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THE MIGRATION-TRAFFICKING NEXUS:

**An investigation into the survival strategies of the
Philippines' poorest migrants**

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ABSTRACT

The Philippines' social and economic complexities limit the life choices of its people and migration has become the only perceived method to achieve upward social and economic mobility. Filipinos are being 'groomed' to migrate as a 'culture of migration' has become ingrained in the national psyche, creating a desperation to migrate which makes the poorest Filipinos prime targets for human traffickers.

The aim of this research project was to investigate the driving factors behind the culture of migration of the Philippines and the implications for trafficking. Underpinned by a qualitative methodology, fieldwork was conducted over five months in Manila and Samar Island in the Philippines.

The findings of this study show that poverty and inequality form the context which forces Filipinos to leave their hometown and the factors which make them vulnerable to trafficking are correlated with endemic corruption and the resulting lack of law enforcement. Additionally the findings revealed that recruitment practices which exploit migrants, including the betrayal of neighbours and kin, have become common practices leading to people being trafficked in poor villages. When trafficking survivors are repatriated they often find the same constraints persist. Hence they are left with no choice but to migrate again and risk being re-trafficked. This thesis concludes that the vulnerabilities inherent in poverty are exacerbated by a complex culture of migration which makes poor Filipinos desperate to accept any offer to migrate and, thus, exposes them to human traffickers.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ATIP	Anti-Trafficking in Persons
CATW	Coalition against Trafficking in Women
CFO	Commission on Filipinos Overseas
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
DOJ	Department of Justice
DOLE	Department of Labour and Employment
DSWD	Department of Social Welfare and Development
FMO	Forced Migration Online
FRA	European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights
IACAT	Inter-Agency Council against Trafficking
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
NBI	National Bureau of Investigation
NSCB	National Statistical Coordination Board
NSO	National Statistics Office
OFW	Overseas Filipino Worker
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
OWWA	Overseas Workers Welfare Administration
PNP	Philippine National Police
POEA	Philippines Overseas Employment Administration
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN.GIFT	UN Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCHR	United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	UN International Children's Emergency Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction and Methodological Framework

Introduction

The Philippines' problematic socio-economic climate can be defined by political elitism, inequality and widespread poverty (Choguill, 2001; Collas-Monsod et al., 2004; Balisacan and Fuwait; 2004; Mojares, 2013). With a surplus of unemployed low-skilled workers, and insufficient local employment opportunities, many Filipinos are forced to look for work abroad and encouraged by their government to do so (CATW, 2002; UNODC, 2000; Van Impe, 2002; Lorenzo et al., 2007; DOLE, 2013; World Bank, 2012). There are now more than one million Filipinos migrating for work abroad each year, with around ten percent of the total population currently living in 238 countries (OHCHR, 2012:6; CFO, 2010:1); a 'culture of migration' has been created.

Labour migration by poor Filipinos often entails elements of force. Many migrants would prefer to stay in their hometown or country of birth but lack adequate options for obtaining a sustainable livelihood (Deshingkar and Grimm, 2004; Lorenzo et al., 2007). Migration that is forced because people live in poverty (economic migration) can make migrants more vulnerable to exploitation than highly skilled migrants because their desperate need to secure an income means they are easily convinced by unscrupulous recruiters (Piper, 2004; Satterthwaite, 2005; Jolly, 2005). The government's overseas employment strategy can facilitate their departure but cannot guarantee their protection once abroad (Van Impe, 2002; Yeoh et al., 2004). Often, migrants are deceived by recruiters that show an economic agenda but covertly recruit for sex industries or forced labour abroad, and face discriminatory immigration laws which criminalise rather than protect them (Oberoi & Taylor-Nicholson, 2013; Pai, 2004; World Migration Report, 2011; Baldwin-Edwards, 2008). Those who do secure employment abroad, often work as domestic workers or labourers in unprotected industries, facing human and labour rights abuses (OHCHR, 2012; Munck, 2008;

Briones, 2009; Chin, 2003). Additional factors such as levels of education and illiteracy and the lack of protection from corrupt law enforcement processes, increase economic migrants' vulnerability to human rights abuses (Oberoi & Taylor-Nicholson, 2013; UNICEF, 2011). This thesis will explore the structural issues which form the context that pushes many Filipinos to look for work outside of their hometown, when they would prefer not to leave their homes.

The culture of migration has scalar dimensions and exists at all levels of society, with more Filipinos migrating internally than internationally (NSO, 2012). However, internal migration has received far less scholarly attention (Saith, 1997). To address this gap, this thesis focuses on the migration of the poorest Filipinos, whose low social standing and lack of cultural capital may put international migration out of their reach, as their limited resources can usually only take them within the country (Deshingkar and Grimm, 2004; de Haan, 2000). This is also important because for some, internal migration can be the first step towards international movement (Omelaniuk, 2005; Jolly and Reeves, 2005). Once poor internal migrants reach Manila they often find themselves living in a squatter settlement with no job prospects, and added pressure to provide for families in their hometowns makes them feel they have no choice but to pursue employment abroad (Hakata, 2013; Mojares, 2013; De Jong, 1983; Carino, 1987).

Despite knowing about discrimination and the risk of abuse, with few opportunities for social mobility (Fuwa, 2003; Hakata, 2013), and disadvantaged by the existing social hierarchy, migration remains the goal of many Filipinos who believe it to be the only way to secure a livelihood (Constable, 2006; Carino, 1987; Todaro, 1980; Brunovskis and Surtees, 2012). This desperation to migrate despite the risks reinforces and perpetuates the culture of migration as it creates a dependency on migration as a survival strategy (Semyonov and Gorodzeisky, 2006). When this desperation is combined with a lack of social and financial capital to access less risky migration options, poor Filipino migrants become vulnerable to exploitation and prime targets for human traffickers to move them abroad (Oberoi & Taylor-Nicholson, 2013). While internal migrants face the same risks of exploitation as international migrants, internal migrants' abuse is often inflicted on them by people they know well (Omelaniuk, 2005:9; Busza 2004).

Recruiters and traffickers are often poor themselves and neighbours and families have been found to deceive and betray one another, indicating the fabric of Filipino society is showing signs of strain (Ezeilo, 2012:1; Global Slavery Index, 2013). This thesis argues that vulnerability caused by poverty and inequality is exacerbated by a culture of migration which not only grooms Filipinos to migrate but increases the risk of migrants becoming victims of trafficking. As such, this thesis documents through literature reviews and a series of case studies the struggles of Filipino migrants, revealing the issues that the most disadvantaged face as they attempt to migrate internally.

In reviewing the literature a global focus is taken to illustrate the plight of international migrants marginalised by discriminatory immigration policies (Wickramasekara, 2008; Castles, 2011), an important piece of the Philippines' culture of migration. This is linked to an exploration of how the extreme poverty of internal migrants makes it difficult to migrate internationally. Yet this situation can be the first step in the trafficking journey. The use of both global and local migration literature has also been applied to draw attention to the scalar dimensions which link the two (Jolly and Reeves, 2005). While this thesis does not provide an investigation into international trafficking, as noted above it is recognised that internal economic migration and internal trafficking can lead to international trafficking (Omelaniuk, 2005). The abuses of overseas Filipino workers are well documented (ILO, 2004; The Protection Project, 2005; Ezeilo, 2010) and this thesis will contribute to the literature by focusing on the considerably less well-known plight of internal migrants, whose journey forms the entry point into the scalar system of Filipino migration. In order to ensure the research process is as authentic as possible it is necessary to explore a researcher's motivation for investigating the issue and understand his/her personal positionality within the research process (O'Leary, 2009).

Motivation for this Research

My motivation for researching economic migration and human trafficking arose after a personal experience which brought the issue to my attention. When I was an undergraduate student in Japan I was approached by a well-dressed middle-aged lady who offered me a job at an English speaking café. Familiar with the

work, after having worked in a café over the summer holiday break it was easy to accept her offer as I was in need of part-time employment. When I arrived at the café the manager asked me to put on a black dress and high heels. I quickly understood that I had been deceived into working at a hostess bar where my role was not to provide English conversation practice, but to pour drinks, light cigarettes and engage in flirtatious conversations with Japanese businessmen. While I was not forced to stay and work as a hostess, the experience provided insight into how easily someone can be misled into entering such an industry, especially when it appears to be a timely opportunity to alleviate economic hardship. It also piqued my interest into investigating the circumstances of those with fewer options who are deceived into and forced to work in Japan's vast entertainment industry.¹

Hence, in 2012 I returned to Japan and conducted research for an NGO on the Japanese government's efforts to combat trafficking for sexual exploitation and discovered that many of those identified as trafficking victims in Japan were from the Philippines (Protection Project, 2005). However, when offered repatriation support, none of the trafficked victims wanted to return to the Philippines and all opted to stay on and work under exploitative conditions. It became clear to me that not all women trafficked into prostitution regarded themselves as 'victims'. Indeed the literature on this phenomenon presented a compelling case for sex workers' agency, and how some women can navigate very difficult circumstances as a strategy to improve their overall living conditions (Parrenas, 2010; Yea, 2004). This prompted me to investigate why Filipino men and women are so determined to leave their hometowns/country and to work in cities or abroad, even while risking serious human and labour rights abuses.

The Fieldwork Site

Fieldwork for this research project was therefore planned in the Philippines, and conducted over the course of five months. During these five months I was

¹ Japan's entertainment industry is estimated to accumulate around USD 84 billion annually, and is one of the top nine destination countries for sex trafficking in the world (Protection Project, 2005; Fujimoto, 2011; ILO, 2004).

involved with Plan Philippines Inc., (Plan)² an international NGO, on their Anti-Trafficking in Persons (ATIP) Project. I spent two months working in the Plan country office in Manila alongside the ATIP project manager and sought to gain knowledge of the trafficking situation at the national and policy level. The last three months were spent in Catarman, the capital of Northern Samar Province, working with ATIP staff ‘on the ground’ for the purpose of primary data collection. The following map of the Philippines (Figure 1) displays the study’s geographical setting with the two research sites indicated by arrows: Manila, where I gathered background information and significant experience with internal migrants, and Samar where the fieldwork was conducted.

² See Chapter three for an overview of Plan Philippines and its Anti-Trafficking in Persons Project



Figure 1: Map of the Philippines with Samar Island indicated on the centre right and Manila the capital in the north.

Source: <http://navy.memorieshop.com/Adair/Cruise-Book/Philippines.html>

Partnering with Plan facilitated a deeper knowledge of migration and trafficking issues in the Philippines, including the governmental and non-governmental efforts to prevent and prosecute, and practical approaches to reintegrate victim-survivors. In Northern Samar I participated in Plan’s video documentation of the ATIP Project which involved visiting targeted villages and re-enacting project

activities. Through this I was able to observe the anti-trafficking initiatives in practice as ATIP staff conducted information drives to educate vulnerable people on trafficking in persons (TIP) (see Figure 2 below) and on their legal rights, trained police task forces and social workers how to deal with cases of TIP, and visited the help desk and crisis centres which intercept trafficked persons and provide aftercare for them. Over the three months I visited multiple villages around Northern Samar and assisted staff with interviews with people who had been trafficked to understand their experience and consider reintegration and livelihood options.



Figure 2: This mural depicts a human trafficker taking children for forced labour and prostitution. It was painted outside a crisis centre in Eastern Samar to educate and inform villagers about human trafficking, as part of the ATIP Project.
Source: Author

Positionality

Through working with ATIP project staff I was able to obtain first-hand knowledge of the trafficking issue in the poorest parts of the Philippines and to access interviews with survivors of trafficking who wanted to share their stories. This was essential because as a foreigner, who could not speak the local language and who had no established rapport with participants, it would have been very

difficult to access such experiences. Therefore my position as a researcher was closely connected to my role as a volunteer for Plan. Because the participants felt comfortable with the Plan staff, my affiliation with Plan meant that when I conducted interviews for my own research they were less weary of me and therefore my position as an “outsider” whom they had only just met, did not greatly affect the stories they were willing to disclose. It was also important that, as a middle-class New Zealander who does not face the same economic constraints as the interviewees, I remained objective to their stories and allowed the participants to articulate from their own perspective their motivations for migrating despite risk, and the degree to which they considered themselves to be victims or agents.

Thesis Aims and Objectives

This research project aims to look beyond the ‘either victim or agent’ debate³ and decipher the extent to which the voluntariness of internal labour migration in the Philippines is fluid – where even ‘forced’ migrants can show a level of agency, and how Filipinos can become victims of TIP when they are pushed to migrate as a result of their economic circumstances. The desired outcome of this thesis is to understand the processes involved in human trafficking in order to potentially contribute towards combatting trafficking (Humphries et al., 2000). In order to achieve this, I investigated the driving factors behind the ‘culture of migration’ of the Philippines and documented the stories of Filipinos’ experiences of economic migration which involved aspects of trafficking. By reviewing migration literature and analysing interviews and observations made during fieldwork, I obtained an understanding of the multitude and complexity of structures that oppress labour migrants. This research contributes to migration literature by giving insights into the lives of the Philippines’ poorest migrants including the conditions which force them to migrate, the volatile recruitment process and the decisions which shape their survival strategies. These issues are discussed alongside the impact that corruption and cultural attitudes have on migration processes, and how the amalgamation of these factors cause many migrants to be trafficked internally. In order to effectively address these issues the research aim and objectives of this

³ See MacKinnon (2011), for example, who asserts that all sex workers are victims; and Parrenas (2010) who argues that many (forced) prostitutes have agency.

project sought to obtain a holistic understanding of the conditions which make poor Filipino migrants specifically vulnerable to human trafficking.

This thesis therefore aims to

Investigate the driving factors behind the ‘culture of migration’ of the Philippines and the implications for trafficking

In order to achieve this aim I

- I. Investigate the conditions where people become vulnerable to trafficking
- II. Unpack and explain recruitment practices that exploit migrants
- III. Explore survival strategies applied by trafficked persons
- IV. Describe the post-trafficking situation for survivors

These aim and objectives were chosen to ensure that this study covered all key areas which have led to the trafficking of Filipino migrants. The Philippines’ culture of migration is socially constructed and influences many poor people’s survival strategies. Exploring this phenomenon reveals the expectations many Filipinos hold that migration will be the panacea to their economic issues (Siar, 2011; Semyonov and Gorodzeisky, 2006). Survival strategies will be investigated in the context of push factors of poverty and inequality which force migrants to leave their homes, in order to understand how migrants are able to exert agency to transcend the conditions which make them vulnerable. Discussing recruitment practices and aftercare gives context to the situations which occur before and after the event of trafficking. It also provides a more complete picture of the lives of economic migrants and the processes that can exploit them and position them as victims as they migrate (Taylor-Powell and Renner, 2003), but also shows how they respond and demonstrate agency.

Methodological Approach

The International Organisation for Migration's report on directions for trafficking research was a useful tool in deciding which approaches to data collection are effective when conducting research on human trafficking. The report stated that:

Due to the stigma associated with failed migration, prostitution and other victimized behaviour (or outcomes), and the illegality of many practices tied to trafficking (such as for instance illegal immigration, informal employment or prostitution) ... Qualitative data collection attempts will often be more reliable for these populations (IOM, 2008:40).

With consideration to the IOM's recommendation and because this research is seeking to gain understanding of the power, interests and identities of the actors involved (Moses and Knutsen, 2007), this lends itself to a qualitative approach. Qualitative methodology enables a researcher to study people in their natural settings (Pope and May, 2006), and is flexible in that the researcher is always ready to conduct research as they are immersed in the research context (Crossman, 2012). Qualitative, or field research is especially effective for studying subtle nuances in attitudes and behaviours and for examining social processes over time (Crossman, 2012), enabling researchers to describe and explain the social world (Morse and Field, 1995). It is a 'process of systematic inquiry into the meanings which people employ to make sense of and guide their actions' (Grafanaki, 1996). In this way, qualitative research is particularly relevant to this thesis as what guides people's actions is a crucial element in understanding why poor Filipinos migrate despite high risks.

Qualitative Analysis

The goal of qualitative data analysis is to uncover emerging themes, patterns, concepts, insights, and understandings (Patton, 2002; Taylor-Powell and Renner, 2003). Therefore, narrative techniques, where interviewees recount their own stories, were sought through the application of semi-structured interviews. This allowed me to identify conditions or events in different people's accounts and draw conclusions as to current patterns in economic migrants being trafficked.

Semi-structured interviews are conducted on the basis of a loose structure consisting of open-ended questions that define the area to be explored ... from which the interviewee or interviewer may diverge to pursue an idea or response in more detail (Pope and Mays, 2006:13).

The aim of such interviews, therefore, is that the researcher avoids imposing their own structures and assumptions on the interviewee's account and accepts that the outcome might differ from their original anticipations or predictions (Byrne 2012; Pope and Mays, 2006; Birch and Miller, 2000). In this manner, narrative research becomes a researcher-generated story 'that answers "How" and "What" questions about the life story and meaningful experiences that have implications for others' (Suter, 2012:369). As such, people's life-stories can also be manifestations of social and cultural patterns (Squire et al., 2008), which was important for this research project as it is the social and cultural context of the migrants' lives which increase their susceptibility to trafficking.

Methods

Qualitative methods can include observing, participating, interviewing (one-on-one and focus group), and informal chats with research participants (Pope and Mays, 2006; Byrne 2012). As mentioned, one-on-one semi-structured interviews⁴ were the key method utilised to collect data for this thesis as they are particularly appropriate for gathering data on sensitive topics such as trafficking (Coyle and Write, 1996). The semi-structured interview style was used as a tool to promote free-flowing conversation, as opposed to a questionnaire where all questions would have been predetermined (Suter, 2012). While specific questions were included, they were worded in a way which allowed the participants to state their own opinions and ideas, rather than leading them to any preconceived answers, and allowing them to discuss their experience freely (Suter, 2012; Pope and May, 2006).

⁴ See Appendix 1 for the list of semi-structured interview questions

The one focus group discussion held for this research was with a group of four girls who had a common trafficking experience. Focus group participants can provide mutual support for each other as they express feelings that are common to their group but which they consider to deviate from mainstream culture, and ‘this is particularly important when researching stigmatised or taboo experiences such as sexual violence’ (Kitzinger, 1995:300). Therefore it was beneficial for the group of four girls to share their narratives in a focus group discussion, rather than separate one-on-one interviews. Focus groups can also be used to help to identify group norms and cultural values (Kitzinger, 1995; Byrne 2012). In this group, each participant having been forced into prostitution by her parents appeared to be a group norm, and the discussion revealed the cultural values attached to this process.

Additionally, participant observation methods were chosen for this research. In order to capture all elements that come together to create the association between migrating Filipinos and victims of trafficking ‘researchers conducting qualitative studies ... are obliged to consider as data whatever they observe in the field’ (Sandelowski, 2000:336). Therefore, the narratives have been used in conjunction with personal observations and data collected through informal discussions with multiple key informants, who will be presented in Table 2 in Chapter Four. These included Plan staff working on the anti-trafficking in persons (ATIP) project, a former judge for the International Justice Mission who worked specifically on trafficking cases and social workers at shelters caring for victims of TIP. A journal was also kept to record significant events and snippets from conversations with neighbours and acquaintances which were deemed relevant to the research objectives (Taylor-Powell and Renner, 2003).

Although much discussion is centred on gathering and using primary data, secondary data is also valuable when conducting trafficking research.

Though secondary sources may not always reflect the whole reality of trafficking, their value lies in helping to shape the context and offering a wider perspective on the issue (IOM, 2008:11).

Therefore document analysis has also been utilised to shape the wider context which impacts the lives and decisions of Filipino migrants.

Access to Participants

The IOM recognised areas where trafficking research has been lacking. These include an overemphasis on trafficking in women for sexual exploitation and too few studies focusing on trafficking for labour exploitation. Also noted was a lack of research on trafficking of boys and men and insufficient studies presenting the viewpoints of the victims (IOM, 2008:5). This thesis seeks to address some of these shortcomings by including research on men trafficked for forced labour, in addition to women trafficked into prostitution, and by presenting the viewpoints of victims through narrative interviews (Suter, 2012).

I conducted five semi-structured one on one interviews with three women and two men and one focus group discussion with four young women, who will be introduced in Table 1 in Chapter Four. World-wide estimates are important for drawing attention to the global problem of trafficking, however, the IOM (2008:10) argues that ‘small scale studies may be more precise, and more appropriate to answer specific questions about specific contexts’. This data set was relatively small and fits with qualitative research which seeks rich, deep data. Suter (2012) asserted that a relatively small data set can provide important insights, which was applicable to this context where these few interviews have provided me with a rich understanding of the factors which compel vulnerable women and men in Samar to migrate and of their trafficking experiences.

The interviewees were selected by ATIP staff and were people with whom the staff had an established relationship. Purposive sampling methods were used to ensure that only participants whose experience was relevant to the research questions were selected (Sandelowski, 2000; Pope and May, 2006), and for the potential to yield insight from rich information sources (Patton, 2002; Byrne 2012). International migrants were originally intended to be included as interview participants as this would have linked to my original experiences in Japan. However, the returned migrants under Plan’s care had only moved internally. This

proved to be beneficial to the research as it created a stronger focus on the underrepresented struggles of the Philippines' more marginalised internal migrants. Li (2008:101) asserts that 'when studying non-mainstream groups in society such as the marginalized and the stigmatized, researchers must tailor their data collection methods to both the sensitivity of the research topic and the vulnerability of research subjects' (Coyle and Write, 1996), which will be discussed in the following section.

Researching Sensitive Issues and Ethics

Strong attention was placed on ethics as some of the interviewees experienced coercion when they migrated, which could potentially cause emotional or psychological harm to the interviewee as painful memories are relived (O'Leary, 2004; Coyle and Write, 1996). In order to mitigate these risks there was a social worker present at each interview and the participants were made aware of their right to decline any questions or stop the interview at any time. Participants chose pseudonyms to conceal their identities and all names have been changed throughout the research report.

Steps were taken to ensure the research was ethically viable. After completing a Massey University Screening Questionnaire – one of the steps taken to determine whether the research was low-risk or whether a full ethics application was required, and an in-house ethics form, each point surrounding potential ethical issues, such as investigating sensitive subjects, ensuring participant safety, confidentiality and informed consent, was discussed in a formal meeting with my supervisor Dr Maria Borovnik and Associate Professor Glenn Banks. The project was then affirmed to be of low risk to participants and the Massey University Human Ethics Committee (MUHEC) accepted a low risk notification. Plan also has its own ethical procedures to follow when interviewing women under their supervision. After discussing the nature my research with the supervisor at Plan, my project was also regarded as safe and I was given a security briefing and training on how to speak sensitively with people who have experienced trauma.

Cowles (1988) described how individuals involved in intensely emotional life experiences may be both unable and unwilling to cooperate in research

endeavours. They can develop a distrust of “outsiders” which can ‘inhibit those who might otherwise be amenable to discussing their thoughts and feelings’ (1988:164). As a result, it can be difficult to attain rich primary data on issues such as trafficking or prostitution. In general, for sensitive questions, more long-term investment and repeated visits, to establish trust and rapport, are necessary to produce more reliable data (IOM, 2008:38; Dickson-Swift et al., 2006; Coyle and Write, 1996). For these reasons, and the fact that I did not have time to form a close rapport with the participants, it was important that I worked with Plan who helped me initiate connections for interviews and also accompanied me to interviews. It was important that someone attended with whom the participants already had an established bond, and who they trusted (see also Birch and Miller, 2000, who discuss the importance of this). Thus, having Plan staff facilitate the interviews made the participants feel safe and able to speak freely. Plan staff also acted as interpreters so the participants were comfortable speaking in their own language with people they knew. Despite having the assuring presence of Plan staff, it was essential that I also behaved with empathy, was objective and non-judgemental, in order to establish a sense of trust with the participants, especially as they were discussing emotionally sensitive experiences (Cowles, 1988; Coyle and Write, 1996; Byrne, 2012).

Some qualitative interviews centred on sensitive issues can be therapeutic for research participants who talk in-depth about their experiences (Coyle and Write, 1996). Re-telling past experiences can become an ‘opportunity for (re)constructing narratives in different ways, evolving different perspectives on the past, leading to different understandings of the present, with implications for the future’ (Birch and Miller, 2000:193). Through this process individuals can transform painful or difficult experiences into ‘success stories’, where misfortune and problems have been overcome (Birch and Miller, 2000). However, qualitative interviews can also turn into counselling sessions which researchers are not trained to deal with (Dickson-Swift et al., 2006; Birch and Miller, 2000). Coyle and Write (1996) recommend employing counselling attributes and skills within the context of a research interview in order to address and collect data on sensitive issues effectively. The interview-counselling nexus was reconciled in this research as the Plan staff accompanying me and interpreting were also trained social

workers who were able to offer emotional support for the participants. The participants also had the option of having family or friends present in the interview if it made them feel more relaxed. In addition to potential risks to participants, there were also challenges to consider as a researcher of sensitive issues, which will be outlined in the next paragraph.

