their own refrigerators. Freshness was a description used often and infers food that they can either see in its most basic form (for example, uncooked vegetables or meat) or foods that had been cooked in a way that they both understand and seems transparent (many food vendors allow customers to watch closely as they prepare pots of food). In addition to the ready to eat meals, a few of the women noted that on occasion they purchased raw ingredients to take home so they can prepare their own meals. However, preparing one's own meal was considered an indulgence that women were regrettably not able to do regularly due to the time it takes to both source the various ingredients as well as the actual time to prepare the food.

The Khlong Toey market was described as convenient as it was within walking distance to their abode and operates 24 hours a day. Some of the women who worked similar shifts to their spouses in and around the market area, also used the market as a place to spend time together, and sourced their household meals and food before and after their shifts. For these women, their spouses were also involved in the daily decision making for what they would eat, although only one of these couples looked look around first before they decided which stall to purchase from.

The marketplace was viewed as a place suitable for browsing, purchasing and eating. For those who preferred to look around first before buying, it was a place for finding the right price and quality combinations. 'Woman D' bought meals for her son and nephew to share with her, and was careful to ensure that the single meal that she could afford to buy was also sufficient to feed them all.

"I need to be careful with my money, so I buy one dish that we all share. There are a lot of cheap options around at the market, so I look around and when I see something I like, I will buy it and take it home for us to share."

For those who did not look around first, but returned each day to the same vendors, the marketplace was referred to either as a place where relationships with the vendor were fostered and quality was ensured, or due to time constraints, a necessity to return to a vendor who has in the past provided what was considered to be both quality food and affordable prices. The market represented a place of transparency – what you see was what you get. This sentiment was endorsed by women who rely on the freshness, quality and affordability of their meals. The alternatives to buying fresh food and meals away from the market were the nearby hypermarkets and the food courts in the attached malls. However, 'Woman D', the head of her household, preferred to buy from the market as she felt that she could trust what she bought. This trust was based on knowing where the food came from, where it was made and how it should taste.

"I trust that the food at the market here is very fresh because it is also a wholesale market and so I know it will be good quality."

This view was also highlighted by 'Woman H' and 'Woman K'. 'Woman H' lived at her place of work, but her children lived in a nearby rented room. Despite not living with her children, 'Woman H' still shopped daily for her children and provided all of their meals. 'Woman H' also preferred to buy her family's meals from the market as she did trust the food from the hypermarket as she thought that it was not fresh.

"I don't buy the fresh food from Tesco Lotus as it is not fresh."

'Woman K', married with one son, explained that because she did not understand the provenance or processing of food that was sold in the hypermarket, she was hesitant to buy her family's food there. 'Woman K' did not trust what she could not understand, and so the simplicity of the market meant that she felt she trusted both the space, the vendor and the products.

"The supermarket and hypermarkets have strict quarantine measures in place and they use processes to extend the lifespan of food. But I don't understand these processes."

The market was commonly viewed as being synonymous with fresh food and cooked meals. However, many women preferred to purchase other everyday essentials that included household cleaners, personal goods and dried foods or condiments, from the closest Tesco Lotus[3] hypermarket, which was located in a nearby mall. The hypermarkets were also viewed as spaces that were convenient as they opened until late at night, and also offered bulk purchasing for lower cheaper unit prices, both of which appealed. 'Woman B' noted that the hypermarket provided not only financial incentives bulk-buy, but also provided what she considered to be a clean, cool, safe and pleasant environment for her to spend time with her children.

"For non-food items I only shop at Lotus. It is not as expensive as the market for these things and my children love going to Lotus. I want to save money, so we buy the larger sizes or in bulk and get it cheaper. I care about quality and price. I like my children to come shopping there as it is clean and air conditioned. On hot days we can escape the heat and go to Lotus. Even if an item is 5 or 10 baht more, I am happy to buy it at Lotus as it is nice and we can take our time there and walk around in the air conditioning."

Likewise, 'Woman D' also liked to take her nephew and son to the hypermarket many times in the week. Although the hypermarket was and incorporated into the family routine, 'Woman D' placed time limitations on each visit, which ensured that she did not spend money that she did not plan on spending.

"I can buy in bulk for cheaper and my nephew loves going there. He loves the air conditioning. I prefer to not spend much time there, I get what I need and leave. I am tired after work and I don't have much money. If I spent more

[3] Tesco Lotus are an amalgamation of Thai retailer Lotus Supercentre and British supermarket Tesco. Tesco Lotus have 1,700 supermarket format stores across Thailand, that include hypermarkets, malls and convenience stores (Tesco Lotus, 2015)

time there I would spend too much money. I go there for my toothpaste or shampoo and I see it and if it is good value then I buy it."

One of the attractions for women who did shop at the hypermarket was that it was located close by and considered to be normalised as a space for both shopping and pleasure. Furthermore, in Khlong Toey, there were two hypermarkets located opposite each other (with a main arterial road separating them). All of the women noted a preference for the closer of the two, which was Tesco Lotus hypermarket as it was deemed more convenient and easier to reach. The other hypermarket was repeatedly described

"not convenient as I would need to cross a busy road to get to it".

The women all spoke of the weekly outdoor clothing market located next to the food market. Held every Wednesday, the clothing market appealed as it was close by and had stalls that sold both second-hand and factory seconds clothing. Some women, preferred to only buy clothes from the stalls selling factory seconds, as they felt that the quality was better and made reference to not being able to rely on the level of cleanliness of the second-hand clothes. Other women were not concerned with this as they had a set budget for clothing and were price sensitive, and noted that they rummaged around to find clothes within their budget, and could always launder an item if it needed it.

The weekly clothing market was an informal environment and quite conducive to delving around the trestle tables, bags and baskets of clothing. As observed, often the main customers were women, which was reflected by a majority of the women participants who responded that they also bought at the weekly clothing market on behalf of their husbands, as their husbands did not want to spend the time that they were not working by going out to buy clothing. Only a few of the women did not buy on behalf of their children at the weekly clothing market. For these mothers, their children preferred to pick out their own clothes. Hence, the weekly clothing market became a place where the women had an outing with their children in order to purchase clothes. The mothers looked forward to these outings as it provided a break

from the mundane routine of work or school and the search for clothes for their children was considered to be recreational.

Some of the women also liked to look out for sales and specials on children's clothing when they were at the hypermarket or malls. Although still price sensitive, they felt that their children could have had better quality or more prestigious clothes than what was available at the market. 'Woman I' suggested that it was not so much status that was signified in buying quality clothes for the children, but a way in which she put her children first and perhaps showed good mothering, a concept that was explored in the following chapter. 'Woman I' noted that for herself, she only ever bought the cheapest clothes at the market, suggesting that she did not place a lot of importance on spending money on her own clothes.

> *"I like to look at clothing displays at the hypermarket. Sometimes the children's clothes attract me and they feel like good material and are really cheap on sale, then I might buy something for the children. I never buy clothes for myself there. I only buy clothes for myself from the weekly clothing market, or from the hawkers who walk around selling the clothes."*

Similarly, 'Woman K' preferred the hypermarket when she has bought special outfits for her ten year old son. She spoke of the instance when her son had the opportunity to be involved in a Christmas production at school, and the boys were required to wear a tie, collared shirt and trousers. Because her son was to be up on stage in front of other people, 'Woman K' thought it were important to buy an outfit from the hypermarket, despite it *"costing a fortune"*. This suggests that as the Christmas production was an occasion when not only her son was on show (on stage) but so was the family status. Self and family identity will be discussed in the following chapter.

Some of the women noted that they preferred the weekly clothing market to passing hawkers or other clothing stalls, as it was a place where they had built up relationships with some stall holders or trusted the quality of the clothes. Relationships seemed to be developed over years, and required more than regular patronage, but also a rapport and potential for reciprocity. For these women, one currently has a stall near the clothing market area, and the other has previously held a

stall in this market. Building relationships in this environment provided an added benefit of potentially accessing further discounts, and on occasion being able to go into temporary credit with the stall holder when their family needed to buy clothes, but their household did not have the cash-flow.

As some women purchased clothes for their household, they then recycled their old clothes (that were too tattered or stained for them to want to retain themselves), and used the space outside their own abode to leave out their old clothes for beggars and homeless people. They saw that there were other people worse off than themselves, and were happy to give away their old clothes. A couple of women reused their old clothes as rags, particularly during the monsoonal season when water often dripped into their rooms.

5.2.2 Spaces for life's luxuries: Hypermarkets

Household provisioning not only includes food, cleaning agents and clothes, but also the luxury items that are acquired for the household. For all but one woman, the nearby Tesco Lotus hypermarket was the space where luxury purchases are planned and purchased. When describing their most recent luxury purchase that the women had acquired for their families, responses included technological and electrical goods such as mobile telephones, fans, blenders, televisions and a washing machine. It was observed that the hypermarket stocked a variety of brands and models for all of these items. Electrical goods were considered to be a luxury purchase as the cost of acquisition was between 6 and 35 times the average daily wage in Khlong Toey, and often back in their village up-country, they had not been able to afford to acquire such goods. As such, these items represented an expense which required both careful budgeting and the careful utilisation of consumer knowledge within an informed decision making process. Mobile telephones provided the women with connectivity to their families back in *Isaan*, while the other electrical goods were viewed as bringing convenience and comfort.

'Woman A', did not go to the hypermarket to buy her mobile telephone, and instead bought from a local second-hand stall within the Khlong Toey Market precinct.

‘Woman A’ lived by herself within the market precinct, and her two children lived upcountry. ‘Woman A’ openly discussed that she preferred to buy from other stallholders, and bought her mobile phone from the same stall where she had previously bought her lamp and fan. While ‘Woman A’ liked to peruse through the glossy hypermarket brochures and look at the luxury items that were catalogued, she found the sheer size of the hypermarket and the number of products sitting side-by-side overwhelming and too confusing. For ‘Woman A’, the hypermarket represented life’s little luxuries, but at a cost that she felt anxious and overwhelmed, and so avoided going to it for this reason.

For the other women, the hypermarket represented a space that they were already comfortable with (as they purchased their dry foodstuffs from the hypermarket) and they were all aware of the guarantees (or warranties) that were on offer for electrical items. Warranties were often not available from local sellers, and as electrical items are luxury goods due to the cost and time it took to save for the purchase, it was important to the women, should the product malfunction, that the product was covered under warranty. The women were actively aware of what each space offered and most were attracted to the ‘one week no questions asked returns policy’ and free delivery within Khlong Toey as advertised by Tesco Lotus. The delivery aspect was really important, as a majority of the women explained that they had absolutely no access to a private vehicle nor the capacity to pay to transport large items themselves. Also, I observed that as the abodes within Khlong Toey were typically accessible only by foot using small pathways and makeshift bridges, the transportation of large goods home was a difficult exercise.

‘Woman B’ described that after she had longed to have a washing machine for a very long time, she had recently purchased one from the Tesco Lotus hypermarket. ‘Woman B’ lived with three adults and two teenage children at the back of a shopfront on a busy thoroughfare, where she rented two rooms. Her washing machine sat proudly out the front of the shop as there was no room nor water available inside. The hypermarket arranged delivery and installation free of charge. The washing machine was considered a luxury as it took the household a long time before they could afford to purchase it. ‘Woman B’ described her household as neither the richest nor the poorest in the area, and after checking with her family,

decided to allocate money to save up for a washing machine, that she thought best suited her family's needs. When 'Woman B' had saved up enough money to buy her washing machine, she already knew which model had the functionality that she wanted. Her final choice cost her more than one month's wage, but as she worked long hours, the washing machine was perceived to be an important time-saver and an item of great convenience for her household. Furthermore, she preferred that her children focused on their schooling than having to hand wash their garments, as the benefits of education could potentially improve the family's capacity for other life's luxuries in the future. During observations, I did not see many washing machines as I walked around Khlong Toey, and as the only owners of a washing machine in their area, 'Woman B''s household had expanded their income base by also providing a washing service for local residents for a nominal fee.

> *"It took a long time until I could be able to buy it. I bought from Lotus. I knew that Lotus had a good selection and would have many options and there would be one to fit my budget. Lotus offered a warranty which was really important. They offer a 7 day no questions asked returns policy. So I thought this was a great idea for my family to test it out. For cheaper items they offer a 3 day return policy, but for washing machines it was 7 days. I don't know if other shops also offer this – but I already go to Lotus for my other cleaning things for the house, so I stuck with Lotus."*

The warranty and returns policy provided 'Woman B' with a sense of security, both economic and in her decision to buy, because if the purchase was a mistake (if the washing machine took up too much space, cost too much to run, was too difficult to operate or was not considered a purchase that was useful for the family), then it could be returned, and she had not lost anything financially. The warranty given by the hypermarket represented security, quality and a space that could be trusted. The sentiment of trust in the hypermarket when buying a luxury item was reiterated by all of the women, regardless if their purchase was for a mobile telephone, television or an electric fan.

Another example of the importance of trust when purchasing a product was presented by 'Woman E', who worked as a porter and lived with her spouse in a single room in

one of the many tenements. For her, the hypermarket was where she chose to purchase her mobile telephone. A key motivator in shopping at the hypermarket was that she could trust the quality of the phone as she knew that they hypermarket only sold first-hand goods. The mobile phone was an important purchase for her, as it enabled her to stay connected with her children, who lived back in her home village in *Isaan*. 'Woman E' explained that because the purchase was important and did cost her a lot of money, she knew that she could trust the products that the hypermarket sold and so did not look around at other shops.

> *"I bought my mobile phone from Tesco Lotus because they have a really good selection across all the brands, and I could walk in to compare everything so it made it easy for me. I wouldn't buy a phone from the stalls in the market, even though they also sell them there too, as I can't trust it is new and anyway I only buy fresh food from the market – I didn't even look at the phone stalls there. I bought a pre-paid plan which is really handy as I can just top it up whenever I go shopping at Lotus. I wait until the credit is finished, then the next time I am shopping at Lotus and I can afford it, I top it up."*

'Woman E' explained that in addition to being trusted, the hypermarket, was also a place of convenience for three reasons. Firstly, the long opening hours enabled her to go there after her nightshift at work has finished. Secondly, the hypermarket had a large range of mobile phones, which meant that as she worked long hours and was time-poor, there was no need to traipse around other spaces, and so she felt that she could compare a number of options and so made an informed choice based on her own budget, needs and desires. Finally, the hypermarket provided ongoing convenience as her prepaid credit could be topped up during her twice weekly shopping trips to the hypermarket for other household essentials.

