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Abstract

**Thai Women in Britain: An Ethnography of
Restaurant Workers**

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Women play an increasingly important part in today's international migration but there is only a limited amount of research on this subject. With a growing number of migrant businesses generating the development of new labour structures in which workers from countries of origin migrate towards a host nation, thousands of migrant workers are exchanging their hard labour for meagre wages in ethnic restaurants on every high street in the UK. I decided to make women who work in those particular restaurants the focus of my enquiry.

The study examines the convergence of recent anthropological interests in gender and transnational migration. It aims to illuminate the experiences of migrant women in ethnic minority owned restaurants by investigating Thai restaurants in central England. Focusing on my working life with other waitresses in a chain of restaurants, I characterise these women's lived experiences of work and livelihood, exploitation and struggle while they are away from home.