In preparing for fieldwork and data collection, before conducting any interviews, I attended a two day group counselling session in Northern Samar for sexually abused girls, in my role as a volunteer for Plan. The session was for 10 girls between the ages of 7 and 22, mostly 13 and 14 year olds, and in conjunction with Plan staff, social workers, local police and crisis centre staff. Attending this session before my thesis-related fieldwork greatly helped to prepare me for interviewing emotionally sensitive research participants. Over the two days the girls' initial weariness of me as an outsider subsided as they became more comfortable and began to share their experiences with me (Cowles, 1988).

Although the workshop was emotionally challenging, through it I gained exposure to human atrocities and experience interacting with victims of extreme abuse. This experience helped to prepare me for meeting my interview participants whose experiences were significantly less traumatic than those of the group counselling participants. In order to deal with my own emotional responses to these girls' experiences I debriefed with the social workers at the end of each session. Researcher debriefing may afford an outlet for painful emotions, help the qualitative researcher to process large amounts of sensitive data, alleviate some researcher bias (against abusive fathers or traffickers for example) and relieve apprehensions the researcher may experience when exposed to sensitive material and vulnerable subjects (Cowles, 1988:175; Dickson-Swift et al., 2008). Therefore when I conducted fieldwork, I also used debriefing as a tool to process the heavy content which sometimes arose during interviews, to avoid any potential adverse effects (Dickson-Swift et al., 2006). The context and processes of the interviews will be described in the following section, beginning with a description of Samar Island where the participants lived.

Fieldwork Context and Experiences: Samar

The interviews were conducted on Samar Island which has been identified by Plan as a trafficking hotspot. Samar Island is situated in the Eastern Visayas and, as noted in Figure 3 below, it is divided into three provinces, Samar (Western), Eastern Samar and Northern Samar, where I was based in the capital, Catarman. Northern Samar consists of 24 municipalities and 569 *barangays* (villages). In 2010 the population of Northern Samar was 590,000 people, 65 percent of whom reside in rural areas, with a life expectancy of 64.75 for males and 71.05 for females (NSO, 2011:1-3). Northern Samar is ranked consistently in the top ten most impoverished provinces of the Philippines, and in 2012 it had 51.3 percent poverty incidence and 21 percent subsistence living (NSCB, 2012:5, 8).



Figure 3: Map of Samar Island with Catarman highlighted at the top of Northern Samar. Interviews took place in rural villages throughout each of the three provinces. Source: <http://www.mappery.com/Samar-Island-Tourist-Map>

To reach the houses of the participants I travelled into remote villages around the three provinces of Samar. Most houses were made of bamboo, sticks and palm leaves, usually without running water and with limited electricity, an example of which is shown in Figures 4 and 5 below. In order to reach one participant, two Plan staff members, a local guide and I walked for one hour inland through the jungle on a muddy road; half the time being at least ankle deep in mud and water. When we arrived at his house, some of his family were playing bingo, gambling being a common pastime in areas with high unemployment, with his grandmother receiving the highest winnings of 25 Philippine Pesos (PHP) (57 cents). During another interview another participant's pet baby wild boar was sitting on my foot and putting its tummy out to be stroked like a cat. Her family was also present during our talk and her mother and father contributed to the discussion while her nine-year-old brother worked hard carrying sacks of wood up the hill to the house. Travelling to participants' villages and entering their houses gave context to their narratives as I was able to briefly observe their family life and the conditions they were seeking to improve or escape, as is useful when conducting qualitative research (Sandelowski, 2000; Taylor-Powell and Renner, 2003).



Figure 4: People washing their clothes outside with water retrieved from a well in a participant's village.
Source: Author



Figure 5: Speaking with children outside a house.
Source: Author

ATIP staff informed the participants of the purposes of the study and explained the Information Sheet⁵ to them in their native Waray-Waray dialect. The women and men then volunteered to share their stories. Each interview took between 30 – 60 minutes and was held in the house of each participant, as the setting of an interview can affect the content, and it is usually preferable to interview people in their own homes (Pope and May, 2006:19; Byrne 2012). They were conducted in Waray-Waray and interpreted into English by ATIP staff who were also present and acted as interpreters and counsellors during each interview. As the research interviews were facilitated by Plan staff as part of the ATIP project, they would sometimes begin with an explanation of the law on TIP and a discussion on livelihood support the participants may be eligible for.

Most interviews were conducted in an informal, friendly atmosphere with frequent periods of light-heartedness despite the heavy content. One participant was initially nervous thinking I was possibly a recruiter, and the social worker/

⁵ See Appendix 2 for a copy of the Information Sheet. Note the title and some aspects of the research project have since been adapted to accommodate new research developments.

interpreter opened the interview with a joke, telling the family that I was a recruiter. Despite the seeming inappropriateness of the joke, everyone laughed when they understood that I was a student researcher and it set a relaxed tone for the interview enabling us to cover some difficult topics with relative good humour. The fairly relaxed attitude allowed the participants to speak freely which coincided well with semi-structured interviews.

Before conducting fieldwork in Samar I spent two months living in Manila. I was predominately doing desk-based research and did not conduct official interviews; however, it is relevant to include a discussion on my experience there as I lived in a community with internal migrants who provided valuable insights into Philippine urban poverty and the culture of migration.

Pre-Fieldwork Context and Experience: Manila

While working in the Plan country office in Manila, I lived in Santa Ana, Metro Manila, inside a squatter settlement. The vast disparities in income of Filipinos can be seen clearly in Metro Manila where despite rapid economic growth in commercial centres such as Makati (see Figure 6), there are an estimated 100,000 homeless, including street children (Aoki, 2008:70; Hakata, 2013). Many of these homeless people migrated to the capital seeking opportunities unavailable in their rural provinces, and many of these internal migrants sleep and live in the squatter settlements in Santa Ana (Aoki, 2008:70-71). There are now slums and squatters scattered over 526 communities in Metro Manila, housing 2.5 million people on vacant private or public lands (UN Habitat, 2003:215). They are usually situated along rivers, near garbage dumps, along railroad tracks, under bridges and beside industrial establishments, or wherever there is space or opportunity (UN Habitat, 2003:215).



Figure 6: The view from my rooftop with the squatter in the foreground and Makati City, the commercial centre of Manila, in the background.
Source: Author

Accessing the Santa Ana squatter community is complex. A small boat crosses the Pasig River which has open sewerage pouring into it, and is full of rubbish. Children from the squatter community, such as those pictured in Figure 7, bathe in the river and swim around the boats. The squatter settlement is highly congested and while some commute daily to jobs in the service, construction and industrial sectors, many migrant residents make a living from working as vendors, scavengers or beggars while others are involved in ‘snatching’, drug dealing or prostitution (Aoki, 2008:71; Hakata, 2013).

While living in the squatter settlement in Manila I had many informal conversations with my housemates and neighbours, all of whom were internal migrants, regarding how they came to live there and what they desired from their lives. Through these discussions, and by living in an environment of urban poverty, my understanding of the complexities surrounding poverty in the Philippine context developed (see also Taylor-Powell and Renner, 2003, who discuss this point). Later when in Samar, I was able to reflect on my experiences of rural poverty in Samar and recognised that the rural poor appeared to be more

desperate to migrate internally, while urban poor were more focused on international migration. This contrast highlighted the link between domestic and international migration in the Philippines. While I lived in these complex environments there were many challenges and encounters that shaped my experience, which will now be discussed.



Figure 7: Some of the children who lived beside me, hanging around outside the local sari-sari store. I spent a lot of my free time chatting with the store owner who disclosed the life stories of her customers.

Source: Author

Limitations and Reflections

Some difficulties arose over the course of conducting fieldwork. Interviews, for example, were conducted in the house of participants whose family and/or neighbours were often present. Although friends and family were there to support the participants, their presence may have influenced the discussion as the interviewees may have been reluctant to relate their full experience in front of others. When asked if they would prefer to have a more private interview, participants indicated they were fine with the arrangement and we proceeded to discuss their experience in front of others.

In Manila it was important to be conscious of personal safety, especially in the squatter settlement, as I was seen as an outsider and one with money. In order to combat this I stopped wearing jewellery, did not take my laptop to work, never walked around alone after dark and made friendly relationships with local people as a form of protection. After a few weeks I felt comfortable walking around but remained cautious. Due to overcrowding and close proximity of residences in the settlement, I inadvertently witnessed extreme domestic violence, young children's sexual experimentation, and neighbours' children becoming infected with diseases which disfigured their faces. I was informed that all these incidences are part of everyday life in the squatter. One afternoon I was grabbed and held onto by a drunken man whose wife eventually forced him to let me go. Later that week he came to see me to apologise. Another time I was caught up in a complex family drama where I felt responsibility to defend a young girl who was being marginalised by the community, at the same time as feeling obliged to abide by the procedures of the community who had accepted me. The positive and negative experiences in Manila and Samar were invaluable in shaping my perceptions of life for the rural and urban poor in the Philippines, and enhanced my understanding of the need to migrate in spite of high risks.

Thesis Outline

This thesis is organised into six chapters. This first introductory chapter has asserted that this research project will contribute to migration literature by emphasising the difficulties facing the lesser-documented internal migrants, particularly those who are forced into migrating due to economic constraints. An overview of the qualitative methodology and the accompanying data collection methods, for example the use of narrative interviews for the purpose of hearing the voices of returned migrants who were trafficked, is presented; as are the ethical issues surrounding research with sensitive subjects. The field research sites and reflections from within them were described to afford context to the following chapters, particularly the results chapters, Four and Five.

Chapter Two is a literature review on globalised migration trends and presents the issues surrounding economic migration through a gendered and human rights lens. The current focus on national security within migration policies, coupled with

discriminatory divisions of labour based on race, class and gender, result in poor migrants, particularly women, often enduring human rights abuses and even human trafficking. Chapter Two also discusses the push and pull factors which determine the voluntariness of labour migration and can increase susceptibility to trafficking.

The context to the culture of migration in the Philippines is presented in Chapter Three. It addresses the social, cultural and political factors which force Filipinos to migrate, including rampant corruption and inequality, and a national 'inferiority complex' inflicted on the Filipino population through centuries of colonial rule. It also highlights the resilience and agency that many Filipino migrants exert even under conditions of severe exploitation. These issues are discussed alongside current national and nongovernmental initiatives to protect the Philippines' vast migrant labour force from trafficking, and their efficacy.

The results chapters, Four and Five present key findings from interviews and fieldwork in Manila and Samar, focusing on the recurring issues which create the circumstances where Filipino migrants become vulnerable to trafficking. Through case studies of trafficked men and women from Samar Island, Chapter Four illustrates recruitment processes and incentives to migrate such as the desire for consumer goods to increase one's status in the village. Discussions from within the squatter settlement in Manila reveal the hardships internal migrants frequently face when they reach Manila, and how internal migration is often the first step to international movement. Chapter Five explains how widespread corruption and lack of law enforcement increases the prevalence of trafficking as traffickers operate with near impunity. The complexities involved in fighting trafficking at the local level are detailed as social workers and NGO staff express their perceived hopelessness of protecting poor migrants. Life after trafficking is discussed in terms of stigma and reputation, and livelihood options for returnee victim-survivors who, the results revealed, usually opt for 'easy money' rather than 'hard' work or study.

The final chapter, Chapter Six seeks to provide conclusions to the key issues addressed throughout this thesis. It begins with a discussion on the self-

contradictory Filipino mentality where Filipinos are proud of their country and culture, at the same as being determined to escape from it. This paradox provides the context in which the research aim and objectives are achieved. Chapter Six concludes the thesis by asserting that elitist hierarchies imbedded in social, political and economic systems have caused widespread poverty and inequality throughout the Philippines, forcing the poorer levels of society to employ unconventional survival strategies. This can be said for economic migrants, their families, recruiters and service providers, all of whom the results found to be engaged in activities which victimise themselves or the people they are supposed to protect. Due to such tensions in low-income society, poor Filipinos are forced to migrate and face a high risk of being trafficked in the process.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review: The Complexities of Migration: Migrant Rights and Trafficking

Introduction

The current era of economic globalisation has stimulated free flows of capital, goods and services between countries and opened up an international labour market. This has accelerated migration into a major global phenomenon influencing cultural, political and economic spheres, directly affecting more people than ever before. Migration can greatly contribute to economic and social development for both sending and receiving countries, offering prosperity for migrants themselves, their families back home and their hosting employers. However, unequal global economic structures have reinforced imperial class systems which favour ‘the West’ and have created a division of labour segregated by nationality, sex and position within the global economic order (Law and Nadeau, 1999; Peterson, 2007).

Many people who leave their home in search of a better life are escaping severe social, economic and political crises, and are marginalised from state protection and vulnerable to serious human rights violations at each stage of the migration process (Satterthwaite, 2005). Receiving governments, concerned with national security and economic growth, are tightening immigration controls while turning a blind eye to systematic employer abuses of irregular migrant labour forces (Jolly, 2005; Castles, 2011). Consequently, low-skilled migrants are marginalised and often criminalised.

Women from developing countries are migrating into gender-segregated labour markets. These are largely unregulated and unprotected industries, for example the domestic work sphere, and render women invisible and more vulnerable to exploitation than men (Munck, 2008; Briones, 2009). As a result many female migrants end up being trafficked into forced labour and into foreign sex industries

and suffer sustained psychological and physical abuses. This systematic discrimination against migrant women has been referred to as the 'dark side of globalisation' (D'Cunha, 2002).

An underrepresented side of migration discourse is the plight of internal migrants, who move in far greater numbers than international migrants, but whose extreme poverty and lack of market knowledge confine them to domestic movement (Deshingkar, 2009). Structural inequalities disadvantage international and internal migrants at all levels of society and internal migrants are just as susceptible to exploitation and trafficking within their own country (Deshingkar and Grimm, 2004). Internal trafficking has been acknowledged as a factor which can also lead to international trafficking (Piper, 2005; Jolly and Reeves, 2005).

This chapter seeks to outline the politico-economic conditions, security concerns and discriminatory policies which shape the individual migrant experience. It begins with a discussion on global migration structures including the negative light in which migrants are portrayed in the media, and how this impacts national and international immigration policies. This is followed by an investigation of the 'push and pull' factors which define the dynamic relationship between migration and development. A gendered perspective is utilised to focus on women's migrating experience, primarily with respect to invisibility, agency and potential for empowerment within the constraints of a migration process which contains force. Human rights theories are drawn on to highlight the gaps between policy and practice in national and international laws and how the current failing of governments to provide adequate protection to migrants can lead to human trafficking.

Systematic Marginalisation of Economic Migrants

Demographically, migration is one of the main factors which govern population dynamics as it influences the age, gender and skill compositions of societies (Docquier et al., 2011). Ambiguous categories of migrants, along with the incompatibility of methods of measuring migration data between countries, make accurately quantifying migration statistics very difficult (Samers, 2010; IOM, 2008). Nevertheless, the IOM (2013:1) reports that in 2010 there were an

estimated 214 million international migrants worldwide, or 3.1 percent of the global population, 15.4 million of whom were refugees, accounting for 7.8 percent of total migrants. Internal migrant numbers are even more difficult to determine as they alternate between living at their source and destination locations, but the UNDP reported that in 2009 there were 740 million internal migrants; nearly four times as many as those who moved internationally (UNESCO, 2013:3).

Migration is a highly politicised subject, often manipulated by local politicians for political gain. It is also a recurring issue in national and inter-governmental organisations due to its direct relevance and impact on the public. National security and free market forces are the two main issues which influence migration policy and planning in rich countries (Gzesh, 2008; Jolly, 2005). Munck (2008) argues that the dominant migration discourse is informed by methodological nationalism, largely seen from the perspectives of rich and powerful receiving countries and has marginalised those affected by these policies - both internal and transnational migrants. This skewed emphasis on seeing migration as a ‘problem’ and one of national security is evident in the UK where the group working on ‘promoting return of irregular migrants and failed asylum seekers is currently five times larger than the team focused on migration and development in the Department for International Development’ (UNDP, 2009:4). The mainstream media reflects this stigmatisation of migrants as a risk to ‘national security’ through its tendency to homogenise migrants as threats to social security.

Despite or perhaps because of its social and political significance, migration is often distorted in the media (World Migration Report, 2011) which tends to place an unbalanced emphasis on the negative implications of transferring cultural or behavioural norms between countries (Docquier et al., 2011; Chin, 2003). In destination countries migration is often cited as the cause of social unrest articulated in increases in violence or racial tension, and also as the cause of local unemployment where migrants are perceived to take jobs from local workers. The understated positive side to migration is the cultural diversity foreigners bring to receiving communities - vital in the current age of globalisation. Labour migrants also make valuable contributions to their host countries’ economies, through taxation and by frequently taking on jobs which local workers deem dirty,

degrading or dangerous, but without which entire sections of the economy would collapse (Jacoby, 2012; Pai, 2004). However, negative perceptions of migrants are fuelled by the media's tendency to disproportionately focus on the contentious aspects of immigration. This results in widespread anti-migrant sentiment expressed in opinion polls in destination communities, to which policymakers respond with restrictive immigration laws (World Migration Report, 2011; Oberoi & Taylor-Nicholson, 2013; Pai, 2004). Baldwin-Edwards (2008) asserts that the politicisation of immigration policies and decades of mismanaged migration flows, are causes of severe structural problems which have resulted in increased illegal migration and humanitarian crises.

Complex dynamics are involved when people are forced to migrate as a result of circumstances beyond their control. This is especially so when the situation is not regarded as urgent enough to qualify them as 'genuine refugees' and they become vulnerable to unscrupulous employers, criminal charges and deportation (World Migration Report, 2008). Therefore, the current global political structures which exist around migration and impact the lives and opportunities available for migrants do not adequately reflect the real circumstances of individual migrants (Kelley, 2002; Samer, 2010). The focus on migrants' potential risk to receiving societies rather than their plight as people seeking meaningful employment abroad, lays the foundation for human rights abuses and marginalisation, particularly for migrants who are forced to leave their homes (Pai, 2004; Edwards, 2005).

Push and Pull Factors

Forced migration occurs when predisposing social, political, environmental and cultural conditions of a specific country or region create the context that drives or 'pushes' people to migrate. These can include: natural disasters which displace people and destroy their livelihoods; poverty and lack of local employment opportunities (Jolly, 2005); and gender inequality where women may need to escape from oppressive social structures or abusive family situations which discriminate against or harm them (Piper, 2008). Political upheaval, conflict or an oppressive regime can also force people from their homes as their security and rights are violated (Jolly, 2005). When faced with these confronting situations

migration can be used as a family survival strategy where there are no other options (Piper, 2004; Briones, 2009b). Some of the root causes which push or force people to migrate are issues which development aims to alleviate or mitigate. The multi-layered relationship between migration and development can be demonstrated by both 'push' and 'pull' factors which determine the degree to which migration is voluntary. Migration has thus come to the forefront of current development dialogue after being of limited interest to the development agenda for many years (Bakewell, 2007), and has the potential to both support and challenge the achievement of development goals (Jolly, 2005).

Factors which 'pull' people to migrate include seeking opportunities for economic advancement and better living conditions offered by a developed society (Van Hear et al., 2012; Doyle and Timonen, 2010). Migration can be an empowering experience for those whose purpose is to seek better employment opportunities which are not available in the country of origin; or exercise freedom and autonomy by going out in the world independently, contributing to their personal and economic development (Briones, 2009b). However, where people are pushed or pulled to migrate due to development issues such as poverty or conflict, migration cannot be considered voluntary. Many 'willing' migrants would not choose to leave their home countries in order to secure an income if they had the option of building a livelihood at home (Deshingkar and Grimm, 2004). The UNDP argues that development initiatives should seek to increase living standards to the level where migration is no longer the only option. Additionally, migration can contribute to achieving this outcome as returned migrants transfer skills, knowledge and investment to their home communities (UNDP, 2009). The potential for development will now be discussed.

Migration's Potential for Development

For sending countries, returnee migrants expand human and cultural capital through sharing new skills and knowledge with their native communities and facilitating international trade and investment (Gibson and McKenzie, 2010; Levitt and Lamba-Nieves, 2011). The remittances sent home to families by migrant workers contribute considerably to the national GDP with remitting migrants being hailed as heroes in many countries (Asis, 2006). Remittance flows

into developing countries are estimated to have reached US\$ 401 billion in 2012, with worldwide flows including high income countries of the same year estimated at \$529 billion (World Bank, 2013:1). Remittances now contribute three times more to the economies of developing countries than official development assistance and can have a profound impact on human welfare and building up human and financial capital for the poor (World Bank, 2012; Levitt and Lamba-Nieves, 2011). The World Migration Report in 2010 acknowledged several capacity building initiatives being implemented in poor communities to promote the effective use of remittances for development. These include: tax exemptions for enterprises set up using remittances; access to microfinance credit that are oriented towards education; and the provision of information to migrants' families on philanthropic ventures and community development projects such as building a classroom with the pooling of remittances (World Migration Report, 2010:49). The migration for development paradigm is generally both to 'stimulate return of migrants so that they could contribute to development, and to promote development in regions and countries with strong migration "potential", in order to reduce the incentive to migrate' (UNDP, 2009:2). However, as human capital and transportation links improve through development, mobility and hence migration out of that region increases, which can have adverse effects on migrant-sending countries (Bird and Rodriguez, 1999:317; Van Hear et al., 2012).

Where developing countries have a surplus of low-skilled labour, and rich countries' immigration policies favour highly skilled migrants, it can create the occurrence of 'brain drain'. Here, skilled workers from developing countries take their knowledge and critical skills abroad to the developed world, decimating human capital, creating an absence of productive workers and agents of change (Castles, 2011), and neglecting their native country's economy (Sriskandarajah, 2005). The detrimental effects of the brain drain can be seen in the global health sector, for example, where nurses and physicians from developing countries with high levels of diseases per capita send their medical staff to richer countries that have more healthcare professionals and lower ratios of disease (Wickramasekara, 2008:1255). Beine's et al. (2008) study on the impact of migration on a developing economy, however, conversely showed that migration prospects - where higher returns on education are expected abroad - can foster a rise in the

average level of education in the remaining population. This can balance the negative effects of the brain drain by increasing overall human capital (Haque and Kim, 1995). However, this ‘beneficial brain drain’ is highly country-context specific and for many small developing countries the losses far outweigh the gains (Beine et al., 2008:648; Adams, 2003). The interconnecting migration-development nexus which creates push and pull incentives for migration can have both positive and negative effects on sending countries. These effects can also be observed in communities where people have migrated internally, typically as a result of the same issues which prompt international migration.

Internal Migration

Internal migration is significant the world over and in some countries is far greater than international migration in terms of migrant numbers. In China in 2001, for example, 458,000 people migrated internationally while close to 120 million people were estimated to migrate internally in the same year (Deshingkar and Grimm, 2004:7). In India nearly 30 percent of the total Indian population are internal migrants (UNESCO, 2013:iii). Internal migration can therefore generate far higher remittance values than international migration because despite individual quantities being smaller, ‘the total volume of internal remittances is likely to be enormous because of the numbers of people involved’ (Deshingkar and Grimm, 2004:28; IOM, 2013b). While there are context specific conditions which determine individual motives for internal migration, certain aspects can be generalised as key factors which have contributed to the increase in domestic movement. Improvements in communication and transport facilities create the conditions for mass internal migration, generally from rural to urban areas. Additionally economic growth is concentrated in urban areas, while low-yield agricultural activities no longer support the surplus of underemployed rural poor (Deshingkar, 2009:90; Deshingkar and Grimm, 2004; UNFPA, 2013). Other key push factors include escaping conflict zones, natural disasters or gender discriminating cultures; and are consistent with those of external migration (Jolly and Reeves, 2005; UNFPA, 2013; IOM, 2013b).