The hypermarket represented luxury in not only material terms, but also as being a clean and accessible space in which the women, after working long hours, could unwind and relax. A majority of the women who go to the hypermarket, talk about how they liked to hang out in the hypermarket precinct by walking around, browsing and spending time with either their children or neighbours. In this respect, the hypermarket was a space for socialisation. In addition, the women used terms such as

"clean, cool and air-conditioned" to describe what it was that attracted them to the hypermarkets. These descriptors were in contrast to their living and working conditions. 'Woman F' who lived with her husband, and had two children living upcountry did not make any purchases at the hypermarket but still went there to escape the heat and to spend time with friends by walking around and looking at the displays in shop windows.

> "*I have no intention of buying anything when I am in there. I go there to cool down and then come home. It's a cool and clean place to spend time walking around. When I go in to escape the heat, I will walk around for an hour, or even more. It's a great way to cool off and spend time with friends. My husband prefers to not go, so I will go with other friends from my neighbourhood."*

This suggested that the hypermarket was a retailer, a social space and a means for escaping the hot or monsoonal weather. Similarly, 'Woman C', who lived with her husband and two of their four children also liked to while away time in the hypermarket with her children. She viewed it as an ideal place to take her children as she knew that it was clean and so perceived it to be a positive place for them to spend their time.

> "*I like my children to come shopping there as it is clean and air conditioned. On hot days we can escape the heat and go to Lotus.*"

Despite the hypermarket being considered as a clean place associated with luxuries – both relatively expensive material goods and for spending one's downtime, none ever contemplated eating within any of the eateries within the hypermarket precinct. The eateries include restaurants, fast-food outlets and the food court. For example, 'Woman D', in her mid-thirties, lived in a single room with her nephew and son, emphatically noted that eateries in the hypermarket and the surrounding mall area were not places that she would ever eat at as she saw that these required a different set of manners than she possessed. Therefore, eating was not an activity that she planned to undertake in or around the hypermarket mall area.

"*No, we don't eat at these places. We don't feel comfortable, as at home we can eat how we want, and not have to think of any special etiquette.*"

In addition to feeling uncomfortable about how they were expected to eat, the women all voiced concerns about the freshness and quality of the food that was prepared at the hypermarket, which were unlike the meals made by vendors at the market, prepared in front of them with fresh ingredients. 'Woman C' reinforced the notion of freshness, and correlated fresh food with the origin of the food and how it was prepared.

"*I don't think the taste is for me there. The food is not so fresh and not made in front of me, so I won't buy it. I never buy cooked food there - not even from Lotus. You don't know how long it has been there.*"

'Woman C' felt that because she could not see how the food was prepared, that the preparation processes lacked transparency and so could not be trusted.

5.2.3 Spaces for 'going past and dropping in': Convenience stores

The convenience store was a ubiquitous space across the Bangkok landscape. I observed in Khlong Toey a number of air-conditioned franchised shops such as 7-eleven,[4] Minimart[5] and Family Mart[6] that typified Thai convenience stores. All the convenience stores that I saw seemed to be bustling, despite the time of day. Some of the women interviewed, however, stated that they did not have any reason to go into any of the convenience stores, as they did not have the time nor the budget to do so. By avoiding the convenience store, they were able to resist going over their budgets. It was observed that everyday items such as shampoos, snack foods and packets of tissues all typically cost a couple of baht more per single-use size at the convenience store compared to the hypermarket. Therefore, the convenience store represented to these women an increase in their daily expense that could result in budget blow-outs.

[4] Thai company CP All Plc. operates more than 7,500 7-eleven stores across Thailand, all of which are 24 hour convenience stores (CP All, 2015)
[5] Minimart is the term for privately owned convenience stores in Thailand
[6] Family Mart stores are convenience stores found across Thailand (FamilyMart, 2015)

Purchases for treats such as snacks and cold drinks were ones that they just cannot afford to have.

For most of the women, the convenience store was another consumption space that they went to on a daily basis and bought cold drinks such as milk, juice or soda. The convenience store was ideal, as not only were they located across Khlong Toey, they were open 24 hours a day, and so were handy to the women in their everyday activities. Women who shopped at convenience stores appreciated that as there were no queues, one could go in, make a purchase and come out again very quickly. Time was an important factor as women usually worked long hours, and did not wish to spend the little downtime that they had in queues. Furthermore, because the convenience store also accepted partial payments for utilities and mobile telephones, the women spoke about how they easily incorporated making small regular payments for bills into their daily or weekly budgets.

Women who work as hawkers (selling flannels, coriander and bangles) or porters, work long shifts outside (sometimes 18 hours or more), regardless of the weather. The air conditioning in the convenience store provided a short respite from the weather, and the women often drank their cold beverage on the steps of the convenience store before work was resumed.

In addition to the cold drinks being consumed, most of the women mentioned the small and cheap packets of snacks that they liked to buy from the convenience store. 'Woman D', who lived with her son and nephew described how both children enjoyed eating the American style hotdogs from the convenience stores, and that as a treat and when she could afford it, she liked to buy them one now and again. Another example of using the convenience store for the purchase of food was 'Woman A'. She liked to buy microwave meals from the convenience store, as the meals were typically different to the freshly made ethnic *Isaan* food that she often ate. For her, the convenience store represented the means for her to have the confidence to try new and innovative foods within her tight budget.

> "*I am a bold person – I like to try new things and 7-eleven always stocks new things that I can afford to try*".

‘Woman A’’s partiality for processed foods from the convenience stores was in contrast to the general attitude towards expecting food being fresh and the associated manufacturing processes being transparent. ‘Woman A’ commented that she would not want to look for similar microwave meals from the hypermarket, and preferred the convenience store as it was less overwhelming, as it was a smaller space with a limited selection of goods and so less choice to choose from.

The convenience stores, in addition to drinks and snacks, also sold small single use sized daily essentials (including packets of shampoo, toothpaste, laundry powder, etc.). Single use packets enable essentials to be purchased each day and so incorporated into daily budgets. Some of the women preferred to buy these items from the convenience stores as the price was considered to be fairly similar to the larger supermarkets, and they remarked that they were already going to the convenience stores for drinks each day anyway. ‘Woman F’, worked as a porter for 18 hours a day. She preferred the convenience store for many of her purchases as she could pop in to the closest store and buy whatever she or her spouse needed in a single shop.

> *“Because I don’t have much time, I tend to buy everything from whichever convenience store is closest. I don’t have the time to go out. It saves time, there is no waiting and I only buy what I need. I don’t buy from the same places either.”*

In addition to the ever-present convenience stores, Bangkok also had many small general stores owned that were typically operated by Chinese-Thai families, and like the convenience store, stock a variety of everyday essentials. Most of the women stated that these shops were more expensive, had slower service, were not as clean and did not stock quality goods when compared to the convenience store, and that they had no specific reason to shop there. The ethnicity of the shop-owners was not a reason to not shop there, but for ‘Woman K’, who also had part Chinese ethnicity, it was a motivator to regularly shop at the Chinese-Thai run stores, as she stated that on occasion she had been able to access store credit when times were bad. ‘Woman K’ noted that despite the store-owner having trusted her to give credit, she did not

necessarily trust the products that the Chinese-Thai stores sold, as sometimes goods that she had bought were past their expiry dates. 'Woman K' had bought fresh milk for her son and fried noodles for herself, both of which were inedible as they were past their expiry date. Due to the nature of her relationship with the store owner (having received credit in the past), she felt that she could not return the spoiled foods. Furthermore, 'Woman K' suggested that her access to irregular credit within the store was made possible because she does have Chinese ethnicity, and that credit would probably not be available to other residents in the area who do not share this ethnic heritage. The Chinese-Thai run stores were the only spaces that offered informal credit for goods. The hypermarket only provided layby services and required interest to be paid.

5.2.4 Spaces of security: Gold shops and pawn shops

The majority of the women, managed their cash-flow during times of need or to get through financial shocks and stresses by going to gold shops and/or pawn shops where they have bought or sold gold jewellery. The gold shops and pawn shops were used to secure or access their savings in terms of physical assets such as jewellery. Because it was important to safeguard the household savings, the women selected a gold shop and/or pawn shop as the space of security which was most suited to their families' needs.

Table 4 - Reasons for the selection for a 'space of security'

Spaces of security	Location	Main motivator	Perceptions of the space
Gold shop *(buying only)*	Khlong Toey	Relationship with shop owner (referred by family and friends)	• Trust and loyalty in the shop owner • Lack of time to go to the China Town gold shops
Gold shop	China Town	Store name and reputation	• Better gold prices • Trust in the quality of the gold
Gold shop (China Town outlet)	Khlong Toey	Store name and reputation	• Better gold prices • Trust in the quality of the gold • Trust in the store name
Pawn shop	Khlong Toey	Relationship with shop owner (referred by family and friends)	• Trust and loyalty in the shop owner • Lack of time to go to the China Town gold shops • Lack of trust in the China Town gold shops

Source: Author (2012)

Gold was the favoured commodity and as shown in Table 4, some women preferred choosing a gold shop that was located across the other side of Bangkok in China Town, and could be reached by travelling by public bus (40 minutes away). Alternatively, one China Town gold shop also had an outlet in Khlong Toey. Women were confident that in China Town, the gold shops had a better reputation, gave better prices and quality assurances. With China Town so far away, the women had to amass a lot of information that included the location, ownership, reputation, trustworthiness and price that each gold shop had. In contrast to this, 'Woman I' noted that while she would have preferred to buy her gold jewellery from a shop in China Town, she did not have the time as both her and her husband work long nightshifts. Therefore, for 'Woman I', it was imperative that the gold shop she trusted the most was also located close by in Khlong Toey.

Gold shops provided the means to purchase, sell, upsize and downgrade, whereas the pawn shops also offered the option for gold jewellery to be placed as temporary collateral. Gold shops were chosen based on the women's trust in the store name and reputation, whereas the pawn shops were spaces where the women relied on past referrals and experiences of family and friends in Khlong Toey. For example, 'Woman B', arrived in Bangkok more than 15 years ago, and lived with her two children, brother and mother. 'Woman B' explained that in the past she went regularly, sometimes even daily, to the pawn shop and upsized or downsized her jewellery, depending on the household needs. Like the other women, she chose which pawn shop to use based on a referral from other women in her neighbourhood. However, 'Woman B' felt that her dependence on the pawn shop was shameful as it was a signifier that showed her as needy or not coping. Since she started up her own small business, 'Woman B''s household finances became less volatile, and had effectively reduced her reliance on the pawn shop. Despite the sense of shame that she felt, 'Woman B' stated that her local pawn shop in Khlong Toey was still an option, if she needed it.

> *"A long time ago I used to go to the pawn shops a lot, even every day, to upgrade or downgrade my gold. I feel a lot of shame when going to the pawn shop, but it has offered us quick and temporary money. It is still an option, but we don't need it at the moment. When the children were younger we*

always had financial stress, like their school fees, doctors and so on. But now they are a little older and my somtam business is getting constant we have managed to do without the pawn shops."

Gold that was bought or upsized was viewed as a means of growing the family assets. In contrast to 'Woman B', 'Woman I' had been in Khlong Toey with her husband for around 5 years, and did not associate shame with the pawn shop, but that it was a normalised way in which she managed cash flow and could save for the future. 'Woman I' was different from others as she preferred to buy her jewellery from the gold shop, but then she sold it or downsized it in the pawn shop. This suggested that she trusted the gold shop more than the pawn shop in regards to the quality and price.

"When I get some money together, I buy the gold and add to the ring. It is a way to save for the future. I do this very frequently. If I used a bank, I wouldn't save the money. But with the gold ring, I keep hold of it. I always go to the same gold shop in Khlong Toey. I only go to this shop when I am buying more gold. If I need money, I take the ring to the pawn shop which is in the opposite direction. I always go to the same pawn shop because I trust them. I have used this pawn shop many times. My relatives recommended it. Now because the economy is quiet, I have to work longer hours and I am having to pawn my small pieces gold, not save it."

In addition to gold shops and pawn shops, only a couple of women held bank accounts. The first had an account so that extended family members could deposit money for them when times in Bangkok were financially tough. While the other tried to deposit savings into her Islam Bank account so that in the future, she could meet the criteria of six months regular savings to obtain a micro loan. For the majority of the women, banks were not considered useful or appropriate ways that protected the family's savings. Banks typically had limited opening hours and the women did not like debit cards and they thought it was too easy for either themselves or their husbands to withdraw money from their bank account. Furthermore, the women trusted the gold jewellery as they could touch and feel it, had already amassed a vast amount of consumer knowledge and knew its worth on any given day. In contrast, a bank account became just an intangible number on a piece of paper. This was

exemplified by ‘Woman H’, in her late twenties, she lived out the back of her place of work, but her four children lived with her brothers and their children in a small two roomed tenement around the corner. ‘Woman H’ was the main provisioner for her family’s household. With a similar sentiment to the other women, she preferred to invest in gold. For ‘Woman H’, not only was the tangible aspect of gold attractive, but she did not have to pay ongoing levies or fees on her savings.

> “*A better investment than the bank. It is safer. The more you accumulate, the more value you have. There is no administration involved, the government does not know*.”

In addition, ‘Woman B’ felt that when money was credited to a bank account, it never really accumulated, which suggested that as money was placed in the bank, it was just as easily taken out again. For this reason, and because it was important that she saw and touched her household savings, banks were not considered beneficial.

> *“I don’t use bank accounts. When you deposit your money into an account, you never have much. Because my business is very small, each day I don’t have much money. It wouldn’t feel good to only see that I have such a small amount of money in the bank. But I can save and buy small pieces of gold and then as I collect more money, I can upgrade it to bigger pieces. I don’t see the banks as a good thing for me.”*

Despite gold shops and pawn shops being associated as spaces of financial security, they were also where the women felt vulnerable. All women spoke about their need to be extra vigilant when they left both gold and pawn shops, in case they were robbed of their gold. Being a target to thieves was a resounding concern for the women. So while gold shops and pawn shops were selected based on their level of trustworthiness, the surrounding area outside of each shop became spaces of vulnerability and insecurity. Because of this, many preferred not to display their assets and stashed their bigger pieces of jewellery in their abodes, and wore only basic chains or rings. The hiding of jewellery in their own homes was perceived to lessen the risk that they lost their precious gold in the event of being robbed in person, or that their abode was broken into.

5.3 Discussion: The interconnections across consumption spaces

Following the analysis of consumption spaces in Section 5.2, the following section discusses the interconnections of consumption spaces in context to the literature as explored in Chapters 2 and 3.