While the push and pull factors for internal and international migration are fundamentally the same, the distances that people move vary by degree of

poverty, with international migration usually reserved for the more affluent from poorer countries (de Haan, 2000). ‘In general, *poorer people move shorter distances* because of their limited resources, skills, networks and market intelligence ... mobility patterns are highly differentiated according to levels of income and the size and type of settlement in which they reside’ (Deshingkar and Grimm, 2004:13; emphasis in original). Therefore the poorest people are only likely to migrate internally (de Haan, 2000). As well as distances travelled, another key difference between the two is the temporary and seasonal nature of internal migration, where people are able to migrate for periods of two weeks to two years and keep ‘one foot in their village’ (Deshingkar, 2009:88). However, internal and external migrations are often interconnected as internal movement frequently serves as the first step towards international migration (Omelaniuk, 2005). ‘People may move from a rural to an urban area internally before organising their journey on to another country’ (Jolly and Reeves, 2005:9). The connections between internal and international migration will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Four, with reference to internal migrants residing in a squatter settlement in Manila, seeking work abroad. The positive and negative impacts of migration discussed above, therefore, affect the opportunities available to both poor internal and external migrants, including the risk of becoming trafficked, and there are gender specific implications for women and their families.

Migration as a Gendered Experience

The International Organisation for Migration suggests that gender is perhaps the most important factor which shapes migrants’ experience (IOM, n.d.); and gendered analysis of the migration process reveal differing experiences for men and women (Ghosh, 2009).

A gender analysis of migration looks beyond simple differences in migration behaviour between men and women – such as the likelihood and type of migration – and examines the inequalities underlying those differences. It looks at how these are shaped by the social and cultural contexts of the individual, and the influence that membership of social groups and economic and

political conditions can have on decisions about migration (Omelaniuk, 2005:1).

Migration is thus a gendered experience and for women it is more complex. Historical migration theory has been largely 'gender-blind' predominantly focusing on male migrants of whom women were merely accompanying dependents (Carling, 2005; UNDP, 2009), but women account for 50 percent of the world's migrants (UNFPA, 2013; OSCE, 2009; Carling, 2005). In the 1980s and 1990s the dominant cause of female migration was family reunification when women and children followed their husbands in secondary waves after the labour migration movements of the 1960s and 1970s (Omelaniuk, 2005:2). More recently, development issues, high unemployment rates, and male dominated workforces, can compel women to seek employment abroad. Other push factors include the desire to escape cultures which discriminate against women through gender-based violence or pressures on women to get married and fulfil familial obligations (Satterthwaite, 2005).

While gendered migration considers inequalities which determine the subjectivities and motives for female and male movements (Tyner, 2013), the change in the nature of migration has inspired the term 'feminisation of migration' (Jolly, 2005; Boyd and Grieco, 2003). The feminisation of migration is a result of 'a number of worldwide forces in which gender roles and sex discrimination are intertwined with globalization' (Satterthwaite, 2005:7). The term also describes the stronger links to home and family as women are now recognised as migrating independently. There is also an increase of service-sector occupations in migration flows (Piper, 2004) as women migrants often end up in gender-segregated sectors of the economy such as domestic work (UNFPA, 2013). The implications for women from developing countries who migrate into gender-discriminatory labour markets will now be discussed.

Labour migration is closely associated with the gender division of labour as the employment opportunities available for migrants are largely centred on socially constructed and stereotypical images of gender roles (Kofman, 2000; Boyd and Grieco, 2003). Men predominantly work in the public/productive sectors of the

economy including construction, agriculture and other physically demanding roles. Female migrants typically take on private/reproductive roles such as domestic service and care work (Carling, 2011; Asis et al, 2004), as well as entertainment work (Ghosh, 2009; Chin, 2003). The term ‘domestic worker’ can be used to refer to housekeeping and caring for dependents, such as children, older persons and persons with disabilities (FRA, 2011). These positions fill the gap in the domestic labour market where women in advanced economies who are now participating in the workforce have their domestic work taken over by migrant women (Doyle and Timonen, 2010). Highly skilled female migrants are commonly employed in the healthcare sector and generally represent a higher percentage of nurses than the native women of destination countries, particularly in Europe (OSCE, 2009). Chant and McIlwaine (1995) recognise that women from developing countries are cheaper to employ than men and women in more developed economies, and their ‘lesser cost’ and ‘docile nature’ - which make them easily exploitable - are pivotal in the feminisation of migration (Satterthwaite, 2005:7; Chin, 2003).

Poor migrant women’s exploitability correlates with Law and Nadeau’s (1999) assertion that transnational migration, in the era of a global capitalist labour market, is often framed within the political economy of neo-colonialism and imperialism, or “imperialist globalisation”. Gendered and ethnically stereotyped employment and racist labour policies favour Western agendas in global restructuring, and perpetuate poverty in poor countries (Peterson, 2007). This means that migrants from poor countries are systematically disadvantaged as they enter foreign labour markets. Therefore, the current global politico-economic system exacerbates polarised class structures between rich and poor countries through discriminatory laws which reflect social constructions of gender and ethnicity (Law and Nadeau, 1999; Peterson, 2007; Rao, 2011; Chin, 2003). These inequitable structures shape the migration experience, and create an environment where human trafficking can prevail. This is particularly conspicuous in the domestic service sector and the so-called care-chain (Raijman et al., 2003).

Domestic Workers and Agency

This section will demonstrate how economic migrants can navigate their marginalised circumstances using a case study example of domestic workers. There are currently at least 53 million domestic workers globally, 83 percent of whom are women (ILO, 2013:19, 21) and many of whom are migrants (HRW, 2014). A discussion on domestic workers is necessary not only because of the gender dimension and for the fact that domestic work is closely interlinked with migration and the global politico-economic structures outlined above (ILO, 2013), but due to Filipinas' overrepresentation in the domestic work sphere. In the Philippines twelve percent of the female working population are domestic workers and those employed locally in the Philippines are 'younger, come from poorer areas, have lower levels of education and have less work experience than domestic workers who take placements overseas' (ILO, 2013:29). Domestic workers are among the most exploited and abused workers in the world and children and migrant domestic workers are often the most vulnerable (HRW, 2014). This vulnerability can lead domestic workers to become trafficked, an example of which will be shown in a case study presented in Chapter Four. This section will now outline some of the complexities around domestic workers' vulnerability and agency, beginning with a discussion on the global care-chain.

The global care-chain is created when a migrant domestic worker leaves her poor country to look after the children of a woman in a rich country who has entered the workforce. The migrant then outsources the care of her own children to a poorer woman in her home country who in turn leaves her children in the care of her eldest daughter or a relative. Through these transferences the traditional role of motherhood is subverted (Raijman et al., 2003) and motherly love is commoditised (Hochschild, 2000). Women's migration can have severe emotional consequences on families left behind which are barely offset by the economic benefits gained through migration (Jingzhong and Lu, 2011). Piper (2008) for example argues that 'transnationally split families' incur gender-based social consequences, such as the effects on a husband who takes over his migrant wife's domestic duties. In some cases left behind husbands can turn to extramarital affairs, excessive drinking, and/or avoiding work to compensate for a perceived lack of masculinity as his wife takes over the breadwinner role (Piper,

2008:1289). Migrant mothers can experience contradicting emotions where they feel like a “bad mother” for leaving their children, while simultaneously feeling obliged to provide a better education through migration (Doyle and Timonen, 2010; Hochschild, 2000). Filipina migrants have even been accused of causing ‘the Filipino family to deteriorate, children to be abandoned, and a crisis of care to take root in the Philippines’ (Parrenas, 2003:40). For the children left behind by migrant women, the provision of an education and improved living conditions does not necessarily put them at an advantage, as the emotional costs of separation can affect their grades and reduce motivation to attain higher schooling. Separation has also been connected to psychosocial problems in left behind children including violence, self-enclosure and depression; and such resentment of the migrant mother that estrangement is common (Jingzhong and Lu, 2011:361; Parrenas, 2003). Therefore, while migration can improve living conditions for a family in financial terms, the emotional trauma and social consequences inflicted on migrant women and their families left behind, can supersede the advantages of migration (Rajjman et al., 2003), as will also be illustrated in another case study in Chapter Four. Despite these many challenges migrant women can use their position strategically to benefit their dual lives: at home and abroad.

Rao (2011) describes the complexity involved as migrant domestic workers seek to transcend conflicting emotions and oppressive class structures and obtain dual respectability in their home and destination cities/countries. Economic agency and a sense of responsibility can give a migrant domestic worker esteem in her home community; whereas at the workplace submissiveness and politeness are seen as respectable traits by her employer. This respect between employer and employee, however, is not mutual due to unequal relations inherent in the ‘culture of servitude’, and ‘given its association with reproduction rather than skills, domestic work continues to be socially and ideologically devalued’ (Rao, 2011:770). However, the respect migrant women strive for, both in their home communities and with their employers, is less associated with the domestic work itself but the self-dignity and increases in social mobility it affords. As such, vulnerable female migrants should not be viewed homogenously as victims. Scalar dimensions create diverse situations for migration and individuals can express agency even under exploitative circumstances (Rogaly, 2008). For example, Rao (2011) argues

that through migration women can have the chance to find a foreign husband even though they might be deemed 'too old' in their own country, or have access to greater authority and decision making power in their household back home (Boyd and Grieco, 2003). Where women migrate independently they can often accumulate savings, language skills and adventure (Doyle and Timonen, 2010) by which they can secure a life free of menial labour where they can eventually care for their own family rather than someone else's (Rao, 2011). In this way, even migration which is forced due to complex circumstances has the potential to be an empowering transition for women who are able to find independence they would not have in their own countries, alternatives for marriage, and economic and career advancement; strengthening their agency where they usually have few opportunities (Omelaniuk, 2005; Piper, 2008).

This agency can be exerted within the structural restrictions of the oppressive global political economy, traversing the notions of migrants as either victims or agents. However, Briones (2009:4) notes that 'agency requires capability to successfully mediate victimization; agency itself is insufficient'. When women migrants are perceived solely as victims of oppressive structures, laws to protect their human rights can deny their chance of making a livelihood (Briones, 2009; Piper, 2004; Busza, 2004). The 'choice' between protecting migrants' human rights or their right to a livelihood is decided by governments, with little attention to the needs and desires of the women themselves. This is highly problematic as migrants become vulnerable to restrictive immigration policies, marginalisation and exploitation (Parrenas, 2011; Raijman et al., 2003). It is this enhanced vulnerability which increases the likelihood of migrant women becoming victims of human trafficking. Therefore rights-based policies must be integrated into labour and immigration laws to provide the capacity for female and male migrants to exert agency within situations of economic and forced migration.

Economic Migration and Migrants' Rights

As mentioned, the conditions which force people to migrate – poverty, discrimination, conflict – are fundamental violations of human rights (UNICEF, 2011), and severe rights abuses can occur at each stage of the migration process to all actors on the spectrum. The volatile transportation stage exposes migrants to

exploitation, and their status of temporary contract workers and willingness to work in low paid, dirty, demeaning and dangerous jobs leaves them doubly vulnerable to having their rights violated in destination countries or cities (Piper, 2004; Raijman et al., 2003). This section will predominantly address issues pertaining to international migrants rights as few policies relate directly to migration at the national level (de Haan, 2000; Sabates-Wheeler and Waite, 2003).

The strict immigration policies in receiving countries which favour highly skilled migrants leave a vast number of irregular and low skilled migrants restricted to finding employment in industries which profit from an illegal, flexible workforce whose labour rights such as social security and safety standards are often abandoned completely. Local governments are ‘unofficially aware’ and even complicit of employers’ abuse due to the national economy’s reliance on such a workforce (Jolly, 2005; Castles, 2011; Piper, 2004). The denial of labour demand by receiving governments is a key factor which leads to irregular migration, ‘a situation at the core of much of the abuse and numerous human rights violations suffered by migrants’ (Wickramasekara, 2008:1252).

Furthermore, the security paradigm, outlined above, categorises many asylum seekers as illegal immigrants (Edwards, 2005). This exacerbates human rights abuses to the extent that an irregular or forced migrant can be shot at and killed at a border crossing (Gzesh, 2008; Wickramasekara, 2008). Oberoi & Taylor-Nicholson (2013) recognise a growing crisis at international borderlines and call for enforcement of the principles of human rights law within national security frameworks:

Multiple layers of marginalization and discrimination accompany poor and vulnerable individuals as they attempt to migrate across borders; despite the fact that it is the poor and the socially excluded who are most in need of migration as a survival strategy (Oberoi & Taylor-Nicholson, 2013:170).

Once in the destination country migrants can face discrimination and social exclusion and, considering the conditions they were in prior to emigration, feel they are not entitled to claim their fundamental human rights, let alone claim the labour rights they are entitled to (UNESCO, 2011). In Malaysia, for instance, low-wage migrants face severely discriminatory labour laws including being prohibited to migrate with dependents, marry Malaysians or join labour unions. They are also made to undergo medical exams and face immediate deportation if tested positive for pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases (Chin, 2003:57). Some State practises also deliberately segregate migrant workers according to ethnicity, gender or sector to deter potential collective action, further marginalising working class migrants from national citizens (Chin, 2003). These blatant discriminations exist despite strong political commitments to universal human rights.

The concept of human rights as outlined by the United Nations is based on the principle that all rights are universal, indivisible and inalienable. Article 22 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that

Everyone as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international cooperation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality (UDHR, 1948:22).

However, gaps remain between current international human rights policies and practice, with regard to migrants' rights (Hendow, 2013). Despite human rights being generally well known and accepted in receiving countries, there is a lack of political will to codify and ratify migrant workers' rights as human rights in domestic law (Iredale and Piper, 2003; Ruhs, 2012; Briones, 2009) leaving migrants especially vulnerable to human rights violations. The ILO's Migrant Workers Rights Conventions 97 and 143 and the United Nations' 1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICMR or MWC) were created to provide migrant workers the same rights as nationals; to place migrants as human beings first and

foremost irrespective of which State they belong to (Gzesh, 2008) and regardless of their immigration status (UNCHR, 2013). The more recent 2006 ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration was also a major step forward in defining a rights-based approach to labour migration and recognises the common goal of the international community being migration in ‘conditions of freedom, dignity, equity and security’ (ILO, 2010:4). However, the ICMR has only been ratified by 47 states (UN Treaties, 2013), of which none are major migrant-receiving countries. Suggested reasons for the abstention are the desire to protect the national interests of the (welfare or) nation-state and the limiting of state sovereignty (Williams, 2009; Ruhs, 2012), as well as the unwillingness of governments to give rights to irregular migrants (Iredale and Piper, 2003). This shows that a lot of lip service has been paid by governments and multilateral institutions, but ‘the machinery and cooperation mechanisms at the international and regional levels to promote these understandings are lacking, leaving major challenges of migration yet to be addressed’ (Wickramasekara, 2008:1261). As Piper (2004b:81 quoted in Briones, 2009:9) puts it, the current state of the ICMR

underscores the age-long conflict between the international norms of human rights and state sovereignty — a particularly thorny issue in the context of cross-border migration. Ultimately, the “rights of states” clearly prevail over the “rights of migrants” with states retaining the right to set the conditions under which foreigners may enter and reside in their territory.

The international laws would offer comprehensive protection for migrants related to employment, social and cultural rights but due to low ratification, such protection is left to national labour laws and employment contracts (Piper, 2004). This leaves migrants still vulnerable to abuse, however, it is migrant women who are most severely affected.

Female Migrants and Human Rights

Women and children are particularly vulnerable during the migration process due to gender-biased cultures and their overall weaker status in society. The trauma associated with economic migration is exacerbated by gender insensitive

immigration policies which fail to address women's reproductive health needs. Women also often have to continue living within their own patriarchal societal structures in destination countries (Banerjee, 2006). Women migrants face discriminatory abuses based on nationality, religion, ethnicity and sex (Satterthwaite, 2005). These intersect with other forms of discrimination against age, economic status and their status as foreigners and leave female labour migrants facing double or triple marginalisation (UNICEF, 2011). Migration in such marginalised circumstances exposes women to the risks of sexual harassment and gender-based violence (Jolly, 2005), an increased burden of taking care of families, and – in the worst cases of human rights violations – makes them vulnerable to trafficking (FMO, 2013).

Despite migrant protection laws in place in many origin countries (Asis, 2006), irregular migration leaves numerous female migrants invisible in terms of access to social security and justice systems (Peterson, 2007; Doyle and Timonen, 2010). The reproductive labour markets women migrants usually work in, such as domestic work and entertainment work, are unprotected and unregulated sectors and render women vulnerable to isolation and extreme forms of exploitation by their employers in destination countries (Munck, 2008; Briones, 2009; Chin, 2003). Some domestic work contracts in Asia explicitly exclude workers from national employment laws due to the private sphere of their 'workplace' (Piper, 2004; Chin, 2003). Such exclusion exempts women from normal working hour limits, or restricts them from leaving their employer's premises at all (Satterthwaite, 2005). Invisibility of female migrants is not limited to low skilled women as unequal global economic restructuring has led to the marginalisation of educated women too. Kofman (2000) and Doyle and Timonen (2010) point out that many highly skilled female migrants have also been omitted from research as care work is classified as 'unskilled', but many of those who do it are not 'unskilled'. Highly educated women such as teachers and engineers from developing countries are forced to work as cleaners and carers as these are often the only jobs available to female migrants. The official statistics of female labour migration do not cover the full extent to which women are migrating, especially where women are classified as 'dependents' which places them in a family role rather than a market role (Boyd and Grieco, 2003). Statistics also fail to include

factors such as ‘international wives’ who marry to stay in a destination country longer or who seek employment after marriage to send remittances back to their families (Piper, 2008). While women migrants might be generally invisible in statistics, literature and society, and the enforcement of migrant protection policies remains inadequate, the situation is even riskier for forced female internal and international migrants, when they become the prime targets of human traffickers.

Migration and Human Trafficking

Human trafficking is currently the fastest growing criminal industry in the world (Kara, 2009). The poorest migrants who have the greatest need to improve their income, are less able to migrate as they do not possess the assets needed for migration, such as money for transport and bribes for immigration officials and employment contacts (de Haan, 2000). Therefore the poorest migrants are particularly at risk of being trafficked as they are willing to accept offers from deceitful recruiters. The restrictive immigration policies detailed above which are based on efforts to obstruct or deter people from crossing borders also ‘have negative consequences, forcing migrants into the hands of unscrupulous smugglers or human traffickers’ (Piper, 2004:217). The term human trafficking encompasses a range of exploitative actions and is defined by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime as the

recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation includes, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs (UNODC, 2004:42).

Trafficking is happening on both international and internal scales with people being taken for forced labour or prostitution within their own country and abroad. Women and children are the most at risk of being trafficked (D’Cunha, 2002; Satterthwaite, 2005) and although they are susceptible to all types of trafficking - which includes domestic servitude, agricultural work, forced begging, manufacturing, construction and organ harvesting (Kara, 2009) - sexual exploitation and prostitution are most common for women. The ILO (2012:2) estimates that of the 21 million people in situations of forced labour worldwide, 4.5 million are being used for sexual exploitation. Trafficking routes typically follow migration paths where the flow of women generally goes from the global south to north or from east to west; or from states in economic, social or political crises to richer, more politically stable countries (Raymond, n.d.; UNODC, 2012). Sex trafficking intersects with migration not through the transportation of people but by the exploitation of migrants including the exploitation of a woman’s desire to migrate (Raymond, n.d.), nullifying the initial consent expressed by willing migrants (UNWOMEN, n.d.). ‘Agents who are working in direct contravention of national laws, facilitating women’s crossing of borders illegally, may use coercion, force, or false promises, placing women in clandestine domestic settings, illegal sex work, or exploitative sweatshops – practices that amount to trafficking’ (Satterthwaite, 2005:23).

Due to the assumption that trafficking is mainly of women for the purpose of prostitution, women and girls are the dominate focus of trafficking policies and discourse and trafficking of men is underreported (IOM, 2008). In addition, trafficked men are often treated as irregular migrants, rather than victims of TIP, and deported without their cases being investigated (USAID, 2010). There are an estimated 9.5 million men working in situations of forced labour worldwide (ILO, 2012:2), most of whom are recruited in groups by intermediaries, from poor rural areas for jobs in urban centres or abroad (USAID, 2010). Male trafficking is usually linked to a lack of local employment opportunities, low education and health status, and ignorance of trafficking (Onyekpere, 2006). Poor men who are mentally or physically disabled are likely to be particularly vulnerable to trafficking because of limited capacity to gauge risk or escape trafficking and the fact that they can be more easily manipulated (Surtees, 2005). An example of

stunted growth leading to a man being trafficked will be presented in Chapter Four. These abuses of men and women migrants are more prevalent in areas with high incidences of poverty and inequality and occur on both international and domestic scales (UNODC, 2012).

Trafficking must be posited in broader economic and socio-cultural contexts, and conceptual frameworks of border crossing should be expanded to incorporate internal trafficking (Adepoju, 2005:91). The UNODC (2012:51) reports that internal trafficking constituted 31 percent of all trafficking cases in 2010, up from 19 percent in 2007; citing the increasing difficulty in cross-border trafficking due to tighter border controls, as a possible explanation for the recent surge. Bourguignon (2009) asserts that violence and crime, including internal trafficking and prostitution, are, among other factors, social costs of excessive poverty and inequality. In regions where children are largely trafficked within their country of origin the traffickers are predominantly locals (UNESCO, 2006:67; UNODC, 2012) and even parents, as ‘endemic rural poverty often causes poor families to sell their children to traffickers, in the hope of improving their life chances’ (Omelaniuk, 2005:9; Busza 2004). This point will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Four. Therefore where there are high levels of poverty and inequality which force already vulnerable people to migrate internally, the risk of trafficking increases further as local people and even families have incentives to sell their kin to traffickers.

Development issues have been cited as causes of internal migrant women often entering into prostitution, as they lack alternative opportunities (Piper, 2005:211; Ezeilo, 2012). For example, ‘increasing numbers of migrant women engage in sexual labour in major tourist sites in search of better economic opportunities unavailable in their home communities’ (Piper, 2005:210). Deshingkar and Grimm (2004:6) explain that migration for sex work cannot be labelled voluntary due to the inherent exploitation in the sex industry and the term ‘voluntary’ underplays the negative aspects. This is especially true when the fact that a person’s hometown cannot support their livelihood is the only reason that they are leaving. In areas where internal migration for sex work is high, incidences of human trafficking are also prevalent, and a link between internal and international

trafficking is generated (Omelaniuk, 2005). Piper's research suggests that 'early involvement in internal trafficking for sex work at the age of a child [has] subsequently led to further trafficking often across international borders as an adult' (Piper, 2005:214).

Trafficking affects every continent and every type of economy with 161 countries identified as being a source, transit, or destination country (or a combination of the above) (UN.GIFT, 2008:1-2). The global business of human trafficking is extremely lucrative, generating an estimated US\$31.6 billion in profits each year (ILO, 2005:17). The sex trafficking industry accumulates a global weighted average net profit margin of 70 percent, making it one of the most profitable enterprises in the world (Kara, 2009:21). Despite an increase in research on trafficking, internal trafficking is an existing research gap, and numbers of internally trafficked victims, and profit margins, are often more difficult to capture as most victims do not stay in the area long enough to take legal action (IOM, 2008:13; Laczko, 2005). Trafficking is also exceedingly low risk for crime rings. In 2006 there were 5,808 prosecutions and 3,160 convictions of sex traffickers worldwide which means that for every 800 people that were trafficked in 2006, there was only one conviction (UN.GIFT, 2008:1-2). As anti-trafficking laws are passed, the perpetrators have created more diverse and sophisticated methods, with strong connections between trafficking networks and organised crime syndicates, public officials, and corporate enterprises including transport and tourism industries (D'Cunha, 2002; Busza 2004). D'Cunha (2002) asserts that current anti-trafficking initiatives are overly focused on post-trafficking assistance and not enough on prevention or suppression of demand; thus reinforcing populations' vulnerability to trafficking by not being gender or market responsive. These initiatives are also lacking in a rights-based sustainable development orientation by being

embedded in morality, law and order, national security and sovereignty paradigms marked by class, gender, ethnic, nationality concerns and restrictive, punitive strategies, that violate human rights. The onus is discriminatorily placed on

people who are victims of an unjust social order and a chain of coercive and deceptive events (D’Cunha, 2002:4).

The lack of enforcement of anti-trafficking legislation and arguably misdirected anti-trafficking interventions (Busza 2004), are exacerbated by discriminatory immigration policies that treat many economic and forced migrants as criminals. These issues indicate that despite the rhetoric, much is yet to be done to provide protection for internal and external migrants, particularly women, from falling prey to human trafficking. In this way women and men migrants’ vulnerability due to poverty and lack alternative options to secure a livelihood, can therefore lead them directly into the hands of traffickers. This vulnerability is intensified as they receive virtually no support from receiving governments who are more concerned with their immigration status than their human rights. Economic migrants thus face multiple systematic abuses as they attempt to work their way out of poverty, and for women the gender-based discrimination inherent in the marginalised sectors they usually work in, increases their susceptibility to abuse and becoming trafficked.

Chapter Conclusions

Globalisation has accelerated and politicised migration, bringing it to the forefront of international economic, security and development dialogues. Push and pull factors determine the degree to which transnational movement is voluntary, and with diverse implications for migrants based on nationality, race, sex and social class, economic migrants are frequently disadvantaged in receiving countries (Peterson, 2007; Rao 2011). Discussing migration through a human rights lens revealed that discriminatory divisions of labour push already vulnerable migrants into dirty and dangerous jobs; while the need for nation-states to maintain sovereignty and national security (Gzesh, 2008; Pai, 2004), and the media’s sensationalist portrayals of migrants as terrorists or criminals (Docquier et al., 2011; Chin, 2003), has resulted in strict immigration policies in destination countries which further marginalise migrants and leave them susceptible to widely tolerated abuse (Wickramasekara, 2008; Castles, 2011). Low ratification of international conventions on migrants’ rights makes governments’ non-compliance all the more explicit (Iredale and Piper, 2003; Ruhs, 2012).

International migration is closely interlinked with internal migration as internal migration is often the first step towards an external move (Jolly and Reeves, 2005; Omelaniuk, 2005). Poverty and inequality are the root causes which force migrants to leave their communities but it is the poorest people who are most likely to move internally, risking abuses within their own country, and by people they know, placing them further at risk (Deshingkar and Grimm, 2004).

A gendered perspective of migration has been used to grasp a holistic understanding of migration processes and the unique experiences of individual migrants. Migrant women are largely invisible from society and labour protection laws due to their overrepresentation in unregulated private spheres (Munck, 2008; Briones, 2009). The forced conditions under which women migrate, the emotional difficulties they face as they leave their families behind (Piper, 2008) and the associated psychological implications of these aggregate circumstances, mean that for many women, the migration experience invokes disempowerment and discrimination and for some, leads to the deplorable act of being trafficked (FMO, 2013; D’Cunha, 2002).

However, despite the numerous difficulties inherent in forced female migration, drawing on the example of domestic work, women are also able to exert agency and improve their overall position by strategically manoeuvring through unequal social, economic and political structures and earn respect (Rao, 2011), increase their self-esteem, and provide a livelihood for their families back home (Doyle and Timonen, 2010; Omelaniuk, 2005). Nonetheless, gaps remain between rhetoric and practice and immigration policies regularly fail to provide the capacity through which migrant women can exert their agency and transcend the unjust social order which renders them invisible and vulnerable to abuse and trafficking (Parrenas, 2011; Briones, 2009). Forced internal migrants face just as high a risk of trafficking as international migrants, due to the fact that both categories of migrants are coming from situations of extreme poverty and migrate within structural inequalities which create conditions for trafficking (Bourguignon, 2009). Internal female migrants escaping poverty often enter local sex industries where they can become victims of trafficking in the process

(Omelaniuk, 2005); and internal trafficking as a child has been connected to cross-border trafficking as an adult (Piper, 2005). A clear understanding of the links between economic migration and trafficking from a rights-based gendered perspective is necessary to ensure that migrating women and men are free to seek employment abroad while maintaining their security, rights and human dignity.

CHAPTER THREE

The Philippines' Culture of Migration

Introduction

A recent history of colonialism, martial law and an unstable national politico-economic climate, have created a culture of migration in the Philippines. Migration is strongly endorsed by the Philippine Government and is an essential part of its economic and employment strategy (Van Impe, 2002; CATW, 2002; UNODC, 2000). Nowadays, widespread poverty, unemployment and rampant corruption combined with a sub-conscious national identity formed through colonial oppression, gives Filipinos the somewhat idealistic impression that 'outside is better' (Reincke, 1997; Mulder, 1990). Chapter Two detailed how internal and international migrants who are desperate to escape poverty are vulnerable to exploitation and human trafficking. This chapter presents the case of Filipino migrants and will illustrate how the Philippines' culture of migration, which stimulates an eagerness to accept work either more internally or abroad, renders poor Filipino migrants particularly vulnerable to such abuses (Semyonov and Gorodzeisky, 2006; Schirmer and Shalom, 1987; Collas-Monsod et al., 2004).

This chapter also seeks to outline what the Government and NGOs are doing to address these issues. In 2009 the Philippines was placed on the Tier 2 watch list in the US State Department's Trafficking in Persons Report for not complying with the minimum requirements to combat trafficking. A key issue identified in the report was that 'The government's ability to effectively prosecute trafficking crimes is severely limited by an inefficient judicial system and *endemic corruption*' (US State, 2009: Philippines, emphasis added). This widespread corruption is a major setback to the Philippine economy, and to the welfare and protection of its citizens, particularly those who migrate (Global Slavery Index, 2013; Zhang and Pineda, 2008).

As such, this chapter begins with a description of the current politico-economic context of the Philippines and an overview of the historical background of Filipino migration. This is followed by a discussion of the multifaceted dynamics which push Filipinos to migrate and how economic migrants strategically navigate the migration process. A clear understanding of the links between migration and trafficking is necessary to ensure that migrating Filipinos are free to seek employment away from home while maintaining their security, rights and dignity.

Profile of the Philippines

The Republic of the Philippines is an archipelago of 7,100 islands, of which 11 make up 95 percent of its landmass. The islands are divided into three main regions: Luzon in the north, which hosts the dominant urban centre and capital, Manila, Mindanao in the south and the Visayas in between (Collas-Monsod et al., 2004:122). The population of 96.5 million, which grew at an average of 1.9 percent between 2000 and 2010 (NSO, 2013:6), is divided among 78 provinces and almost 42,000 villages or '*barangays*'. The legacy of 350 years of Spanish colonisation is reflected in 80 percent of the population being Roman Catholic Christians with ten percent other Christian denominations and five percent Muslim (World Population Review, 2013:1). There are at least 51 ethno-linguistic groups and after nearly 50 years of American colonisation in the first half of the 20th century there are two official languages: Tagalog (or Filipino) and English (World Population Review, 2013:1; Collas-Monsod et al., 2004). Mindanao has borne five centuries of violence with an increase in civil conflict in the last four decades; causes of which range from historical colonial grievances, ethnic and religious clashes, and exclusion from the benefits of macro-economic growth (Vellema et al., 2011; IDMC, 2013).

In recent years the Philippine national economy has stabilised due to increased government spending and exports, and resilience to typhoons, climate change and food and fuel price hikes amid a global recession. Currency stability has also increased thanks to remittances which have produced a strong build-up of foreign reserves (World Bank, 2012:1). These factors, coupled with restored political stability, have contributed to the Philippines averaging around five percent growth since 2002 and 6.6 percent growth in 2012 (World Bank, 2013:1). This is

significantly higher than previous decades. In regards to the Millennium Development Goals, the Philippines is on track to achieving gender equality in basic education, reducing infant and child mortality and combatting major diseases. However, the World Bank has identified that there is still a need to intensify efforts in reducing poverty, achieving universal primary education and in improving maternal health. The Bank also noted that the lack of good jobs among low-income earners, especially those from rural areas where many poor people reside, must be addressed (2013:1).

In 2012 the Philippines had a human development index (HDI) value of 0.654, based on a life expectancy of 69 years, 8.9 years of average school tuition, and a GNI per capita of \$3,752 (UNDP, 2013:2). This ranking places the Philippines at 114 out of 187 countries, and in the medium human development category. This is a substantial increase from 1980 when the HDI value was 0.561 as life expectancy was 63.2 years, with 6.1 years average schooling, and a GNI per capita of \$2,786 (UNDP, 2013:2). However, the Philippines' HDI is lower than the regional average and loses 19.9 percent falling to 0.524, when the value is discounted for inequality (UNDP, 2013:4). Collas-Monsod et al. argue this is exacerbated as 'subnational disparities exist, indicating possible patterns of isolation or discrimination' (2004:134). Climate, topography and frequent natural calamities such as typhoons and earthquakes, as well as on-going armed conflict and low quality local governance are issues which hinder the development of the Philippines (Collas-Monsod et al., 2004:129). This volatile context fuses with a complicated colonial history imposed by first the Spanish and then the U.S., and has created the conditions for a so-called national 'inferiority complex'.

Feelings of Subservience and Inferiority

The Philippine national identity has been shaped by its history of colonialism which served Spanish and U.S. interests and their Filipino elite allies, disregarding the common people. U.S. colonialism created a social and political elite class which served the interests of the U.S., and a neo-colonial psychology which affected all Filipinos and created a lasting subservience to the U.S.A (Reincke, 1997). For example, the U.S. established free trade for Filipino landowning elites into tariff-free U.S. markets which reinforced the feudal agrarian system

established by the Spanish. This served to buttress the suffering and exploitation of farmers and workers by the elites who collaborated with the colonisers at their expense (Schirmer and Shalom, 1987:37). As a result of centuries of submission to foreign powers, an inferiority complex within the Filipino population arose (Reincke, 1997). In 1902 the U.S. administration established universal education in the Philippines which was taught in English. The curriculum glorified the benefits that foreigners brought into the Philippines and systematically aligned Philippine interests with those of the U.S. while instilling a sense of indebtedness and gratitude for the great privilege of being conquered and colonised by the Americans (Mulder, 1990). This system gave the sense that being Filipino was not good enough and the impression that a Filipino 'stands naked and in need of being dressed in foreign gear' (Mulder, 1990:91). This education system aimed at making Filipinos into loyal colonial subjects, while at the same time 'deprived them of their soul, that is, their history, culture, and identity, instituting instead a sense of rootlessness, dependence and inferiority' to the point where students would often 'rather be citizens of another country' (Mulder, 1990:86, 97). The effect of this system was the erosion of the national identity and the spread of white superiority (Schirmer and Shalom, 1987:35). After independence in 1946 the Philippines struggled to establish itself as a new republic with its own ethnic identity disassociated with its former coloniser and adopted an image in international circles as bring the offspring of America (Orig, 2008:53). Carino (1987:308) suggested that the 'imperial tradition may also engender the feeling that by migration to an imperial center, the former colonial subject is moving up into a superior and exciting culture'. This may be an explanation as to why many Filipinos migrated to the U.S. after independence, and a contributing factor to the 'culture of migration' which has become a prominent part of the Philippine national identity today.

Culture of Migration

Gardiner-Barber (2008) identified three waves of Filipino migration dating back to the 20th century where the Age of Capitalism produced the first commodification of Filipino migration. U.S. colonisation of the Philippines from 1898 brought many Filipino men, as nationals of the U.S.A., to Hawaii's sugar plantations, food processing and service sectors, and as U.S. Navy recruits where

they faced poor working conditions, social exclusion and systematic discrimination (Castillo, 1976). Equal education for girls and boys was also introduced by the U.S. which encouraged female labour migration as women's economic potential grew (Lauby and Stark, 1988). After independence in 1946, a more class-diversified stream of migrants entered the U.S. including medical and technical professionals with a higher percentage of female migrants. A third wave of out-migration was prompted when the Marcos administration declared martial law in 1972 inciting political and economic uncertainty and resulting in a 671 percent increase in applications for work abroad (Gardiner-Barber, 2008:1270).

The nature of Filipino migration has always had a maritime dimension and even today overseas contracts are classified as land-based or sea-based, making up 75 and 25 percent of migrant contracts respectively (OHCHR, 2012:6). Originally the migrant labour force was predominantly male contract workers in Asia and the Middle East, but around the 1980s onwards the demand for contract workers in construction and in the oil industry subsided. At the same time the demand for gendered domestic labour in advanced economies increased, resulting in women accounting for the higher percentage of Filipino migrants and outnumbering men by respective ratios of 12:1 (Chin, 2003:51).

In the early 1970s the Philippine Government started supporting and promoting labour migration as a temporary means to address two major problems: unemployment and the balance of payments (CATW, 2002; UNODC, 2000). Since then migration has become a central part of its employment strategy (Van Impe, 2002). In the 1980s government incentives for capital and energy intensive industries and disincentives for commercial agriculture pushed landless farmers and urban workers upland to find new livelihoods (Amacher et al., 1998:93). The strategy of domestic migration is still employed today. In 1982 the Government established the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) to enable the fluid movement of its citizens abroad through streamlining bureaucratic processes and facilitating the transfer of remittances into the country. Despite such high levels of migration, protection for migrants was not formally introduced until 1987 when the Government established the Overseas Worker Welfare Administration (OWWA) and in 1995 adopted the Migrant Workers and Overseas

Filipino Act. The Act followed the execution of a Filipino maid in Singapore who was convicted for killing another Filipino maid and the Singaporean child she was caring for (Reincke, 1997). The execution sparked widespread protests among the Filipino population over the Government's lack of protection for Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) (Gonzalez, 1998).

Since migration became a permanent fixture of the Philippine employment strategy, remittances of OFWs have significantly contributed to the GDP and the Philippines' informal development policies (OHCHR, 2012; Siar, 2011). Remittances are now seen as more important than official aid for development (Munck, 2008), with OFWs regarded as active development agents (Calzado, 2007) and hailed as national heroes (Asis, 2006). Despite the inherent difficulty in obtaining accurate migration statistics, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (2012) estimates that roughly ten percent of the Philippines' population is living in 238 countries, eight percent of whom are irregular (CFO, 2010:1); with 1.423 million Filipinos deployed in 2009 alone (OHCHR, 2012:6). In this context, the Philippines generated a 'culture of migration' among its people, where powerful images of travel abroad, social mobility and affluence through cash remittances (Van Impe, 2002:117), result in increasingly higher numbers of Filipinos migrating each year. However, Filipino migration is not limited to crossing borders, many move domestically within the archipelago to seek a better livelihood.

Internal Migration

The Philippines has a long history of internal as well as international migration (De Jong, 1983) with the former often facilitating the latter (Omelaniuk, 2005). Despite high levels of international migration, the 2010 national census revealed that 95.8 percent of 2.86 million Filipino movers migrated domestically (NSO, 2012:1). Internal migration has received a lot less attention which Saith (1997) suggests is because internal migration involves poorer people moving from poorer regions. It is therefore poorer people who rely on domestic remittances while upper income families receive a disproportionately high percentage of remittances from family members abroad (Saith, 1997). Family plays a causal and facilitating role in Filipino migration. Socialisation to migration occurs in families where a

member has already migrated and encourages others to follow. In addition migrants play a facilitating role where migrants assist their family in housing and employment (De Jong, 1983; Quisumbing and McNiven, 2005). However, rural to urban migration exceeds the rate of urban job creation, which generates surplus urban labour and exacerbates economic and structural imbalances (Mojares, 2013). Therefore, despite kinship networks and support, many internal migrants are left without employment in destination areas and forced to dwell in informal housing settlements such as urban squatters (Hakata, 2013). The reasons why individual Filipinos are so eager to leave their community or country are varied and cover multiple societal spheres.

Driving factors of Filipino Migration

This section will detail the reasons why individual Filipinos decide to leave their hometown and look for outside jobs, and why migration – both internal and international – is so prevalent. This is achieved by considering the economic, political and socio-cultural factors which drive Filipinos to migrate. The domestic labour market of the Philippines is characterised by low salaries, no overtime or hazard pay and no insurance (Lorenzo et al., 2007:1412), as well as insufficient available jobs to fit the labour force demand. The government’s policy emphasis on labour export and international service provision has correlated with limited effort to address domestic labour issues (Lorenzo et al., 2007). Unemployment and underemployment have been extensive since martial law in the 1970s and those who are in work are often underemployed, underpaid or working below their full potential (Lorenzo et al., 2007; DOLE, 2013). The unemployment rate peaked in 2004 at 11.9 percent, dropped to 7 percent in 2011 (World Bank, 2012:1), and currently sits on 7.1 percent (National Statistics Office, 2013:1). Unemployment is especially high among youth with 17.6 percent of 15 to 24 year olds experiencing unemployment in 2010 (UNHCR, 2012:6). It takes an average high school leaver three to four years to find a permanent job and up to two years for a college graduate. This is a problem as early unemployment increases the likelihood of further unemployment (DOLE, 2013:6). Over 40 percent of the working population is in vulnerable employment meaning they are ‘forced to accept or create whatever work is available just to survive’ (ILO, 2011:11). In 2011 the nationally mandated minimum wage was 389 Philippine Pesos (PHP)/day (USD

8.65⁶) and 32 percent of the population were earning below that (ILO, 2011:6). In some poorer regions remunerations are even lower, for example Bicol's minimum wage is set at PHP 210/day (USD 4.67), and as much as 60 percent of the Bicol population were earning less than that in 2011 (ILO, 2011:7).

Social mobility within the country is low; most people who are born poor in the Philippines are likely to die poor (Hakata, 2013; Fuwa, 2003). Some urban families have two parents working 12 hour days each and still not making a sufficient income to support their families. High numbers of urban slum dwellers are even resorting to selling organs to pay off debts 'because they have virtually no other means to provide support for themselves or their families' (Saber and Delmonico, 2008:925, Yea, 2010). Ninety-four percent of organ commercial donors reported regretting their donation as their economic situation did not improve (Saber and Delmonico, 2008:928). In rural settings, where there are few job opportunities outside of farming, lower levels of education and larger families to provide for, the need to migrate for work becomes more pronounced (Castillo, 1976; Carino, 1987). With such limited livelihood opportunities available, the idea of earning three days' wage in the Philippines for one hour's work overseas becomes almost impossible to resist. Overseas employment offers Filipinos higher incomes, better working conditions, and more room for professional advancement (Siar, 2011). Semyonov and Gorodzeisky argue that 'Labor migrants view their overseas employment as a temporary solution to economic problems in their country of origin, as a means to combat poverty and economic hardships in the homeland, and as a way to help support household members left at home' (2006:46).

However, it is not only people with limited education and opportunity, desperate to escape poverty, who search for economic opportunity abroad. Educated Filipinos, particularly engineers, scientists and physicians are also migrating in large numbers (Carino, 1987). Filipino physicians for example are retraining as nurses in order to gain overseas employment to the extent that 'in 2004, the Philippines Hospital Association estimated that 80 percent of all public sector physicians were currently or had already retrained as nurses' (Lorenzo et al,

⁶ Based on the exchange rate in March, 2014

2007:1410). The physicians cited as reasons for their career shifts ‘the very low salaries, poor working conditions, political instability, graft and corruption in the Philippines, and the threat of malpractice lawsuits’ (Lorenzo et al., 2007:1412). These motives to migrate indicate that political corruption is another significant push factor.

In the 1950s and 1960s the Philippines was Asia’s most promising economy with the second highest GDP after Japan, but it gradually declined over the following decades and by 2000 was one of the weakest economies in Asia (Choguill, 2001; Storey, 1996). Key reasons for this lack of economic prosperity, despite abundant natural resources and potential, are its elitist political economy, and corruption imbedded in all levels of government (Storey, 1996; Schirmer and Shalom, 1987; Collas-Monsod et al., 2004). Parpart (2004:1) argued that in an increasingly competitive global political economy, good governance has become a primary concern as many governing bodies are unable or unwilling to care for their citizens due to corruption, venality and incompetence. Barr (2009:312, citing Davis, 2006) discussed how political corruption was exacerbated in post-independence governments who at the end of the colonial period tended to ‘abdicate responsibility for the poor in order to rule in the interests of the local elites’. This left a legacy of growing poverty and inequality manifested in the creation of extensive slum dwellings. This is apparent in the Philippines where housing policies and programmes have been routinely ‘vehicles and victims of patronage politics ... dictated by the agendas of those in power’ (Storey, 1996:96). This has resulted in vast inequalities between the elite class and the majority population; evident in overpopulated urban areas, and stretched social services which are largely unattainable to the multitude of poor people (Choguill, 2001:2).

Rapid urbanisation has far outpaced government provision of services resulting in congestion and overcrowding, unemployment and poverty, slums and squatters, and generally unsatisfactory environmental conditions (Mojares, 2013; Carino, 1987:314; Todaro, 1980). Recent development and economic growth outlined above, has occurred in the large urban centres of Manila and Cebu, but the majority of the benefits have gone to the land-owning elites and a few others who

have political connections, ignoring the masses of urban poor who live in squatter settlements (Choguill, 2001:12). In Manila, amidst numerous recently built skyscrapers, there are mothers and babies sleeping on cardboard boxes on the street. The Philippine government does not prioritise redistribution of wealth and poverty reduction for the many urban poor; and where there are relevant policies it still lacks the will for implementation, unless there is an election coming up (Choguill, 2001).

The Government is also replete with nepotism and political dynasties, despite official prohibition of political dynasties. In the 1992-1995 House of Representatives 145 out of 199 elected officials were from political families (Collas-Monsod et al., 2004:124). Balisacan and Fuwait (2004:1902) found that the more politicians were related to each other in a certain region, the lower the income growth was in that region. What is more, where there was income growth it did not lead to poverty reduction because of the Philippines' oligarchic political system. There is also widespread condemnation of the poor amongst upper and middle-class Filipinos, who blame the urban poor for their predicament. Accounts in the media routinely categorise slum dwellers as 'lazy, dirty, and dangerous' (*The Manila Times*, 2013) and chastise the millions of urban squatterers who could live a better life if they 'tried harder'.

Decentralisation was introduced in 1991 by the Aquino Government and this decentralisation gave local provincial governments more jurisdiction over poverty alleviation and fund allocation. However, 'The potential virtues of decentralization depend upon political accountability and the inevitable need to strengthen local delivery capacity' (Bird and Rodriguez, 1999:304). Where local governments were capacitated, poverty reduction initiatives targeted the poorest regions and invested in infrastructure and education. Ironically, these structural improvements served to increase population mobility and hence migration to richer areas, so the benefits of the investment are not necessarily desirable to the overall outcome of the target location (Bird and Rodriguez, 1999:318). Where local and national governments lack the capacity or will to implement poverty reduction initiatives, people who suffer from poverty and underemployment, and those who have no livelihood options, are forced to migrate to a region or country

which can offer better socio-political and economic stability (Lorenzo et al., 2007:1412). In incidences where people are unable to migrate themselves, they often send a member of their family.

Social and cultural reasons for Filipino migration are largely based around the family. The opportunity to travel and learn other cultures, the availability of money to finance a move, and life cycle variables such as marital status and age are important factors; but family pressure, including the future opportunity for family to migrate, and influence from peers and relatives, are the dominant determinants of migration intentions (De Jong et al., 1986:51; Lorenzo et al., 2007). The family is usually the source of social, economic and emotional support for individuals who in turn work for the benefit of the family unit. Ex-President Aquino stated that family is so important in Philippine culture that it makes Filipinos more 'feeling' than 'thinking' people (Asis et al., 2004:202), making them more inclined to work for the family than for personal gain. Filipino women in particular are highly socialised to support the family (Van Impe, 2002:118; Quisumbing and McNiven, 2005). While both sons and daughters migrate as a family survival strategy, Lauby and Stark (1988) assert that families are more likely to put pressure on their daughters to migrate because it is harder for daughters to be completely independent of their families and they are more likely to remit money home than their brothers.

Filipina motives for migration can be seen on a spectrum from entirely family oriented, to purely for the pursuit of personal goals (Lauby and Stark, 1988; Quisumbing and McNiven, 2005). In some instances women who have children out of marriage or who are considered too old to have a good chance of marrying locally, might migrate in search of a foreign husband (Constable, 2006) or through a pre-arranged marriage with a foreigner. Some women also migrate to escape abusive husbands in the Philippines or oppressive family life (Piper, 2008; Omelaniuk, 2005; Ezeilo, 2012).

Globalisation has had a significant impact on perceptions of poverty and, through advertising, poor and rural Filipinas are exposed to luxurious Western lifestyles and consumer products such as cell phones and skin whitening treatments which

are not available in their villages or within their financial means. Some Filipinas migrate specifically to become 'beautiful' like the girls they see on TV and to acquire consumer goods which are 'prized more for the status that goes with their ownership than for their utility' (Carino, 1987:318; Busza 2004). Hence, in this way, returnee migrants appear to have increased status in their villages which encourages others to migrate so that they too can gain more recognition in society (Osella and Osella, 2000; Busza 2004). In Asis's et al. (2004) study on Filipina migrants, one interviewed girl related that she 'had really wanted to go abroad because she noticed that those who did had a different aura' (2004:205). Low levels of education and lack of local employment opportunities, coupled with family pressure to provide financial support, and the strong desire to increase one's status, make poor women and men extremely determined to migrate. It is this sheer determination which increases their vulnerability to trafficking as they are less cautious about the risks associated with migration and are ready to accept any offer of outside employment (Global Slavery Index, 2013).