The women incorporated a variety of different consumption spaces into their everyday routines, and across these spaces, a number of interconnections existed. In the first instance, the physical location, proximity and ease to get to a space was resoundingly important. Except for a couple of women who used the gold shops in China Town, all other consumption spaces were located within the Khlong Toey area. Secondly, each space was used for provisioning for their household for quite separate reasons and the women allocated a specific use of that space. This included where the women sourced food, purchased household essentials or bought clothing. In addition to this, the level of trust and loyalty that the women felt for each space was fundamental in whether or not a woman would go there. Furthermore, the use of some consumption spaces, such as the hypermarket, signified that the women participated in modern urban society, which in Thailand had in the past been luxuries associated with middle-income households, and not low-income ones. Finally, the concepts of 'freshness' and 'cleanliness' reverberated across the spaces, and were often used to compare one space to another.

5.3.1 Location and proximity of spaces

All women participants were rural migrants, worked informally and lived within Khlong Toey District. The consumption spaces that the low-income women in Khlong Toey went to or had any interaction in order to provide for their household included marketplaces, hypermarkets and malls, convenience stores, pawn shops and gold shops, and were typically restricted to those spaces in close proximity to their living quarters. The cost in both time and money which was associated with getting to consumption spaces which were not close by was often too high to even consider. This meant that consumption spaces needed to be within an easy walking distance, as

the only option that the women had was to carry their goods back to their abode. As Bhowmik (2005) discussed, working age members of low-income households in Bangkok worked very long hours, and so neighbourhoods with a number of food vendors that provided ready to eat meals were more suited as they reduced the associated preparation time and need for facilities (Bhowmik, 2005, p. 2259).

The importance of location was further illustrated when the women were choosing which hypermarket to shop at, with most of the women being deterred from shopping at Big C[7] as they had to cross a walkover on a busy road. When there were two consumption spaces that were similar, there was an obvious preference to select the one that was closest and most accessible. By selecting in this way, the women were able to maximise the most effective use of their time. The inclination to choose consumption spaces that were situated within a close proximity to home was consistent with Stillerman and Salcedo's (2012) research in Chile that concluded proximity and accessibility are integral for low-income consumers. Additionally, this research is also consistent with Wiig and Smith's (2008) observation that distance, accessibility and the size or quantity of their intended purchases influences which consumption space to use. In the Khlong Toey context, consumption was typically concentrated within spaces that were close by and easy to get to. These spaces became important as they were included into their daily provisioning strategies (budget controls, time constraints and time management).

5.3.2 Every space has its purpose

As explained in Section 5.3.1, consumption spaces needing to be close by and easy to get to, each space also had a specific use. The interviews with the women in Khlong Toey indicated that there was a clear delineation across each consumption space in regards to the woman's intention in what the space was used for and what it represented. The market was clearly preferred for raw ingredients and cooked meals, the hypermarket for non-food stuffs and luxury items for their families, the convenience store for treats such as snacks, and the gold and pawn shops for securing

[7] Big C is a leading Thai hypermarket that acquired a French chain of supermarkets in Thailand (Big C, 2015)

their savings. This determination of meaning for consumption spaces for low-income women can be seen as an extension to the research Isaacs (2009) completed on Thai middle class consumers in the city Chiang Mai. Isaacs noted that there were no restrictions for the middle classes to limit their consumption to a single type of space, which was evident by the consumers studied often using a combination of both modern and traditional spaces. Similarly, this lack of restriction was also evident in the Khlong Toey context as the low-income women also shopped across different spaces, and did so with a specific provisioning need in mind.

The fresh food market was designated as a place for obtaining on a daily basis fresh ingredients or ready-made meals, with descriptors such as being affordable, fresh and high quality being applied. Askew (2002) suggested that it was customary for low-income households in Bangkok to go to marketplaces as such spaces continued to persist in and around low-income settlements, which made them accessible "focal points of activity" (Askew, 2002, p. 68). While the market in Khlong Toey was central to their everyday activities, the women generally decided where to shop in the market based on product offering, price, available time and accessibility. This was in contrast to Isaacs et al. (2010), who commented that relationships with market stallholders were evident in the Thai market culture (Isaacs, et al., 2010, p. 426). The combination of the size of the Khlong Toey market, the women with a lack of spare time, and both the women and stallholders not necessarily originating from the same town or city, may have reduced the importance of relationships within the market, as only a small number of the women used the market for socialisation with stall holders.

Brody (2006) suggested that the management and control mechanisms that were evident in modern consumption spaces had been adopted with the intention "to prevent undesirables from entering the mall and spoiling its exclusive environment" (Brody, 2006, p. 542). While Brody (2006) observed that the hypermarket in Khlong Toey had a number of management controls in place that excluded low-income people from entering, the women interviewed in this research incorporated the hypermarket space into their families' provisioning and had not been prevented from entering the premises. For women, the hypermarket and mall represented the

everyday items that excluded fresh food and meals, and luxury items such as electrical goods, mobile telephones and children's clothing for special occasions. Furthermore, the hypermarket and mall were characterised by perceptions of better product quality, quality controls, higher cost, prestige, trust and cleanliness. This representation was consistent with Stillerman and Salcedo's (2012) observations in Chile, that malls remained important through "how consumers perceive and inhabit them" (Stillerman & Salcedo, 2012, p. 313). For the low-income women in Khlong Toey, the hypermarket and mall were used for not only financial transactions, but also to browse, pass time and gather information such as price, variety of models and functions for luxury goods that they aspired to own.

The hypermarket and the mall were also the only space where non-shopping practices were regularly observed. In other spaces, consumers entered, did what they needed to do and exited. However, my observations confirmed that not only did the women spend time in the hypermarket and mall to escape the weather, but they also regularly went there to spend time with their children or friends. The association of social activity in malls had long been an activity for the Thai urban middle class (Cai & Shannon, 2012) as having spare time was an indulgence (Vorng, 2011, p. 78), which low-income households in Thailand often did not have.

While Isaacs et al. described an attraction of the mall was the use of the food courts as "social space" (Isaacs, et al., 2010, p. 426), this was one area of the mall where the low-income women were not comfortable, as they felt that aside from poor value and quality for the food, there was a certain unfamiliarity that came with eating in a food court which made the experience unpleasant for those unfamiliar with this etiquette. Isaacs (2009) and Mills (1998) explained this discomfort as being attributed to the need to eat with cutlery, which provided a challenge to the women's usual eating behaviour, which was eating quickly with one's hands (Isaacs, 2009, p. 353). To eat in the food court, the women in this research felt that they needed to adhere to the expected eating protocols (Mills, 1998).

In addition to the market and hypermarket, the weekly clothing market was another space where the women went with a clear purpose. This market provided the entwining of not only many second-hand clothing spaces with each other (Gregson &

Crewe, 2003, p. 101), but with first hand too (albeit, factory seconds). My observations expanded on Gregson and Crewe's (2003) discussion on the "fuzzy relation" (Gregson & Crewe, 2003, p. 18) that exists between first and second-hand spaces, when one emulated or encroached on the other, and that in the Khlong Toey weekly clothing market, first and second-hand space had converged. In addition to the weekly clothing market, the women also browsed and on occasion bought for their children clothes from the hypermarket. The values that emerged within the clothing market were based on value, necessity and to a lesser extent, relationships with stall holders. Whereas, the first hand spaces such as the hypermarket still represented luxury, prestige, quality, and higher costs, and were considered appropriate for the purchase of children's clothes for special occasions. In contrast, the second-hand clothes sold at the weekly clothing market symbolised clothes suited for every day wearing at work or at home.

All of the consumption spaces that were discussed by the women in Khlong Toey as part of their everyday provisioning also embodied an emotion. While gold shops had a sense of safety connected to them (both for savings and easy access to cash), pawn shops were considered necessary, but also sometimes shameful. In contrast, convenience stores were associated with a sense of relief, as they were quick, easy and not overwhelming, like the hypermarket could be. For some of the women, the hypermarket was a place of anxiety as the sheer size and expectations on how to behave within a modern environment with a different type of space could be overwhelming, particularly when there was a vast choice of products to choose from. Despite this, the hypermarket represented new opportunities, social inclusion and urban progress (Brody, 2006, p. 534).

5.3.3 Placing trust and loyalty in spaces

Although the hypermarket symbolised urban progress, for the low-income women in Khlong Toey to incorporate the space into their everyday practices, they also needed to trust both the space and the products being sold. Because the women did not understand the provenance and subsequent processes involved to get the food that was sold in the hypermarket to its final state, they could not trust it, and so would not

buy it. In contrast, the women were all comfortable and confident buying meals and fresh food from the market, which was a space where food production and preparation processes were transparent. This was consistent with Isaacs (2010) study in Chiang Mai of middle class consumers, who also often preferred to buy their raw ingredients from the local marketplace, as they trusted both the product and stall holder (Isaacs, et al., 2010).

Despite the hypermarket not being trusted for food purchases, the women all had a resounding sense of trust in the hypermarket when they purchased expensive luxury goods for their families. This trust was based on the appreciation that the luxury products were first hand, and that as the hypermarket offered warranties and guarantees, they were also quality products. In contrast, most of the women did not trust the small electrical stalls at the market as they did not know if the products on sale were first or second-hand. Likewise, the convenience stores were trusted to stock good quality products, however the general stores run by Chinese-Thai families were not.

5.3.4 Urban spaces that embodied civilised society

The hypermarket represented to the low-income women in Khlong Toey quality products, guarantees and trust, and as a consumption space, was treated differently than other spaces, such as the markets. Isaacs (2009) explained that the Thai urban hypermarket were unlike marketplaces, as there was no need to question either the product quality or barter the price (Isaacs, 2009). Vorng (2011) continued to suggest that the Bangkok mall and hypermarket spaces changed people's conduct into a style of conformative consumer behaviour, which was an inclusive way for people to interact with, or be part of modern Bangkok (Vorng, 2011, p. 68). In this sense, participation within the hypermarket represented the concept of being civilised (Brody, 2006, p. 539), which was confirmed within this research as the women spoke of using the hypermarket as an ideal, clean place to take their children or to socialise with their friends.

Ockey's (2004) view was that modern spaces such as malls and hypermarkets teach the Thai middle classes which material goods they should aspire to accumulate (Ockey, 2004, pp. 162-163). However, my observations confirmed that there was a melding of social classes within the hypermarket space and that for the low-income women who were constantly seeing luxury items such as technological and electrical goods, they also aspired to accumulate these products too. Isaacs (2009) suggested that a desire to be trendy or show themselves as urban and contemporary are aspirations to accumulate material goods (Isaacs, 2009, p. 353). Jongudomkarn and Camfield (2006) explored how these same material goods have for their families back in *Isaan*, became indicators of well-being, happiness and prosperity (Jongudomkarn & Camfield, 2006). This research is consistent with both Isaacs and Jongudomkarn and Camfield, as the women sought to adopt urban ways and give to their rural based families through the acquisition of material goods.

Nevertheless, in the context of the low-income women in Khlong Toey, they have spent a great deal of effort browsing, accumulated immense consumer knowledge and then applied a saving regime in order to purchase luxury items that are functional for the household. This process required a lot of skill in both finding out the right information and planning how their families could afford it.

The hypermarkets and malls in Khlong Toey are a combination of what Stillerman and Salcedo (2012) referred to as 'American style malls' (which encouraged consumers to drive and park) and the Chilean style malls (integrated pedestrian needs within the mall precinct) (Stillerman & Salcedo, 2012, p. 313). Stillerman and Salcedo noted that in Chile, because such encounters occurred regularly, the space was then an inherent "integration of middle- and low- income consumers" (Stillerman & Salcedo, 2012, p. 311). This study was in contrast to Hill's (2010) study of cinema complexes in Kolkata that suggested that spaces became socially exclusionary by nature, and favoured encounters between only the middle and elite classes. However, Hill's observations were not noticed in Khlong Toey, probably due to the close location and immediate proximity to the low-income women's residences.

5.3.5 Spaces that were clean and fresh

In addition to the location and purpose of each space, two clear descriptions were used to compare consumption spaces – clean and fresh. Modern illuminated spaces such as the hypermarket were referred to as clean. The concept of being clean was described by Brody (2006) as a Thai metaphor for progress, namely urban progress. Brody's description was consistent with the women in Khlong Toey, as the women explained that a clean space was considered to be civilised and was demonstrated through their capacity to not only regularly enter into the hypermarkets, which as Isaacs et al. (2010) described in terms of being noticeably stark, spotless and well-lit (Isaacs, et al., 2010), but also provided somewhere for their children to have participated and interacted in an environment that was perceived by the women as safe, clean and pleasurable.

In contrast, markets were described in terms of 'freshness'. In this sense, freshness was not related to the surrounds, but to what was on offer at the market. Freshness referred to the quality of the produce and meals being sold. One consumption space that straddled both concepts of 'fresh' and 'clean' were the convenience stores. This was despite convenience stores also having quality control systems, and in many ways mimic hypermarkets on a much smaller scale. In contrast to the convenience store were the Chinese-Thai run family stores that although were similar to the convenience store in terms of size and product offering, were not considered either clean or fresh.

5.4 Summary

Findings showed that each consumption space has a particular role, in both the type of provisioning that was available and what the space represents to the women. For example, the fresh food market was visited for the key reason to source meals and fresh food for the household. In contrast, spaces such as hypermarkets and malls are associated with the purchase of other household essentials, including luxury items such as electrical goods. The results showed that while each space was correlated

with meeting a specific household need, other factors such as location and proximity are also important for the decision making processes of where to go and to consume.

Consumption spaces are integral to the everyday provisioning for low-income women in Khlong Toey. The spaces represent not only places of purchase, but have become part of the women's routine and where the women interact with social spaces – whether in the market or in the hypermarket. Women would visit multiple spaces as part of their provisioning. For specific reasons, ranging from the acquisition of goods, management of cash flow, providing food for their families and spending one's spare time. The experiences and aspirations to be more urbanised were evident through the practices of the low-income women in Khlong Toey, for example using the hypermarket as a space for socialisation, a preference for buying food from the market and the purchase of luxury items. Having established that low-income women shop skilfully and selectively across differing consumption spaces, Chapter 6 will look at the changing lives of low-income women through their everyday consumption practices.

6 Consumption practices in the changing lives of urban low-income women

6.1 Introduction

Following Chapter 5, which discussed the significance and interconnections of consumption spaces, this chapter focuses on the lives of the women as low-income rural-urban migrants living in Bangkok and explores the women's urban consumption practices, which include how the women provide for themselves and their families through consumption.

The first section of this chapter will analyse how the women spoke about meeting the expectations of their family members back in rural Thailand and how the women's households in Bangkok live, including where they lived, the household consumption habits, and how the women provide for their families in Bangkok.