Intersection between Economic Migration and Trafficking

The reliance of Filipino families on remittances has also been a cause of forced labour migration (Samers, 2010). Many of the economic conditions outlined above which encourage, facilitate and push Filipinos to migrate, put people in a vulnerable situation, and expose them to human and labour rights abuses (UNICEF, 2011; Piper, 2004; Wickramasekara, 2008; Global Slavery Index, 2013). When analysing the Philippine Government's efforts to protect its vast migrant labour force the UNHCR (2012:8) found that

While the government has continued to develop programmes to respond to the challenges faced by migrant workers, proper implementation, follow-up, monitoring and evaluation of these programmes is a persistent problem. Programmes continue to lack clear, measurable and time-bound targets to facilitate their implementation and increase their effectiveness.

Thus, the lack of effective protection policies by the government exposes migrants to unscrupulous recruiters. Yea (2010b:371) indicates two factors which render Filipinos vulnerable to trafficking: the role of brokers as intermediaries, and *inescapable poverty* coupled with a general acceptance of irregular processes.

Zhang and Pineda (2008) investigated the causal factors of human trafficking. While they acknowledged that poverty and ‘certain macro-level variables’ are contributing factors, corruption – in terms of lack of government transparency, official ineptitude, and collusion – ‘is likely to facilitate and enable human trafficking to a greater extent than poverty-related factors ... and is probably the most important factor in explaining human trafficking’ (2008:52-53; Global Slavery Index, 2013). This is because a regulatory or socio-legal environment is needed for traffickers to mount successful and continuous operations (Zhang and Pineda, 2008). Therefore the Philippines’ combination of poverty and official corruption provide the necessary conditions for a thriving trafficking industry.

Filipino women are especially vulnerable to trafficking (Van Imp, 2007:118). Sometimes women’s ‘migration is facilitated by family members who want to exploit them to make money for the family’ (Ezeilo, 2012:1; Global Slavery Index, 2013), which will be explained further in Chapter Four. Their vulnerability can lead to situations of exploitation in which any real choice they may exert is compromised by their poverty. This is recognised by the United Nations (2000) Trafficking Protocol and the Philippines’ anti-trafficking law (Yea, 2010:365). The Philippine Government has taken significant measures to protect its migrant workers (AUN, 2012), but the nature of transnational migration is intrinsically difficult to regulate and control (Munck, 2008), and widespread economic migration leaves Filipinos vulnerable to unscrupulous recruiters. Traffickers, in collaboration with corrupt law enforcement officers and organised crime syndicates recruit men, women and children for jobs abroad, or within the Philippines, where they are ‘often subject to violence, threats, inhumane living conditions, non-payment of salaries, and withholding of travel and identity documents’ (US State Department, Philippines, 2012; Global Slavery Index, 2013). Many women are trafficked and sold into the sex industries of more advanced economies (UNODC, 2000). Filipino girls living in poor rural and urban

areas are offered attractive, lucrative jobs as domestic workers in larger economic centres in the Philippines or abroad, usually by someone they know, through which they believe they will be able to support their families. However, the nature of the work and the conditions under which they are forced to work are often not what the migrants agree on when signing the contract in their hometown.

According to a sample survey of 100 women in Manila who had migrated to Japan, about 80 percent of Filipinas sent to Japan by trafficking rings are forced into prostitution (Protection Project, 2005).

Only a small percentage were aware beforehand that they would be sent there to work in prostitution, and nearly half were between the ages of 15 and 18 ... Most are told that they will work as singers, cashiers, chambermaids, or hostesses, but in reality they are forced to sell or administer drugs, appear in pornographic videos, prostitute themselves, or recruit other Filipino women (The Protection Project, 2005:4).

Even girls who initially agreed to work at hostess bars have often been forced into performing sexual acts they did not previously agree on, and were beaten and/or sexually assaulted when they did not comply (ILO, 2004). There is also the case of false marriage where women are often unaware the marriage proposal is false and that they will be required to pay money back after the 'wedding'. In other cases they are aware of fees but are deceived by the real conditions of the contract and become subject to domestic violence, low salaries, no freedom and debt-bondage ranging from US \$30,000 to \$60,000 (Ezeilo, 2010; Guth, 2009).

Internal trafficking is also a significant problem in the Philippines with men, women and children trafficked from rural areas to urban centres including Manila and Cebu. Children and women, including some of the interviewees for this thesis, are trafficked to the city of Angeles, a thriving hub for sex tourism catering to local and foreign men (US State Department, Philippines, 2011; Global Slavery Index, 2013). They are also trafficked for forced labour as domestic workers, factory workers and for forced begging. Children are also increasingly trafficked

to cities in Mindanao and forced to become soldiers (US State Department, Philippines, 2011; UNODC, 2012). Internal trafficking for women and children increased after Super Typhoon Haiyan in 2013, as many of the survivors who were relocated to Manila and Cebu were snatched by mafias to be sold into prostitution dens (Santos, 2014). Men are subjected to forced labour and debt bondage in the agriculture, fishing, and maritime industries (UNODC, 2012; US State Department, Philippines, 2011; Global Slavery Index, 2013) as well as in junkshops⁷, which will be illustrated by case studies in Chapter Four. Internal trafficking for the purpose of organ removal is also widespread. In 2002 the Philippines government issued the National Policy on Kidney Transplantation from Living Non- Related Donors (LNRDs) that recommends living ‘donors’ undergo counselling and medical evaluations. This law opened the way for a lucrative underground kidney trade and resulted in the arrival of wealthy Japanese and Arab ‘transplant tourists’, and the Philippines becoming one of the top five organ trafficking nations in the world (Yea, 2010:4), despite some people ‘choosing’ to sell their organs as described above (Saber and Delmonico, 2008).

Sharp criticism from the international community prompted the Philippine government to create the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003⁸ (RA9208) which criminalises the act of trafficking and provides services for the recovery and reintegration of trafficked victims. It also created the Inter-Agency Council against Trafficking (IACAT) as the mandated body to coordinate the implementation of RA9208, with the Department of Justice as the lead agency (CFO Primer, 2011). The passage of RA9208 is considered a milestone which shows the world that the Philippines is determined to stop human trafficking (Plan, 2012; Ezeilo, 2012). Despite these efforts the Philippines was placed on the U.S. State Department’s ‘watch list’ twice, for two consecutive years starting in

⁷ A junkshop is an establishment that trades in used items such as bottles, scrap metal and plastics.

⁸ The Act is defined as: ‘an act to institute policies to eliminate trafficking in persons especially women and children, establishing the necessary institutional mechanisms for the protection and support of trafficked persons, providing penalties for its violations, and for other’. The full policy can be retrieved from <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/population/trafficking/philippines.traf.03.htm>

2004 and 2009 respectively. This was due to the fact that the government showed no evidence of progress in convicting trafficking offenders, particularly those responsible for labour trafficking, despite widespread reports of Filipinos being trafficked for forced labour domestically and abroad (US State Department, Philippines, 2009). In 2011 the Philippines convicted 25 trafficking offenders, made significant efforts to tackle trafficking-related corruption and filed criminal cases against several Philippine officials (US State Department, Philippines, 2011). The Philippines is also now a signatory to all relevant conventions and legislation relating to modern slavery (Global Slavery Index, 2013; Ezeilo, 2012), and as a result has been returned to the more acceptable category of 'Tier 2' on the Trafficking Report. Many of these efforts to combat trafficking by the national Government were made with strong support and collaboration with local and international NGOs such as Plan.

The Role of Plan International

Plan International, founded in 1937, is one of the oldest and largest children's development NGOs in the world, working in 50 developing countries to promote child rights and lift millions of families out of poverty, and in 2012, worked with 84 million children in 90,131 communities (Plan website, 2013). Plan has been in the Philippines since 1961 and now works in 420 communities nationwide serving more than 80,000 families (Plan website, 2013). After conducting a baseline survey which revealed the gravity of the trafficking problem in the Philippines, Plan responded with the creation of the Community Empowerment towards the Prevention and Reintegration of Trafficked Persons Project (CEPRTP), also known as the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Project (ATIP) (Plan, 2012). The Project's policy framework is based on international agreements such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the Palermo (anti-trafficking) Protocol, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); as well as the National Law RA9208 (Plan, 2012:12). The CEPRTP is implemented in 21 municipalities and 174 villages for a five-year period commencing in 2008 and aims to:

Institute a community-based mechanism to prevent children and women from being trafficked; work for the recovery and reintegration of children-survivors to their families and communities; and contribute to the national and international efforts to stop exploitation and trafficking in persons, particularly internal trafficking in the Philippines (Plan, 2012:14).

Over the five-year duration of the project, the ATIP team have implemented six key components in order to realise these aims. The components include an information and education campaign to raise awareness in vulnerable communities of human trafficking and the Law RA9208; capacity building for duty-bearers and service providers such as police, social workers and prosecutors to handle trafficking cases; establishing community-based prevention systems to monitor entry of recruiters and out-migration of children in target villages; upgrading four crisis centres to serve as residential facilities for victim-survivors which provide shelter, education and counselling; establishing two help desks in major ports to intercept trafficked persons and transfer them to relevant service providers for care; and treatment and aftercare services to address trauma and facilitate reintegration to communities with the provision of livelihood or education assistance (Plan, 2012:17). The ATIP Project aims to benefit 45,000 children at risk of being trafficked, targeting primarily girl-children who are victim-survivors of internal trafficking, as they comprise the highest number of cases (Plan, 2012:16). It is pertinent to tackle the issue of internal trafficking as children trafficked into domestic sex industries have been linked to becoming victims of international sex trafficking as adults (Piper, 2005:214), as discussed in Chapter Two.

Mid-term evaluation of the projects revealed an increase in awareness of trafficking in persons in target communities as children and adults are now able to verbalise what trafficking is and understand the human rights violations it entails. There has also been an increase in the number of

reported trafficking cases, and a total of 420 victim-survivors intercepted at the help desks (Plan, 2012:24). However, despite noteworthy successes in combating trafficking by the government and NGOs such as Plan, Parrenas (2011) argues that strict immigration policies which have been installed to protect migrant women from trafficking have restricted their right to make a livelihood, even if under dubious conditions. These policies fail to recognise the agency women migrants can exert even when they are ‘victims’ of the unequal global political economy.

The Question of Agency in Economic Migration

The term trafficking and ‘its whole-scale adoption has served to blur distinctions between different sorts of migrant women and their needs and interests’ (Constable, 2006:22). The debate between victims and agents is not new, but it remains important to understand where to draw the line between protection of migrants and disruption of their livelihoods. Constable (2006) discusses how migrant Filipina brides, maids and entertainers are often analysed as one category of vulnerable women, victims of oppressive colonial history and unequal globalisation. However, she argues that this blurred definition, which labels migrants as victims of trafficking due to their vulnerable position, does not acknowledge their agency. Utilising social, cultural and economic capitals people are able to negotiate the outcomes of events within historical sociocultural constraints and poverty (Gibson, 2012). In this way, Filipina labour migrants can work within their disadvantaged and dominated positions and acquire more economic and social capital to improve their overall wellbeing. Potter et al. (2008:109) used the notion of ‘strategic flexibility’ to describe how some transnational migrants use flexibility and receptiveness to future opportunities as a survival strategy. The term could be applicable to many Filipino migrants who are flexible to the point of resilience amid uncomfortable conditions – and take pride in their resilience – as a strategy to ensure they make a livelihood for themselves and/or their families. Seeberg (2012) also suggests that the strong resilience that Filipinos possess serves as cultural capital for migrant Filipinos and helps them adapt quickly to different and difficult living conditions and to endure situations which may be uncomfortable but are worth enduring in order to achieve the predetermined objectives of their migration.

The trafficking experience does not always end in the state of abuse. The period of sexual or labour exploitation is, for many, a transition phase on the path to improving their social security and that of their families back home. The agency exerted by many migrants under forced conditions is well recognised (Briones, 2009). Yea's (2004) study, for example, on Filipina entertainers who married U.S. army personnel in South Korea documented both the careful calculations involved when the Filipinas carved out their life paths, but also the considerable anxiety they faced once they had escaped their exploitative work places and married the GIs. Parrenas (2010:20) noted that Filipina hostesses in Japan describe their abject poverty in 'downtrodden' Philippines to invoke pity from their richer Japanese customers, manipulating the men's fetish of women from poor countries (which generates feelings of chivalry and reinforces their masculinity). The migrant hostesses use the 'victim of poverty' dialogue to create attachment between them and their customers which then contributes to/increases their income.

Nevertheless, despite the potential for working strategically, commentators on both sides of the victim-agent debate should not become desensitised to the important fact that these migrants are often still enduring emotional and physical stress in order to do so. MacKinnon (2011) adamantly rejects the notion of any sex work leading to empowerment and asserts that 'sex work is the resort of those with fewest choices, or none at all when all else fails' (2011:274), consequential to poverty, destitution, social exclusion and often forms of previous physical or sexual abuse (2011:280). Kara (2009), after conducting extensive research on sex trafficking, observed that

As long as the token morsels from the slave owner's hand represented a more filling meal than freedom and democracy could provide, slavery would never end. Never mind the promise of a better life; sometimes slavery was a better life (2009:199).

This incredibly sad realisation that an exploitative trafficking experience can be a better option than one's normal life serves to highlight the extent to which the Philippine Government has let its poor people down, where some girls decide that

a life of sexual and financial exploitation is a preferable life to what is offered back home. In this way we can see that both victims and agents of economic migration are coming from the more disadvantaged end of the unequal national and global political economies, and these structural problems must be rectified in order to eliminate the element of force so prevalent in Filipino migration.

Chapter Conclusions

Filipino migration has become a worldwide phenomenon as globalisation has provided employment opportunities for Filipinos all over the world. This coincides with few prospects for local employment and low social mobility, making migration a key part of the Philippine Government's promoted employment structure and development strategy (Van Impe, 2002). A complicated colonial history has dominated the national identity and given Filipinos the sense that life abroad is preferable to life in the Philippines (Mulder, 1990). This sense is exemplified when they are living in overcrowded and under-serviced urban squatters (Carino, 1987), and can see the ruling elite are enjoying immense economic prosperity, often at their expense (Choguill, 2001; Collas-Monsod et al., 2004). For some, the decision to migrate is more about increasing their status and acquiring consumer products (Asis, 2004); goals which are unattainable if they stay at home.

The large contribution migrants' remittances make to the otherwise volatile economy, and to poverty reduction in receiving communities, has prompted the Philippine government to set up recruitment and support agencies to facilitate mass migration (Siar, 2011). Unfortunately, however, adequate attention has not been paid to the protection of migrants, and despite the creation of protective policies at the national and international levels, corrupt and complicit officials have not enforced the laws and trafficking has become a common outcome for vulnerable Filipinos who are desperate for their chance to escape poverty and support their families (Yea, 2010b; Ezeilo, 2012). Women and girls are particularly vulnerable to trafficking due in part to their cultural obligations to provide for their families which mean they are more frequently forced to migrate under difficult circumstances than men (Van Imp, 2007; Ezeilo, 2012); and the

fact that they largely work in marginalised areas such as the domestic service sector (ILO, 2013).

There is room for agency within the economic migration experience and many Filipinos utilise their situation abroad, exerting resilience even under severe exploitation, to realise their dreams of providing a better life for themselves and their families back home (Parrenas, 2010; Gibson, 2012; Hakata, 2013). However, the fact that Filipino men and women are forced to etch out a livelihood in distressing circumstances abroad highlights the lack of political will to alleviate poverty in the Philippines and redistribute wealth so that recent economic prosperity benefits all levels of society. NGOs have intercepted where government services are lacking and have gained considerable ground in preventing trafficking and reintegrating victim-survivors into their communities (Plan, 2012), but the issues remain widespread. As long as the conditions of poverty and inequality persist, Filipinos will continue to risk their safety and migrate both internally and internationally; and remain unprotected throughout the migration experience due to weak enforcement of the Government's celebrated migrant protection laws and anti-trafficking initiatives (Ezeilo, 2012).

CHAPTER FOUR

Case Studies: Recruitment, Poverty and Consumerism

Introduction

Chapter Three explained the disproportionate number of natural and man-made disasters which have been inflicted on the Philippines, most severely affecting the poorest people. The impact of these calamities has shaped the life and choices of Filipinos and has created a culture where migration is a Government endorsed approach to poverty alleviation (Lorenzo et al., 2007; OHCHR, 2012; Siar, 2011). Chapter Three also explained how migration often becomes a family strategy - where a member is required to migrate for the survival of the family, and how for many of those who are forced to participate, there is a high risk of ending up in an exploitative situation of trafficking, sooner than solving their family's financial problems (ILO, 2004; Ezeilo, 2010; Guth, 2009).

This chapter presents and discusses the results from fieldwork and the people who through the process of wanting to migrate became victims of internal trafficking for forced labour or sex. These participants are presented in Table 1. Data was collected in five individual interviews, and one focus group discussion consisting of four girls who were recruited together and opted to discuss their experience as a group. As noted in Chapter One, men who had been trafficked for forced labour were also interviewed to gather a broader range of experiences of trafficked migrants. The key findings which emerged from the interviews are linked with the literature presented in Chapters Two and Three which showed that escaping poverty and the desire to increase one's status are the main reasons which prompt migration (Osella and Osella, 2000; Busza 2004; Asis's et al., 2004). Information obtained through key informants in Manila and Samar also confirmed that there were links between internal and international migration, and that it is poverty-induced desperation and illiteracy which makes migrants vulnerable to exploitation and trafficking (Oberoi & Taylor-Nicholson, 2013; UNICEF, 2011).

Interview Participants

Table 1: Participants that Experienced Trafficking

Name/ Title	Sex	Age when trafficked	Type of trafficking	Duration of exploitation	Main reason for wanting to migrate
Individual Interviews					
Anda	Male	27	Forced labour	8 months	No employment in hometown
Joena	Female	21	Forced prostitution	11 days	To help her poor family
Bernard	Male	21	Forced labour	6 weeks	Escape poverty and to experience life in a big city
Niki	Female	15	Forced prostitution	3 days	To pay for schooling and acquire consumer goods
Althea	Female	15	'Forced drug use' ⁹	1 month	Parental absence, peer pressure
Focus Group Participants ¹⁰					
Mariel	Female	18	Forced prostitution	Intercepted on-route	Forced by parents
Marie-Lisa	Female	14	Forced prostitution	Intercepted on-route	Forced by parents
Carlotta	Female	17	Forced prostitution	Intercepted on-route	Forced by parents
Brenda	Female	18	Forced prostitution	Intercepted on-route	Forced by parents

⁹ Althea's situation does not necessarily come under the definition of trafficking, however, she was being treated as a survivor of TIP in a crisis centre. I included her case as it supplements the migration-trafficking discussion.

¹⁰ The four participants in the focus group are from four separate families but went through the recruitment process together and opted to share their story as a group.

Table 2 provides a list of key informants who shared experience and knowledge which was relevant to the research aim of this project. These consist of a former judge for the International Justice Mission, Plan staff working on the Anti-Trafficking in Persons project who acted as interpreters and social workers during my interviews, my neighbour in Northern Samar, the Mayor of a town recognised as a trafficking hotspot and the House Parent at a crisis centre caring for victim-survivors of TIP. I also include informal discussions with friends and neighbours with whom I resided in the Manila squatter settlement as most of them migrated from rural provinces such as Samar (where the interview participants lived), into Manila, with the intention of migrating internationally from there. All names of these informants have been changed or omitted to protect their identities.

Table 2: Key Informants

Pseudonym or Title	Occupation	Relationship to Researcher	Relevance to Research
Rosalie	House Parent at a crisis centre which takes care of intercepted victims of TIP	Introduced by ATIP staff	Extensive knowledge of TIP in Philippines, particularly motivations to migrate and aftercare
David	Bank Manager in Catarman	Neighbour in Catarman	Provides an alternative suggestion for Filipino migration
Judge	Former Judge for the International Justice Mission specialising in cases of TIP	Acquaintance in Manila	Extensive knowledge of TIP in Philippines, particularly law enforcement
Plan's ATIP Staff	Social workers and staff on Plan's Anti-Trafficking in Persons Project who assisted in facilitation and interpretation for interviews	Worked together on ATIP project and conducted interviews together	Extensive knowledge of all aspects of TIP in the Philippines
Marcy	Sari-sari store owner	Friend and neighbour in Manila	A migrant worker in Manila originally from

		squatter	Northern Samar
Kano	Waiter in Chinese restaurant	Friend and neighbour in Manila squatter	A migrant worker in Manila originally from Boracay
Mayor	Mayor of Borongan and former agent for the National Bureau of Investigation's trafficking taskforce.	Introduced by ATIP staff	Extensive knowledge of TIP in Philippines particularly prosecution processes

The results of the fieldwork are organised into two key themes which were recurrent in the interviews conducted on the island of Samar: recruitment and push factors of migration. These themes were selected as they directly contribute to the research aim of deciphering how migrating Filipinos become victims of trafficking. The recruitment phase is described to indicate how people are falsely recruited, and the complex dynamics that often exist between migrants and their recruiters. This is linked to a discussion of the push factors which provide the motives for migrants to leave their hometown. Poverty and consumerism form the base of these motives and this discussion highlights the desperation that extreme poverty entails, which forces people to migrate and makes migrants vulnerable. I begin with a summary of informal conversations held with residents of the Manila squatter to give an overview of the link between domestic and international migration in the Philippines and an outline of the conditions which many internal migrants face once they reach Manila.

Urban Squatterers on Migration

While I lived in the squatter settlement in Manila I was able to converse with many internal migrants. This section will summarise the findings from these encounters. Most of the squatter inhabitants had migrated to Manila from the rural provinces in search of employment that was not available in their hometowns. Many people told me that before making the decision to move away from rural poverty in the provinces, they had believed that there would be an abundance of work in Manila. However, after arrival they ended up in the squatter with no work

and limited family support (Mojares, 2013). This resonates with Todaro (1980) who asserted that internal migrants often end up jobless and living in urban slums. My housemate who had migrated from Boracay¹¹ was unemployed for five months before he finally secured a job with a temporary contract, as a waiter at a Chinese restaurant. He earned PHP 456¹²/day for around ten hours work and was so pleased to have a source of income and be able to send remittances back to family in Boracay. His main aspiration, however, like many others I spoke to, was to find a job abroad where he believed he could earn much more money for far less work, and after a couple of years return to Boracay and build a house for his family.

Almost everyone I spoke to had a relative working as a domestic worker in Singapore or on a construction site in Saudi Arabia who they greatly respected and whose path they wished to follow, consistent with the literature outlined in Chapter Three (Quisumbing and McNiven, 2005; De Jong, 1983; Jacquemet, 1996; Busza 2004). When I asked my housemate if he knew of the risks associated with international migration he said he had heard many stories about overseas Filipino workers being abused and even killed but was adamant that this was the only feasible way that he could make a sufficient living to support his family. He felt there were simply no opportunities in the Philippines to be successful, so it was a risk worth taking. The residents spoke openly of their distrust of the Philippine political system and politicians¹³ and conveyed a deep sense of injustice mixed with feelings of hopelessness. They also had an acute awareness of global class structures which discriminate against Filipinos. A friend once asked me, “Why is it that you can come here and everybody respects you but when Filipinos go abroad we are treated as second-class citizens?” Her perspective remained positive, however, as she declared that “Filipinos face many disadvantages but we are resilient and strategic”. When discussing family life and marriage the residents informed me that it is important that Filipinas marry

¹¹ Boracay is a small island located in the Western Visayas. Despite becoming a world famous tourist destination, there are still high levels of poverty and unemployment among the local population.

¹² 456 Philippine Pesos (PHP) is equivalent to USD 10.25 in December, 2013

¹³ Despite immense distrust of politicians many rural and urban poor people frequently wear t-shirts with politicians' faces on them that they receive with a cash stipend in exchange for votes at election time.

strategically, rather than for love, in order to improve their life prospects. I was even told by one resident that “the sex industry is a good option for many poor girls because they can make good money, even if they don’t want to do that kind of work”. This attitude reflects the widespread understanding that prostitution can be a strategic opportunity for girls who have no other options (Ezeilo, 2012). It also highlights the determination of many Filipinos who exert agency as they migrate under extremely problematic circumstances (Yea, 2004; Briones, 2009).

Many squatter inhabitants were there in a transition phase, enduring difficult conditions to provide a better future for themselves and their families. Internal migration was the first step to international migration which would solve their financial problems (Omelaniuk, 2005; Jolly and Reeves, 2005). However, most of these people were living on a subsistence income and had very little education, so international migration is generally out of their reach, as was discussed in Chapter Three (Deshingkar and Grimm, 2004), unless they go through informal channels which increase the risk of trafficking. ‘Risky’ migration, so it seemed, was perceived as the only solution to overcome extreme poverty and marginalisation, among the squatter neighbourhood.

Case Studies

After two months observing urban poverty in Manila, I spent three months conducting fieldwork on Samar Island where I was able to witness rural poverty in the Philippines, as explained in Chapter One. The following two case studies were chosen to illustrate the trafficking process from start to finish. The case studies introduce key themes symbolic of many other trafficked experiences which will be discussed in detail in this chapter and Chapter Five. Joena and Niki’s stories were selected as they demonstrate how people living in poverty in poor rural villages are compelled to accept offers by unscrupulous recruiters. They also show the agency that these migrants exert in order to escape and reclaim their freedom. Themes from other interviewees’ experiences are also detailed throughout this chapter and Chapter Five.

Box 1

Joena

In February, 2013 Joena was approached by a middle-aged female recruiter and the former *barangay* chief of police who offered her a job in Catbalogan City as a waitress, for PHP 3000/month. She wanted to help out her poor family so accepted the job and left her village. When she arrived at the destination she was told to dress for work and was shocked by the outfit. She had to wear a spaghetti-strap singlet, short shorts, heavy make-up, large earrings with a big hair-do, and she felt that she “looked like a prostitute”. That was the moment she realised that she was not just there as a waitress, as promised by the recruiter.

The venue was not a restaurant but a Beer House¹⁴ where all the customers were old men, including foreigners, but the recruiter continued to insist it was just a restaurant. On her first night Joena was chosen by a Filipino soldier to sleep with him for the night. She still did not understand that she was there as a sex worker and when he asked her for sex she misunderstood and gave him six pesos. Due to her innocence and inexperience it did not even cross her mind that he would ask her for sex, which made it all the more shocking for her when she realised.

When the soldier made his intentions clear she ran away from him to the second floor to jump from the window to escape. The soldier stopped chasing her and told her not to jump, assuring her that he would not force her to have sex with him because he may be relieved of his military status if people found out he had slept with a victim of TIP. The soldier advised her to go home saying “this is not the place for you”. He had offered her PHP 5000 (USD 112) to sleep with him, all of which she could have kept, but she refused.

Joena continued to be stubborn and refused to even sit with customers. This attitude earned her the nickname ‘NPA’ (short for the New People’s Army rebel group). Punishment for this attitude was verbal abuse, having the recruiter push her finger into her temple and emotional harassment. She was told if she tried to escape then the recruiter would tell the police that she stole jewellery and money (even though she did not) so that she would go to jail. She was forced to drink beer which she had never drunk before. There were eight girls in the four metre square bedroom. At night they lay squashed on the floor with rats, cockroaches, mosquitoes and other insects, and a very bad smell. Sometimes they ate with the rats.

To escape she waited for daylight and at 7am ran and took a bus while her recruiter was chasing and shouting after her. Thanks to Joena’s determination and ‘NPA’ attitude she managed to avoid having sex with customers and was able to escape. She feels “it was a difficult experience; a nightmare”.

¹⁴ A Beer House is a drinking venue serving predominantly male customers, where waitresses are usually available for sexual services.

Joena's innocence and lack of awareness of trafficking made her trusting of the recruiter and naïve about her position once in the Beer House. However, when she became aware of her difficult circumstances she also exerted incredible agency, similar to the Filipinas described in literature in Chapters Two and Three, as she managed to escape without being forced into prostitution. Additionally, despite needing money to support her family she refused the offer of PHP 5000, showing that in spite of being poor, she could not be tempted to forego her principles for a relatively large sum of money. This chapter will reveal that this is not the case for everyone, as the need or desire to obtain money can override previous moral standards. This can also be said of the former police chief's role in Joena's recruitment. Despite his responsibility to protect citizens, he intentionally deceived Joena for personal profit. The corruption of law enforcers and their role in trafficking will be discussed in Chapter Five. For others, the importance of reputation outweighs their desire for gratification. The soldier, for example, who tried to solicit sex but stopped once he realised Joena was trafficked, to save his own reputation and career in the army, shows how reputation can influence people's actions. Themes surrounding reputation and stigma, and their role in trafficking processes, will also be discussed in this chapter and Chapter Five. Naivety and confusion was also the case with Niki whose experience emphasised several other important issues, particularly regarding recruitment processes.

Box 2

Niki

Niki's mother could not afford to look after her so she went to live with her grandmother in the next town. However, her grandmother could not support her school transportation costs so she was forced to quit school and come back to her village. There she met her neighbour who offered her a job in the province capital, Borongan as a domestic worker. Her main ambition was to finish studies and this opportunity would afford her a chance for this. She also wanted her family to own a TV. She explained that she would not have accepted the offer if her family had had money.

Niki arrived at the destination and was shocked to find it was a Beer House, not a family residence. During the day she had to stay in a room and just cried all day. The door was always locked and she was told not to leave because social workers from the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) would see her.

At night she took a bath and was told to “dress sexy”.

On her first night working she was forced to drink a Redhorse Beer (7% alcohol) and told that if she did not she would not receive any income, as she would earn PHP 50 per bottle she drunk. It was her first time drinking alcohol and after her first drink she went straight to the bathroom feeling sick. Her recruiter followed her and forced her to drink the whole beer but after that bottle she went to her room, sick, and her PHP 50 was given to the recruiter.

The customer followed her to her room and sexually assaulted her but she said she did not remember any details because she was drunk. She assumes she was raped.

On the second night Niki’s co-worker insisted she go with her to Alang Alang, a popular spot where fishermen drink. She had to drink a lot and on the way back to her accommodation the tricycle driver brought Niki and her co-worker to the DSWD because he said she was a child and should not be drunk. Her co-worker escaped because she was afraid of police.

Niki woke up in hospital, not knowing what had happened. The DSWD had contacted the crisis centre staff who contacted a social worker who took her to hospital. They suspected she had been drugged and was not just drunk.

The social worker took her back to the Beer House to get her belongings but the recruiter quickly took her to a quiet place and told her to hide. The social worker called Plan who contacted Niki’s mother and informed her of the situation. Niki’s mother was shocked as she thought Niki was still with her grandmother, so went and found her in her hiding place at 11pm and brought her back to the crisis centre where she was safe.

Although Niki was not able to evade abuse and escape by herself as Joena was, her story illustrates the choices that some poor Filipinos make as survival strategies. Niki made the decision herself to follow the recruiter, without even consulting her mother, in order to pay for her school fees which her family could not afford. However, while her fundamental motive to migrate was to finish her studies, she also wanted her family to obtain consumer products such as a TV. The key role consumerism plays in enticing vulnerable people to migrate will be explained later in this chapter. It is also noteworthy that Niki believed she was migrating to be a domestic worker providing an example of the link between domestic work and trafficking.

Another significant factor was Niki’s relationship with her recruiter who was also her neighbour. This is consistent with the literature presented in Chapter Two

which highlights the situation where people living in close proximity in a small village can betray one another for profit (Salt and Stein, 1997), and is comparable to the police chief in Joena's recruitment experience. These narratives also revealed that relationships between recruiters and trafficked victims, while exploitative, are often less hostile than expected.

The Recruitment Process

This section will present an outline of the recruitment processes which exploit economic migrants, the multidimensional relationships between migrants and their recruiters, and the role some parents play in forcing their children to migrate. Trafficking in persons (TIP) can be distinguished into two points in time: recruitment and the work itself; both of which can involve violence and coercion (Bruckert and Parent, 2002). Recruitment is the beginning of the transition phase from hometown to destination and many victims of TIP do not experience direct force or abduction. The recruitment phase is usually conducted either via a centralised mode such as media, Internet or employment agency, or through a decentralised approach such as recruiters going directly into villages and offering people jobs (Bruckert and Parent, 2002:19). The participants in this study were all victims of the latter and usually already knew their recruiter.

Bernard and Anda are from different villages but were both recruited separately by the same female recruiter¹⁵ to work in a junkshop in Nueva Ecija. Bernard recalled his recruiter taking him to Allen (the port town in Northern Samar) where he was met by another woman who took him to Nueva Ecija. He said that many people were involved in the transportation process. When he arrived in the office of the junkshop he thought it was "beautiful and safe and seemed like there were no problems", but he later discovered it is run by a large crime syndicate who had already exploited over 100 young poor people. Most recruiters described in the case studies worked at the lowest levels of much larger criminal networks and were often just as poor as the victims they recruited. This shared poverty created a complex dynamic between the interview participants and their recruiters.

¹⁵ Bernard alleges that his female recruiter, who also worked as an ice-cream seller, has been shot dead by another person she deceived into forced labour.

Relationships with Recruiters

Recruiters are often poor, young criminals who are ‘attracted by the possibility of earning easy money by exploiting girls/women who are friends, neighbours or schoolmates from their home villages’ (Salt and Stein, 1997:477). It is increasingly common for recruiters to be neighbours and friends of the people they recruit, and the fact of living in close proximity to each other allows a recruiter to be persistent, which can qualify as coercion even if direct force is not used (Yea, 2010:367). The interviewees described the relationships with their recruiters with a combination of familiarity and disdain. Rosalie is a House Parent at a crisis centre which works with the girls intercepted by the port Help Desk who are identified as potential victims of trafficking. She says the intercepted girls usually know their recruiter - an auntie, neighbour or friend for example - and therefore do not suspect any harm. She asserts that the recruiters themselves are even unaware of potential exploitation at times, and when they are consciously deceiving people it is because they too are often poor and may simply be employing their own survival strategy. This shared experience of poverty and familial status can create a degree of solidarity between the recruiter and the victims, even after trafficking has occurred. This was revealed in relaxed dialogues between the participants and their recruiters which seem almost like a dispute between sisters. For example, the woman who recruited Mariel, Marie-Lisa, Carlotta and Brenda was herself a dancer/ prostitute at the bar for which she was recruiting the girls, but was engaged to the Australian bar owner which had put her in a position of power. This recruiter was later detained after Carlotta filed a complaint against her. When Carlotta visited her in prison she asked Carlotta, “Why did you do this to me?!” as if it were completely unexpected that Carlotta should take legal action, implying a level of solidarity between them. Carlotta casually replied that she did not regret reporting her. However, it was curious that she even visited her recruiter in prison, after the hardship she had experienced.

In a similar way, when Joena escaped the brothel by sprinting to a bus when she had a chance, her recruiter ran after her shouting: “Find other girls in your village for me!!” Joena shouted back from the bus, “You should come back to Getigo!” daring her to try, to which the recruiter replied, “Find me girls with talent, even if they are blind!” This seems an almost jovial dialogue after the recruiter had

willingly deceived Joena into sexual slavery. Unexpectedly relaxed conversations were also held between Niki and her recruiter, when Niki went back to her village after escaping the brothel and filed a case against her neighbour/recruiter. The recruiter was angry and asked Niki's family "What's the problem? Niki liked the work!", as if she had not caused Niki any harm. Surprisingly, they continued to be neighbours despite their grievances and on-going court case. These familiar dialogues indicate that the recruiters were often on the 'same level' as the victims, not necessarily intentionally deceiving them, or acting as if it were not such a serious issue that they should trick their neighbour into working in a brothel. Deceiving one's neighbour is also an example of the dubious actions some people take to improve their livelihood options from a marginalised economic position. A more extreme case was revealed as a group of girls were forced into prostitution by their own parents.

Parents and Recruiters

In some cases of trafficking, as discussed in Chapter Two, poverty compels parents to force their children to migrate as a family survival strategy (Omelaniuk, 2005; Busza 2004). Traffickers' movement and operations are clandestine which makes them difficult to detect, but 'when communities and families are involved in the human trafficking chain, as found in many cases in the Philippines, it makes the situation far more complex' (Ezeilo, 2012:1; Global Slavery Index, 2013). Rosalie said "Most girls are forced to migrate by their parents due to poverty related issues, to support their families or to improve the housing and lifestyle of their families ... and the parents often get angry that they are intercepted (by the Help Desk) as they were expecting to receive remittances". The mayor of Niki's village in Borongan, Eastern Samar, who happened to be a former agent for the National Bureau of Investigation's trafficking taskforce confirmed parents' responsibility when I discussed with him the issue of prosecuting traffickers. He remarked that "We should be punishing the victims' parents too", considering their key role in forcing their reluctant children to migrate. The mayor's recommendation could apply to the four sets of parents from Western Samar, who forced their respective daughters – Mariel, Marie-Lisa, Carlotta, Brenda – to migrate into a brothel. All four sets of parents were brought into negotiations with a recruiter who informed them about work in the infamous brothel town of

Angeles, Pampanga, where the girls could work as prostitutes and sell their virginity for PHP 100,000 (USD 2234). The four girls said that they wanted to help their families out of poverty, however, none of them actually wanted work in the brothel but their parents forced them. The girls tried to refuse to go and Carlotta recalled crying desperately the night before they were to leave.

Both of Carlotta's parents were present during the interview¹⁶ with these girls and as Carlotta recalled this distressing memory, her mother began to look uncomfortable. Carlotta's father is a village official, and when the interpreter asked him why he forced his daughter into prostitution he waved his arms around and, refuting responsibility, declared, "No, I didn't, it was her mother!!" Carlotta's mother kept her head down and stayed silent. Despite strong opposition by the four daughters, the parents forced them to go, and escorted them to the jeepney station to see them off. Fortunately, the jeepney was intercepted by police who had been tipped-off by a neighbour, and the girls narrowly escaped forced prostitution.

This incident demonstrates that some parents perceive selling a daughter for sex as a reasonable family strategy where few other options are available, despite the high importance of family in Filipino culture. Even though the participants were not physically abducted into a trafficking situation, Yea (2010) explains that it is migrants' economic marginality that is the key site of their vulnerability. The interviewees, or their parents, were easy to convince by recruiters as their extreme poverty meant they had little prospects for earning an income - or living their preferred lifestyle - in their poor and isolated hometowns, as the following section will explain.

Reasons to Migrate

This section will discuss the incentives for Filipinos to migrate on an individual level. 'The root causes of trafficking and migration overlap to a great extent; it is thus important to understand the motivations behind people's decisions to leave

¹⁶ As outlined in Chapter One, the participants had the choice whether they wanted family members present in their interviews. It seemed to be the norm that people discussed their experiences openly, in front of family members and sometimes neighbours.

their homes' (Ezeilo, 2012:1). Poverty was the interviewees' fundamental motivation to migrate and also the reason that they were at risk in the process. However, these migrants often had other intentions to look for work in bigger cities such as obtaining consumer products which would increase their status in the village.

Poverty and Desperation

All of the interviewees came from poor families in isolated rural villages. Their poverty made them vulnerable to unscrupulous recruiters as they had few local options for employment so were eager to go with anyone who promised them work. Some migrated to earn money specifically to fund their education. Niki, for example, decided to quit school and go with her neighbour/recruiter as she had to drop out of school anyway because her family could not pay the fees. Her main goal was to earn money to finish her studies and she would not have accepted the offer if her family had had money. Poverty is linked with low levels of education, which is also a factor in making girls vulnerable to trafficking.

Rosalie, the crisis centre House Parent, explained that most of the girls were migrating into domestic service jobs in Manila either through a recruiter or on their own. One girl who was intercepted the day of the interview had been forced by her parents to quit school and migrate to Manila to support her nine younger siblings; sacrificing her own education for theirs. Rosalie also explained that most of the migrants only have grade one elementary education and are illiterate, and some 16 and 17 year old girls cannot even recognise letters. Their illiteracy and under-education can also mean they are naïve, easy to deceive by recruiters, have difficulty making an escape plan and lack awareness of the situation they are in even after being trafficked. This was illustrated above in the case of Joena, who did not even realise she was working as a sex worker when she was asked for sex.

In another case Althea's British father left the Philippines and stopped supporting Althea's education as she was not performing well at school. As a result her mother migrated to Singapore as a domestic worker to fund her education. When Althea was left alone without her parents, she started to rebel. She was drawn in by a group of boys who were using drugs and pressured her into taking them too.

She then dropped out of school altogether. When the police raided her boyfriend's flat she was taken to a crisis centre as a trafficking victim. Although Althea was not forced to work or have sex, her situation highlights an alternative link in the migration-trafficking nexus where forced migration due to poverty can have undesired consequences on family members left behind which override the initial reasons for migrating, as discussed in Chapter Two (Jingzhong and Lu, 2011; Parrenas, 2003). In this case Althea's mother migrated to support Althea's education which was abandoned as a result of that migration. This case also showed that even those left behind are being made susceptible to trafficking.

The above examples illustrated education as a motive for migration but others have migrated due to a lack of employment options in their home villages. There was no work in Anda's village, for instance, and although he did not want to leave his home he was forced to look for work outside. Anda had severely stunted growth due to malnutrition which made him appear much younger than his actual age. As a result, a local recruiter who was looking for children recruited Anda (age 27 at that time) as a child. Anda was employed in a junkshop in Nueva Ecija, a big town a few hours from his village with around 100 other employees (including Bernard). Each worker was recruited under false pretences from poor villages in Northern Samar, and many of them were underage girls. Anda was promised good food (including meat), board, and a salary of PHP 1500/ month¹⁷. However, he was forced to work 12 hour days without a break, in harsh weather conditions, with only two days off per month. He received PHP 20 some days and only PHP 5 on others. He was given only vegetables to eat, and the two times in eight months that he did receive meat was after a goat had died of old age or disease. If he made any mistakes his employers kicked him, slapped his face and smashed glass bottles all over his body. It was the poverty of these 100 employees and their desperation for work that led all of them to follow the recruiter out of their village. This example shows how men, especially when physically impaired, can easily become victims of TIP, as well as the most vulnerable women (Surtees, 2005). It also illustrates how extreme poverty coincides with low education and lack of employment; both of which serve as push factors to leave one's hometown. However, the desire to increase one's social status by acquiring

¹⁷ USD 33.80 in December, 2013

consumer goods through migrating to a bigger city was also widely cited by the participants as a key incentive to migrate.

Consumerism and the Desire to be ‘Somebody’

Although the participants were victims of inescapable poverty, they were still able to look beyond their basic needs and sought after consumer products which they believed would increase their social status. A Plan staff member working on the ATIP project, who was an interpreter in some interviews, believed that

So many children leave for Manila and we can't stop them. Their parents can't stop them either because they can't support their schooling. The children want to go because they see other kids that have been to Manila who get white skin and become beautiful. Then they can buy cellphones and clothes that the parents can't provide. Trafficking is a product of poverty *and* bad values like materialism.

Rosalie, the crisis centre House Parent, agreed that some girls make the decision themselves to migrate in order to obtain consumer goods such as cellphones and skin whitening products to “improve their image in public”. The motive of acquiring consumer goods and whiter skin to increase status is consistent with the literature presented in Chapter Three, which acknowledges the importance of consumer goods in improving status (Carino, 1987; Busza 2004). Niki said that although her main ambition was to finish her studies, she also migrated because she wanted to buy a TV because she and her family had to go to the neighbour's house to watch TV. I saw many unemployed people watching a lot of TV in poor villages and the extensive advertising they are exposed to is a contributing factor to their perceptions of their own poverty and their ‘need’ to acquire the advertised products. In addition to consumerism, the desire to be beautiful by having white skin is also heavily propagated by the media. The girls and women on TV do not even look like Filipinas. They are mostly mixed-race or have had excessive plastic surgery and their skin is invariably abnormally white - an unnatural shade for most Filipinos. Children in hot, rural areas are told constantly they are ugly if they have dark skin, which is perverse as they are naturally dark skinned and spend a

lot of time in the sun. My friend in Manila told me that her three year old daughter called her from Samar province where she was on holiday with her grandmother saying, “Mum, the island is beautiful but I want to come back to Manila because I have dark skin now and I am so ugly!” Her mother agreed that she had become ugly with darker skin. Rosalie confirmed that many girls migrate specifically to get white skin.

The incessant desire to obtain products which are perceived to increase one’s image in public is due to the high importance of reputation in the village. David is a bank manager working in Catarman, who comes from the bigger city of Tacloban. He confided that “people tell you they migrate to feed their families and send their siblings to school, but mostly they are too embarrassed to tell you the truth which is that they want to be ‘Someone’”. David explained that he was content to work in a simple job with no responsibility as he came from a relatively wealthy family, but pursued a more high profile job only so he could compete with his friends at the next school reunion. In Catarman he cannot wear his basketball shorts in his free time in case he loses his image as the corporate ‘Big Man’ from Tacloban. An interpreter from Plan informed me that just being able to say ‘I have worked in Manila’ even if the experience was negative, can earn returned migrants respect from other villagers. Therefore, the value of consumer products which are unattainable in a poor village and the fact that return migrants who have experienced life in a big city are perceived to have a certain ‘aura’ about them (Asis et al., 2004), serve as enticing motivations for migration.

Chapter Conclusions

As the interviews presented in this chapter revealed there are multiple reasons why people from Manila and rural Samar decided to migrate, all of which relate to poverty and lack of local opportunities. Whether one is forced to migrate to provide for her family or just for herself, a poor person’s lack of choice makes her vulnerable to unscrupulous recruiters as she is willing to accept any opportunity (Satterthwaite, 2005; Jolly, 2005). The fact that education levels in Samar are low and the poorest people are often completely illiterate enhances migrants’ vulnerability and naivety (Piper, 2004). The case studies of Niki and Joena illustrated how low education levels and lack of resources to pay for schooling can

leave a poor girl or boy with no choice but to look for a job. Both Niki and Joena were poorly educated and their ignorance of trafficking led them to trust their recruiters. However, their recruiters were people with whom they were familiar so it is conceivable that they trusted that the job offers were legitimate. In other cases it is the parents themselves who see a livelihood strategy in sending their children to a brothel, despite the strong importance placed on family ties in Filipino culture (De Jong et al., 1986; Lorenzo et al., 2007).

For some, the motivation to move is less desperate than those trying just to survive, and they seek to acquire consumer products and skin whitening treatments they see advertised on TV in order to increase their status in the village (Asis et al., 2004). This more superficial impetus is also linked to poverty as items such as cellphones are perceived as more valuable and become more desirable when parents are unable to provide even basic services such as schooling to their children (Carino, 1987). Niki's poverty also led her to feel like she needed to own a TV to increase her status in the village. Although this motivation does not entail strong force, it highlights the importance of social status and reputations in small villages and how they can affect decisions to migrate.

For those who succeed in migrating internally to Manila, they often discover that they are still unable to obtain a sufficient livelihood (Choguill, 2001; Mojares, 2013) and seek to take the next step into international migration (Omelaniuk, 2005; Carino, 1987; Lorenzo et al., 2007). Their desperation to secure employment which is unavailable in the Philippines means they are willing to accept clandestine offers and risk human rights abuses, marginalisation, discriminatory labour policies and becoming victims of international human trafficking (UNICEF, 2011; Van Imp, 2007; Piper, 2004; Wickramasekara, 2008).

Niki and Joena's narratives also underlined the important theme of agency and the survival strategies that poor Filipino can employ, even during a trafficking experience. Joena, for example, stood up to her oppressive recruiter/trafficker and flatly refused to cooperate. Through this willpower she was able to escape with relatively little harm. Niki, who appeared to have a less assertive personality, was rescued by the initiative of a kind stranger rather than through her own direct

action. However, making the decision to follow the recruiter in order to pay for her own school fees was an example of determination to improve her situation through providing an education for herself. In Niki's post-trafficking experience, which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Five, she had to overcome bullying while going through a prolonged and seemingly impossible court battle with her recruiter who was still living next door. During this difficult period she continued to study. Niki's determination to become educated shows incredible resilience and is an example of the agency that poor Filipinos are able to exert in order to transcend circumstances of poverty.

This chapter discussed how poverty forces people in Samar to migrate and how that makes them susceptible to trafficking, while the case studies of Niki and Joena illustrated how trafficked people can navigate these challenging circumstances. Interviews, however, also revealed other contributing factors which make Filipino migrants particularly susceptible to human trafficking. These issues will be analysed in detail in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER FIVE

Key Issues: Corruption and Life after Trafficking

Introduction

In Chapter Four the need to escape poverty and the desire to increase status explained the reasons that forced or motivated the participants in Samar to migrate and was consistent with the literature in Chapters Two and Three. This chapter addresses significant external structural and cultural themes that arose during interviews in Samar which explain how forced Filipino migrants sometimes end up being trafficked. While low education and illiteracy made migrants vulnerable to exploitation, a lack of protection from local law enforcers significantly increased their likelihood of being trafficked.