Sections 6.3 and 6.4 will then discuss how the women's consumption practices not only provide for their families, but also demonstrate the family social status and enables the women to assume what they consider to be a more beautiful appearance of themselves. The last section for this chapter looks at identity, and explains how the women's identities as urban woman, wife, mother or daughter are shaped through their consumption practices.

6.2 Different consumption practices for rural and urban

The women in Khlong Toey all migrated to Bangkok to live and work. Many women left their immediate family, including children and parents behind in their rural villages. The expectations from the women's rural family members are to be assisted financially. The women themselves, however, also need to balance her responsibilities to family members in Bangkok with their own practice of an urban lifestyle.

6.2.1 Rural expectations

All women participating in this study were living and working in Bangkok to benefit themselves and their families. The benefits were considered to be financial, and enabled the women to help provide for their families. Many women had left their children behind to be brought up by grandparents or other extended family members, which was a sacrifice that each mother made in order to assist their family financially. The women were confident that living in Bangkok was worthwhile because at least in Bangkok there were opportunities to earn money that paid for their children's schooling, to buy material goods to make life easier for their families and to hopefully save some money for their future. The women all described their abodes within the low-income settlements in terms of being convenient to work opportunities and the provision of necessities to their household in Bangkok, as the women could easily walk to their places of work and to both shops and markets. Living within walking proximity was important as it meant that they did not need to rely on public transport, which saved both money and time.

Working in Bangkok also brought its own set of prospects. The women all spoke of the anticipations that was placed upon them by their family members back in their home village to assist financially for both general expenses and for their families' possible financial shocks and stresses. Hopes held by the women's rural families (both her own and her husband's) included the remittance of money, particularly for the women's home villages where children lived left behind, and the provision of gifts for family members when they returned for visits. 'Woman I' described her decision to migrate to Bangkok from *Isaan* as a financial one, as well as the work on the rice fields being hard work. 'Woman I' migrated to Bangkok with other distant relatives from the same village. Since migrating, she had married and had two children; the children lived with their grandparents in *Isaan*.

> *"I didn't want to work in the rice fields anymore, or do the pounding of the rice. It is not good work. I cannot make the money for me and my family."*

'Woman I' noted that when she lived and worked in *Isaan*, she still contributed her income to the household expenses. However, as the income levels in *Isaan* were low, she expected that she could earn more money if she lived and worked in an urban centre such as Bangkok. 'Woman I' endeavoured to send money back as often as she could to cover her children's cost of living. The monies remitted by 'Woman I' provided her parents with financial assistance that went towards her parents' own consumption practices. The financial remittances not only improved their everyday lives by providing for food and utilities, but also paid for education related expenses, which was an investment in her own children's future. 'Monies were physically taken back by either herself or friends, and not remitted through financial institutions as making such arrangements was considered to be too time consuming for both 'Woman I' and her rural family members. Less regularly, 'Woman I' and her husband also arranged money to be sent back to his parents in another *Isaan* village. However, priority was placed on the everyday needs of her own family in *Isaan*, as their children were being reared by her parents.

> *"I think about my parents, and think that it will make them happy to receive it and be able to buy things."*

The women did not question the need to send or take money back to their rural family, as it was what they were expected to do. Others had become estranged from their siblings and their parents were no longer alive, so they did not feel there was any need to send money back to anyone in their home village.

In addition to remittance of cash, many women spoke about the need to take gifts back when they did return to visit their village. The women noted that they bought gifts from Bangkok for their families, and carried the gifts back with them on their visits home. Some women described the types of gifts that they had bought for their most recent trip back to *Isaan*. 'Woman C' timed her visit home with a local festival and only bought clothes as gifts for female family members and friends. She bought the clothes from the factory seconds stalls at the weekly clothing market, as the clothes still had the brand tags attached and looked new, which made her look like she could afford 'good' things. The clothes were considered to be a good gift as the

rural female recipients often did not have the opportunity to buy themselves new clothes.

Previously, when still living in *Isaan*, 'Woman C' had once received from a friend, a gift of food that had been bought in Bangkok from a hypermarket, but she did not think that it had tasted very good and so it probably was not fresh. For this reason, 'Woman C' would never take food gifts back to *Isaan* as she felt that if she gave gifts of bad quality food, it reflected poorly on her quality judgements. Other women also only purchased for their female family members and the older women in the village, but purchased sarongs or other useful pieces of clothing that they knew suited the rural environment and that the female recipients would be comfortable wearing. A few women decided to not buy any presents, but took back money so that their parents could improve purchase small appliances like fans, or gifts for their children who had remained in the countryside.

In contrast, 'Woman K', who lived in a room with her son and husband, spoke of her reluctance to give gifts to her family members in *Isaan*. 'Woman K' felt that as she was the only family member who worked in Bangkok, there had been in the past too many expectations that she provided her family with expensive gifts. 'Woman K' mentioned that since the passing of her parents, she no longer had any connection with her siblings who still lived in her home village, and subsequently felt that she should not have to provide for her rural family members any longer. When her niece was born, 'Woman K' gifted her 1,000 Thai Baht[8], which at the time equated to two week's income. 'Woman K' felt that she had been very generous sending so much money back, but felt that her sister had expected more.

> *"Firstly, it matters how close you are to your family. For me, I don't have any closeness to anyone in my family anymore. Not my brothers or sisters. I am the one outside of the family. When my sister got for the first time the child, I give her 1,000 baht. The second one, she say that if I come to see her daughter, she needs the gold jewellery. Since then I don't give anymore."*

[8] 1,000 Thai Baht was equivalent to approximately NZD $38.50 at the time of research

Despite not giving any more money to her family, 'Woman K' noted that when she took her son back to the province to visit, she only bought "*good quality*" toys from the hypermarket in Bangkok as gifts for her nieces and nephews. Despite requests by her siblings to give money to the children, 'Woman K' was more comfortable giving toys, which was a luxury not available in their rural village. The significance of toys is explored in more detail in the next section of this chapter.

All women spoke of the expectations that their families back in their home villages had for money to be remitted back. The financial benefits associated with migrating to Bangkok enabled the women to help look after both their immediate and extended families. By living in a low-income settlement in Bangkok, the women were able to find work opportunities and minimise their own reliance on others in order to provide for their families. Life in the low-income settlements for the women in Khlong Toey is a balance between providing and caring for their family in rural Thailand as well as those family members who live with them in Bangkok.

6.2.2 Urban practices

The women's everyday routines incorporated provisioning, budgeting and shopping. As none owned a refrigerator, food was purchased and consumed daily. Life in Bangkok did not consist of stocking up on a lot of goods. Furthermore, all women described their abodes as compact, which was not a concern, but meant that there was not a lot of space for the acquisition of large material items. The women declared that as they were in Bangkok to work, the use of their rooms was limited to sleep and watching television. Watching television was a daily activity, and so, televisions were one of the first household items that the women budgeted for.

The combination of a limited budget and restricted living space was reflected in the consumption practices for dry foods and personal goods. These goods were typically bought in single use portions. Single use sachets included laundry powder, shampoo and tooth paste. Not only did single use sachets not take a lot of space in their abodes, they were easy and light to transport from the retailer, and enabled these goods to be incorporated daily into the family budgets.

All women ensured that their household was sufficiently provided for, cleaned and that family member's needs were met. The task of provisioning for their households often meant that the women controlled how the household income was spent. The women all prioritised the rest of their family's needs above her own. 'Woman B' stated that her first priority was that her family was fed before any other purchases or payments were made.

> *"With my budget, and the living expenses that I have, the money must be controlled, and for the family, I cannot spend too much. I have to buy food first, not the other things just because I like it."*

In the case of 'Woman H', two households were being managed, as she slept at her workplace and her children lived separately with her brother in a nearby room. Despite living separately, 'Woman H' still ensured that her children and brother were provided for, as well as providing for herself. Furthermore, 'Woman H' also went to the room that her children lived in and cleaned it and laundered their clothes by hand. By being the main provider of household consumable goods, the women continually balanced their time, their family's needs and their knowledge of price and quality. Even for daily food purchases, the women were juggling the time it took to compare food prices and offerings compared to just buying regularly from the same vendor. In order for their households to benefit from both good money management and decision making, the women took it upon themselves and learnt not only where items were sold, but the correlation between variations in prices to quality or functionality. 'Woman D' reflected this when she sourced personal hygiene goods in bulk from the hypermarket to save money. In this instance, 'Woman D' made allowances in her budget and purchased multiple single-use sachets of the same product as it was cheaper and then shared them within the household. 'Woman D' could read numbers, but was otherwise illiterate, and had never been taught mathematical tools such as multiplication or addition. However, one of the benefits for 'Woman D' living in Bangkok was that stores such as the hypermarket provided per unit costing on all of its price tags, which was easy for her to understand. 'Woman D' noted that in rural areas, she would have had to always ask for this type of information.

"I know I can buy in bulk and save money".

Likewise, it was not just the price and quality of consumables that the women had learnt, but also fluctuating prices in the gold market. Like most women, 'Woman I' knew exactly how much her gold was worth, and from where she could get the best price.

> *"If I am buying gold, I take the cheapest bus to China Town. I bought most of my gold when the price was really low, and now it is worth a lot more now. I can't afford to buy it at the moment."*

In this instance, 'Woman I' had accumulated not only local knowledge, but had also learnt how to navigate Bangkok, namely to get to China Town, which was located across the city from Khlong Toey. 'Woman I' was proud of this accomplishment, as she made note that even her husband had not ventured that far from Khlong Toey.

The acquisition of useful knowledge was applied to not only daily food purchases, household goods, but also for their luxury items and technical goods. The women became the person within their household who knew and advised others of the available items or goods, and the differences or household benefits across different price scales. 'Woman H' spoke about her recently purchased mobile telephone, and she described the process as having checked prices and functionality first. 'Woman H' was not only knowledgeable in the price ranges of different mobile phones, but she had learnt also what different models meant. As 'Woman H' had built up and was confident in her consumer knowledge, she was comfortable in making the decisions on behalf of her family. 'Woman H' also described herself in terms of buying everything for her family, which means her household roles included decision-maker, purchaser and financial manager.

> *"I walked around first to many shops. I checked the models and prices. It [the hypermarket] was close by to my house, and about the same price as other places. I chose this phone because I really liked the functions that it offered. It's an all in one phone with a monthly plan. Well, I buy all the things for the family. I go by myself when I by these items for the family. I*

know what is needed. I go around and look at different places, mainly at the prices and what is available first. I want to know what type of value I can get in different price ranges."

The women were all actively aware of urban practices such as what to buy and where to get it in Bangkok. This knowledge expansion provided the women with a new household role that was specific to their life in Bangkok. Their role included not only the acquisition of information, but often making the decisions as well. The women's urban practices are in contrast to the women's previous rural situation, as the consumption practices were limited to local markets or trading with neighbours. Eating out with spouses, watched television or spent time at games zones were all examples of urban consumption practices that were been adopted as part of urban life. These practices have epitomised quality family time and relaxation, and for the women, helped them demonstrate their roles as 'good' mothers or wives within an urban setting.

6.2.3 Mothering practices

In addition to the acquisition of consumer knowledge, the women had the role of looking after their families. An important means of achieving this was through consumption practices such as buying and browsing. However, in addition to these practices, the women all ensured that they allocated enough of their spare time to spend with their families. For many women, life in Bangkok had resulted in both themselves and their spouses working extremely long hours. This meant that there was limited time that the women had with their husbands. Of those women whose children were either at school during the day or lived back in their home village, the women enjoyed the company of their husbands at mealtimes away from their abode and returned home to relax between working shifts. Mealtimes with their husbands included sitting and eating together on plastic stools at nearby food vendors. 'Woman F' suggested that mealtimes were precious as they were one of the few opportunities for her and her husband to talk and spend time together.

"That includes buying our meals. We chat first about what would be nice to eat, and then we look for it."

In contrast, the women who had children in Bangkok not yet at school, returned home and ate and relaxed with their husbands and children. Ownership of a television also epitomised having quality family time together. Most women had managed to save up enough money to buy a small television for their households. A couple of women had been lucky and received a second hand television from other extended family members in Khlong Toey. Some women noted that because they owned a television, each day they returned home and watched soap operas on television as a way to relax. 'Woman I' finished her work at 10am, and recommenced work at 3pm. She found that by returning straight home after work, she could watch daytime television programmes while eating her food.

"It is the morning, and I really like to eat while I watch the soap opera."

Likewise, 'Woman D' said that she, her son and nephew had recently saved up and bought a television, and now enjoyed watching the television together. For 'Woman D', watching the television with the children was perceived as being a good parent through the association of watching television and quality family time.

"The family watch television regularly. It is our way of having family time when we watch it together. We have enough to live on, we can buy food, and now we can also watch the television."

In addition to the television, women with children in Bangkok also enjoyed quality time together with their children the nearby hypermarkets in Khlong Toey. A few of the women noted that their children enjoyed the games zone in the hypermarket, although they could not afford to play the coin operated games. Their children were happy to watch others play, or pretended to play themselves. During this time, the women sat around the games area and relaxed while they watched their children. The hypermarket provided a space where the women could enjoy their role as mother in an environment that they considered to be pleasant and clean.

Another instance of 'good' mothering that some of the women spoke about was knowing where their children could go to school in Bangkok. The education of their children was considered integral, and for the children who had joined their parents in Bangkok, the location and capacity of the school was important information that the women needed to know. Additionally, the women mentioned the importance of the school uniform. The women were proud that their children wore a Bangkok school uniform. Each year, the women budgeted for the annual purchase of new school uniforms. These woman returned each year to their preferred place where she sourced her children's school uniforms. The stores ranged from school stores, local stalls, the supermarket and local shops. 'Woman H' preferred to buy her children's school uniforms direct from their school as she was concerned that otherwise their uniforms would not meet the school's requirements and her children would not fit in with their peers.

> *"I always buy it from the school. Because you can only buy it from the school and know that you get the correct badges on it."*

Many women mentioned the acquisition of toys as a reflection of urban living. Despite none ever owning a toy during their own childhood, these women felt that being able to play with toys somehow made their own children more urban. This was particularly true for the toys that had been bought from the hypermarket or supermarket, and so the women often included toys into their budgets. 'Woman K' loved toys and would have loved to have some as a child herself, and so she preferred to buy her son the types of toys that she was attracted to and wished that she had as a child. 'Woman K' also preferred to save for slightly more expensive toys that were bought from the hypermarket, as she determined that coming from the hypermarket the toys had to be quality than the toys bought from a hawker. The opportunity and capacity to buy toys from the hypermarket represented to 'Woman K' an urban indulgence. She particularly liked the Lego[9] style blocks and noted that *"Thai people don't really know much about Lego"*, despite many similar imitations available in Thailand. This comment suggested that the purchase of these types of toys reflected upon her as knowing about toys, and so more urban. In contrast, 'Woman B' could

[9] Lego is a branded construction toy that consists of a number of interconnecting plastic blocks (Lego, 2015)

not afford to buy toys for her children, and so had her children save up themselves for their toys.