The results showed that a corrupt law enforcement establishment combined with a system where service providers need incentives to do their jobs leave migrants without protection. Law enforcers, who are often poor themselves, are easily corrupted by traffickers as the need to feed their own family, or simply line their own pockets, frequently takes precedence over their role of protecting civilians. Following an exploration of service provision and corruption, the issues surrounding life after trafficking which include stigma, livelihood options and return migration, are discussed in this chapter to provide a more comprehensive overview of the lives of vulnerable migrants, and the dynamics which lead them to being trafficked.

Law enforcement

As explained in Chapter Two, governments and international institutions' policies to afford equal labour rights to poor and irregular international migrants have been mostly lip-service, and migrants remain unprotected in practice (Wickramasekara, 2008; Williams, 2009; Ruhs, 2012; Iredale and Piper, 2003). Similarly, the interview results indicated that on the national level, protection policies for internal migrants and victims of TIP such as the National Law RA9208 – the

creation of which aided the Philippines in being removed from the US State Department's trafficking 'watch list' – are not being adequately enforced. Ezeilo (2012), the UN Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, asserted that 'enforcement of the law and assistance to victims is not uniform in all areas of the country and may depend on the political and economic will of the local governments involved'. Inadequate law enforcement, a consequence of an establishment rife with corruption, serves as an external factor which allows traffickers to act with impunity (Guth, 2009; Zhang and Pineda, 2008). A discussion in Chapter Two revealed that trafficking is an extremely low risk and profitable criminal activity for perpetrators (Kara, 2009). Prosecution rates remain low as trafficking syndicates collaborate with local officials to create sophisticated operating methods to evade new trafficking legislation (UN.GIFT, 2008; D'Cunha, 2002). In Samar, insufficient law enforcement was observed not just through a corrupt judicial system and police force, but also in a lack of will by service providers including social workers to actively protect migrants. This section discusses these issues surrounding anti-trafficking law enforcement. Despite the Philippine government's laws and commitments to protect migrants and combat trafficking, which were introduced in Chapter Three, insufficient law enforcement at the village level was a crucial factor which led to the trafficking of the interview participants.

Corruption

Zhang and Pineda (2008) concluded that corruption is probably the most important factor contributing to human trafficking, even more so than poverty. Organised crime relies on the complicity of a range of individuals including law enforcers (Bruckert and Parent, 2002:19). Guth (2009) stated that high and low level corruption has been side-lined in discussions pertaining to the causes of TIP despite being a central issue in facilitating and continuing trafficking in the Philippines. The author explained:

The low-level corruption, e.g. law enforcement officers, leaves little or no protection to those leaving their homes with traffickers. The high-level corruption of elected officials who use their oppressive powers to control the legal and economic

systems push individuals to migrate from their homes to seek better opportunities elsewhere. Recruiters thrive on this knowledge and often encourage the vulnerable to migrate, accompanying them away from the relative safety of their home municipalities and into the hands of other traffickers. In order to curb human trafficking one must confront the issue of corruption at the local level in order to make home municipalities more palatable places to stay instead of flee (Guth, 2009:148).

Corruption by police and/or judges was mentioned by each participant as an issue which contributed to their trafficking experience. Joena's recruiter, for example, partnered with the former *barangay* police chief to deceive and recruit young girls to work in a brothel. NGOs in the trafficking hotspot, Pampanga, informed ATIP staff that the police and government officials are paid to protect the bars which employ and exploit underage girls. The junkshop in Nueva Ecija which Anda and Bernard were trafficked into was referred to the police over two years ago but no action has yet been taken because the police are being bribed. Niki's case was filed in 2008 but is still ongoing as the owner of the bar she was trafficked into was a policeman so the case was dropped. Niki's family were paid PHP 10,000 to drop charges initially, and the judge was paid PHP 10,000 to change a positive resolution to a negative one. Judges get paid an incentive of PHP 150,000 to convict traffickers and, according to ATIP staff, Mariel's recruiter and her associates paid the judge PHP 300,000 to let her off, which he did. It helped that the recruiter's lawyer was also the second cousin of the wife of the judge, and family connections are important. Additionally, while the recruiter was detained for three years she was dating and pregnant to the prison officer. These examples exposed the professional lines that police frequently cross and the ease with which traffickers can manipulate the judicial process, as long as they have access to money.

A former judge for the International Justice Mission (IJM) disclosed in an informal discussion that there were not many TIP prosecutions because the crime syndicates simply bribe the police, judges and witnesses' families and that "it's easy to pay them off because they're poor". Witnesses regularly disappear and

cases are dismissed. The IJM is an international NGO, however, and could not be corrupted. As this judge could not be bribed, traffickers filed eight civil cases against her including one for disbarment which is still pending. She said “human trafficking now is like AIDS was in the 1980s; everyone’s into combatting it”. Despite an increase in efforts to combat trafficking, it is still extremely difficult to do in practice due to widespread corruption. The judge’s assertion that corruption prohibits trafficking prosecutions in the Philippines is confirmed by Yea (2010b) and the UNHCR (2012)’s conclusions that the government’s programmes to support migrants and curb trafficking have been so far largely ineffective due to a general acceptance of irregular processes, as was illustrated in Chapter Three.

The judge resigned from her post at the IJM and when discussing the corruption of law enforcers and the judicial system, and the near impossibility of getting a TIP conviction, she commented that “anti-trafficking used to be my life. I’m so glad I’m out of that business, it takes everything from you”. One of Plan’s ATIP staff members sighed deeply, shaking her head during a discussion about corruption and ceded that, “It just seems impossible to get a trafficking conviction”. This sentiment that tackling trafficking is an insurmountable challenge was echoed by service providers working directly with victim-survivors of human trafficking.

Incentives to Act

Chapter Two demonstrated a lack of political will by sovereign states to enforce human rights legislation protecting vulnerable labour migrants. This was out of a desire to protect national interests, specifically in terms of social security or economic advancement (Piper, 2004b; Williams, 2009; Ruhs, 2012). In the same way law enforcers at local levels in the Philippines were bypassing their responsibilities to protect migrants, if doing so afforded them no direct personal benefit. Levitt and Dubner (2005) assert that all humans need incentives to act. In a country rife with corruption such as the Philippines (Storey, 1996; Schirmer and Shalom, 1987; Collas-Monsod et al., 2004), if there are no added monetary incentives offered, service providers are less willing to do their job (Rose-Ackerman, 1999; Kreuzer, 2012). Consequently, Brunovskis and Surtees (2012:27) emphasise a tendency for victims of TIP to ‘feel that assistance is due

to the good will of individuals, rather than services to which they are entitled'; highlighting that accountability and transparency are central to post-trafficking service provision, as providers simply may not do their job.

In Samar, it seemed that despite anti-trafficking policies and systems being in place, service providers would not actually enforce the laws without a personal incentive to do so. The lack of will by law enforcers and service providers to combat TIP was not only due to corruption, but also laziness, mixed with a feeling of hopelessness that the problem was too big. Anti-trafficking personnel feel that they cannot compete with the corrupt law and judicial systems and that young people are just too desperate to migrate despite high risks. The police are not enforcing the law because they are being paid off by the traffickers and brothel owners, but they also have a lack of will to do extra work and lack the resources to prosecute traffickers (Ezeilo, 2012). In one case for instance, ATIP staff informed me that the police had a trafficker in custody but no fuel in the police car to take him to court, so they let him go free.

In Samar both police and social workers in charge were found to be abdicating their duties to care for victims of TIP if they could not afford to pay bribes. ATIP staff reported that social workers who are caring for victims of trafficking sometimes encourage their clients not to press charges against their traffickers because they do not want to file the case. Most social workers meet with the families when they send the intercepted children back to their village, but ATIP staff said some are lazy and cannot be bothered visiting the communities so just sign the report and the child leaves to Manila with the recruiter. Rosalie agreed that follow-up visits are conducted by social workers from the originating province but there are times when the social workers do not actually follow-up. In one case a girl from Western Samar who had epilepsy had been forced to migrate by her parents who did not want to look after her. She ended up in a crisis centre in Northern Samar, where staff called social workers in Western Samar whose responsibility it was to assist the girl. The Western Samar social workers advised to "Just let her go; she'll turn up somewhere else", encouraging the crisis centre staff to abandon the girl as she was a difficult case. The girl's parents were also

contacted, and perhaps because they felt they could not cope with her epilepsy, said, “We’d rather go to jail than look after her”.

These reported incidences of low-level corruption by law enforcers and lack of will and lethargy towards providing services to victims of TIP provide evidence that despite the enthusiastic rhetoric of action and commitment to tackling TIP at the policy level (CFO Primer, 2011; US State Department, Philippines, 2012), there is still limited enforcement of these laws and programs on the ground. Corruption in the Philippines, so it seems, is also related to a structure of poverty and lack of opportunities which creates high competition. Ezeilo, (2012) confirmed that there is little follow up after victims have been repatriated and the lack of resources makes it difficult for institutions to provide comprehensive assistance to survivors of TIP. The lack of services and the ‘absence of an effective remedy for the victims places them at an increased risk of falling once again prey to the hands of traffickers’ (2012:1). Furthermore, once trafficked migrants have returned to their village there are also socio-cultural factors which sustain their motivation for migration and increase the likelihood of being re-trafficked (Martin and Callaway, 2011; Langberg, 2005).

Life after Trafficking

Martin and Callaway (2011:220) assert that economic imperatives and social stigmas can prohibit victims of TIP from returning home and leave them vulnerable to further abuse. A stigmatised identity can develop as the result of factors such as prostitution, failing as a migrant or not bringing home money (Brunovskis and Surtees, 2012:28). Returnees often face cultural factors such as loss of reputation after the trafficking experience that combine with poverty related push factors which persist even after repatriation. A tendency to search for ‘easy money’ rather than engage in menial labour (Raijman et al., 2003; Jacquemet, 1996), also limits opportunities for people once they have returned to their village. These complexities can lead to continued vulnerability for returned trafficking victims and prompt a second migration attempt which includes the risk of being re-trafficked (Brunovskis and Surtees, 2012).

Loss of Reputation

Victim-survivors of TIP who are successfully repatriated to their hometowns are not necessarily in a better position than those who have not been rescued, as their reputations can be severely damaged. The strong desire to impress one's neighbours and increase social status, illustrated in Chapter Four, coincides with everyone knowing each other in small villages and an abundance of potentially harmful gossip. Thus having an untainted reputation is essential. Migrating has both the potential to achieve high social status, but also to destroy the migrant's reputation. Mariel, Marie-Lisa, Carlotta and Brenda, for instance, said they felt ashamed that they had gone to work in the brothel (even though they did not actually work there as they were intercepted on the way), and did not want to leave the crisis centre because of stigma. When they did return to their village they were bullied publicly for being prostitutes and branded as 'the ones who went to sell their virginity'. Even Carlotta's teacher said in front of a group of people including Carlotta: "Oh that's Carlotta; she's the one who went to Angeles to sell her virginity for 100,000!"

Niki also suffered the effects of a damaged reputation when she returned to her village. While the trial to convict her trafficker was in process she was not able to attend normal school and so was home-schooled for two years. At the end of that period she failed the entry examination for grade two so, after two years away, re-enrolled in grade one in a public school. The fact that she was put back in school and the stigma associated with her trafficking experience were causes for bullying, and her friends at the Department of Social Welfare and Development had to intervene on her behalf. She is currently residing at a home for girls, while she is recovering from her traumatic experiences. Once stigma and trauma have subsided after counselling and livelihood options have been provided, it is important that victim-survivors of TIP are reintegrated into society and are able to enter reputable employment (Martin and Callaway, 2011; Laczko, 2005). This can be difficult, however, if their home context has not changed and the same incentives to migrate remain (Brunovskis and Surtees, 2012).

The Search for Easy Money

Mulder (1990) asserted that the colonial education system which inflicted a national sense of inferiority, as discussed in Chapter Three, also systematically instilled shame about perceived ‘laziness’ into the Filipino population. He quoted high school textbooks and presidential speeches which declare that Filipinos ‘do not work hard, sacrifice work for social occasions, lack pride in their work and look for easy money’. Textbooks were written with the intention of ‘making Filipinos aware of their weaknesses so they can change them’ (1990:94-95). Mulder states that whether or not a student is actually lazy, ‘chances are that such readings become self-fulfilling prophecies’ (1990:95). Migration is often perceived as a way to earn ‘easy money’ to people in poor villages who see returned migrants with disposable incomes, despite the reality that the migrants’ money was usually extremely ‘hard-earned’ (Osella and Osella, 2000; Raijman et al., 2003; Jacquemet, 1996; Busza 2004). In this context, and with consideration to the apparent laziness of some service providers as detailed above, it is interesting to note that several of the interviewees saw their migration as a way to avoid hard work and make ‘easy money’. They believed that rather than toiling fields for minimum profit, they could more efficiently use their labour to make money more quickly as a domestic worker in Manila. However, this decision could be seen as a way to maximise the earning potential of their labour as part of a survival strategy, rather than laziness, which will be discussed further in Chapter Six.

Rosalie stated that many poor Filipinos are under the impression that migrating will lead them to ‘the land of milk and honey’ where they can gain meaningful employment and all their financial and other problems will be solved. She said that all intercepted trafficking victims were unaware of the risks associated with migration and had no knowledge of TIP. The crisis centre teaches trafficking victim-survivors life skills, handicraft training, dressmaking, cooking for future employment plus basic education; some illiterate girls are taught to read and write. They are also provided with counselling on TIP as well as personal development, namely how to change one’s attitude or personality to a more productive mind to work, rather than just looking for easy money and gadgets. Rosalie and ATIP staff explained that most of the rescued girls actually turn down the livelihood options

offered them - microfinance, skills training or education - as they 'don't want to work or study' and opt for getting married and having children instead. Subsequently their children also grow up with little education and seek an 'easy' way out of poverty.

Brunovskis and Surtees (2012) stated that many returned trafficking victims decline livelihood support if they feel it does not suit their specific needs. The IOM (2008) also found that people who have strong family support networks are less likely to accept assistance from providers who administer a certain selection criteria (2008:34). Several ATIP staff reiterated the fact that it was difficult to engage trafficking survivors into alternative forms of employment or training. Mariel, Marie-Lisa and Brenda all declined the livelihood support offered by Plan stating that they did not want to work or study but preferred to get married and have children. Mariel is now in her second marriage with one child, and her plan is to have more children. Marie-Lisa is married and she also wants to have children. Brenda has no plan; she is in her village 'just relaxing' and is content. Only Carlotta from that group is enrolled in school and said she wants to achieve and go on with her life. Bernard is also enrolled in school but says he is focusing on trying to find a way to get his brother out of the junkshop. He had no plan as to how as he was going to do that and was leaving it to the police, (even though the police have known about the issue for two years and not acted). Anda now has a job selling used clothing around his village which earns him between PHP 120 - 200 per day. He says it is not enough but he is happy if he gets an income each day. Joena is just happy to be home, away from the Beer House, and is going to try and send her recruiter to prison.

While most of the interviewees said adamantly that they would never accept another offer to migrate, (although Brenda briefly went to Manila to work as a domestic helper but left after one month as her employer was abusive), Rosalie says there are girls who end up back at the crisis centre, as they attempt to migrate for a second time. In some cases the exploitative industries poor people are trafficked into are simply a better option than staying in their village (Kara, 2009; Brunovskis and Surtees, 2012). Joena recounted how some of her co-workers at the brothel who had been there for five years, from as young as age 14, were able

to get a better life through the work, despite contracting HIV. This predicament gives an indication of the conditions that people opt to migrate out of, to which a life of prostitution and terminal illness could be preferable. However, Rosalie insisted that if the girls have been successfully educated on TIP during aftercare, then they do not usually attempt to migrate again. These issues which persist in migrants' lives, after the trafficking experience is over, illustrate the complexity of trafficking and the necessity of tackling fundamental issues of poverty in order to eliminate the element of force in migration.

Chapter Conclusions

Poverty and inequality can explain not only the reasons for migration but also the pervasiveness of trafficking in persons in Samar as they are factors which allow traffickers to continue with impunity (Zhang and Pineda, 2008; Ezeilo, 2012). Despite social workers, specially trained police task forces and NGO staff trying earnestly to curb the flow of trafficking, the issue is nonetheless that the traffickers have money and the law enforcers do not (Bird and Rodriguez, 1999). In a system that is rife with corruption, a trafficker can easily pay police, prosecutors and judges twice their official salary and resume his illegal business. Social workers deal with individual cases but knowing that the likelihood of securing a conviction is negligible, they eventually lose the will to keep fighting what has proved to be a losing battle.

Similarly, even survivors of trafficking often lose the desire to find meaningful employment as social mobility is low and working hard, if they are fortunate enough to find a job, will not necessarily improve their position (Fuwa, 2003; Hakata, 2013). Livelihood support offered by NGOs is often turned down if it is perceived to entail a 'harder' method of earning a living than migration would (Brunovskis and Surtees, 2012; IOM, 2008), especially after witnessing the success of other returned migrants who seemingly made 'easy money' (Jacquemet, 1996; Busza 2004).

Trafficking survivors also often battle stigma and loss of reputation within their villages which can hinder their recovery and increase the chance of attempting to migrate again, and hence risk being re-trafficked (Martin and Callaway, 2011;

Langberg, 2005). In some cases, where social exclusion and lack of opportunities persist, situations of labour and sexual exploitation can appear preferable to life in the village (Brunovskis and Surtees, 2012). While this complex situation of poverty and corruption in Samar - and the Philippines generally - remains, young, poor, vulnerable people will continue to search for work outside their hometowns and traffickers will continue to exploit them with impunity.

CHAPTER SIX

Conclusions: It's more fun in the Philippines!

Introduction

The current national catchphrase used to promote travel and tourism in the Philippines - 'It's more fun in the Philippines!' - is often said with irony by Filipinos after misfortune has occurred. Ironic, because, as highlighted in Chapter Three, citizens of the Philippines face on a daily basis corruption which is rooted in all levels of government and industries, long-term civil conflict, and widespread poverty, inequality and unemployment (Collas-Monsod et al., 2004; UNDP, 2013; Storey, 1996; Schirmer and Shalom, 1987; CATW, 2002; UNODC, 2000). On top of economic and social issues the islands are susceptible to natural disasters which can annihilate entire cities at once - of which the recent Super Typhoon Haiyan is a poignant example (Santos, 2014; Jolly, 2005). Yet, despite the numerous obstructions to security and prosperity, or perhaps because of them, most Filipinos are resilient (Seeberg, 2012). This resilience enables Filipinos to survive repeated disruptions to their livelihoods and endure prolonged difficulties for the survival of themselves and others (Parrenas, 2010; Gibson, 2012). Over the course of my fieldwork I observed how many Filipinos continue to smile and laugh in the face of extreme adversity. However, below the outwardly easy-going attitude towards poverty and disaster there seemed to be an underlying sentiment that the Philippines actually is a problematic place to be, and that its people would rather be somewhere else.

As detailed in Chapter Four, many Filipinos I spoke to both in Samar and Manila felt disenchanting by their government and disappointed with the Philippines in general. They wished they had been born into a country with more opportunities which does not abandon its poor, thus they were doing everything within their capabilities to reach one of those countries. Many are desperate to escape poverty and disadvantage and, as was illustrated in Chapter Three, see migration as the panacea to all of their struggles (Deshingkar and Grimm, 2004; Van Impe, 2002;

Lorenzo et al., 2007). While migration is common in many nations, literature in Chapter Three revealed that the extent to which Filipinos leave their country is particularly remarkable (OHCHR, 2012; Siar, 2011; CFO, 2010; Munck, 2008). I was told by a resident in the squatter settlement in Manila that “Filipinos are unique because, unlike other nationalities, they can adapt to any culture, adopt any new cuisine and learn any language when they live abroad”. However, the fact that many are prepared to trade in their own culture, language and cuisine for another could be a symptom of a national ‘inferiority complex’ (Mulder, 1990). The Philippines’ long colonial history ingrained a feeling of subordination into the population - as discussed in Chapter Two - and has instilled a general acceptance of Filipinos’ lower position within global economic and social structures (Schirmer and Shalom, 1987; Orig, 2008; Carino, 1987). Subsequently, people declare they are proud to be Filipinos because of their resilience, family values, and laughter in the face of adversity, but are simultaneously trying to find a way to leave the Philippines and adopt a new nationality.

A complex system where external structures, colonial aftermath and the almost universal aspiration of Filipinos to leave their home country, as well as the capability to move internally or internationally, has fostered a ‘culture of migration’ (Reincke, 1997; Brunovskis and Surtees, 2012). The culture of migration has nurtured the mobility of people and established the idea that migration is an essential step to achieving upward social and economic mobility (Hakata, 2013). This makes poor Filipinos particularly prepared to accept an unscrupulous offer for employment out of their hometown. Migrating from a situation of poverty can therefore put people in a vulnerable position and potentially lead to human trafficking.

With the above mentioned in mind, the overall aim of this thesis was

To investigate the driving factors of the culture of migration of the Philippines and the implications for trafficking.

This chapter will discuss key issues pertaining to the Philippine migration-trafficking nexus by addressing each of the following research objectives and linking them with the literature and the interview results.

- I: Investigate the conditions where people become vulnerable to trafficking
- II: Unpack and explain recruitment practices that exploit migrants
- III: Explore survival strategies employed by Filipinos who experienced trafficking
- IV: Describe the post-trafficking situation for survivors

The justification for exploring these objectives is that the external conditions that make Filipinos vulnerable to trafficking as they migrate are related to poverty and structural inequalities which distinguish them from highly skilled, more privileged migrants who are not in vulnerable positions. An examination of predatory recruitment practices explained the complex issues surrounding trust and recruitment which form the first step towards the exploitation of migrants. The survival strategies applied by migrants who experience trafficking are linked with the notion of agency within situations of exploitation. Finally, discussing life after trafficking presents the conditions which persist in migrants' hometowns after repatriation which can lead to people attempting to migrate again and risk being re-trafficked.

In order to understand how migration becomes a cultural aspect of the Philippines it was important to hear the voices of those who utilised migration as a survival strategy. A qualitative methodology was employed so as to hear the narratives of seven women and two men who experienced trafficking for forced labour or sex as they attempted to migrate, and to understand the social and cultural context of the migrants' lives which increase their susceptibility to trafficking (Byrne 2012; Pope and Mays, 2006; Birch and Miller, 2000). Further information was gathered through informal conversations with seven key informants who had first-hand and expert knowledge on trafficking (Sandelowski, 2000; Taylor-Powell and Renner, 2003). A document analysis was also utilised to investigate the wider context which shapes and impacts Filipinos' lives, in order to identify what factors make migrants vulnerable to trafficking (IOM, 2008). The four research objectives were

addressed by including the viewpoints of the trafficking survivors themselves, to understand why people make the decision to migrate despite high risks. The narratives obtained through interviews in Samar were combined with observations made over five months living in the Philippines.

Following a discussion on each objective, the results will be placed within the wider context of the themes which formed the thesis framework and were introduced in Chapter One and discussed in detail in Chapters Two and Three. The themes used in the research framework – globalisation, gendered migration and migrants’ rights – were utilised throughout the thesis to give context to wider global political structures which influence internal and international migrants in general and in the Philippines specifically. These will be discussed in relation to the government and nongovernmental policies and initiatives to combat trafficking and whether they are effective in practice. The final section of this chapter outlines what needs to be done to address the key issues raised in this thesis in order to protect the Philippines’ substantial migrant population from the factors which render them vulnerable to trafficking.

Objective I: Conditions where People become Vulnerable to Trafficking

In Chapter Three, an overview of the current socio-economic context of the Philippines was provided, with reference to the enduring effects of colonialism and elitist politics. It showed that the Philippines’ colonial history has left a legacy of elitism which is deep-rooted in its political, economic and social systems (Barr, 2009; Storey, 1996). This has embedded corruption at each level of society, and created huge disparities between the rich and the poor (Schirmer and Shalom, 1987; Collas-Monsod et al., 2004). Continuing elitism is observable in society where numerous squatter settlements are scattered amongst high-rise buildings and gated communities (Hakata, 2013; Storey, 1996). As a result of elitist capture and widespread inequality poor Filipinos have become victims of inescapable poverty, and the local labour market cannot support the surplus of un- and underemployed people (Lorenzo et al., 2007; DOLE, 2013; Todaro, 1980). Thus Filipinos are forced to look for work abroad, and are encouraged by their government to do so (CATW, 2002; UNODC, 2000). The Government’s role in

facilitating overseas employment for Filipinos has helped to create a culture of migration. In this way crippling poverty, caused and exacerbated by endemic corruption that leaves the most vulnerable people marginalised and with little chance of upward social mobility (Hakata, 2013; Fuwa, 2003), is combined with an institutionalised and broadly accepted idea that migration is the only way to free oneself from such poverty. This combination creates desperation in Filipinos to seek work out of their hometown or country, in order to pull themselves and their families out of poverty (Lorenzo et al., 2007).