Women who had their children in Bangkok, either living with them in Khlong Toey, or living in a separate residence; would go out with their children and purchase the toys together. Women whose children remained in the rural village, this was not possible, and so the women went out by themselves and purchased toys to take back to their children. 'Woman I' tried to return back to her children in the rural village every few months, and had her son telephone her just before each trip home to tell her of the types of toys he thought that he would like. Her son now expected to get the type of toy that he had requested and so 'Woman I' looked around the different toy stalls and found the cheapest version available. In contrast, 'Woman E' said that her children in *Isaan* never expected any toys, and that she never intended to buy any toys when she set out shopping, but somehow she found herself always looking out at the toy sales for affordable toys for her children.

> *"I buy toys from both the permanent stall holders at the market, but I also look out for any factory seconds toys on a Wednesday. When we are at Lotus [the nearby Tesco Lotus Hypermarket in Khlong Toey], and we are looking around and there is a special on, then I also buy from there. To be honest, buying toys is completely dependent on how I feel on the day and where I happen to be. Wherever I go and I see toys that I like and I have the money and time to buy them, then I will probably buy them! I never have any intention to buy any toys. But when I am walking around Lotus or the market, and I see some toy that I like, then I think that I will buy it for the children."*

'Woman I' thought that as her children seemed to love receiving toys, and as she only returned back to see her children a couple of times a year, it was nice for her to give them a special present from Bangkok like toys.

Gift giving to their children was a way that the women could demonstrate affection, being a good mother, and providing their children with the material goods that the women had not had the opportunity to enjoy in their own childhood. Furthermore,

the purchase of toys for their children reflected a way to incorporate urban-ness into their children's lives, particularly for the children who remained in the rural village.

6.2.4 Identities and self-perception: Becoming urban

Women who have migrated from a rural environment to an urban one do not only experience changes to their household roles, but also how they view themselves within the urban setting. The effects of social urbanisation means that the women have wanted to feel that they are also more urban, in both their own appearance and how they feel about themselves. As mentioned in the above section, the acquisition of toys reflected their children as being viewed as similar to being an urban child. For women to demonstrate that they had moved away from the rural environment and were becoming urban, it was not toys, but the adornment of silver-plated jewellery and the use of different toiletries.

It was discussed in Chapter 5 that all women bought and sold gold jewellery. In addition to gold jewellery, some of the women liked to buy for themselves cheap silver plated jewellery. In 'Woman B''s opinion, silver plated jewellery represented a frivolous purchase, as there was no resale value. Despite this, 'Woman B' found that it made her feel good about herself to wear it, and that she felt beautiful. Buying and wearing accessories like silver jewellery were important to the women as it signified the social status that she could afford luxuries and could be identified as being urban instead of rural. The latter reference was because silver jewellery was not suited to be worn by manual rural workers back in *Isaan*, which in turn 'Woman B' felt that wearing it indicated that she was an urban dweller and no longer a rural peasant working on the land.

> *"Whereas the silver has no real value to sell on afterwards. Everyone knows it is not worth anything. I stock up on silver when I have the money, and I use it when I want to put something on and feel good. When I don't use it, I just put it back in the cardboard box. I like to wear the silver, as I can usually find a piece in my box that matches my mood. It makes me feel more beautiful."*

In the case of 'Woman A', it was not the adornment of silver-plated jewellery that she perceived as fitting in to her urban surrounds, but having purchased Amway[10] branded toiletries. 'Woman A' noted that she regularly ordered small quantities of Amway products and, according to the Amway distribution model, had the products hand-delivered to her by the local Amway representative. 'Woman A' bought the Amway products despite not actually planning to use them herself. 'Woman A' felt that she gained a level of status when she gave away to other people a foreign product that was considered to be good quality and was not readily available outside of urban centres.

> *"I only buy Amway lotions. I always order from the same lady. She can deliver the items and pick up my next order. Things like shampoo, toothpaste, lotions. Actually, I don't really use the Amway products that much. I have many unopened products that I give away to my poorer friends in Khlong Toey or my family in Isaan. I like the Amway products as they are good quality and get delivered to me."*

According to the women, urban dwellers were not exposed to the elements as they did not labour on farms, and so urban women were often seen as having a whiter skin colour. In contrast, rural women typically had a darker skin.

As women from the rural provinces who lived in Khlong Toey, most of the women wanted to lighten their skin tone as they felt that a lighter skin colour symbolised urban-ness. Partly from wanting to fit-in, and partly from wanting to feel better about their own image, many women applied moisturising creams that had a whitening agent included, and would essentially lighten the colour of their skin. 'Woman H' used daily a whitening cream as she felt that it made her look less provincial and more urbanised, like the celebrities she had seen on television.

> *"You don't look so much like a peasant with white skin, and anyway the people on television all have white skin."*

[10] Amway is a large global retailer of health and beauty products that distributes its products through independent business owners (Amway, 2015)

Likewise, 'Woman I' had only bought whitening cream since she arrived in Khlong Toey around ten years ago. The cream had been recommended to her from a migrant friend who also lived in Khlong Toey. 'Woman I' described her use of whitening cream as a way to improve her looks.

> *"Because my friend used it, and my friend's face looked really good and young and white. So I decided that I wanted to be like that too. It makes my face look more white, more smooth and more beautiful. It makes me look good."*

For 'Woman I', the use of whitening cream has helped her feel better about herself, and that she was more beautiful by looking whiter.

6.3 Discussion: Providing through consumption

Following the analysis of the interview data in Section 6.2, the following sections of this chapter discuss the women's responses in context to the theories from Chapters 2 and 3.

As low-income migrant women who lived in Bangkok, in addition to being a provisioner, the women were instrumental in setting household budgets that often applied savings regimes. Greenwood (2013) contended that low-income migrant women were often marginalised as their resilience to financial shocks was typically low and that women lacked roles in decision making. In contrast, Brody's (2006) research suggested Thai women regularly handled the family's finances (Brody, 2006) and Curran et al. (2005) determined that Thai women were the primary decision maker when making purchases (Curran, Garip, Chung, & Tangchonlatip, 2005). Both Brody and Curran et al.'s findings were reflected in the women in Khlong Toey as they had key roles in their household decision making, actively managed and planned their household budgets, and made the purchases. Financial management required a high degree of consumer knowledge which included a keen awareness of prices, functionality and quality. Consistent with Rappaport (2000), the

domesticated role of the women in Khlong Toey extended beyond their own house and into the consumption spaces in which they participated.

In order to be good wives and good mothers, the women in Khlong Toey tried to ensure that their precious non-working time also included having time with their husbands and children. This included taking their children out with them to the hypermarket or when buying their children toys. Consistent with Gregson's and Crewe's (2003) discussion regarding women on low-incomes often give their family's needs over their own (Gregson & Crewe, 2003). Having time with their children was a means in which the women in Khlong Toey demonstrated their affection for their family and engaged in mothering. The demonstration of affection through consumption was discussed by Cockburn-Wotton et al. (2008), who noted that everyday consumption related activities of women were a means to nurturing the women's families (Cockburn-Wotton, Pritchard, Morgan, & Jones, 2008, p. 409). Furthermore, the women in Khlong Toey continually balanced how they provided for their rural and urban families, as well as meeting their own needs. Providing through consumption for families included financial assistance, material goods and nurturing. Whereas, providing for one's self included making oneself feel beautiful and urban.

6.3.1 Providing for family

Through consumption practices, the women in Khlong Toey provided for their families and for themselves. This included the family members who they lived with in Bangkok, as well as their family members who remained back in their rural village. The women in Khlong Toey provisioned household goods and ensured that family members in Bangkok had the goods that they needed.

Consistent with Gregson's and Crewe's (2003) discussion regarding how women on low-incomes often give their family's needs over their own (Gregson & Crewe, 2003), the women in Khlong Toey exhibited the same tendencies, and often forewent products for themselves in order to provide for their families. As Cockburn-Wotton et al. (2008) noted mundane consumption practices, such as grocery shopping

are vital activities for mothers to foster and nurture families (Cockburn-Wotton, Pritchard, Morgan, & Jones, 2008, p. 409).

In addition to acquiring goods, the women in Khlong Toey contributed to their households by their decision-making and acquisition of consumer knowledge. Curran et al.'s (2005) determined that Thai women were the primary decision makers when making purchases (Curran, Garip, Chung, & Tangchonlatip, 2005). The level of participation as demonstrated by the women in Khlong Toey was consistent with Curran et al.'s (2005) findings. These findings also suggest that the women in Khlong Toey were the primary decision maker for consumption related decisions. Brody's (2006) research suggested that Thai women regularly handled the family finances (Brody, 2006), and this was true for women in Khlong Toey, who were not only actively involved in the decision making processes, but also took on the role as manager of the family finances, which included planning household budgets and savings regimes.

In addition to providing for their urban households, the women in Khlong Toey also provided for their families back in their rural villages. These expectations were as Curran and Saguy (2001) have noted, part of their matrilineal obligations and family duties evident in rural Thai culture (Curran & Saguy, 2001). In contrast to Esara's (2004) view that assistance is expected to be financial, some of the women in this research preferred to personally take the monies with them when they visited and be involved in the purchase of material goods for their families. The inclination to not send monies back is consistent with studies by Curran and Saguy (2001) and Knodel and Saengtienchai (2007) who found that when the women sent back cash, the women did not trust how their remittances were being spent (Knodel & Saengtienchai, 2007).

6.3.2 Improving social status of the family

The Khlong Toey women also provided for their family in order to confirm the family social status or identity. Silva (2007) suggested that when women do consume on behalf of their household, it was for both provisioning and determining the family

identity or ideals (Silva, 2007). Women in Khlong Toey improved their family social status through consumption that included the purchase of Amway products, buying new, albeit seconds, clothes for friends and family back in the village and the ownership of electrical items such as televisions. The Amway products provided increased social status due to the brand being foreign, whereas the ownership of a television demonstrated to peers and neighbours both the capacity to own a television, and also being able to have family me together in front of the television, which epitomised to the women in Khlong Toey quality family time. The quality family time fits Silva's (2007) description of consuming in order to provide what the family desires, as the concept of quality family time was highly desirable to the women in Khlong Toey. Gregson & Crewe's (2003) research that showed a family's identity through second hand consumption habits can be viewed as socially unacceptable was not evident in the responses by the women in Khlong Toey.

6.3.3 Providing for self

The women in Khlong Toey also provided for themselves through consumption practices. This included buying goods that made women feel more beautiful or desirable, such as silver-plated jewellery or whitening creams. The use of whitening creams was consistent with McIntosh's (2013) conclusion that women often used consumption practices to define themselves and their social status (McIntosh, 2013). By applying whitening cream, the women in Khlong Toey were able to feel more urban by lightening their skin colour. Gregson and Crewe (2003) suggested that people use consumption in order to fit in (Gregson & Crewe, 2003, p. 92), and it is possible that the women in Khlong Toey also wanted to fit in and look like urban people, who typically have lighter skin tone than their rural counterparts.

6.4 Discussion: Urban identities

The urbanisation of identity related to how the women in Khlong Toey have shaped their identities. This section looks at the literature that is available and determines the relevance that existing and emerging research has in the context of the women in

Khlong Toey. The urbanisation of identity also included an examination of social exclusion from consumption spaces and practices when cohorts of society were not from the middle classes.

6.4.1 Shaping identities

The women in Khlong Toey all arrived in Bangkok as rural migrants. However, the identities that they arrived with have not necessarily been maintained. Rappaport (2000) noted, the role and identity of women is influenced and shaped by their consumption practices. The women in Khlong Toey maintain their gendered household roles, such as shopping and cleaning. However, unlike the research undertaken by Mortimer and Clarke (2011), who stated that when a woman enters the workforce, household roles become less gendered (Mortimer & Clarke, 2011). However, for women in Khlong Toey, this was not the case, as although the women worked long hours, provisioning continued to be a gendered role. If anything, the women's roles in Khlong Toey had been expanded to include other consumption practices, such as the acquisition of consumer knowledge as well as purchases.

Hogg, Maclaren and Curasi (2003) determined that across a woman's lifecycle, her role and identities continue to change. Ogle et al. (2013) expanded on this and suggested that at any one time, a woman's notion of her own identity could be maintained, disrupted or affirmed. Reasons for identities being reconfigured included the transitioning of family roles (Ogle, Tyner, & Schofield-Tomschin, 2013). The manner that the women in Khlong Toey, who had come from the country, were able to take on roles for making consumption related decisions in an urban environment was consistent with Ogle et.al.'s and demonstrated that the women were able to affirm a new identity within Bangkok. Furthermore, the women maintain their identities as mother, wife and daughter, while disrupting their identity as a dark skinned peasant. Duffy (2012a) established that self-perception is usually challenged by both the emerging and existing sub-cultures. The influence of sub-cultures was evident in the way that the women in Khlong Toey perceived themselves through watching soap operas on the television and by going to the, hypermarket.

While the women in Khlong Toey maintain their identity within their household, as mother, wife and daughter, their lives in Bangkok are different to the lives they had in the rural provinces, and were constantly changing within the urban environment. This was consistent with Duffy (2012a), who suggested that the combination of gendered roles within their households, the feminisation of consumption spaces and changing identities showed that women and consumption are interconnected (Duffy, 2012a). Duffy expanded on this notion that there was a continual negotiation between a woman's gender role and the space that she occupied (Duffy, 2012a).

6.4.2 Positive gains and returns through consumption

Radner (1995) determined that women practice consumption by consciously seeking financial or materialistic gains or positive returns such as feelings of pleasure or improved identities. The expectation to gain from a consumption related activity can be through pleasure, the acquisition of a material good or the capacity reconstruct their identity " (Radner, 1995, p. xiv). The women of Khlong Toey consume in order to survive as well as to gain. When provisioning for their families, the women invest their time and money, and their gain to sustain their family. However, when the women save their money for gold jewellery, or for a television, they are also consuming in order to get a return. Furthermore, the capacity for urban low-income women in Thailand to provide for their rural-based families was observed by Brody (2006) to be an indicator of a successful Thai urban woman (Brody, 2006, p. 550).

6.4.3 Urban exclusions and marginalisation

Greenwood's (2013) research contended that low-income migrant women were often marginalised as their resilience to financial shocks was typically low and that women lacked roles in decision making. However, the women in this thesis have shown that not only do they have strong active roles in everyday decision making, particularly when provisioning for their families, they are also capable of putting in place strategies such as the purchase of gold to sustain their families through tough times. The capacity to apply such strategies make the women incredibly resilient. The

women in Khlong Toey did not speak of being socially excluded from any consumption space. Despite not being socially excluded, the women did seek to change their physical appearance in order to feel and look more urban through the use of whitening creams and wearing silver-plated jewellery. Bauman suggested that by changing one's physical appearance was a symbol of establishing both urban identity and a way to ensure social inclusion Bauman (2005).

The urbanisation of the identities of the women in Khlong Toey are shaped by a combination of the urban environment, the sub-cultures, social values and norms and how the women perceive themselves. Through the purchase of objects, wearing jewellery or applying whitening cream, the women's identities are constantly being maintained, disrupted and affirmed. Although the women do consume in order to gain something, a lot of their consumption practices are centred on provisioning for their families.

6.5 Summary

The findings presented in this chapter show that women continually balance both the needs of their rural family members (who also often included their own children) with the need to participate in urban consumption practices, including provisioning for their Bangkok household and living their own urban ideals. The women are knowledgeable about their consumption practices, and have learnt to navigate not only the geographies of Bangkok, but also where and how to get around a variety of urban consumption spaces too. Within their urban lives, the women also maintain, disrupt and affirm their own notions of their identities. The women's identities are influenced by both their household roles, but also the emerging urban sub-cultures that they women are exposed to. This study found that unlike in western societies, as the women in Khlong Toey enter the workforce, their roles, particularly those that related to consumption do not become less gendered. If anything, their roles become even more gendered as they take on the responsibility of decision making and acquisition of consumer knowledge.

Following the discussion in this Chapter of the urban practices and rural expectations for women in Khlong Toey, Chapter 7 will provide a discussion of urban development, women and consumption before deliberating the conclusion and recommendations for this research.

7 Thesis conclusions: Interrelations between development, women and consumption

7.1 Consumption is significant in everyday lives

This thesis sought to explore the importance of consumption spaces and patterns in the everyday lives of migrant women living in the low-income settlement of Khlong Toey, Bangkok. The main aim of the research was:

> ***To explore the role and significance of urban consumption spaces and practices in the everyday lives of low-income women living in Khlong Toey, Bangkok.***

This research positioned consumption within development discourses that included urban livelihoods, urban poverty, and gender development. As discussed in Chapter 2, consumption practices contribute to people's sense of identity and belonging. Through consumption, low-income women are able to self-actualise, and acquire material goods and information. Women can also play a dominant role within consumption related household decisions. Consumption is a means to demonstrate the uplifting of families from poverty and the improvement of family lifestyles. Consumption related studies have predominantly focused on the experiences of the middle classes in developed countries. However, this thesis is placed within an emerging body of literature that concentrates on consumption within developing countries, and contributes by demonstrating the interrelations between consumption and development outcomes. This study sits in contrast to other development based consumption studies (Isaacs, 2009 and Hill, 2010), as it focuses on low-income women, rather than women from the middle classes.

Applying a qualitative methodology, which consisted of researcher observations and in-depth open-ended semi-structured interviews with 11 women, this research reveals the experiences of low-income urban women and offers new insights into the role of consumption practices and spaces by responding to two Research Objectives:

Research Objective 1: To examine what urban consumption spaces represent and what they mean for women's everyday lives in Khlong Toey.

Research Objective 2: To investigate the roles and functions of consumption practices for rural women who have migrated to urban Khlong Toey.

The following two sections each respond to a Research Objective by interpreting the key findings from Chapters 5 and 6 in the context of the literature as discussed in Chapters 2 and 3.

7.2 Meanings of consumption spaces in everyday lives of women in Khlong Toey

This section responds to Research Objective 1, and relates the main research findings from Chapter 5 with the theoretical concepts as discussed in Chapters 2 and 3. The navigation and negotiation, levels of trust and loyalty, and the inclusionary nature of urban consumption spaces, all contribute to defining and representing consumption spaces in the everyday lives of low-income women in Khlong Toey.

7.2.1 Negotiation and navigation of geographies

One response to Research Objective 1, is that consumption spaces are important in everyday lives as they need to be navigated and negotiated. Consumption spaces are not only spaces for the provisioning of basic household goods, but are also used for socialisation, pleasure and the acquisition of luxury items. In Chapter 5, it was evident that the women in this study were acutely aware of how far their household budgets could stretch, and in order to maximise their budgets, the women needed to know where they could get the best value possible. For some women, this included navigating their way across unfamiliar urban territory to new consumption spaces. Furthermore consumption spaces such as hypermarkets and malls were for many women a foreign experience, which had to be learnt and negotiated. According to Vorng (2011) 'new' consumption spaces such as hypermarkets and malls are used by

consumers who belong to the right social hierarchies or groups, namely the middle classes, who could afford in terms of both money and time to use malls. In contrast, the women in this study regularly and confidently negotiated both the physical aspects, such as the layout of these places, as well as the unwritten rules of participation, such as acceptable dress code and modes of behaviour. Furthermore, the women of Khlong Toey learnt to utilise different spaces for different products and purposes. The confidence that the women in this study had in negotiating urban consumption spaces helped contribute to the women actualising self-empowerment, which is a process that Basiago (1999) describes as one of the challenges faced by the urban poor.

7.2.2 Trust and loyalty

A second response to Research Objective 1, is that consumption spaces represent trust and loyalty. In Chapter 3, it was discussed that Thai consumption spaces epitomise development in Thailand. Traditional spaces were considered dirty and backward, and 'new' modern urban spaces were decidedly clean, progressive and essentially good and pleasurable (Brody, 2006; Isaacs, 2009). The women of Khlong Toey also responded in similar terms when describing their thoughts on the variety of consumption spaces that they used. The significance of these responses, as discussed in Chapter 5, was that despite notions of some spaces being cleaner or dirtier, or progressive compared to backward, the women showed their preferences to utilise spaces for specific purchases or activities. The women's decision to use one space over another was entrenched in perceptions of trust, loyalty, security, and cost. In this respect, this research is consistent with Isaacs et al. (2010) who concluded that the middle classes also rely on their quality judgements based on trust and social networks.

7.2.3 Places of inclusion

Low-income women, particularly urban migrant women are often seen as excluded or marginalised from society (Greenwood, 2013). Consumption spaces can be markers of belonging, or spaces of exclusion (Bauman 2005). Hill (2010) and Ward and Mouyly (2013) have all concluded in their research that consumption spaces tend to be exclusionary spaces for low-income cohorts and that modern spaces implement management and control mechanisms to ensure that low-income consumers are excluded. Clarke (2000) expands on this suggesting that such mechanisms are driven by middle class norms, values and expectations. However, this was not the experiences of the women in Khlong Toey, who not only actively engaged in a variety of consumption practices in spaces that were assumed in previous studies to belong to the Thai urban middle classes, and so be socially exclusionary (Vorng, 2011; Ockey, 2004), but discussed how these spaces were regularly utilised within their everyday consumption practices.

In summary, the three above issues specifically respond to Research Objective 1; and within development discourse, the consumption spaces represented places where the women of Khlong Toey gained confidence, control and autonomy. The women learnt how to navigate urban spaces that were traditionally viewed as socially exclusive and trusted their own judgements on where to go for different products.

7.3 Roles and function of consumption practices in women's changing lives

This section discusses implications for Research Objective 2 and explains that consumption practices have important roles and functions in the women's changing lives. The women undertake roles of providing and caring for their families, and being actively engaged in consumption related decision making for their households. The adoption of urban ways, particularly urban consumption practices contribute to the women shaping their identity in order to feel more at home in their urban environment.

7.3.1 Providing for family

Consumption practices are a way in which the women in Khlong Toey provide for their families. However, there is more to consumption than just provision. The women are also able to combine providing and provisoning for their family with socialisation and activities for pleasure.

Consumption as a means of family provision is consistent with the research as presented by Curran et al. (2005) that women are both the primary decision maker for consumption related choices and also the managers of family finances and budgets. As with low-income women elsewhere, the needs of their family are often placed before their own (Gregson & Crewe, 2003). Likewise, as evident in studies by Wiig and Smith (2008) and Cockburn-Wotten et al. (2008), the women in Khlong Toey maintain their roles as nurturing providers and demonstrate through daily consumption their affection for their families.

This affection is also shown through the women being able to plan and provide for their desires and aspirations of their families through the accumulation of desirable material items. The practices of consumption being associated with are presented in previous research focused on the Thai middle classes undertaken by Isaacs (2009), Cai and Shannon (2012), Vorng (2011) and Ockey (2004). It is, however, shown by this study that it is not only the middle classes who consume to provide for their families through the accumulation of trendy or material goods; but the low-income women of Khlong Toey actively seek information, plan, budget for and purchase items of desire, particularly toys and cosmetics. Furthermore, the provisioning for their families is not limited to material goods collated within their Khlong Toey household, but also extends to providing for their rural-based families. This pattern of giving to rural-based family members through remittances and gifts is consistent with Esara's (2004) observations that low-income Thai women are expected by their families to continue to provide financially for their parents after urban migration. Furthermore, as per Curran and Saguy (2001) and Knodel and Saengtienchai (2007), financial remittances are important to the financial security and well-being of rural family members, this was something that most of the Khlong Toey women accepted was natural and normal.

Vorng (2011) notes that spare time is an indulgence, and Cai and Shannon (2012) assume socialisation in malls as an activity for the Thai urban middle classes. This research found that while spare time was not readily available, the women did use shopping practices as a means of socialisation, whether this was at the mall or the market. .

7.3.2 Active engagement in household decision making

In addition to consumption being an important arena for provisioning and socialisation, this study found that consumption practices provide the low-income women of Khlong Toey a level of autonomy, control and empowerment. Not only are the women the key decision makers of household consumption (Curran et al., 2005), the women also demonstrated that they were actively engaged in household decisions. This is in contrast to other studies (Greenwood, 2013) who suggest that low-income migrant women often lack decision making roles and are marginalised. Furthermore, this research points to the women in Khlong Toey regularly demonstrating not only actively engagement in household decision making, but that they also consciously acquire knowledge in order to ensure that they were confident in their decisions being right for their families.

7.3.3 Adopting urban ways

Besides knowledge acquisition, consumption functions as a means of 'feeling at home' in a place. It is evident from several studies, namely Bauman (2005), Jackson and Holbrook (1995) and Gregson, Metcalfe and Crewe (2007), that people, in order to fit in or be accepted, modify their appearance according to the surrounding sub-culture or social environment. This pattern is also evident in this research as the women of Khlong Toey consume products that they feel are more appropriate to the urban environment and seek to change their appearance in order to feel more beautiful. Such consumption in their own eyes, contributes to looking more urban. The adoption of urban ways fits with striving to be perceived as more civilised within

the Thai concept of *khwam siwilai,* a construct that underpins urban development in Thailand. The adoption of urban practices enables low-income migrant women to feel modern and urbanised, and contributes to changing not only how the women perceive themselves within their own social peer group, but also within the context of their urban environment.

7.3.4 Shaping identity

Participation in modern life requires adoption and creation of social identities (Bauman, 2005). Social identities and gender roles are influenced and challenged by sub-cultures (Duffy, 2012a). Anglo-American based research from several consumption theorists, including Gregson, Crewe & Brooks (2002), Ogle et al. (2013), Gregson, Metcalfe and Crewe (2007) and Mansvelt (2005), points to consumption being an integral factor for maintaining and affirming identities. This study demonstrated that for the low-income migrant women living in Khlong Toey, consumption practices were important to both the social and individual identities of women and their families. This research found that the women felt their place within the social hierarchy as improved, that they were more socially respectable through the acquisition of social capital and significantly, and belonged to a modern and progressive Thailand. The latter is of great consequence, as the sense of belonging is a sentiment that the women take back with them and share with their rural family members, particularly their children.

Status of family, perception of self, practicing gender roles and the transitioning of family roles all influence and get influenced by consumption practices. Expanding on this, and consistent with Radner's (1995) theory that women practice consumption in order to gain. Gains for women in Khlong Toey included provisioning for the family, but also the capacity to feel better about oneself by behaving or acting in a more urban manner, and being able fit in to socialise and interact with consumption spaces that were decidedly 'urban', 'modern', 'progressive' and 'clean', and the acquisition of material goods. There is a strong focus within consumption related research regarding the material goods or the associated brand messages that embody social identity (Grayson & Martinec, 2004)**;** and for items such as gold and silver jewellery,

clothes bought from a hypermarket or the use of a foreign branded whitening cream, both the ownership and usage contributed to the women identifying themselves as looking and feeling more urban, less rural, more clean, and less backward. Furthermore, through giving toys and other material items, their rural-based children and parents are also able to feel more urban within their rural lives. The ownership of urban goods helped the women feel more urban, and essentially decreased the social polarisation of perceptions between being considered as "civilised" or being "backward", which currently exists between Thai urban and rural societies.

In summary, the above four issues specifically respond to Research Objective 2. Within development discourse, the roles and functions of consumption practices of the women in Khlong Toey enabled the women to meet the basic needs of their families, and within urban and rural livelihoods, provide for their urban household and maintain commitment to their rural-based families. Within a gender development framework, consumption practices were also important to the way the women of Khlong Toey perceived themselves, and used consumption to feel at home in their urban environment; and so enabling the women to feel more beautiful and more confident.

7.4 Reflections

Both consumption spaces and practices are important in the changing lives of migrant women in Khlong Toey. This research demonstrated that there are interrelations across urban development, women and consumption. Interrelations are evident through the everyday activities of provisioning, caring for family, acquiring autonomy and control, and adopting urban ways and identity. This research looked at consumption in terms of development and was framed within the development constructs of rural-urban migration, urban livelihoods and gender roles. Within this framework, consumption spaces and practices were seen as important within the everyday lives of low-income migrant women.

My research revealed that it is not just women's production that leads to development outcomes, but development outcomes are also closely linked with consumption

practices and spaces. Framed within the development discourse of urban livelihoods, consumption is fundamentally linked with providing for daily basic needs. As discussed in Chapter 5, the women, as the primary consumer for their households, needed to be careful with how they spent their money, as meeting basic needs was fraught with limited cash-flow, and financial shocks and stresses; and so did not mean the same thing every day. The results of the effort that the women put into their practices of purchase, browsing and comparing prices, ensured that their family diet was adequate and healthy; this is in contrast to studies by Kumar et al. (2013) and Khosla (2012) who noted the struggle low-income urban women often had in providing healthy food options for their families. To meet their families' daily basic needs, the women in Khlong Toey found out where they could go to shop or exchange gold assets, and knew which space represented the most value for their daily requirements. Furthermore, in addition to meeting basic needs, the women actively plan and cater for meeting the secondary and often future needs of their families, including school fees and uniforms.