Literature presented in Chapter Three also revealed cultural tendencies, instilled by successive colonial governments, to surmise that other nations are seen as superior (Reincke, 1997; Mulder, 1990). This inclination increases the rate of out-migration and reinforces the idea that moving overseas will provide a better life than staying in the Philippines; contributing to Filipinos' specific vulnerability to trafficking as their desire to migrate intensifies. The interviews presented in the case studies in Chapter Four showed that internal migrants, for whom international migration is out of reach (Deshingkar and Grimm, 2004; de Haan, 2000), are just as convinced that internal migration will solve their problems. As shown in the literature, this belief is no different from the idea held by international migrants. Manila and other urban centres are seen to be economic utopias full of job opportunities, despite the reality that those areas are overcrowded and also suffer from high unemployment levels (World Bank, 2012; National Statistics Office, 2013). The culture of migration normalises moving as a survival strategy and this willingness to move has become a precondition to trafficking (Global Slavery Index, 2013; Hakata, 2013).

The interview results presented in Chapters Four and Five confirmed that poverty is the root cause of migration, and that if Filipinos had options to secure a livelihood in their home community, most would not choose to leave (Global Slavery Index, 2013; Deshingkar and Grimm, 2004). However, as explained in Chapter Four, not all incentives for migrating were to escape poverty. Some participants had materialistic motivations and sought to buy their family a TV, or obtain 'white skin' in order to be beautiful and increase their status in the village (Carino, 1987:318; Busza 2004; Asis et al., 2004). All of the interviewees

reiterated that if their family had had money they would not have left their homes, and they saw migration as the only way to improve their current circumstances, whether it was strictly for survival or for materialistic purposes. The involuntariness of migration expressed by participants indicates that migration is perceived to be a necessary process to be endured in order to achieve upward mobility. This acceptance that migration is unavoidable means people are more inclined to accept an offer from unscrupulous recruiters (Satterthwaite, 2005; Jolly, 2005).

As Filipino migrants are pushed to cross international borders because of these economic reasons their human rights are not protected (Satterthwaite, 2005; Castles, 2011). Chapter Two discussed how capitalist structures of globalisation ensure richer receiving countries cherry-pick the most highly skilled migrants while low-skilled migrants are pushed into marginalised sectors where governments turn a blind eye to frequent human and labour rights abuses (Jolly, 2005; Castles, 2011; Law and Nadeau, 1999; Peterson, 2007). The Philippine government promotes its migrant protection policies (Yeoh et al., 2004) but in practice it is not sufficiently supporting its remitting 'heroes', due to their overrepresentation in marginalised and unprotected areas (Munck, 2008; Briones, 2009; Chin, 2003). Migrants' lack of government protection means they are more likely to be trafficked (Satterthwaite, 2005), and their desperation to secure a livelihood forces them to persevere under conditions of sustained abuse (Banerjee, 2006; Kara, 2009).

Zhang and Pineda (2008) stated that corruption is the most significant factor which makes trafficking thrive, as the resulting lack of law enforcement allows traffickers to act with impunity (Guth, 2009; Ezeilo, 2012; Kara, 2009). Results revealed in Chapter Five were compatible with the literature as they illustrated that when the participants attempted to migrate, low-level corruption and lack of law enforcement were another set of key issues which contributed to their being trafficked. Police and judges were shown to abdicate their duties to protect civilians in favour of receiving bribes from traffickers to drop cases. Key informants such as the former judge and staff of Plan's ATIP project voiced their frustrations as they could not compete with trying to protect victims of TIP and

prosecute traffickers when the law enforcers would not do their job. Even some social workers chose simply not to act. This meant that some migrants who had been intercepted by anti-trafficking initiatives ended up being trafficked as a direct result of service providers' ineffectiveness (Bruckert and Parent, 2002). These conditions of poverty, inequality and corruption lay the foundation for making migrants vulnerable to trafficking (Bird and Rodriguez, 1999; Ezeilo, 2012). The results also revealed issues surrounding recruitment processes which form the first steps of exploitation.

Objective II: Recruitment Practices that Exploit Migrants

This section will discuss how recruitment processes exploit poor migrants, particularly the multidimensional relationships between migrants and their recruiters. This thesis demonstrated that internal migrants have significantly fewer options than international migrants, due to their lack of social and financial capitals to facilitate international migration (Deshingkar and Grimm, 2004; de Haan, 2000). The poverty and lack of options which force people to look for work away from home, can lead to ruthless competition for resources and cause people to behave in a way which jeopardises the safety of others in their communities (Ezeilo, 2012; Omelaniuk, 2005:9; Busza 2004). Interviews with internally trafficked persons revealed recruitment processes which prey on poor people's vulnerability and desperation to migrate. In Anda's case, his malnourishment which caused severely stunted growth led him to be recruited by a trafficker looking for children. This indicates another link between poverty and trafficking as his lack of nutritious food as a child, indirectly contributed to his being trafficked as an adult.

Chapter Four described how recruiters are often poor themselves and can be a neighbour for example, willing to deceive and exploit a child living next door to them. Some parents are even prepared to sell their own daughters' virginity despite their protests, in order to receive remittances. The interviews also revealed examples of police and village officials being involved in deceptively recruiting children under their jurisdiction. Tragically the young migrants were betrayed by people that were supposed to look after them. Poor, uneducated migrants therefore

cannot always rely on their family, community or local law enforcers to protect them (Bruckert and Parent, 2002; Ezeilo, 2012; Bird and Rodriguez, 1999).

For those who have prior knowledge of trafficking, the image of an aggressive male trafficker with an evil grin, as illustrated in the mural shown in Chapter One (Figure 1), is often what a young, vulnerable person would recognise not to trust. The fact that recruiters often come in the form of trustworthy looking people with job offers that are plausible, such as the lady who recruited me into a hostess bar in Japan, or a friendly middle-aged neighbour offering a job as a waitress, invites no suspicion from a trusting young girl (Salt and Stein, 1997; Yea, 2010). Likewise a policeman saying he can connect a young man with a paid job in construction nearby seems like a conceivable stroke of good luck. Chapter Four revealed that most of the interviewees were recruited by neighbours, policemen or people from their own community with whom they had almost friendly relationships, even after being deceived; confirming that recruiters' familiarity to their victims makes them easy to trust. Although these people are young and naïve, they are not behaving recklessly or irrationally by believing that the 'kind' policeman or the lady across the road is offering them a job. The recruiters therefore are exploiting the migrants' trust as well as their poverty. Despite migrants being deceived into forced labour or sex and exploited by actors at each step of the trafficking process, there is certain room for agency as they employ strategies to survive.

Objective III: Survival Strategies Employed by Filipinos who Experienced Trafficking

This thesis described the context of poverty that Filipinos are living in, but more importantly drew attention to the strategies that many employ to improve their lives. Chapter Three discussed Filipinos' resilience and ability to endure difficult situations (Seeberg, 2012; Briones, 2009; Yea, 2004). While such spirit has enabled Filipinos to overcome an abundance of obstacles, it may also be correlated with a cultural tendency to smile in the face of adversity whilst simultaneously conceding that the problem is too big to solve, as discussed above, and therefore accepting that the odds are against them. This acceptance was portrayed in Chapter Five where some of the participants felt that working hard

would not enable them to rise above their marginalised position. This sentiment may have consequently led some Filipinos to seek an ‘easy’ resolution to their position, such as getting married and having babies, or migrating despite the high risk of trafficking (Brunovskis and Surtees, 2012; IOM, 2008; Martin and Callaway, 2011; Langberg, 2005).

Given the multitude of factors oppressing the interviewees in Samar the sense that people are fighting a losing battle can be overwhelming, and survival strategies are consequently short term. People often said “If I’m lucky” rather than “I’ll do it”, and tended to be short-sighted in their planning, thinking of today or ‘this year’ as primary, with little consideration to life in several years’ time. Filipinos had a sense of having no control over the conditions of their fate as, for instance, they could not fight the corrupt political elites, their livelihood could be destroyed by a typhoon next month or there was a chance their family or the police might sell them. Therefore the perceived most rational thing to do – within these conditions – is to ‘live in the now’ and do the best they can today. People’s existence has been largely subsistence-based so investing time and effort into studying for the future, especially when no one around has higher than elementary education, becomes an almost unfathomable option (NSCB, 2012; NSO, 2011). For someone who is not sure if she will be alive in three years’ time, it is difficult to see the point in spending what might be her last three years of life studying. It makes more sense, therefore, to spend effort in acquiring enough money for today and to think about tomorrow’s needs tomorrow. In this context, when that ‘lucky chance’ comes along to earn ‘easy money’ as a well-paid domestic maid in Manila, poor Filipinos are prepared to take it.

Chapter Four detailed the conditions facing rural migrants who successfully reached Manila without becoming victims of forced labour, and found that Manila did not provide the anticipated ‘easy money’. Internal migrants in Manila have pressure from families in the provinces to send money home (Saith, 1997; Samers, 2010). The surplus of labour in urban centres means finding a job can be near impossible, especially for those who are low-skilled (Hakata, 2013; Mojares, 2013; Todaro, 1980). If they are lucky enough to find a job, the minimum wage is barely sufficient to cover costs of living and commuting let alone enough to

provide for families in the provinces (ILO, 2011). Finding oneself unemployed after migrating to Manila creates the link where internal migration can become international migration. In this context compelling stories of successful overseas Filipino ‘remitting heroes’, as they were labelled in Chapter Three, making \$15 an hour as construction workers or domestic helpers in Dubai, becomes even more aspirational (Omelaniuk, 2005). Many of those I spoke to in Manila knew the risks associated with international migration and had heard the horror stories of abused Filipinos abroad, but were not deterred from seeking work overseas as it appears to be the only feasible escape from a marginalised position of economic stagnation. Over the five months I spent living in the Philippines, every single Filipino I spoke to expressed their desire to migrate, either internally or internationally depending on their economic situation. Eventually I too became convinced that migration was the only way out.

Each of my interview participants was a survivor of trafficking. The participants employed unique survival strategies at each stage of their migration/ trafficking experience, providing examples of the agency migrants can exert despite being in vulnerable, exploited and forced situations, as discussed in Chapters Two and Three (Rao, 2011; Doyle and Timonen, 2010; Omelaniuk, 2005; Parrenas, 2011). Domestic workers, for example, are largely invisible from society and labour protection laws due to their employment in unregulated private spheres (Munck, 2008; Briones, 2009) but are able to tactically manoeuvre through unequal social, economic and political structures and earn respect (Rao, 2011), increase their self-esteem, and provide a livelihood for their families back home (Omelaniuk, 2005; Doyle and Timonen, 2010). For those in a trafficking situation there is often less flexibility to transcend an exploitative situation, however, the participants in this study strategically navigated their circumstances to regain control of their lives.

For the interviewees the decision to migrate, even when people did not want to leave their village, demonstrated a courageous survival strategy. Leaving one’s hometown for the first time to enter an unknown city in order to provide for family or increase status shows great determination. Likewise, escaping from a brothel or junkshop, whilst faced with multiple abuses and with limited resources, required strategic planning, as the case studies from Chapters Four and Five

revealed. Bernard, for example, begged his trafficker every day to let him go, while enduring constant psychological and physical abuse, until he finally relented on the condition that Bernard's brother stay and work. Joena and Anda saved every peso they earned and waited patiently for an opportune moment to run away. Niki was rescued by a worried citizen who notified the DSWD, as were Mariel, Marie-Lisa, Carlotta and Brenda, who escaped before they reached the brothel as concerned members of the public notified the police. Once the participants were back in their villages and they understood that migration was too risky a method to alleviate their poverty, they recognised the need to adjust their survival strategies; although some people later resort back to migration, as will be discussed below. These examples illustrate how poor Filipinos have navigated migration processes with the limited recourses they have available, in order to transcend their marginalised position. For those who survived a trafficking experience, they are often faced with new obstacles which arise as consequences to trafficking.

Objective IV: The Post-Trafficking Situation for Survivors

This section will discuss the cultural factors returnees often face that combine with persistent poverty related push factors and can lead to further migration attempts. After trafficking survivors have been repatriated, Chapter Five described how they are not necessarily better off than when they were under conditions of forced labour or prostitution, especially if they were able to earn a small income (Kara, 2009). In Chapter Four a discussion on life after trafficking revealed that parents are often disappointed when their children return as they were expecting remittances (Omelaniuk, 2005; Busza 2004). TIP survivors often return home with a stigmatised reputation associated with failed migration or for being 'the girl who worked as a prostitute' which can cause isolation and make rebuilding a life in the village difficult (Martin and Callaway, 2011; Brunovskis and Surtees, 2012). The participants from the interviews were from small villages where everybody knows each other's business and are often related. In this context, many of the female participants reported feeling stigmatised due to their association with prostitution, and were therefore reluctant to return to their village. The pressure to provide an income for their families also remained. As discussed above, the participants who were offered livelihood support were unlikely to

choose to work or study as it seemed purposeless. Many instead opted to get married. However, chances of finding a suitable marriage partner decrease if their reputation has been damaged by stigma. Within these constraints, and especially when the family still requires an income from remittances, even people who have experienced trafficking sometimes have no option but to attempt to migrate again, making themselves vulnerable to being re-trafficked (Martin and Callaway, 2011; Langberg, 2005).

Two of the participants stated that they were focusing on sending their traffickers to jail. Considering the difficulty in securing a prosecution especially when they have no money to bribe officials, endeavouring to obtain justice for their abuse can be a futile venture (Yea, 2010b; Ezeilo, 2012; UN.GIFT, 2008). Those who opted to start a family of their own bring children into the same situation where obtaining an education is not an expected aspect of life, employment opportunities are scarce and migration remains the only perceived option to earn a decent living. While these conditions persist, and traffickers largely operate with impunity, the cycle of forced migration and trafficking becomes an intergenerational phenomenon.

Thesis Conclusions

The aim of this study was to investigate the driving factors behind the culture of migration of the Philippines and the implications for trafficking. The results found that Filipinos are being ‘groomed’ to migrate as migration has become ingrained in the national psyche. The Philippines has social and economic complexities which limit the life choices of its people and migration is the accepted, and indeed only, perceived method to achieve upward social mobility. This thesis detailed the constraints facing Filipino international migrants and presented case studies on the poorest internal migrants. The results have been in agreement with the literature and supported Ezeilo’s (2012:1) assertion that in the Philippines

The root causes of trafficking and migration overlap to a great extent; it is thus important to understand the motivations behind people’s decisions to leave their homes. In many cases, people leave their homes in search of protection and opportunity and in

short, human security threatened already in their primary locations.

This section will conclude these research results and illustrate how this thesis is placed within global migration, gendered migration and human and labour rights discourse, and how it contributes to literature on human trafficking within the Philippines.

Human rights issues surrounding global migration centre on the abuses that international migrants face as they cross borders and are pushed by receiving governments into marginalised sectors; despite sovereign states' obligations to adhere to international treaties protecting migrant rights (Piper, 2004; Raijman et al., 2003; UNICEF, 2011; Chin, 2003; Wickramasekara, 2008). Chapter Five provided the connection between policies to protect migrants' rights on international and national scales, as it emphasised the fact that implementation on both levels has been inadequate (UN.GIFT, 2008; D'Cunha, 2002; Ezeilo, 2012). The results concluded that as states fail to abide by their international human rights obligations, the Philippine government also neglects its duty to protect its internal migrants from abuse. This thesis contributed to literature on human and labour rights abuses as it detailed the conditions of abuse that the interviewees suffered as they were trafficked. However, the focus was placed on the situations which enable migrants to be abused, such as inadequate policy implementation, rather than the acts of abuse themselves. The consequences of the lack of law enforcement at the household level were detailed through the case studies which showed how trafficking of migrants was facilitated by complicit law enforcers at the local level. This was reinforced by the literature presented in Chapter Three which places corruption as a key contributing factor to trafficking (Global Slavery Index, 2013; Zhang and Pineda, 2008; Guth, 2009; UN.GIFT, 2008; Bruckert and Parent, 2002).

Literature on gendered experiences of migration discussed the plight of women migrants and the multiple discriminations they are susceptible to based on gender, race and class (Peterson, 2007; UNFPA, 2013; Rao 2011; Piper, 2004). For example, Law and Nadeau (1999) argued that transnational migration is often

framed within the political economy of “imperialist globalisation” and that gendered and ethnically stereotyped employment and racist labour policies favour Western agendas (Peterson, 2007). Within this structure domestic workers from lower income countries like the Philippines are exploited for their ‘lesser cost’ and ‘docile nature’ (Chant and McIlwaine, 1995; Satterthwaite, 2005:7; Chin, 2003). Filipinas are overrepresented in the domestic service sector, and the “Filipino maid” has become a cultural labour stereotype. Due to the invisibility of domestic helpers as discussed above, this exploitation can lead to trafficking, which therefore poses a serious risk for Filipinas migrating into the domestic service sector. This thesis contributed to the gendered migration discussion by including the voice of women migrants from Samar who are poorer than the majority of those represented in the literature, due to the fact that international migration is out of their reach (Deshingkar and Grimm, 2004; de Haan, 2000). The results from the interviews showed parallels in internal migrants’ stories with those of international migrants.

Where gendered migration incorporates the subjectivities and motives for female and male mobility in analyses of migration (Tyner, 2013), the feminisation of migration refers to the change in the nature of migration (Jolly, 2005; Boyd and Grieco, 2003). The feminisation of migration involves an increase in service-sector jobs as women migrate abroad to become domestic workers, taking over reproductive work from women in richer economies and creating the so-called ‘care chain’ (Rajiman et al., 2003; Satterthwaite, 2005; Piper, 2004; UNFPA, 2013). This phenomenon has infiltrated the poorest people’s consciousness and conveyed the idea that migrating to become a domestic helper is a possible and lucrative livelihood option. Indeed most of the trafficked women intercepted by the Help Desk were migrating for domestic work in Manila, signifying that poor internal migrants were also part of the care chain. Niki, one of the case study examples from Chapter Four, was promised a job as a domestic worker but ended up working as a sex worker. Mariel attempted to migrate after she had already been repatriated from her trafficking experience, as she also thought she could be a domestic worker in Manila. Her boss was abusive so she returned to her village. These case study examples demonstrate that international abuses of Filipino maids are happening within the Philippines too. Therefore, the results can conclude that

the current global politico-economic system which exacerbates polarised class structures between rich and poor countries (Law and Nadeau, 1999; Peterson, 2007; Rao, 2011; Chin, 2003), are also prevalent on a domestic scale within the Philippines.

In Chapter Two the literature detailed the conflicting emotions some women migrants face as they leave their children behind to care for others' and the negative impacts this can have on the family (Jingzhong and Lu, 2011; Piper, 2008; Rao, 2011) which can supersede the advantages of migration (Rajjman et al., 2003). Doyle and Timonen (2010) asserted that some migrant mothers can feel like a "bad mother" for leaving their children, while simultaneously feeling obliged to provide a better future for them through migration and ensuing remittances (Hochschild, 2000). Althea's case, presented in Chapter Five, was consistent with this literature but also showed that the children left behind can become vulnerable to bad influences or even recruiters. Althea's mother migrated to Singapore as a domestic worker in order to fund Althea's education. Because of her mother's absence Althea felt abandoned which resulted in her leaving school altogether and being persuaded to take drugs by a local criminal network. The police found Althea and handed her over to the crisis centre as a victim of TIP. This case indicates that it is not only migrants who are at risk of being trafficked but also the children who migrants leave behind.

In addition to the problematic issues surrounding global class structures and the domestic care chain, links between the literature and results were also found pertaining to the gender division of labour. 'Low-skilled' migrants are often forced to enter gender segregated areas which are centred on socially constructed and stereotypical images of gender roles (Kofman, 2000; Boyd and Grieco, 2003). The case studies underlined and confirmed gendered labour divisions as the girls interviewed were offered jobs as domestic workers or waitresses and trafficked into sex work and the two men interviewed had been trafficked for forced labour into the junkshop; both cases serving as examples of gender-based exploitation. Each migrant had low education and skill levels so were forced to take any job they were offered, and the only jobs available for such workers were those which exploit the workers' gender: domestic or sex work for females and manual labour

for males. The exploitation of male migrants also drew attention to male trafficking - recognised by the IOM (2008) as being the underrepresented side of trafficking research - and the vulnerability of poor rural men who have no local opportunities for employment.

This thesis contributed to discussions on Philippine trafficking by detailing the circumstances where poor Filipinos become trafficked internally. A holistic understanding of the situation was obtained when I was volunteering for Plan and working with them on their Anti-Trafficking in Persons project. Plan's partnerships with police, social workers, government departments of justice and social welfare and development on local and national scales provided insights into the complete approach government and nongovernment organisations are taking to combat trafficking. The Philippine government has made significant contributions to addressing trafficking such as creating the Inter-Agency Council against Trafficking, ratifying international migrant protection and anti-trafficking conventions, and funding national anti-trafficking initiatives. Prosecution rates of traffickers have gone up significantly in the past few years and policy reforms have been made to address the widespread trafficking issue particularly with regard to corruption and aftercare for survivors (Plan, 2012; Ezeilo, 2012; US State Department, Philippines, 2011; CFO Primer, 2011).

While working in Samar on the ground with the ATIP project team I was able to witness first-hand how these initiatives work in practice. Special police task forces are being trained how to deal with trafficking cases, information and education drives are being implemented in villages to educate uninformed people about TIP and the risks of migration. The Help Desk initiative is succeeding in intercepting trafficked girls and boys, women and men as they are on their way to Manila and the crisis centres are counselling and caring for survivors while social workers help them to decide which livelihood support would benefit them.

These substantial efforts are making an impact on the prevalence of trafficking, but as the case studies revealed, gaps still remain between policy and practice and migrants are still vulnerable to being trafficked. Root causes of trafficking, particularly poverty and lack of law enforcement are not being effectively

addressed (CFO Primer, 2011; US State Department, Philippines, 2012). This has perpetuated the abuse of human rights of Filipinos both domestically and abroad, who are exposed to exploitation and extortion by brokers, employers and law enforcement agents (Ezeilo, 2012). Given the scale of trafficking of Filipinos both internally and across borders, the prosecution rate remains low. This, and the complicity of local police, social workers and judges in traffickers' illicit and clandestine operations, contributes to the impunity of traffickers and the vulnerability of migrants (Zhang and Pineda, 2008; Ezeilo, 2012; Guth, 2009; Kara, 2009). Therefore, despite resiliency and determination to survive (Seeberg, 2012; Hakata, 2013), while the current factors, which propel the culture of migration and the lack of government protection for vulnerable migrants remain inadequately addressed, poor Filipinos will continue to seek work outside of their hometowns and risk being trafficked. Thus, this thesis has argued that in order to most effectively combat trafficking in the Philippines, the root causes of poverty and inequality must be addressed so the necessity to migrate diminishes.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Semi-structured Interview Questions

- 1) Why did you decide to migrate?
- 2) Describe the recruitment process
- 3) What did you expect in Manila (or other urban centre) and what was your actual experience?
- 4) How did you escape?
- 5) What livelihood options do you have now?

Appendix 2 Information Sheet



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

Filipina Migrants: Examining the Voluntariness of Labour Migration INFORMATION SHEET

Hello, I'm Christey. I am currently living in the Philippines to conduct research for my Master's degree in International Development. The purpose of this research is to find out the extent to which Filipina labour migration is actually voluntary. I intend to do this by documenting the life stories of female labour migrants who have returned to the Philippines.

I would like to invite you to participate in this research by sharing your migration experience with me in focus groups of two or three women, or one on one interviews if you prefer to do it individually. Each discussion or interview will take around one hour. If you decide to participate, I would like you to feel completely comfortable. There will be a social worker present and you have the freedom to skip questions or stop the interview at any time you like. All information will be kept completely confidential and you are welcome to choose a pseudonym.

I will produce a summary discussion of my findings which I can send you if you like. The information will be primarily used for my thesis, and Plan may also use some of my research findings for their work in supporting returnee migrants. You will be able to access the final report at the Massey University library online.

Your rights if you choose to participate

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 at any time, with no explanation for the withdrawal;
- 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 me;
- 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.

I would like to sincerely thank you for taking part in my research and sharing your experiences with me. Please feel free to contact me or my supervisor if you have any questions or comments! Salamat po!

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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. I am 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 5240, email humanethics@massey.ac.nz.

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ki Pihoro

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