In addition to providing for their daily basic needs, and framed within the development discourse of gender roles, the Khlong Toey women also developed the confidence and capability to navigate and negotiate foreign urban spaces, and then be empowered to pass on this knowledge to the men in their households so they also know where to buy things. As discussed in Chapter 3, young Thai rural-urban migrant women often gain autonomy and increased mobility in Bangkok (see Mills, 1998). This thesis expands on Mills, as discussed in Chapter 6, the capacity to walk competently around urban consumption spaces as well as becoming the key decision maker for consumption related decisions contributed to the Khlong Toey women's improved autonomy. Furthermore, the women in this study had to learn themselves how to provision for their families in an urban environment, and could not rely on intergenerational consumption practices, which as Fisher and Combs (2007) noted were often how women learnt provision related duties.

As discussed in Chapter 6, the women of Khlong Toey provided for both their urban and rural families. Despite living in Khlong Toey, the women demonstrated their ongoing commitment and strong involvement with their rural families through financial remittances, the purchase of material goods and the giving of gifts, such as

pretty clothes for their female family members or toys for their children. The provision of material goods instead of monies were for many of the women considered to be a more effective way for the women to provide for their rural families, and is confirmed by Knodel and Saengtichai (2007) as discussed in Chapter 3.

The women had access to income, and so were enabled to consume. The women were economically engaged as both economic contributors and household provisioners. Through provisioning for their households, the women demonstrated through their consumption practices that their economic contribution relied upon them being excellent financial managers. Within development theory, the women's economic contribution fits within both the discourses of gaining autonomy within gender development and retaining strong familial links and commitment within rural and urban livelihoods.

It is not just production that leads to development outcomes, and this thesis shows that development outcomes are also closely linked with consumption practices and spaces. Consumption practices and spaces matter to the lived experiences of low-income urban women through shaping meaning, identity, sociality and a sense of being at home in urban space.

8 References

Aizura, A. (2009, September). Where health and beauty meet: Femininity and racialisation in Thai cosmetic surgery clinics. *Asian Studies Review, 33*, 303-317.

Albright, A., Aurchaikarn, S., Chaiyanun, C., Dharani, P., Hanson, P., Nokdhes, N., & Sae-Lim, N. (2011). *Identifying strategies to facilitate a successful relocation. The informal settlement of Klong Toey.* Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok. Retrieved February 26, 2012, from https://www.wpi.edu/Pubs/E-project/Available/E-project-030311-212634/unrestricted/DPF_final_report_3.4.11.pdf

Amway. (2015). *Our company*. Retrieved February 4, 2014, from Amway: https://www.amway.com.au/Content/Article?PageCode=aboutAmwayOurCompany&c=EN-AU

Askew, M. (2002). *Bangkok: Place, practice and representation.* New York: Routledge.

Atlas.ti. (2014). *What is qualitative analysis of data?* Retrieved June 10, 2014, from atlas.ti : Qualitative Data Analysis: http://www.atlasti.com/qualitative-analysis-of-data.html

Auffrey, C. (2002). Informal settlements of Chiang Mai. In M. Romanos, & C. Auffrey (Eds.), *Managing intermediate size cities: Sustainable development in a growth region of Thailand* (Vol. GeoJournal Library Volume 69, pp. 253-273). Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Bachman, R., & Schutt, R. K. (2013). *The practice of research in criminology and criminal justice* (5th ed.). New York: Sage Publications, Inc.

Balu, M. (2005, June). *Data analysis procedures.* Retrieved June 10, 2014, from Manchester Metropolitan University: http://www.celt.mmu.ac.uk/researchmethods/Modules/Data_analysis/index.php

Barles, S. (2010). Society, energy and materials: the contribution of urban metabolism studies to sustainable urban development issues. *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management, 53*(4), 439-455.

Barney, K. (2012, January). Land, livelihoods, and remittances. *Critical Asian Studies, 44*(1), 57-83.

Basiago, A. (1999). Economic, social, and environmental sustainability in development theory and urban planning practice. *The Environmentalist, 19*, 145-161.

Baudrillard, J. (1998). *The consumer society, myths and structures.* London: Sage.

Bauman, Z. (2005). *Work, consumerism and the new poor* (2 ed.). Berkshire, England: Open University Press.

Baxter, P., & Jack, S. (2008, December). Qualitative case study methodology: Study design and implementation for novice researchers. *The Qualitative Report, 13*(4), 544-559.

Bhowmik, S. K. (2005, May 8). Street vendors in Asia: A review. *Economic and Political Weekly, 40*(22/23), 2256-2264.

Big C. (2015). *Big C Supercenter*. Retrieved February 4, 2015, from Investor relations: http://corporate.bigc.co.th/en/

Bird, D., Caldwell, H., & DeFanti, H. (2010). The quest for beauty: Asia's fascination with pale skin. In R. A. Oglesby, H. P. Leblanc, & M. G. Adams (Eds.), *Business research yearbook* (Vol. XVII, pp. 26-33). Beltsville, MD, United States of America: International Academy of Business Disciplines.

Bolton, G. (2010). *Reflective practice: Writing and professional development* (3rd ed.). London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Boonyabancha, S. (2008). Upgrading Thailand's urban settlements: A community driven process of social development. In C. O. Moser, & A. Ahmad Dani (Eds.), *Assets, livelihoods and social policy* (p. 195). Washington DC: The World Bank.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*, 77-101.

Brickell, K. (2011). “We don't forget the old rice pot when we get the new one”: Discourses on Ideals and Practices of Women in Contemporary Cambodia. *Signs, 36*(2), 437-463.

Brody, A. (2006). The cleaners you aren’t meant to see: Order, hygiene and everyday politics in a Bangkok shopping mall. *Antipode, 38*(3), 534-556.

Cai, Y., & Shannon, R. (2012). Personal values and mall shopping behavior: The mediating role of attitude and intention among Chinese and Thai consumers. *Australasian Marketing Journal, 20*, 37-47.

Campbell, S. (1996, Summer). Green cities, growing cities, just cities? Urban planning and the contradictions of sustainable development. *Journal of the American Planning Association, 62*(3), 296-312.

Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions. (2008). *Women, slums and urbanisation: Examining the causes and consequences.* Geneva: Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions.

Chant, S., & McIlwaine, C. (2013). Gender, urban development and the politics of space. *State of Women in Cities 2012/2013.* London: UNHABITAT.

Chantavanich, S., Laodumrongchai, S., Than, M., & Wong-a-thitikul, A. (2009). *Rapid assessment on the impacts of the economic downturn on workers in Thailand.* Chulalongkorn University, Phase I, Bangkok: Asian Research Centre for Migration.

Clarke, D. B. (2010). The seduction of space. In D. Goodman, M. K. Goodman, & M. Redclift (Eds.), *Consuming space: Placing consumption in perspective* (pp. 57-96). Farham, Surrey, England: Ashgate Publishing Limited.

Cockburn-Wotton, C., Pritchard, A., Morgan, N., & Jones, E. (2008). "It's her Shopping list!" Exploring gender, leisure and power in grocery shopping. *Leisure/Loisr, 32*(2), 407-436.

Colby, R. (2010). *Qualitative research: Interpreting observations and interviews.* Retrieved June 10, 2014, from University of Denver: http://wow.richardcolby.net/wp-content/uploads/2010/03/Chapter7.pdf

Commonwealth Secretariat. (2009, December). *Gender in Planning and Urban Development.* Retrieved October 14, 2014, from Commonwealth Secretariat: http://www.thecommonwealth.org/publications

Community Organizations Development Institute. (2014). *Baan Mankong housing collective: Slums and spirit houses.* Retrieved March 15, 2014, from CODI: http://www.codi.or.th/housing/SpiritHouses.html

CP All. (2015, February 4). *CP All*. Retrieved from Investor relations operational highlights: https://www.cpall.co.th/Investor-Relations/operational-highlights

Curran, S. R., & Saguy, A. C. (2001, June). Migration and cultural change: A role for gender and social networks. *Journal of International Women's Studies, 2*(3), 54-77.

Curran, S., Garip, F., Chung, C. Y., & Tangchonlatip, K. (2005, September). Gendered migrant social capital: Evidence from Thailand. *Social Forces, 84*(1), 225-255.

Daniere, A., & NaRanong, A. (2009). Tanigle and intangible civic spaces in Bangkok's slums. In A. Daniere, & M. Douglass (Eds.), *The politics of civic space in Asia: Building urban communities* (pp. 72-92). New York: Routledge.

De Jong, G. F. (2000). Expectations, gender, and norms in migration decision-making. *Population Studies: A Journal of Demography, 54*(3), 307-319.

De Jong, G. F., Richter, K., & Isarabhakdi, P. (1996). Gender, values, and intentions to move in rural Thailand. *International Migration Review, 30*(3), 748-770.

DiCicco-Bloom, B., & Crabtree, B. F. (2006). The qualitative research interview. *Medical Education, 40*, 314-321.

Douglass, M., Ard-Am, O., & Ki Kim, I. (2002). Urban poverty and the environment - Social capital and state-community synergy in Seoul and Bangkok. In P. Evans (Ed.),

Livable cities? The politics of urban livelihood and sustainability (pp. 31-66). Berkeley: University of California Press.

Duffy, D. (2012a). Constructing 'masculine' identities: Consuming 'feminine' practices. In R. Belk, & A. Ruvio (Eds.), *The Routledge companion to identity and consumption* (pp. 344-352). London: Routledge.

Duffy, D. (2012b). Traversing the matriarch's domain: How young men negotiate the feminized space of fashion consumption and self-presentation. In R. W. Belk, S. Askegaard, & L. Scott (Eds.), *Research in consumer behaviour* (Vol. 14, pp. 69-87). Bingley, West Yorkshire, England: Emerald Group Publishing Ltd. doi:10.1108/S0885-2111(2012)0000014008

Duranton, G. (2008, August). Viewpoint: From cities to productivity and growth in developing countries. *The Canaditan Journal of Economics/Revue Canadienne d'Economique, 41*(3), 689-736.

Dwyer, S. C., & Buckle, J. L. (2009). The space between: On being an insider-outsider in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 8*(1), 54-63.

Esara, P. (2004). Women will keep the household. *Critical Asian Studies, 36*(2), 199-216.

FamilyMart. (2015). *FamilyMart*. Retrieved February 4, 2015, from Message from CEO: http://www.familymart.co.th/about1_en.html

Farag, S., Weltevreden, J., van Rietbergen, T., Dijst, M., & van Oort, F. (2006). E-shopping in the Netherlands: Does geography matter? *Environment and Planning B: Planning and Design, 33*, 59-74.

Featherstone, M. (1991). *Consumer culture and postmodernism* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.

Fernquest, J. (2012, February 3). *Thailand minimum daily wage*. Retrieved March 15, 2014, from Bangkok Post: http://www.bangkokpost.com/learning/learning-from-news/278162/300-baht-minimum-daily-wage

Fisher, K. E., & Combs, T. (2007). Shop and talk: Supporting women's nurturing and providing roles through mobile technology. *Grace Hopper Conference.* Orlando, Florida: Anita Borg Institute. Retrieved March 10, 2014, from http://www.anitaborg.org

Fuentes, C. (2012). *Socio-cultural retailing: A literature review.* Lund, Sweden: Lund University. Retrieved April 25, 2014, from http://lup.lub.lu.se/record/2861099

Gardner, K., & Lewis, D. (1996). *Anthropology, development and the post-modern challenge.* London: Pluto Press.

Garip, F., & Curran, S. (2010). Increasing migration, diverging communities: Changing character of migrant streams in rural Thailand. *Popul Research and Policy Review, 29*, 659-685.

Glassman, J., & Sneddon, C. (2003, November). Chiang Mai and Khon Kaen as growth poles: Regional industrial development in Thailand and its implications for urban sustainability. *American Academy of Political and Social Science, 590*, 93-115.

Goodman, M. K., Goodman, D., & Redclift, M. (2010). Introduction: Situating consumption, space and place. In D. Goodman, M. K. Goodman, & M. Redclift (Eds.), *Consuming space: Placing consumption in perspective* (pp. 3-40). Farham, Surrey, England: Ashgate Publishing Limited.

Grayson, K., & Martinec, R. (2004). Consumer perceptions of iconicity and their influence on assessments on authentic market offerings. *Journal of Consumer Research, 31*(2), 296-312.

Greenwood, T. (2013). *Marginalised urban women in South-East Asia.* Retrieved May 30, 2014, from CARE: www.care.org.au

Gregson, N., & Crewe, L. (2003). *Second-hand cultures.* Oxford: Berg.

Gregson, N., Crewe, L., & Brooks, K. (2002). Shopping, space and practice. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space, 20*, 597-617.

Gregson, N., Metcalfe, A., & Crewe, L. (2007). Identity, mobility, and the throwaway society. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space, 25*, 682-700.

Hawkes, C., Blouin, C., Henson, S., Drager, N., & Dube, L. (2010). *Trade, Food, Diet and Health - Perspectives and Policy Options.* West Sussex: Wiley Blackwall.

Hill, D. (2010). Politics, capital and leisure in India: Situating the port and the multiplex in Kolkata. *18th Biennial Conference of the Asian Studies Association of Australia*, (pp. 1-15). Adelaide.

Ho, J. (2005). *Consumption and identity in Asian American coming-of-age novels.* New York: Routledge.

Hogg, M. K., Maclaren, P., & Curasi, C. F. (2003). Consumption, role transitions and the re-construction of the self: An exploratory study of social capital within the context of transitional consumers. (D. Turley, & S. Brown, Eds.) *European Advances in Consumer Research, 6*, 258-262.

Hollnesteiner, M., & Tacon, P. (1983). Urban migration in developing countries. In D. A. Wagner (Ed.), *Child development and international development: Research-policy interfaces.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Huguet, J., & Chamratrithirong, A. (Eds.). (2011). *Thailand migration report 2011.* Retrieved March 15, 2014, from International Organization for Migration (IOM) Thailand Office: https://iom.int/jahia/webdav/shared/shared/mainsite/activities/countries/docs/thailand/TMR-2011.pdf#page=64

Isaacs, B. (2009). Imagining Thailand in European hypermarkets: New class-based consumption in Chiang Mai's 'cruise ships'. *The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology, 10*(4), 348-363.

Isaacs, B., Dixon, J., & Banwell, C. (2010). Fresh market to supermarket: nutrition transition insights from Chiang Mai, Thailand. *Public Health Nutrition, 13*(6), 893-897.

Isaacs, B., Dixon, J., Banwell, C., Seubsman, S.-a., Kelly, M., & Pangsap, S. (2010). Competition, adaptation and mutation: Fresh market and supermarket conventions in Thailand. *Journal of Sociology, 46*(4), 413-436.

Jackson, P., & Holbrook, B. (1995). Multiple meanings: shopping and the cultural politics of identity. *Environmet and Planning A, 27*(12), 1913-1930.

Jongudomkarn, D., & Camfield, L. (2006, September). Exploring the quality of life of people in North Eastern and Southern Thailand. *Social Indicators Research, 78*(3), 489-526.

Karnani, A. (2007, December). Doing well by doing good: Case study: 'fair & lovely' whitening cream. *Strategic Management Journal, 28*(13), 1351-1357.

Karstena, L., Kamphuisb, A., & Remeijnseb, C. (2013, October). 'Time-out' with the family: the shaping of family leisure in the new urban consumption spaces of cafes, bars and restaurants. *Leisure Studies*, 1-16.

Khosla, P. (2012). *Young women: Life choices and livelihoods in poor urban areas.* Johannesburg: Action Aid. Retrieved April 15, 2014, from http://www.actionaid.org/sites/files/actionaid/young_women_-urban.pdf

Knodel, J., & Saengtienchai, C. (2007). Rural parents with urban children: Social and economic Implications of migration for the rural elderly in Thailand. *Population, Space & Place, 13*, 193-210.

Korinek, K., Entwisle, B., & Jampaklay, A. (2005, October). Through thick and thin: Layers of social ties and urban settlement among Thai migrants. *American Sociological Review, 70*, 779-800.

Kumar, R., Aslesh, O. P., Kumar, A., Kapoor, A., Sanan, D., Wadhwa, E., & Agarwal, N. (2013, July). Urban poor women do not increase their diet during pregnancy: A study from an urban resettlement colony in Delhi, India. *International Journal of Medicine & Public Health, 3*(3), 134-139.

Lacroix, T. (2011). *Migration, rural development, poverty and food security: a comparative perspective.* International Migration Institute. Oxford: University of Oxford. Retrieved December 7, 2014, from http://www.imi.ox.ac.uk/pdfs/migration-rural-development-poverty-and-food-security-a-comparative-perspective

Laodumrongchai, S., Chaiyapa, W., Ariyasuntorn, C., & Chantavanich, S. (2010). *Rapid assessment: The impacts of the global economic downturn on workers in Thailand, phase II (February - August 2010).* Institute of Asian Studies, Asian Research Center for Migration. Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University.

Lefferts, L. (2005). Sticky rice, fermented fish, and the course of a kingdom: the politics of food in Northeast Thailand. *Asian Studies Review, 29*, 237-248.

Lego. (2015). *Lego*. Retrieved February 4, 2015, from About us: http://www.lego.com/en-us/aboutus/responsibility

Mackenzie, N., & Knipe, S. (2006). Research dilemmas: Paradigms, methods and methodology. *Issues in Educational Research, 16*. Retrieved from http://www.iier.org.au/iier16/mackenzie.html

Maddison, A. (2002). The west and the rest in the international economic order. In Organisation for Economic Co Operation and Development, *Development is Back.* New York: OECD Development Centre.

Mahony, S. M. (2010). *Searching for a better life: Young people living in slum communities in Bangkok.* University of Bath, Department of Social and Policy Sciences. Bath: University of Bath.

Mansvelt, J. (2005). *Geographies of consumption.* London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Mansvelt, J. (2013). Consumption-reproduction. In P. Cloke, P. Crang, & M. Goodwin (Eds.), *Introducing human geographies* (3rd ed.). New York: Routledge.

McCargo, D., & Hongladarom, K. (2010). Contesting Isan-ness: discourses of politics and identity in Northeast Thailand. *Asian Ethnicity, 5*(2), 219-234.

McIntosh, C. (2013, March 20). Gender. *Lecture*. Lilydale, Victoria, Australia: Swinburne University.

Mills, M. B. (1998). Gendered encounters with modernity: Labor migrants and marriage choices in contemporary Thailand. *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power, 5*(3), 301-334.

Mortimer, G., & Clarke, P. (2011). Supermarket consumers and gender differences relating to their perceived importance levels of store characteristics. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 18*(6), 575-585.

Murray, W. E., & Overton, J. (2014). Designing development research. In R. Scheyvens (Ed.), *Development fieldwork: A practical guide* (pp. 19-38). London: Sage Publishing Ltd.

National Statistics Office. (2010). *Population and housing census data.* Bangkok: Thai Government. Retrieved March 15, 2014, from http://web.nso.go.th/en/census/poph/data/

Ockey, J. (2004). *Making democracy: Leadership, class, gender and political participation in Thailand.* Honlulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

Ogle, J. P., Tyner, K. E., & Schofield-Tomschin, S. (2013). The role of maternity dress consumption in shaping the self and identity during the liminal transition of pregnancy. *Journal of Consumer Culture, 13*(2), 119-139.

O'Leary, Z. (2010). *The essential guide to doing your research project.* London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Osaki, K. (2003, September). Migrant remittances in Thailand: Economic necessity or social norm? *Journal of Population Research, 20*(2), 203-222.

Parkin, K. (2006). *Food is love: Advertising and gender roles in modern America.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Paterson, M. (2006). *Consumption and identity. Manufacturing choice. Consumption and Everyday Life.* London: Routledge.
Potter, R. (2002). Global convergence, divergence and development. In V. Desai, & R. Potter (Eds.), *The Companion to Development Studies* (pp. 191-196). London: Arnold.
Radner, H. (1995). *Shopping around: feminine culture and the pursuit of pleasure.* New York: Routledge.
Rappaport, E. D. (2000). *Shopping for pleasure: Women in the making of London's West End.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.
Rigg, J. (2002). The Asian crisis. In V. Desai, & R. B. Potter (Eds.), *The Companion to Development Studies* (pp. 27-32). London: Arnold.
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. (2014). *Qualitative research project guidelines: Semi-structured interviews.* Retrieved June 10, 2014, from Robert Wood Johnson Foundation: http://www.qualres.org/HomeSemi-3629.html
Sadorsky, P. (2014, April). The effect of urbanization and industrialization on energy use in emerging economies: Implications for sustainable development. *American Journal of Economics and Sociology, 73*(2), 392-409.
Sassen, S. (2000). Global hierarchy of cities. In J. Beynon, & D. David (Eds.). London: The Athelone Press.
Schor, J. B. (2001). Why do we consume so much? Minnesota: Saint John's University.
Seidman, I. (2013). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education & the social sciences* (4th ed.). New York: Teachers College Press.
Siddiqui, T. (2012). *Impact of migration on poverty and development.* London: United Kingdon Department for International Development (DFID). Retrieved December 7, 2014, from http://migratingoutofpoverty.dfid.gov.uk/files/file.php?name=wp2-impact-of-migration-on-poverty-and-development.pdf&site=354
Silva, E. (2007). Gender, class, emotional capital and consumption in family life. In E. Casey, & L. Martens, *Gender and Consumption: Domestic Cultures and the Commercialisation of Everyday Life* (pp. 141-162). Farnham, Surrey, England: Ashgate.
Sternstein, L. (1974, March). Migration to and from Bangkok. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers, 64*(1), 138-147.
Stewart-Withers, R., Banks, G., McGregor, A., & Meo-Sewabu, L. (2014). Qualitative research. In R. Scheyvens (Ed.), *Development fieldwork: A practical guide* (pp. 59-80). London: Sage Publications Ltd.
Stillerman, J. (2012). Chile's forgotten consumers: Poor urban families, consumption strategies and the moral economy of risk in Santiago. In J. Sinclair, & A. C. Pertierra (Eds.), *Consumer Culture in Latin America* (pp. 67-79). Houndmill, , United Kingdom: Palgrave MacMillan.
Stillerman, J., & Salcedo, R. (2012, March). Transposing the urban to the mall : Routes, relationships, and resistance in two Santiago, Chile, shopping centers. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, 41*, 309-336.
Stordy, P. (2012). Research design. *Undergraduates' internet literacies*. Sheffield, England. Retrieved January 15, 2014, from http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/is/staff/stordythesis
Suzuki, H., Cervero, R., & Luchi, K. (2013). *Transforming cities with transit: Transit and land-use integration for sustainable urban development.* Washington DC: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank.
Tacoli, C. (1998). *Rural-urban Interactions: A Guide to the literature.* London: International Institute for Environment and Development.
Tesco Lotus. (2015). *Tesco Lotus*. Retrieved February 4, 2015, from Corporate information: http://www.tescolotus.com/en/history

Thaichon, P., Lobo, A., & Mitsis, A. (2014). An empirical model of home internet services quality in Thailand. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics, 26*(2), 190-210.

The Philatelic Database. (2014). *Map showing location of Thailand in South-East Asia*. Retrieved November 2, 2014, from The Philatelic Database: http://www.philatelicdatabase.com/asia/map-showing-location-of-thailand-in-south-east-asia/

Thorbek, S. (1988). Woman and urbanization. *Acta Sociologica, 31*, 283-310.

Tinsley, E. A. (1997). *Mechanics of informal land and housing markets: A theoretical expression.* Wellesley College, Economics. Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Todaro, M. P., & Smith, S. C. (2006). *Economic development.* Essex, England: Pearson Education Limited.

UNHABITAT. (2012). *Housing finance Thailand report.* UNHABITAT. Retrieved March 15, 2014, from https://habnet.unhabitat.org/files/7537_Housing_Finance_Thailand_report.pdf

UNHABITAT. (2013). Addressing urban poverty, inequality, and vulnerability in a warming world. *Asia-Pacific Issue Brief Series on Urbanization and Climate Change, 1*.

University of Surrey. (2014). *Analysing qualitative research data*. Retrieved June 10, 2014, from University of Surrey: http://libweb.surrey.ac.uk/library/skills/Introduction%20to%20Research%20and%20Managing%20Information%20Leicester/page_75.htm

Vorng, S. (2011). Bangkok's two centres: Status, space, and consumption in a millenial Southeast Asian City. *City & Society, 23*(S1), 66-85.

Voyce, M. (2006). Shopping malls in Australia: The end of public space and the rise of 'consumerist citizenship'. *Journal of Sociology, 42*, 269-286.

Ward, K., & Mouyly, V. (2013). The importance of being connected: urban poor women's experience of self-help discourse in Cambodia. *Gender & Development, 21*(2), 313-326.

Wiig, K., & Smith, C. (2008). The art of grocery shopping on a food stamp budget: factors influencing the food choices of low-income women as they try to make ends meet. *Public Health Nutrition, 12*(10), 1726-1734.

Woodruffe-Burton, H., & Wakenshaw, S. (2011). Revisiting experiential values of shopping: consumers' self and identity. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning, 29*(1), 69-85.

World Bank. (2014). *Thailand.* Retrieved March 15, 2014, from The World Bank: http://data.worldbank.org/country/thailand

World Health Organization. (2014). *Slum Residence: Situation and Trends*. Retrieved from World Health Organization Global Health Observatory: http://www.who.int/gho/urban_health/determinants/slum_residence_text/en/

9 Appendices

9.1 Appendix 1 – Transcriber confidentiality form

/

The role and significance of urban retail spaces within everyday practices for women residents of Thai low income settlements

TRANSCRIBER'S CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

I ..... (Full Name - printed) agree to transcribe the recordings provided to me.

I agree to keep confidential all the information provided to me.

I will not make any copies of the transcripts or keep any record of them, other than those required for the project.

Signature: ..... **Date:** .....

Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa

School of People, Environment & Planning

9.2 Appendix 2 – Information sheet

MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
TE KURA PUKENGA TANGATA

The role and significance of urban retail spaces within everyday practices for women residents of Thai low income settlements

INFORMATION SHEET

Hello,

My name is Jenny Finlayson. I am a Master's student in Development Studies. My research aims to explore in depth why and how women in low income settlements make decisions to consume goods and services in the context of urban retail spaces. The interviews are not focused on the money spent, but on experiences and choices made.

I would be grateful if you would take part in this study and could tell me about your experiences and choices that you make in your daily shopping routine.
If you agree to participate, I will set up a time and place with you to conduct an interview. The interview will take approximately one hour and will be informal. If possible, I would like to set up a second interview with you at a later date. With your permission, the interview[s] will be recorded as it will allow me to interpret and analyse the data more effectively.

Your rights as a participant:
You are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- decline to answer any particular question;
- withdraw from the study (specify timeframe);
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher;
- be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded.
- ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview.

The interview will be transcribed by myself and my research assistant. All transcripts, recordings and documents will be held in a secure place and destroyed after the final thesis is completed.
I will be using pseudonyms so that you cannot be identified in my final paper. The final interpretations and summaries contained in my thesis will be publicly available on the Massey University's library website. You will be given a copy of your recording, should you want one. Also, at the end of my research, I can provide you with a summary of my research findings in Thai or in English (summaries can be distributed through email, mobile telephone or hard copy).

Thank you very much for considering your participation!

Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa

MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
TE KURA PUKENGA TANGATA

Please do not hesitate to contact me at any point should you have any queries about my research project.

In Thailand (July 2012):
Jenny Finlayson
Apartment 3.01
Penguin House
27/23 Soi Sri Bungboa,
Vaipaki Road, Dusupatakarak,
Bathoon
Bangkok

In Australia:
Jenny Finlayson
13 Lakeview Parade
Umina Beach
NSW 2257
Australia

Email: Jennifer.Finlayson@bhp.com.au

The contact details for my research supervisors are:

Dr Maria Borovnik
Social Science Tower 3.22,
Dudden Campus
Massey University
Palmerston North
New Zealand
Phone: +64 6 356 9099 ext. 7249
Email: M.Borovnik@massey.ac.nz

Dr Juliana Manavelt
Social Science Tower 3.19
Dudden Campus
Massey University
Palmerston North
New Zealand

Email: J.E.Manavelt@massey.ac.nz

LOW RISK NOTIFICATIONS

"This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named above are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Professor John O'Neill, Director, Research Ethics, telephone 06 350 5249, email humanethics@massey.ac.nz ".

9.3 Appendix 3 – Participant consent form

MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
TE KURA PUKENGA TANGATA

The role and significance of urban retail spaces within everyday practices for women residents of Thai low income settlements

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM - INDIVIDUAL

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at anytime.

☐ I agree to the interview being sound recorded.

☐ I agree to be contacted for a second interview

☐ I wish to have a copy my recordings returned to me.

☐ I would like to receive in late 2012, a preliminary summary of the final thesis (in Thai and English).

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature: ..... Date: .....

Full Name - printed .....

Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa