

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

The Effects of COVID-19 on ni-Vanuatu Workers in New Zealand's Recognised Seasonal Employer Scheme

A research report presented in partial fulfilment of requirements for
the degree of Master of International Development at Massey
University, Palmerston North, New Zealand

Cameron Tonkin

2023

Abstract

On March 11, 2020, the United Nations World Health Organisation declared the COVID-19 virus a global pandemic, initiating widespread government-imposed restrictions affecting peoples' mobility, social engagement and livelihoods (United Nations, 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted global structural inequalities and recognised the importance of migrant workers in their contributions to the global economy (International Labour Organisation, 2021). This context has placed increased recognition on the temporary migration policies that facilitate mobility and their evolution over time (International Labour Organisation, 2021). For temporary workers, participation under these policies had placed restrictions on their already limited social integration and has had an undeniable restraint on their labour rights (Rosewarne, 2010). Temporary workers are often not eligible to access the social and economic safety nets provided to national residents, which has exacerbated their vulnerability from the impacts of the pandemic (Mukumbang, 2021). This study aims to explore how ni-Vanuatu participants in the New Zealand's Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme have exercised agency during the pandemic. This research has focused on workers in Te Puke, New Zealand. The exploration of their lived experiences is harnessed through a qualitative approach and methods that have facilitated discussion in semi-structured interviews along with personal observations and reflections.

The research findings demonstrate RSE scheme stakeholders consisting of RSE employers, local community organisations and respective national governments have made concerted efforts at the initial stages of the pandemic to engage RSE participants and provide the means to sustain themselves. However, as the pandemic had continued, ni-Vanuatu workers shifted their focus towards personal responsibility to supporting themselves and helping other workers. This research shows that even in the most restrictive environments, ni-Vanuatu RSE scheme participants as individuals are conscious and capable of making decisions for themselves. Contributions of this research could be reflected in the design and implementation of the RSE scheme post-pandemic to allow participants to define their needs and promote a better understanding of their experiences.

Acknowledgements

This research is a collaboration of all those that have contributed to my Master's journey. I would like to personally extend my deepest appreciation to the following people who have made the completion of this study possible:

To my participants, for openly sharing your story and deeply personal experiences with me with such insight and thoughtfulness.

To my friend and colleague, Huidan, for picking me up on my bad days and listening to my pent-up frustrations on our walks around the block.

To the Massey IDS team, for your willingness to impart your knowledge and facilitate a supportive learning environment that has provided the foundations for pursuing this research project.

To the Massey Postgraduate research fund, thank you for providing the financial support to cover the costs to facilitate research in the field.

To my supervisor, Dr Maria Borovnik, for your unwavering support in the toughest of times. Research in a pandemic has been incredibly challenging and you have always been there to provide reflection and understanding. Your passion for migrants' issues has shone through in our discussions and have been a source of inspiration.

To my brother and sister Josh and Hayley, for all your encouragement and for being there to support my journey.

To my parents Sandra and Winston, for all the love and support you have given me to pursue my passions and interests. Working in the development space has been a passion of mine involving long stints away and missed special occasions, and it means a lot to have you cheering me on.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	2
Acknowledgements	3
Table of Contents	4
List of Tables	6
List of Figures.....	6
List of Abbreviations	7
Chapter One Introduction	8
1.1. Introduction	8
1.2. Research Aim and Questions	10
1.3. The Vanuatu Context	11
1.4. Culture of ni-Vanuatu Participants in the RSE scheme	12
1.5. Chapter Outline	14
Chapter Two Situating Migrant Workers' Agency in the COVID-19 Pandemic.....	15
2.1 Introduction	15
2.2. The Meaning of Agency in Development	15
2.3. Individuals' Agency in the Context of a Pandemic.....	18
2.4. Agency in the Context of Migration	19
2.4.1 Social constructions of migrant workers and their agency	20
2.4.2. Locating migrant workers agency during the COVID-19 pandemic	21
2.5 Chapter Summary.....	23
Chapter Three Temporary Labour Migration and Development	24
3.1. Introduction	24
3.2. Circular Labour Migration as a Development Tool	24
3.2.1. Types of temporary labour migration	26
3.2.2. Temporary labour migration in the context of globalisation	28
3.3. Contemporary Labour Migration in the Pacific Context	30
3.3.1 The Australian Seasonal Workers schemes	32
3.3.2 New Zealand's Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme	35
3.4. Chapter Summary.....	38
Chapter Four Research Methodology.....	39
4.1. Introduction	39
4.2. Qualitative Methodology.....	39

4.3. Methods.....	40
4.3.1. Semi-structured interviews	40
4.3.2. Observations and reflective journal writing	43
4.4. Ethical Considerations.....	43
4.5. Limitations	44
4.6. Conclusion.....	45
Chapter Five Research Analysis.....	46
5.1. Introduction	46
5.2. Support Networks and the Experiences of ni-Vanuatu Workers	46
5.2.1. Employer support and help from the local community	46
5.2.2. Support from other ni-Vanuatu and RSE workers.....	47
5.2.3. Family support networks	48
5.3. Responsibilities of ni-Vanuatu Workers in the RSE Scheme	50
5.3.1. Time management for ni-Vanuatu workers.....	51
5.3.2. Dealing with earnings and sending remittances	52
5.4. Ni-Vanuatu Workers Coping with the Uncertainties of the COVID-19 pandemic	54
5.4.1. Recognising the pandemic back home	54
5.4.2. Following rules and guidelines in the workplace	55
5.4.3. Following rules and guidelines outside of work.....	56
5.5. Chapter Summary.....	57
Chapter Six Discussion and Conclusion	58
6.1. Introduction	58
6.2. Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on ni-Vanuatu RSE Workers	59
6.2.1. The pandemic and its impact on ni-Vanuatu social relationships	59
6.2.2. The pandemic and its impact on the ni-Vanuatu culture	61
6.3. Ni-Vanuatu Participants and their Agency in the RSE scheme	62
6.3.1. Ni-Vanuatu participants and their exercise of choice.....	62
6.3.2. Ni- Vanuatu participants and their free will in decision-making	66
6.3.3. Ni-Vanuatu participants and their building of self-confidence and knowledge	67
6.4. Conclusion.....	69
References	72

List of Tables

Table 3.1. Pacific RSE Workers Recruited Between 2007/2008 and 2012/2013.....	34
Table 4.1. Descriptors of ni-Vanuatu Participants Interviewed.....	42
Table 6.1. Thinning Agency: Factors and Impacts.....	63
Table 6.2. Thickening Agency: Factors and Impacts.....	68

List of Figures

Figure 1.1. Map of Vanuatu.....	12
Figure 3.1. Timeline of Temporary Labour Migration Opportunities Available to Pacific Island Countries (PICs), December 2005 to the Present.....	36
Figure 6.1. Lister's agency framework and ni-Vanuatu RSE participants dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic	65

List of Abbreviations

IAU Inter-Agency Understanding Arrangement

MPV Microstate Pilot Visa

NAWPP North Australia Worker Pilot Program

NGO Non-Governmental Organisation

OECD Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

PALM Pacific Australia Labour Mobility Scheme

PIC Pacific Island Country

PLF Pacific Labour Facility

PLS Pacific Labour Scheme

PSWPS Pacific Seasonal Worker Pilot Scheme

RSE Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme

SWP Seasonal Worker Program

TLMS Temporary Labour Migration Schemes

UN United Nations

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought about widespread hardship that was felt across the global economy and many societies (United Nations, 2020). This pandemic has elicited discussion over global structural inequalities and highlighted the importance of migrant workers, especially temporary migrant workers, in their contributions to industries across the global economy (International Labour Organisation, 2022). Temporary labour migration is facilitated by complex mobility programs and schemes (International Labour Organisation, 2022). These labour mobility schemes often place temporary migrants in a vulnerable and subordinate position restricting labour rights and social integration in their living environment (Dauvergne and Marsden, 2014a; Hugo, 2009). The pandemic has exacerbated this vulnerability, as temporary migrants were already not often eligible to access the social and economic safety nets provided to national residents (Mukumbang, 2021). In understanding the impacts of the pandemic on temporary migrants, a rethinking of temporary migration policies is required to ensure they contribute to safe and decent work and to facilitate the well-being of migrants.

In the New Zealand context, the Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme (RSE) was implemented in April 2007 (Bedford, 2013). The RSE scheme enables individuals from Pacific countries to be legally contracted to work in New Zealand's viticulture and horticultural industries for a specified amount of time (Winters, 2016). In its design and implementation, the RSE scheme has been internationally acclaimed as an example of best practice (Hugo, 2009; Bedford, 2013). Best practice is reflected in the specific rights and social protections covering RSE workers that aim to protect workers and reduce their vulnerability (Brickenstein, 2015). However, emphasis on best practice has not stopped acts of exploitation occurring in the scheme, with coverage of systematic patterns of workers' rights violations entering the public discourse (Hamilton-Irvine, 2022; Pang, 2023). As the RSE is employer-led from recruitment to pastoral care, the lack of participation from workers to address their needs and voice their concerns are understated (Gibson and McKenzie, 2014). Research seeking to

explore the state of impacts affecting RSE participants on a personal level must therefore draw upon their lived experiences. This must also recognise the context of culture and identity of workers from their point of view.

The research rationale for this report stems from a lack of RSE participants' voice in the pandemic. During the peak of the pandemic, media coverage was bringing to my attention the plight of RSE workers stranded in New Zealand (Radio New Zealand, 2020). However, in reporting on the dire situation of RSE workers, the absence of RSE workers reflecting on their situation felt like a glaring omission. Instead, I noticed commentary on RSE workers being crowded out by employers and industry collectives speaking on their behalf. As a result, questions such as 'How have RSE workers managed the COVID-19 pandemic from their perspective?' and 'Why were RSE workers not approached to talk about their experiences in the scheme?' came to mind.

As my research has aimed to give voice to RSE workers, my research has engaged them to understand their COVID-19 pandemic experience. In order to explore lived experiences, this chapter will set out the research aim and questions. This is followed by a brief background context of Vanuatu, with a further section detailing the presence of ni-Vanuatu culture in the RSE scheme. A chapter outline will inform of the contents included in this research report.

1.2. Research Aim and Questions

This research aims to understand how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected the ability to make choices by New Zealand RSE scheme workers. There are two research questions listed to answer this aim.

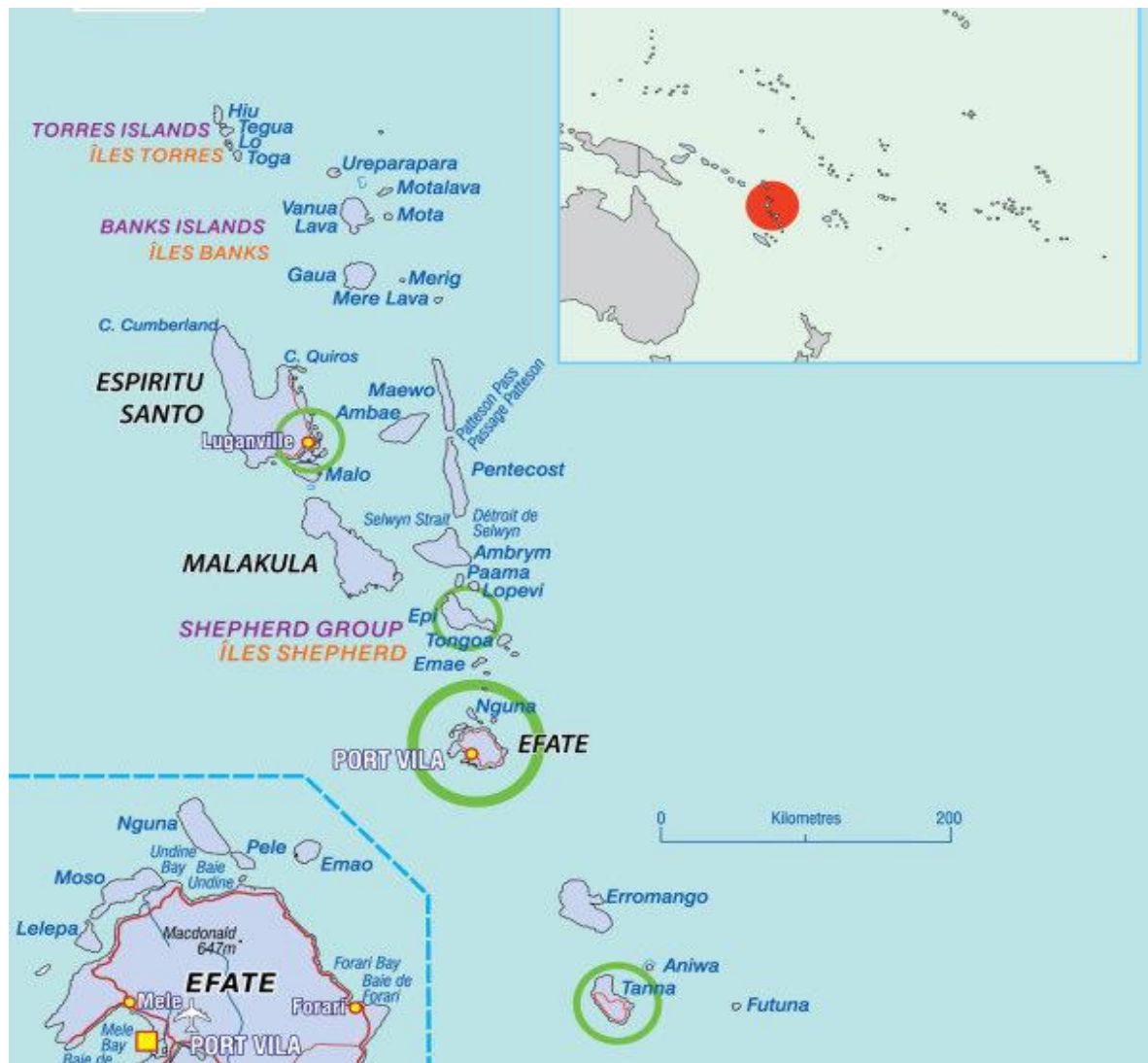
Research Question 1: What impacts did COVID-19-related restrictions and disruptions have on ni-Vanuatu RSE workers?

Research Question 2: Does the RSE scheme facilitate the agency of its workers?

1.3. The Vanuatu Context

As an archipelago, Vanuatu is located in the Melanesian subregion of Oceania. It consists of 83 islands, with a population of 292,680 that inhabits an estimated 65 islands (see Figure 1.1) (Government of Vanuatu, 2022; Petrou and Connell, 2017:55). Approximately 98% of the population is ethnically indigenous Melanesian who “refer to themselves as ni-Vanuatu”, which can be translated as people of the place (Government of Vanuatu, 2022; Cummings, 2013:384). While Vanuatu is culturally and linguistically diverse throughout its regional contexts, some traditional values and practices characterise a shared Melanesian identity (Drake et al., 2022). These values are referenced as humility, kindness, respect, reciprocity, strong ties to social kinship and customary access to resources (Bonnemaison, 1984; Regenvanu, 2010; Cox et al., 2007; Warsal, 2009). In the Vanuatu context, the demonstration of humility, kindness and respect are tied to the embedded nature of Christian beliefs within society (Warsal, 2009). Within the literature, Vanuatu culture's historical and present nature is commonly underpinned by its relation to others in being part of a collective and community (Astonitas Villafuerte, 2018; Smith, 2021). This understanding of ni-Vanuatu culture contrasts with Western behaviours and orientations that are more possessive and individual in their social relations (Astonitas Villafuerte, 2018).

Figure 1.1. Map of Vanuatu



Source: Viney et al., (2014:3)

1.4. Culture of ni-Vanuatu Participants in the RSE scheme

Vanuatu was designated as “one of five kick-start states” in the conceptualisation of the RSE scheme in April 2007 that expedited seasonal migration to New Zealand (Bailey, 2014:52). Before the RSE scheme, Vanuatu had no traditional bilateral links to New Zealand (Curtain et al., 2018). Yet, to this date, Vanuatu has consistently been the major source of seasonal labour to the RSE scheme, with a consistent 45% total share of participants from Pacific states since its launch (McKenzie et al., 2008:4; Curtain and Howes, 2020:25). With ni-Vanuatu’s sizable

and continued participation in the RSE scheme, the scheme has been strongly shaped by their cultural identity.

Throughout the RSE scheme, local New Zealand communities have grown accustomed to the presence of RSE workers (Williams, 2011). However, with the growing cap size of the scheme, RSE workers have become mainly grouped in with other temporary workers that arrive in smaller townships during seasonal peaks (Nunns et al., 2019). In the local community, RSE workers, especially ni-Vanuatu, are prominent members contributing to the attendance of local churches and, to a lesser extent, community and sporting events (Nunns, et al. 2019; Cameron, 2011). As integral participants in their local church congregations, the church plays a crucial meeting point in enabling social interactions and fostering connections with host members of their local community (Bedford, 2013; Bailey, 2016). Workers' religious observances are also linked to supporting general well-being and are tied to the identity of workers (Bedford, 2013; Bailey, 2017). In many instances, local churches and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have stepped in to provide labour rights advocacy and the supply of provisions to assist RSE workers (Otago Daily Times, 2008; Cawston, 2022; Bailey, 2017). This relationship has extended to local development initiatives in home countries and facilitating aid assistance brought on during times of hardship back home (Nunns et al., 2019).

Ni-Vanuatu cultural practices have been observed to play an integral role in resolving concerns within the scheme. In the scheme, ni-Vanuatu participants deal with arising issues in the 'Vanuatu way'. This process encompasses talking it out between the affected parties until an understanding and compromise are agreed upon (Nunns et al., 2019). These 'talk-talk' sessions were witnessed by Bailey (2009) in her ethnographic fieldwork of ni-Vanuatu RSE workers, in which conflict was addressed between the group through mediation and dialogue.

While talking it out provides a culturally appropriate mechanism towards dispute resolution, ni-Vanuatu workers also often feel a sense of shyness in directly conveying these concerns (Nunns et al., 2019). The embeddedness of social hierarchy within Vanuatu culture presents a problem for the RSE scheme in that raising concerns by workers is inhibited out of fear of challenging authority (Nunns et al., 2019). In touching upon this example, Williams (2011) notes that ni-Vanuatu workers have experienced difficulties adapting to New Zealand culture and expectations. These difficulties are also present with the emotional costs of seasonal migration disrupting the stability of family structures (Moala-Tupou, 2016). The navigation

between both cultural realms has led to anger and behavioural issues, with employers weighing up Vanuatu's future employment opportunities and their reputation within the scheme.

1.5. Chapter Outline

Chapter One has introduced the research topic outlining the reasons for researching this issue. This was followed by the research aim and questions. A brief background into Vanuatu was explored along with an explanation of the culture of ni-Vanuatu participants in the RSE scheme.

Chapter Two reviews existing literature exploring the conceptualisation of people's agency, which has implications for the role of individuals in development practice. These conceptualisations of agency are then applied to migrant workers, and their exercise of agency in the COVID-19 pandemic context.

Chapter Three provides the contextual framing by examining temporary labour migration and its differentiated forms. The chapter then discusses the context of temporary migration and its relationship with globalisation forces. The globalised migration context is closely reflected on in the exploration of the Pacific context, highlighting the expanded temporary labour migration opportunities available for Pacific people. The context of temporary migration is further narrowed to explore Australia and New Zealand's respective seasonal worker schemes in their design and implementation.

Chapter Four examines the choice of utilising qualitative methodology. The methods of semi-structured interviews along with personal reflections and observations are elaborated for their purpose of use, and how they were applied to fieldwork engagement. A reflection on ethical considerations and the limitations concerning the research will follow.

Chapter Five provides analysis from the data collected from the fieldwork process. The findings are structured into identifiable key themes that relate to ni-Vanuatu participants' experiences that aim to answer my two research questions.

Chapter Six discusses the information utilising the findings, literature review and background context to critically answer the two research questions in relation to my conceptual frameworks. A conclusion will highlight the key findings and contributions of this research report with an outlook towards the future.

Chapter Two

Situating Migrant Workers' Agency in the COVID-19 Pandemic

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the conceptualisation of migrant workers, and how their agency was exercised in the COVID-19 pandemic context. Section 2.2 will firstly explore how agency has been defined and was contested within conceptualisation of existing literature related to development studies. This section is followed by examining individuals' exercise of agency and its impact from the COVID-19 pandemic, which has led to imposed restrictions across individuals' mobility, social engagement and income earning activities. Section 2.3 focuses on migrant workers in the context of their position of vulnerability. This will include how social constructions and imagery of migrant workers in the literature can limit the space and possibilities to migrant workers' agency in decision making. The following section views migrant workers as holders of agency and locates their agency within the pandemic context. My study argues that an understanding of migrant workers and their agency is needed to better understand their decision-making to serve their needs and aspirations.

2.2. The Meaning of Agency in Development

Agency is a contested term within development discourse. While many conceptualisations of agency have aimed to define and uncover its meaning, Sen's (1985) widely cited definition has become a focal point for examination. Agency is defined broadly by Sen (1985:206) as "what a person is free to do and achieve in pursuit of whatever goals or values he or she regards as important". In his view, agency has the benefit of having intrinsic value, where a person can freely act to choose what they value and can exercise choice towards achieving their goals (Fernandez et al., 2015; White and Wyn, 1998; Ibrahim and Alkire, 2007). An individual imbued with this definition is not merely a passive participant in the constituted world they live in but is conscious of their own volition and reasoning to act on behalf of their aspirations (White and Wyn, 1998). This involvement distinguishes an individual as an agent as they are

active in "bringing about change" through their participation in the social, economic, and political domains (Sen, 1999:16).

Individuals who can exercise agency are said to hold instrumental, intrinsic, and intergenerational values. Alkire and Deneulin (2009) expand on what people are able to do and value by focusing on agents as a central role in development, a role that allows people to be agents of their own lives in expanding valuable freedoms and well-being (Alkire and Deneulin, 2009). The expansion of agency in focusing on how development should be envisaged and what kind of development gains are realised when people are recognised as agents is a crucial feature of agency's instrumental value (Alkire, 2005). In other words, agency, freedom and well-being are closely linked as people need freedoms to express themselves and advance their well-being through the achievement of development goals.

The United Nations Human Development Report (2020) comments that agency is a critical dimension for people's ability to participate in decision-making activities towards achieving their desired choices. An individual with an increased exercise of agency may have the ability to resist and deny policies that may impinge on their values, which could subsequently affect their well-being (Hicks et al., 2016). This position contrasts with a lack of agency, in which an individual may be unable to capitalise on desirable opportunities and be vulnerably situated in a position of coercion (Hicks et al., 2016). The benefit of agency also includes intergenerational values. If parents can exercise an increase in their agency, the quality of human capital investments may be enhanced involving their children (Kabeer and Mahmud, 2009). Thus, parents are giving the maximum opportunity for their child to prosper in life and possibly exercising a higher degree of agency than compared to their lifetime (Moncrieffe, 2009).

Bottomore and Nisbet (1978) explain that early debates conceptualising the role of agency were positioned in a dichotomy with structure. On one hand, agency focuses on individuals' ability to act independently to exercise choice upon their ability to identify and reason to value over others (Van der Ploeg and Long, 1994). In this analysis of agency, the capacity of an individual to exercise choice is independent of undue constraints but exercised under an individual's morality in reasoning and their capacity for self-deliberation (Nadelhoffer et al., 2014). Therefore, the role of an individual is seen to be more vital and influential than the role of a system (Emirbayer and Mische, 1998). This position has implications and consequences for envisaging the forms of social ordering in the ways they emerge. If individuals are active and

free to exercise their free will from undue constraints, social ordering is presented as emergent and contingent upon individuals' acts of reflexivity (Pleasants, 2019). The social ordering by rules, norms and conventions constructed and maintained by individuals is considered to be fluid through their consciousness and behaviour (Van der Ploeg and Long, 1994; Pleasants, 2019). With this view, individuals as agents hold the capacity to continually construct and reconstruct their worlds through "contingent acts of freedom" (Carlsnaes 1992: 255; Deneulin, 2008). For development interventions, conceptualising individuals as agents capable of exercising agency is critical in relation to temporary labour migrants. This view asserts that temporary labour migrants are not disempowered passive participants but have the consciousness and capability to be involved in decision-making activities that affect their development and well-being.

In contrast, central theorists such as Durkheim and Marx emphasise the position of external forces directly conditioning human behaviour (Bottomore, 1981; Coulthard, 2012). In this view, individuals who can exercise agency are not doing so based on individual autonomy but based on feelings, thoughts and actions that are determined by the structures of society (Stones, 2007). These external forces, often referred to as social structures, play a significant role in shaping human behaviour (United Nations, 2020). Individuals are deeply embedded within these social structures and are consequently constrained or directed in their decision-making and actions (Stones, 2007; Schlosser, 2015).

The duality of structure and agency has become contested amongst social theorists attempting to move beyond determination toward reconciling these two distinct concepts (Giddens, 1986; Bourdieu, 1990; Baber, 1991; Coulthard, 2012). This conceptualisation holds agency as "reinforcing capacity of structures and the contingency and emergence of individuals" (Dwiartama and Rosin, 2014:1). Giddens (1986) finds a position of balance in recognising structures and agency as mutually constitutive. In a critique of determinist views over and understating this balance, structures as rules and resources are seen as the medium constraining and enabling human behaviour (Camfield and MacGregor, 2005). Power, in his view, is both held as a transformative capacity and of domination (Giddens, 1986; Gaventa, 2003). The capability of agents to transform a state of pre-existing affairs is dependent on the exercise of power, whereas domination exists in the unequal distributions and concentrations of power amongst social rules (Giddens 1986; Gaventa, 2003).

Bell and Payne (2009) note that people's agency varies between time and space with those most disempowered within restrictive environments exerting some level of individual consciousness to act (Robson et al., 2007). For Klocker (2007), agency is positioned on a continuum between thick and thin agency and is reflective of this relational view. Thin agency relates to people's everyday decisions and behaviours within extremely restrictive environments, distinguished by the narrow options available (Klocker, 2007). Alternatively, thick agency is described as the leeway to choose from a wide range of options. Once positioned on the continuum, an individual is not static but active in being thinned or thickened by the situated environment (Klocker, 2007; Robson, et al., 2007). Structures, contexts, and relationships form all aspects of the environment that thin and thicken an individual's agency by restricting or expanding the available choices (Klocker, 2007:85; Bell and Payne, 2009). In utilising thickening and thinning with regards to the exercise of agency, the terminology conveys a sense of multi-dimensionality recognising the layering or eroding of agency. This view holds that agency can be influenced by multiple factors, which can add up to greater impacts (Klocker, 2007).

2.3. Individuals' Agency in the Context of a Pandemic

Bennett (2021) states pandemics have a way of diverting attention toward social structures and their engagement with everyday life that were masked prior to their emergence. Beyond debilitating and being deadly, the emergence of a pandemic can result in widespread negative implications across the economic, social and political spheres (United Nations, 2020; Davies, 2013). These impacts are cross-societal and are felt across multiple continents, impinging on a high proportion of their populations (Doshi, 2011). The early claims that a pandemic is a "great equaliser" has been put forward due to its impact across all sectors and levels of society (Dennison, 2021; Ali et al., 2020; Abrams and Szeffler, 2020). However, to denote everyone as equally vulnerable and, in some cases, relatively better off in a pandemic is problematic in its conceptualisation (Hay, 2020). Pandemics, in their emergence, have historically exacerbated inequalities as those economically and socially more vulnerable are disproportionately impeded to cushion the brunt of the impacts (Tubadji et al., 2020; Dennison, 2021).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, government and institutions' responses have been largely one-sided in telling individuals and communities what they can and cannot do (Marston et al.,

2020). As public health measures aim to prevent and control the virus, the use of identifying positive cases (COVID-19 testing), informing close contacts (contact tracing), and isolation (self-quarantine) have been utilised to contain transmission in countries (Nussbaumer-Streit et al., 2020; Ayouni et al., 2021; Girum et al., 2020). These often-coercive measures limit individuals' movements, activities and social interactions within their environment, reducing their capacity to exercise agency (Kavanagh and Singh, 2020).

In restricting individuals under public health measures, people who have contracted the virus are required to take responsibility for themselves and are obliged to not endanger others through their behaviour (Chan and Reidpath, 2003). However, counter-intuitively those under public health restrictions must be capable of exercising a sufficient level of agency to adhere to those placed upon them (Chan and Reidpath, 2003). Agency is not equally distributed among individuals, where they are free to choose and act (Otto et al., 2020). Structures, contexts, and relationships that enable and constrain human behaviour can influence an individual's agency available to be exerted (Lister, 2004; Coulthard, 2012; United Nations, 2020). If COVID-19 public health measures and governments do not account for reducing the capacity to exercise agency among those infected, the risk of non-compliance may be heightened to the detriment of overall public health (Chan and Reidpath, 2003). For example, migrant workers who operate without the safety nets afforded to national residents may choose to conceal their positive tests and continue to work (Mukumbang, 2021; International Labour Organisation, 2019). This situation can arise due to the social stigma associated with infection and the potential loss of income from uncompensated self-quarantine (Mukumbang, 2021). Therefore, it is important to highlight agency and the difficulties of reconciling social responsibility and economic insecurity within a pandemic response (Chan and Reidpath, 2003).

2.4. Agency in the Context of Migration

Migration research in conceptualising migrant workers has mirrored the contestation between structure and agency throughout broader debates in development discourse. From objectified targets of development to an emphasis on the individual as a cultural subject, migrant workers have been viewed in a number of different ways (Silvey and Lawson, 1999). These social constructions have implications for perceiving migrants in their capability to exercise agency,

which will be examined in the first sub-section. This will be followed by a contextual exploration of migrants' agency in its application to the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.4.1 Social constructions of migrant workers and their agency

The prominence of modernisation perspectives resonates in contemporary situations placing migrants as labourers, as objects of economic development (Silvey and Lawson, 1999). In this view, migrants are rational and calculated individuals, taking advantage voluntarily of the disparities in states and sectors of the economy that are posited as temporary through their mobility (Massey et al., 1993; Todaro, 1969; Arango, 2000). The economic structures and forces in which migrant workers are located are deterministic in directing their behaviour of mobility (Massey et al., 1993; Lawson, 1998). However, while situated as rational actors, migrant workers are cast as indistinguishable objects in modernisation, invoking a broad brush over their intersectionalities (Chant, 1992). This depiction overlooks the beliefs, attitudes, and values held by individuals (Filomaiava-Doktor, 2009). The treatment of migrant workers as homogenous agents of modernisation is consistent with human capital and labour market approaches (Massey et al., 1993; King, 2012). As such, their contributions to migration have narrowly focused on the determinants of migration that include pull-push factors, net migration flows, and market conditions rather than the broader social structures in shaping the migration process (Bakewell, 2014; King, 2012; Silvey and Lawson, 1999). Therefore, this focus is reinforcing the identity of migrants as objects rather than interpretative subjects in development.

A critical cultural shift has prompted how migrant workers are viewed in development (Silvey and Lawson, 1999). The categorisation of migrant workers as individual rational actors driven by economic factors has been critiqued as monolithic and deterministic, limiting the conceptualisation of agency within approaches (Kochan, 2016). In contrast within contemporary discourse, migrant workers, seen as "interpretative subjects of their own mobility", have opened up the space for understanding and recognition of their agency (Silvey and Lawson, 1999:126). The view that migrants are active in interpreting how they shape, construct, and define their subjective migration experiences has been extensively examined (Kochan, 2016; Secor, 2003).

Such methods of ethnography and cultural observations have sought to uncover nuanced meanings and identities while emphasising the voice of migrants from their concerns (Silvey and Lawson, 1999). Gill et al. (2020), for example, employs ethnographic methods to explore the oral-history traditions of the Latin-American migrant workers in decoding their internalisation and self-reflexiveness of their migration experience. In addition, Lilomaiava-Doktor (2009) focuses on indigenous Samoan concepts analysing mobility as a culturally informed response the globalisation context that will be discussed in Chapter Three. These works aim to understand the movements of migrants through the lens of culturally specific contexts and indigenous epistemologies. However, care should be taken to avoid reinforcing the Western theorisations shaping migration as a dichotomy between the global and local (Lilomaiava-Doktor, 2009). The migration process does not exist in a vacuum, and while analysing local and indigenous contexts help understand people's movements, they are also situated within broader political, economic, and social structures (Lilomaiava-Doktor, 2009).

2.4.2. Locating migrant workers agency during the COVID-19 pandemic

The exercise of agency by individuals is not heterogeneous and exists across four different dimensions positioned at different ends (Coulthard, 2012; Sumner, 2010; Lister, 2004). In Lister's (2004) account of agency, everyday agency is considered to recognise the short-term exercise of agency in decision making by agents to improve their situation. Alternatively, strategic action focuses on long-term decision-making through organisation and planning (Lister, 2004). While positioned as two polar contrasts, the line between every day and strategic agency can often be blurred (Lister, 2015). This confusion occurs because little things can add up every day to influence wider levels of behaviour over time (Lister, 2004). In the other dimension of agency, personal agency is reflected as an individual's choice, with collective agency encompassing the ability to bring change by connecting people (United Nations, 2020; Bandura, 2001; Lister, 2004). These four dimensions are interrelated. (Lister, 2004). Personal agency and individual choices do not exist in a vacuum. Collective agency within socio-economic contexts can reinforce and transform existing structures in shaping individual choices (United Nations, 2020). Conversely, for an individual to participate in collective agency, there must exist an internal sense of purpose or belief to do so (Coulthard, 2012).

In examining these dimensions of agency during the COVID-19 pandemic, the literature focuses on public perceptions and experiences of migrant workers (Bhatt et al., 2020; Bauza et al., 2021). These exist across social demographics and cultural contexts, occurring at different stages during the pandemic (Rajan et al., 2021; Bauza et al., 2021; Takashima et al., 2020). Migrant workers face increased vulnerability from the pandemic due to their limited integration within society and their economic precariousness mentioned in Chapter One (Fassani and Mazza, 2020). However, migrant coping mechanisms in response to the pandemic are multi-layered and multi-phased (Yen et al., 2021). Rajan et al. (2021), in research on COVID-19 affected migrant households in India, demonstrates that collective budgeting decisions across multiple income sources were implemented in the face of economic insecurity. Rajan et al. (2021) also notes how these collective decisions filtered through to daily life and changed consumer behaviours, such as the transition from meat to plant-based diets. These examples of actions undertaken by migrants demonstrate the capacity of migrants to exercise agency in their decision-making to mitigate impacts of the pandemic context on their financial well-being (Dutta et al., 2020).

Steps to mitigate the economic impacts of the virus were additionally complemented by preventive health measures. The adherence to wearing masks, social distancing, and personal hygiene were well observed, with interviewed migrants expressing a desire to protect themselves and others from contracting the virus (Yen et al., 2021; Williams et al., 2020). This view demonstrates that while migrants acted in an individual capacity, their actions were not carried out in isolation, with a relational dimension attached to considering the impacts on the household and wider society (Cappellini et al., 2014). For example, migrants using collective-based strategies to engage with existing local migrant community networks facilitated a sense of belonging and emotional solidarity (Yen et al., 2021). Such community-based strategies are rooted in concepts of utilising social capital for consideration and mutual support (Dutta et al., 2020). For instance, a shared sense of precarity in the context of the pandemic was a consolidated source of engagement and belonging for Filipino migrant workers in Israel. During the initial phase of the pandemic, Filipino workers were advocates for each other, often mobilising campaigns for donations, resource sharing, and disseminating network activities (Sabar et al., 2022). These actions demonstrate the framework for community advocacy in exercising agency to collectively voice their experiences and support those in the community most in need.

Yen et al. (2021:1221) argue that migrants are further susceptible to the "coping with coping paradox" in navigating the pandemic. This coping paradox arises when migrants adapt, respond to, and interpret unfamiliar host-country institutions resulting in increased anxieties and uncertainties as they reflect upon and contrast their home country's values (Yen et al., 2021). For example, the contradictory advice regarding the benefits of mask usage by the United Kingdom government created a conundrum for migrants as they sought to disentangle streams of information from external sources (Boseley, 2020). These stories of mask wearers being stigmatised and physically assaulted became widespread news (Li, 2020; Liao et al., 2021). As a result, the heightened feelings of conflict between balancing government guidelines to becoming a targeted outcast were centralised in migrants' everyday decision making (Wang et al., 2021). As previously outlined in Chapter One, this context demonstrates migrant workers and the added challenges they endure in the pandemic that encompasses their social and economic vulnerability, as well as, navigating their conflicting cultural realms.

2.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter has defined and elaborated on agency as a complex development concept. This conceptualisation has implications for realising how individuals are capable of exercising agency to make decisions for themselves. In relation to the pandemic, individuals' agency was constrained by preventive health measures and social structures that have exacerbated inequalities within societies (Kavanaugh and Singh, 2020). Inequalities have disproportionately impacted migrant workers who are vulnerable and unable to rely on the safety nets afforded to national residents. The exacerbation of migrant workers' vulnerability, therefore, places responsibility on governments to offset the reduction of agency from their preventive measures to promote compliance for the betterment of public health (Chan and Reidpath, 2003). While migrant workers manage reductions to their agency from pandemic restrictions, they also navigate conflicting contexts that heighten tension and uncertainty in their decision making. These decisions are also affected by migration policies that will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter Three

Temporary Labour Migration and Development

3.1. Introduction

In this literature review, the focus is centred around the design and construction of temporary labour migration schemes (TLMS), with a particular interest in New Zealand's RSE scheme. This literature review will be covered in three sections within the chapter. The first section will introduce temporary labour migration as a form of mobility, outlining the arguments that justify its potential to promote development¹. This is followed by reviewing the types of temporary migration that have evolved over time. Next, an emphasis on the globalisation context and its impact on the proliferation of TLMS is examined, with a particular focus on the rights held by temporary labour migrants. The second section will then provide an overview of temporary labour migration, placing it within the Pacific context, specifically reviewing the contemporary temporary labour opportunities available to Pacific Island countries and the scale of their participation. This will include sub-sections that will discuss Australia and New Zealand's seasonal schemes, which aims to bring about mutual development benefits for migrant workers, seasonal employers, and participating Pacific Island countries (PICs).

3.2. Circular Labour Migration as a Development Tool

Circular labour migration as a form of mobility is characterised by multiple migratory cycles from the same person or group (Vadean and Piracha, 2009; Wickramasekara, 2011). This consists of repetitive movements by migrants “back and forth between two or more countries” (Castles and Ozkul, 2014:29). Endorsed in policy circles across international labour institutions to varying degrees, the facilitation of international migration has been seen as a tool to foster development mostly through the sending of remittances to home countries of the Global South (De Haas, 2007). With focus on management of international migration through bilateral

¹ The use of labour migration over labour mobilities, which is referenced throughout current migration literature was chosen based on the wide usage by the International Organization for Migration (2008:1), who defines labour migration as the “movement of persons from their home state to another state for the purpose of employment”.

arrangements and mechanisms that regulate migration flows, the implementation of migration policy can be seen as a mutually beneficial form of co-development (Datta, 2009). This framing of migration as a development tool is underpinned in the “triple-win” argument, which explains managed circular labour migration as providing development benefits to migrant workers, their origin and destination countries (Rahim et al., 2021; Wickramasekara, 2011).

Using a triple-win argument, authors, such as Castles and Ozkul (2014), and Wickramasekara (2013), explain that circular migrant workers, during their engagement, are firstly enabled to take advantage of the receiving country's economy, gaining privileged access to earn higher levels of financial capital. This access facilitates its workers to contribute to the national economy through the transfer of remittance flows and savings in supporting their families and local communities (Vertovec, 2007). Secondly, the benefits also extend to social and human capital. As migrant workers are able to experience a new environment, the development of new skills and knowledge are argued by advocates of temporary migration to be transferable to promote change when they return home (Castles and Ozkul, 2014; Wickramasekara, 2011; Skeldon, 2012).

The third win is concerned with the perspective of the destination country. With a reliable and returning workforce, employers can cover defined shortages in the industry. Filling gaps enables production targets to be fulfilled, with providing employers with certainty in their business decision making. Employers are therefore able to make long-term plans, facilitating industry growth and expansion (Rahim et al., 2021; Zimmerman, 2014).

In consideration of the mutual benefits, the triple-win solution is seen as intimately tied to promotion and legitimisation of circular labour mobility (Trifan, 2015). This advocacy of mutual development benefits has led to the proliferation of temporary migration flows, with their prominence becoming more relevant in the increasingly global context of migration. The rise of migratory flows has been accompanied by the expansion of types that further differentiate and facilitate temporary migration. These types of temporary labour migration and the context of globalisation will be explored further in this chapter.

3.2.1. Types of temporary labour migration

Temporary labour migration is an encompassing term used to describe migrating temporarily without becoming a permanent resident (Lenard, 2012; Wickramasekara, 2011). It includes low and highly skilled workers who feature under different categories in recognition of their heterogeneity across labour market participation (OECD, 2019). These consist of seasonal workers, cross-border migrants, intra-company transferees, and participants of managed temporary labour programs (OECD, 2019). For temporary labour migrants, the duration of their stay in a host country generally coincides with their employment tenure. This situation of temporary labour migration is often the case when host country employers agree to facilitate the hiring of migrant workers for a limited stay with a return expectation at the cessation of the employment contract (Martin, 2003; OECD, 2019). Thus, temporary migration is covering defined labour and skill shortages in an industry for a specified period (Wickramasekara, 2011).

The origins of contemporary labour migration can be traced back to the introduction of the European guestworker programs of the 1950s and 1960s (Castles, 1986). These guestworker programs were constructed as temporary labour programs with the intention that migrants would be able to rotate between their origin and host countries before ultimately returning home (Lenard and Straehle, 2010). However, as the interests of receiving countries and employers have promoted guestworker programs at their conceptions, implementation has generated many unintended adverse impacts (Baubock and Ruhs, 2021). While migrants had arrived with the intention to return home, the guestworker programs failed to recognise migration as a dynamic social process (Massey and Espana, 1987). As migrants had become more integrated into society during their guestworker contracts, the perceptions and influences from their new environment started to feature more prominently in their motivations and decision-making (Heckmann et al., 2009). The opportunity to start a new life abroad became increasingly attractive. This change in perception and circumstance led to the transition of a temporary stay by migrants into permanent residency (Castles, 1986; Castles, 2006).

Distinguishing between temporary and circular migration has remained ambiguous because of their interchangeability and synonymous usage (Wickramasekara, 2011; Geddes, 2015). Consisting of repetitive movements “back and forth between two or more countries”, circular labour migration as a form of mobility is characterised by multiple migratory cycles from the same person or group (Castles and Ozkul, 2014:29; Vadean and Piracha, 2009). Additionally, circular labour migration is renewable because once a migration cycle is completed, the

opportunity to re-enter the destination country can be facilitated again (Fargues, 2008). For circular migration, the inclusion of different contracts, types of mobility and different routes may be available for migrants. This context contrasts with temporary labour migration in that usually one temporary contract exists, after which migrants will return home upon fulfilment, as in the case of working holiday schemes (Vadean and Piracha, 2009; Geddes, 2015)

In exploring circular labour migration, the purpose of international mobility is often carried out for work (Triandafyllidou, 2010). This mobility is increasingly acknowledged as occurring within a single economic space (Newland, 2009). Beyond economic considerations, circulation between two or more countries expands to include influence from the social and cultural spheres (Vertovec, 2007). From connecting with family, engaging in philanthropic interests to seeking further educational opportunities, the reasons for circularity are dynamic and varied depending on the purpose of peoples' movement (Newland, 2009). As such, circular forms of mobility follow a pattern of entry and return in a potentially repetitive character. However, while the recognition of social and cultural features is acknowledged within circular labour migration, Triandafyllidou (2013) asserts that the predominance of an economic motivation through economic activity (not limited to employment) qualifies circular labour migration as such.

A form of migration that is both temporary and circular is seasonal migration. Seasonal work is contingent on seasonal cycles and work is carried out only during these specific year periods (Panda and Mishra, 2018; Martin, 2006). In many countries of the Global North, the facilitation of seasonal workers from the Global South has been encouraged through the growth in operations of TLMS (Wickramasekara, 2011). Seasonal schemes are a form of organised mobility, legally validated through regulation by bilateral frameworks and specifically institutional mechanisms (Wickramasekara, 2011). While all managed seasonal programs restrict the length of stay to coincide with seasonal labour demand, some countries have limited employment options tying migrant labour to specified industries and employers (Panda and Mishra, 2018; Bedford et al., 2017). This limitation allows host governments to channel seasonal migrant labour towards directly fulfilling recognised labour and skill shortages within an industry (Abella, 2006). The construction of a productive, reliable, and returning workforce pool is also facilitated as employers can selectively invite returnees for the following season (Connell, 2015).

In building upon the past perceptions of guestworker programs (Ruhs, 2021; Castles, 2006), the literature review on temporary forms of mobility is extended to include people's differentiation in purpose and motivation (Triandafyllidou, 2013). Circular forms of mobility are recognised to have a predominantly economic motivation and are influenced by the economic and social spheres. This is characterised by repetitive movements between entry and return that distinguishes it as a form of mobility.

3.2.2. Temporary labour migration in the context of globalisation

The process of globalisation is a crucial driver in promoting temporary forms of migration (Wickramasekara, 2002). Globalisation facilitates technological change and innovation, which has “drastically reduced the costs of air travel and communication over increasingly long distances” (Czaika and Haas, 2014:284). This change has profoundly affected the magnitude of migration and the shape of mobility. Firstly, technological innovation has reduced economic constraints that facilitate the accessibility of labour mobility (Czaika and Haas, 2014). For migrants, travel costs for entry and return make up a sizable proportion of costs required to participate in labour mobility. Some of these travel costs are required upfront that heightens the financial risk and reduces the accessibility to participate in labour mobility. By reducing upfront costs and allowing migrants to keep more of the money they earn, the option of labour mobility is presented as a more attractive prospect in a globalised world.

Technological innovation has also strengthened closer engagement with migrant support networks and transnational connections (Czaika and Haas, 2014). Innovation has facilitated the ease of use for transferring remittances and communication channels, allowing temporary migration back and forth to be a substantially more straightforward process (Siegel and Fransen, 2013). Also, globalisation and the increased dissemination of information flows have fundamentally shaped how migration is viewed (Zohry, 2005). Global awareness of migration and more global knowledge, through interconnectivity, has opened the door for migrants to explore opportunities (Ros et al., 2007). Combined, these globalised processes have shaped the capabilities and aspirations for migration on a global scale (De Haas, 2009).

Robertson and Scholte (2007) define globalisation as the growth in transactions across an increasingly interdependent world. This perspective is envisaged through the “integration of markets and nation-states”, facilitating the greater international movement of financial capital,

people, ideas, and technology between borders (Martens and Raza. 2010:1). In the proliferation and functioning of temporary migration programs, the acceptance of temporariness provides an optimum solution for balancing conflicts between the market and states (Rosewarne, 2010). This is argued as employers can use flexible and on-time labour they require without compromising a state's claims of national sovereignty and control of borders (Castles and Ozkul, 2014). In the operation of temporary labour programs, the regulatory frameworks that govern migration flows are argued to be mutually beneficial for the protection of temporary migrant workers and a state (Lenard and Straehle, 2010). This framing enables a state to flexibly circumscribe the labour rights and freedoms of temporary migrants of another state to ensure their arrival does not engender domestic social tensions (Dauvergne and Marsden, 2014a). This is also to ensure their connection with their country of origin is maintained and remittances continue to flow to the migrant-sending country. This form of temporary migration is encouraged through legal forms of migration mechanisms to facilitate temporary migrants' repeated return (Castles, 2008).

The restrictions of temporary labour programs place migrants in a subordinate position within the labour market by dictating their contract length and employment ties (Dauvergne and Marsden, 2014a). These constraints also extend to temporary migrants' political and social rights as the restrictions on voting and family reunifications ensure limited societal integration as discussed in Chapter One (Ciupijus, 2010; Hugo, 2009). Migrants being restricted, as Rosewarne (2010) argues, is based on a reference of migrants being better off in a subordinate position in the host country than compared to the conditions back home. In facilitating migrants' repeated return and enabling comparatively higher earnings to be remitted back home, global labour as a resource is argued by proponents of temporary migration to be efficiently and effectively deployed (Rosewarne, 2010). The labour market is crucial in structuring this argument as attractive within temporary labour programs (Rosewarne, 2010). By presenting the labour market as a determinant that ensures the "function of labour supply and demand", the deployment of labour is optimised to mutually benefit the economic objectives of both countries (Dauvergne and Marsden, 2014b:16). This perception is reinforced by employers, who must ensure that defined labour needs cannot be fulfilled within the local labour market (Dauvergne and Marsden, 2014a).

Proponents of temporary migration argue temporary migrants are able to upgrade their human capital through the development of skills and knowledge from their migration experience (Rahim et al., 2021; Wickramasekara, 2011). In the context of globalisation, the development

of skills and knowledge are more easily enabled to be transferred with the reduction of barriers and the increased accessibility of labour mobility (Dauvergne and Marsden, 2014a). This transfer is not limited to the workplace environment but incorporates migrants by facilitating change to their home country's social structures as agents through their broad participation across the social, cultural, and economic space as discussed in Chapter Two. While the argument that migrants develop skills and knowledge has resonated as a part of promoting temporary migration as a development tool, the value of skills and knowledge transferred by temporary migrants have become increasingly contested (Castles and Ozkul, 2014).

Castles and Ozkul (2014) argue that employers have no incentive to invest in the upskilling of temporary migrants in managed schemes because of the short-term temporal nature of their employment. However, even if skills are upgraded, they are tied to the industry-specific contexts where temporary migrants are employed (Bedford et al., 2009). As such, the global transfer of skills may not be congruent with the locally developed contexts and the needs of migrants and their communities (Fargues, 2008; Bedford et al., 2009; Skeldon, 2010). Therefore, in capitalising on utilising temporary migrants' newly acquired skills, origin countries must successfully facilitate the reintegration of returnees into the labour market (Rahim et al., 2021). This situation may not be possible in practice, however, as the small relative scale of scheme participants in conjunction with unconducive home conditions may limit the extent their human capital can contribute (Rahim et al., 2021; Castles and Ozkul, 2014; Castles and Delago Wise, 2008).

In recent times, the re-emergence and proliferation of TLMS has encouraged movement from Global South to the Global North (Rosewarne, 2019). The globalisation context is particularly relevant for individuals from Pacific nations who are more deeply connected to the global world. These connections have enabled Pacific people to take up a range of seasonal opportunities abroad, which are discussed in the next section.

3.3. Contemporary Labour Migration in the Pacific Context

In the past decade, the proliferation of special temporary employment privileges has provided opportunities to Pacific Island countries (PICs) (Gibson and Bailey, 2021). These aim to “build links and support employment and investment” across PICs in recognition of the potential that temporary labour migration brings to the region (Connell and Petrou, 2019:13). These

privileges are aligned with bilateral engagements that emphasise the regional growth and security of the Pacific region (Connell and Petrou, 2019). As such, temporary labour migration opportunities based on mutual cooperation have been facilitated by close regional ties (Winters, 2016). The countries of Australia and New Zealand in their strong links to the PICs are significantly the most popular destinations for Pacific temporary workers (Gibson and Bailey, 2021; Hill et al., 2018). An exploration of their respective temporary labour schemes regarding their policy and implementation will now be further explored.

In 2004, in response to seasonal employer pressures, the New Zealand government introduced ad hoc arrangements to facilitate seasonal work permits for the upcoming 2005/2006 financial season (Gibson and Bailey, 2021). These permits represented a revival of the range of temporary agricultural schemes that were discontinued in the 1980s (Ramasamy et al., 2008; Connell and Petrou, 2019). In total, approximately 2,000 workers, 80 from the Pacific, were admitted under this work permit (Gibson and Bailey 2021: 3). However, this permit was only viewed as a temporary measure, allowing time for multi-ministry engagement to develop a more comprehensive policy (Ramasamy et al., 2008).

Under temporary arrangements, the governments of PICs had urged New Zealand and Australian governments to promote unskilled and semi-skilled opportunities for their citizens (Gibson and McKenzie, 2014). This request was in response to New Zealand and Australia's respective migration policies, prioritising skilled pathways and at the same time limiting Pacific migration opportunities (Gibson and Bailey, 2021). Coinciding with this concern was a World Bank's (2006) report, which highlighted the growing pressures of the youth bulge on PICs to provide sufficient employment while also emphasising the gains of labour mobility (Gibson and McKenzie, 2014; Gibson and Bailey, 2021).

As mentioned in Chapter One, New Zealand's RSE scheme came into effect in April 2007 in a recent line of initiatives that promoted temporary labour migration to Pacific peoples (Gibson and McKenzie, 2014). Building on the temporary relief of seasonal work visas, its outcome incorporated a multi-ministry approach to comprehensively address unskilled labour shortages within the horticulture and viticulture industries (Curtain et al., 2018). Under the RSE, an initial cap of 5,000 workers from the Pacific involving Tonga, Vanuatu, Samoa, Fiji, Kiribati, and Tuvalu were granted entry (Gibson and McKenzie, 2014:5). This engagement represented a significant development for New Zealand's migration policy, as the RSE scheme extended to PICs that had no previous special privileged mobility agreements (Underhill-Sem and

Marsters, 2017). A further strengthening of New Zealand's relationship with states that New Zealand had previously assisted, such as Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu and Kiribati, also highlighted the regional integration and stability links of labour mobility (Underhill-Sem and Marsters, 2017). Section 3.3.2 will introduce this New Zealand RSE scheme further. First, however, section 3.3.1 will introduce labour mobilities schemes offered by Australia.

3.3.1 The Australian Seasonal Workers schemes

Following the RSE scheme, the introduction of Australia's Pacific Seasonal Worker Pilot Scheme (PSWPS) came into effect in August 2008, initially providing horticultural opportunities to workers from Tonga, Vanuatu, Kiribati and Papua New Guinea (Ball, 2010). Drawing heavily upon the pre-existing design of the RSE scheme, the similarities between the two are noticeable (Curtain et al., 2018). In both instances, employers are held responsible for managing the pastoral care of their workers, while also gaining government department approval to become registered employers (Winters, 2016; Curtain and Howes, 2020). However, in contrast to the RSE scheme, take-up was low over the four years of its operation (see Figure 3.1), as 1,623 workers entered under the pilot cap of 2,500 (Curtain et al., 2018:470). Upon evaluation of the PSWPS, Gibson and McKenzie (2011) note that the perceived risks and costs for participating employers were comparatively high due to the inflexible bureaucracy and the cheaper alternative of drawing on undocumented migration (Ball, 2010). Hay and Howes (2012) also noted the apparent lack of information and policy engagement in the conception of the PSWPS by employers, which contributed to their unawareness of the scheme.

In July 2012, the PSWPS permanently transitioned into the rebranded Seasonal Worker Program (SWP) (Hill et al., 2018). With its transition, the expansion of scope involving sectors and countries has allowed for more open participation from Pacific countries. This includes the induction of Nauru, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, and Timor-Leste into the program, with Fiji later participating in 2015. (Hill et al., 2018). Under the scheme, workers are employed in Australia for an extended period of up to nine months in a twelve-month period (Curtain and Howes, 2020; Lawton, 2019). Since 2015, the scope of seasonal migrant employment in Australia has gone beyond the initial horticultural sector and expanded into agricultural and tourism industries (Bedford et al., 2017). This expansion has coincided with the removal of the initial cap facilitating further possibilities and expansion for workers (Connell and Petrou, 2019).

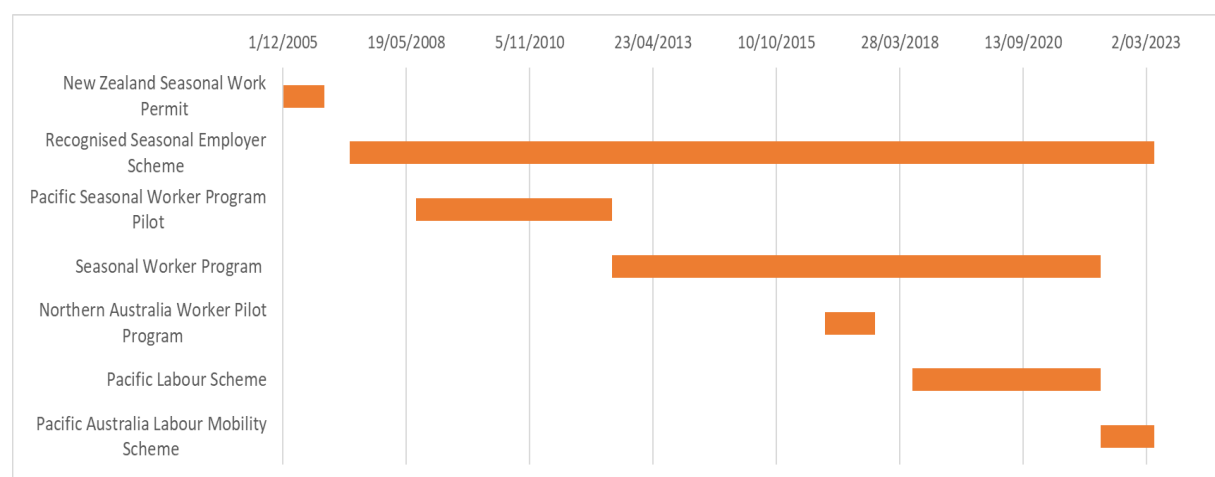
The Northern Australia Worker Pilot Program (NAWPP) commenced in October 2016 and ran concurrently with the SWP as an alternative temporary migration pathway for smaller Pacific nations (Hill et al., 2018). In contrast to the expansive SWP, the program is designed to improve the labour mobility of Pacific Microstates involving Kiribati, Tuvalu, and Nauru, which had the lowest migration rates due to their geographical barriers (Hill et al., 2018). The NAWPP is a substantive policy shift in Australian temporary migration permitting 250 non-seasonal placements over a two and (optional) third-year period in Northern Australia (Hill et al., 2018:2). These placements are facilitated under a Microstate Pilot Visa (MPV), which targets participation in the identified labour shortage sectors of tourism, hospitality, and healthcare work (Centre for Global Development, 2022). With the extension to predominately feminised work sectors, the implementation of the NAWPP is aligned with the goals of greater gender equality in the Australian development program (Hill et al., 2018). This action is aligned with the goal of strengthening Pacific women's opportunities in non-seasonal temporary migration (Hill et al., 2018).

In September 2017, the NAWPP was extended and formalised, creating the Pacific Labour Scheme (PLS). Similarly, to the RSE scheme and SWP, the PLS is an employer-sponsored scheme (Connell and Petrou, 2019). Upon the scheme's commencement in July 2018, the scheme still retained an emphasis on non-seasonal work opportunities along with Pacific microstate participation, which extended an intake to 2,000 workers (Hill et al., 2018:2). However, this was progressively extended later, with access to nine PICs and Timor-Leste under no cap (Connell and Petrou, 2019). While the scheme is open to any sector, the emphasis on matching PIC skillsets to non-seasonal growth sectors is designed to maximise labour mobility benefits (Connell and Petrou, 2019). This design is supported by “labour market testing of placements to identify genuine labour market shortages and ensure the prioritisation of Australian workers” (Hill et al., 2018:2). A Pacific Labour Facility (PLF) has also been set up to mediate recruitment between the Australian government and prospective employers of PLS and SWP in a supporting and promotional role (Hill et al., 2018).

In April 2022, the consolidation of the SWP and PLS was announced by the Australian government under a unified Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) visa (The Australian Government, 2022). While details are yet to be specified, the PALM visa offers a seasonal “(up to nine months) and longer-term (between one and four years)” pathway for the mobility of PICs (The Australian Government, 2022: para 6). Under the new visa, multiple entries are facilitated to allow workers to leave and return to Australia without a visa renewal (The

Australian Government, 2022). Figure 3.1, below, illustrates the timeline of temporary labour migration available to PICs since 2005.

Figure 3.1. Timeline of Temporary Labour Migration Opportunities Available to Pacific Island Countries (PICs), December 2005 to the Present.



Source: Adapted and Collated from The Centre for Global Development (2022), Hill et.al, (2018), The Australian Government (2022) and The New Zealand Government (2006).

Referencing Figure 3.1, the temporary labour opportunities in this chapter are summarised to demonstrate their expanded availability to Pacific workers. From 2007/2008 onwards, an extension of programs encompassing seasonal and non-seasonal work across different countries and varying timeframes has opened up a degree of flexibility and labour mobility possibilities for Pacific workers. While Australia's temporary labour programs have varied in order to target different industry needs, the recent consolidation of Australian temporary programs have been incorporated under the PALM umbrella. In contrast to Australian temporary mobility forms, the New Zealand RSE scheme has remained in constant operation, which will be detailed in the next section.

3.3.2 New Zealand's Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme

As mentioned, New Zealand's RSE scheme, since 2007 allows selected workers from eligible PICs to perform seasonal work in New Zealand for “up to seven months in an eleven-month period” (Bailey, 2009:41). The scheme was designed and implemented as an employer-led initiative to alleviate the critical labour supply shortfalls within the horticulture and viticulture industries (Bailey, 2019; Whatman et al., 2017). At the time, the shortfalls of labour supply had been identified as a constraint on local industry growth and profitability with wider ramifications over regional economic development (Nunns et al., 2020). The failure of the agricultural industry to export their products to the market on time, coupled with the usage of undocumented workers, had created pressures from overseas markets concerning socially sustainable production and compliance (Nunns et al., 2020).

A secondary objective of the RSE scheme is contributing to Pacific development through participation. (Nunns et al., 2020). It aligns with the 2018 Pacific Reset, which strives for mutually beneficial solutions across domestic and foreign policies (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2019; Nunns et al., 2020). The RSE scheme is an example of the policy as the arrangement of migrant workers from the Pacific is intended to mutually benefit New Zealand and participating Pacific nations (Nunns et al., 2020). The triple win argument unpins this rationale in that economic development gains are beneficial to both countries as part of seasonal arrangements. For New Zealand, the ability to fulfil industry shortages and to increase productivity is seen as important for expansion of the seasonal industry and growth (Gibson and McKenzie, 2010; Bedford, 2013). For participating Pacific countries, the flow of remittances and savings by Pacific workers to households and local communities contributes an important source of diversified income as framed within the cultural obligation context discussed in Chapter One. The contribution of remittances is also enhanced by the skills developed by migrants in the context of their work and outside environment that are argued to be transferable (Bailey and Kautoke-Holani, 2018). The commitment to the RSE scheme is also tied to regional integration, as the temporariness of the RSE scheme encourages circular migration and the formation of transnational identities (Ramasamy et al., 2008; Castles and Ozkul, 2014). Table 3.1 below presents the scale of RSE workers recruited from PICs.

In reference to Table 3.1, from the first three intakes of operation from 2007 to 2011, the RSE scheme had recruited at least 15,000 Pacific workers, of which nearly half were from Vanuatu (Bedford and Bedford, 2013:10). By 2013, the expansion of participation to Papua New

Guinea, Nauru and the Solomon Islands has opened a labour mobility channel to Melanesia, where no formal migration agreements other than educational opportunities to New Zealand had been established in the past (Underhill-Sem and Marsters, 2017). A consistent increase in the number of workers participating each year, seen in Table 3.1, is indicative of the popularity of the scheme. This has continued into later years with the incremental raising of the cap to accommodate employers and worker demand.

Table 3.1. Pacific RSE workers Recruited Between 2007/2008 and 2012/2013.

Pacific Country	Year ended June 30					
	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013
Melanesia						
Papua New Guinea	0	0	0	6	6	31
Solomon Islands	238	311	256	252	407	423
Vanuatu	1689	2342	2137	2352	2412	2829
Sub-total	1927	2653	2393	2610	2825	3283
% Vanuatu	47.5	44.0	45.9	43.2	43.0	45.7
% Melanesia	54.2	49.8	51.4	48.0	50.3	53.1
Micronesia						
Kiribati	69	38	48	149	142	138
% Micronesia	1.9	0.7	1.0	2.7	2.5	2.2
Polynesia						
Tonga	805	1355	1142	1411	1398	1573
Tuvalu	99	49	54	51	88	56
Samoa	647	1228	1021	1219	1162	1137
Sub- total	1551	2632	2217	2681	2648	2766
% Polynesia	43.6	49.4	47.6	49.3	47.2	44.7
Total Pacific Workers	3556	5323	4658	5440	5615	6187

Source: Bedford and Bedford (2013:10).

The RSE scheme involves a "complex web of relationships and mechanisms" in its implementation (Bailey, 2019:14). This was initiated by the signing of an Inter-Agency Understanding arrangement (IAU) between respective countries' agencies that formalises participation in the scheme (Winters, 2016; Fijian Government, 2014). While each IAU is different, the IAU provides a detailed description outlining each party's responsibilities, the obligation to fulfil defined responsibilities covers specific arrangements that concern RSE

processes across recruitment, pastoral care, and working conditions (Winters, 2016). The IAUs also highlight public agencies and their commitment to compliance and further monitoring to ensure rules of RSE policy are sustained over time (Ramasamy et al., 2008).

In contrast to other managed forms of temporary migration programs, the engagement and responsibility of employers are fundamental components of the RSE scheme (Bailey, 2019). Before approval and accreditation status, prospective employers need to supply evidence assuring that they are in good financial standing and compliant with labour law and practices (Bailey, 2019). While seen as burdensome red tape from an employers' standpoint, the screening process ensures that approved employers can implement and uphold the best practice policy required (Bailey, 2009; Winters, 2016; Hugo, 2009). In addition, to receive approved employer status, an employer must demonstrate from the outset and continually that the work undertaken by an RSE worker is one that no New Zealand citizen or resident wants to perform (Winters, 2016). This action is underpinned based on the "New Zealand First" principle within the labour market in that employers must have exhausted all reasonable steps towards hiring and training New Zealanders (Whatman et al., 2017; Nunns et al., 2020; Bailey, 2019).

To mitigate the risk of exploitation, the RSE scheme regulates workers' financial and labour terms in their participation (Winters, 2016). Employers must ensure workers are not charged recruitment fees; they are also guaranteed minimum remuneration at a market rate under New Zealand health and safety protections (Bailey, 2019). Employers are also further responsible for managing the behaviour of their workers (Winters, 2016). In cases where a worker's behaviour has been unsatisfactory, it is the employer who is faced with the costs of premature repatriation (Winters, 2016). The RSE scheme also aims to remedy the potential of absconding through incentivisation. Workers understand that if they voluntarily return under a clean record, they will be more likely to be invited back by employers for the following season (Curtain and Howes, 2020). A stigmatisation factor reinforces this perception. As the RSE recruitment process often draws workers from a worker pool derived from the local community each year, the decision to abscond goes beyond an individual choice and has future repercussions due to the community linkages within the recruitment process (Bailey, 2009; Bailey, 2018).

Pacific nations and their prioritised participation are a point of emphasis in the RSE that align with New Zealand's Pacific development objectives, promoting mutual benefits for both participating countries. While the benefits of the RSE scheme are advocated within government policy, there are widespread legal protections and responsibilities in and outside the work

environment that underpin its operation. This is to ensure the RSE scheme can provide best practice to minimise possible exploitation of migrant workers and prioritise New Zealanders in the labour market.

3.4. Chapter Summary

This chapter highlights globalisation and its role in facilitating the conditions for the proliferation of temporary labour migration. As such, the transfer of remittances and skills gained from temporary labour migration has risen to prominence in enabling economic and social development for people and countries involved. Pacific temporary migrants are well positioned to engage with the opportunities available to secure privileged access to a range of labour markets. These roles have expanded to sectors of non-seasonal work with the option of multi-year visa conditions in some cases. However, while expansion of roles and opportunities are available to PICs, the construction of TLMS still restricts the terms of entry for Pacific workers to their subordination in the labour market. In assessing the impact of these restrictions on Pacific workers and their lived experiences, the next chapter focuses on the research methodology utilised in this report.

Chapter Four

Research Methodology

4.1. Introduction

This chapter will explain the research design and methodology while outlining the methods underpinning my research report. In the context of the pandemic, a qualitative methodology was utilised to draw on insights and perspectives of ni-Vanuatu RSE workers and to explore their experiences. To address my research aim, two qualitative methods were applied: semi-structured interviews and a reflective journal consisting of my observations and reflections. The qualitative methodology will be reflected first, followed by explaining the methods, ethical considerations and limitations in the research process.

4.2. Qualitative Methodology

This research report employs a qualitative approach. A qualitative approach seeks to understand social phenomena in their natural setting (O’Leary, 2014; Lune and Berg, 2017). It asks how and why people make sense of their experiences within their social world (Coe, 2012; Pham, 2018). As Lune and Berg (2017:12) state, the social world is unpacked through exploring "meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of things". In this exploration, a qualitative approach does not aim to generalise but seeks to capture the complexity and nuances of individuals, because reality is complex (O’Leary, 2014). This approach values generating detailed descriptions and in-depth information that represent the production of knowledge and data collection (O’Leary, 2014).

The decision to employ a qualitative methodology aligns with my research topic, which seeks to generate detailed descriptions. This methodology provides a depth of understanding that suits exploring seasonal worker experiences. In a context where seasonal and RSE workers are routinely silenced from speaking out, the adoption of a qualitative methodology facilitates the recognition that RSE workers are not just numbers but are unique individual voices (Radio New Zealand, 2020; Otago Daily Times, 2008; Rosewarne, 2019). A qualitative methodology has the potential to enable workers to speak out by providing the platform to tell stories and experiences during the pandemic. The use of a qualitative approach is further relevant in this

context as it has the potential to bring about change, which aligns with my research focus on agency discussed in Chapter Two and giving voice to seasonal workers.

4.3. Methods

This study uses qualitative methods: semi-structured interviews and a reflective journal. These qualitative methods are chosen because they lend themselves to supporting my data collection through social inquiry. My semi-structured interviews were held with ni-Vanuatu RSE workers that experienced the COVID-19 pandemic working in New Zealand during August-September 2022. These interviews were supplemented by using a reflective journal that allowed me to comment upon my positionality and detail acute observations that added context to my findings. The adoption of the two methods in my research report will be explored in more detail below.

4.3.1. Semi-structured interviews

During my fieldwork, I spent two weeks conducting in-person semi-structured interviews in the form of individual or pair interviews. This involved six ni-Vanuatu RSE workers who had experienced the entire duration of the COVID-19 pandemic in New Zealand along with two ni-Vanuatu RSE scheme workers that acted as a support person or partner. There were difficulties in accessing workers with the limited number of RSE workers in New Zealand that had experienced COVID-19 restrictions. As such, my starting point for interviews was one ni-Vanuatu RSE worker referred to me by a local charitable trust in the development sector. As they had lived and worked in New Zealand during the pandemic, I found the worker's knowledge of other ni-Vanuatu RSE workers' circumstances extremely helpful in initiating introductions consistent with my aim. The use of snowball sampling from my starting point's connection was important as it allowed me to reach out to ni-Vanuatu worker social circles. This engagement facilitated a diverse range of genders and backgrounds among the ni-Vanuatu participants interviewed.

Before entering the field, I developed a semi-structured interview guide relating to my research question. This guide was designed with ni-Vanuatu participants as non-native English

speakers, which increased emphasis on conciseness and simplicity to avoid confusion in questioning. The interview questions were divided into key themes: work life, life outside work, support networks and conceptualisations of agency. In formulating the structure of my themes, I started with simple, easy-to-answer questions that eased the interviewee into the discussion. These were followed later by more open-ended and broader questions that encouraged the expression of unstructured and free responses to facilitate the discovery of emergent themes and new insights (O’Leary, 2014). In these semi-structured interviews, I remained responsive through probing and contextualising responses, which significantly enriched the depth of ni-Vanuatu worker experiences, a strategy suggested by Bartholomew et al. (2000). On the other hand, probing was also a careful balancing act to let the conversation flow. As O’Leary (2017:247) states, "your job is to facilitate an interviewee's ability to answer – much more than it is to ask questions." Therefore, in enabling participants to speak freely, the act of guiding rather than dominating conversation was important for me to hear participants’ experiences, while also keeping conversation relevant to my research aim.

I interviewed eight ni-Vanuatu participants that were current RSE workers. Six participants were in Te Puke, New Zealand, since the declaration of COVID-19 as a pandemic in March 2020 (United Nations, 2020). All those who remained in New Zealand during the pandemic were returnees of the RSE scheme. All the ni-Vanuatu participants interviewed have estimated age ranges of between 20 and 49, with three female RSE workers interviewed. Previous experience before the RSE scheme has also differed with some workers in traditional household roles to others in more formal employment. A code referencing gender has been prescribed to each participant interviewed, shown in Table 4.1 below, that will inform the data analysis in the next chapter.

Table 4.1. Descriptors of ni-Vanuatu Participants Interviewed

Date of Interview	Location of Interview	Participant Descriptor	Gender	Estimated Approximate Age	Arrival into New Zealand for the season	Returning Participant in RSE	Code
28/08/2022	Park	Ni-Vanuatu RSE Worker	Male	35-40	2020	Yes	M1
28/08/2022	Park	Ni-Vanuatu RSE Worker	Female	35-40	2020	Yes	F1
3/09/2022	Worker Accommodation	Ni-Vanuatu RSE Worker	Male	30-35	2019	Yes	M2
3/09/2022	Worker Accommodation	Ni-Vanuatu RSE Worker	Male	30-35	2022	No	M3
3/09/2022	Worker Accommodation	Ni-Vanuatu RSE Worker	Male	40-45	2019	Yes	M4
3/09/2022	Worker Accommodation	Ni-Vanuatu RSE Worker/ Partner of RSE worker	Female	25-30	2022	No	F2
3/09/2022	Worker Accommodation	Ni-Vanuatu RSE Worker	Male	25-30	2020	Yes	M5
8/09/2022	Worker Accommodation	Ni-Vanuatu RSE Worker	Female	30-35	2019	Yes	F3

Source: Collated data from semi-structured interviews

4.3.2. Observations and reflective journal writing

A researcher's personal biases, beliefs and subjectivities inevitably influence the research process, leading to the choice of methodology, methods and subsequent research outcomes (Mehra, 2002). In my research, I referred to my involvement in the research process by keeping a daily journal while conducting fieldwork. This reflective method allowed me in the field to reflect on my thoughts and feelings about the day in a compartmentalised manner. By actively engaging with my positionality, reflective journal writing assisted my self-reflexivity in practice. This reflection involved critiquing my positionality in ways that shape the character of knowledge in my research as was described by Stewart-Withers et al. (2014). Journal writing also extended to ongoing awareness of my positionality and how it interacted within the structures of power relationships and political contexts with participants (see also Stewart-Withers et al., 2014).

Reflected in my journal was the observation of seasonal worker schemes that came across to me of an exploitative nature. The writing process was an active way to uncover new emergent themes and curiosities. By writing about these observations, I was able to reflect on the context to workers' situations, which was brought up in subsequent worker interviews to probe and provide further meaning. I also included these observations as part of my data analysis that supplemented context brought out during interviews.

4.4. Ethical Considerations

Ethics are a critical component to ensure that participants' needs and considerations were addressed in the design of the research process (Banks and Scheyvens, 2014). This context is especially relevant to my research as seasonal migration programs are often criticised for their exploitative nature and imbalance of power relations (Strauss and McGrath, 2017; Morgan, 2022; Rosewarne, 2019). Before conducting fieldwork, I attended an in-house ethics review process. This process explored various ethical issues discussed with my research supervisor and another development studies staff member. Following this discussion, I submitted my ethics application to the Massey University Ethics Committee, and it was assessed as low-risk.

With the in-house ethics process, I engaged in ethical issues relevant to my research project. These encompassed considerations of accessing participants, informed consent, use and

handling of information, confidentiality and cross-cutting concerns involving gender and culture (Massey University In-House Ethics Form, 2022). Banks and Scheyyens (2014) note that while exploring ethical issues is essential, the research process also must ensure that participants feel safe, secure, and dignified in their participation in an approach that starts from the bottom up. This aspect referred to cultural themes and considerations highlighted in Massey University's Pacific Protocol and Guidelines (2017), which I incorporated such as respect for knowledge holders.

In terms of accessing potential participants, I focused on contacting ten different local organisations that engage with RSE workers at a community level. This reasoning is due to the disruptions and stress caused by the COVID-19 pandemic; local organisations are best situated to engage and introduce me to potential participants through their close relationships formed over this period. In my research, participants were sourced from a local charitable trust in the Bay of Plenty, whose chair acted as an intermediary to introduce me to potential participants. I chose this method over contacting RSE employers directly because of the concerns that exploitation by some RSE employers was occurring within the power of their relationships with workers (Morgan, 2022). This context informed my decision to forgo utilising personal details and use coded pseudonyms to refer to interview participants.

4.5. Limitations

Culturally, I do not speak Bislama or have a cultural background in connection with my participants. Therefore, I would be perceived as an outsider. Participants might feel that I would not be able to relate to their situation and this could have affected my engagement. Furthermore, in not having a cultural background, I may have missed opportunities to delve deeper through follow up questions and to understand the context of their answers. In order to mitigate this from happening, I have taken steps with to familiarise and understand the social context of Vanuatu by reading previous research conducted with ni-Vanuatu RSE workers such as Bailey (2009) and Cameron (2011). The principles included in Massey's Pacific Research Guidelines and Protocols (2017) were also helpful towards gaining insight into identifying and incorporating cultural considerations into my research design.

The scope of this research report and the qualitative approach utilised has focused on interviewing a small sample size of eight ni-Vanuatu RSE participants. The interviews held

and participant selection have been confined to Te Puke, New Zealand. As such, the rich data collected in this research may not be representative of other RSE participants' experiences.

4.6. Conclusion

This chapter utilised a qualitative approach to give voice to eight ni-Vanuatu RSE workers who were able to discuss, in semi-structured interviews, their lived experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic in rich detail. This method was supplemented by personal observations and reflections to add to the context in answering my research questions. As this research focuses on ni-Vanuatu RSE participants and their agency, harnessing participants' involvement is important in the agency process where they can speak about the impacts of the pandemic on their behalf. The next chapter will analyse the RSE scheme, and the impacts on ni-Vanuatu participants resulting from the pandemic.

Chapter Five

Research Analysis

5.1. Introduction

This research seeks to explore the agency and impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on RSE workers during their work experience in New Zealand. In this chapter, data analysis collected as part of my fieldwork will include eight semi-structured interviews, with five men and three women accompanied by observations and reflections kept in my journal during the fieldwork process. The data analysis in this chapter will explore three key themes related to my research questions: These are support networks, decision-making and responsibility of RSE workers, and coping with uncertainty in times of COVID-19 by RSE workers.

5.2. Support Networks and the Experiences of ni-Vanuatu Workers

Support networks in the RSE scheme play a crucial role in facilitating emotional and physical well-being for ni-Vanuatu workers. At the beginning of the pandemic, ni-Vanuatu workers and their engagement with support networks expanded. While traditional support systems of employers, pastoral care and family have contributed to support workers generally, the pandemic has brought about a particular set of challenges that has increased social and economic hardships for workers. This situation has placed some reliance on local community organisations and other RSE workers. The following section will present the findings of workers and how they have experienced support networks within the RSE scheme.

5.2.1. Employer support and help from the local community

At the start of the pandemic, the provision of food vouchers and clothing to support workers' physical well-being was commonly noted by ni-Vanuatu workers (M1, F1, M2, M4, F3). These items were provided to workers from the local community and charitable organisations connected to the Baptist church and the New Zealand Red Cross. Employers also contributed by initially giving "food vouchers and a bonus" payment to help workers with shopping needs

(M1, F1). This provision was in addition to a hold on accommodation payments until workers could restart their employment (F1). Workers at this time were still responsible for paying their essential living costs to sustain themselves and the recurring financial costs to support their families without work.

With the pandemic surging, all ni-Vanuatu participants who had experienced lockdown were moved to a smaller accommodation site closer to town. Employers and pastoral care personnel decided to reduce capacity and create space from four to three people per room (F1). As a result of this move, the new accommodation site hosted only ni-Vanuatu workers. One female worker noted the comparison in the living situation before with the diverse mix of backpackers, working holiday and RSE workers. She reflected that “we are different and there are many” (F1). The shift to smaller-sized accommodation among only ni-Vanuatu workers was considered important towards building a community that featured their distinct social and cultural identity. This living arrangement contrasted with their past accommodation that had consisted of a range of nationalities and a large number of residents that merged ni-Vanuatu with other seasonal workers. While the shift placed ni-Vanuatu workers together, an unanticipated consequence meant that ni-Vanuatu workers missed out on receiving the benefits from the efforts of community organisations. This predicament was understood by one worker, commenting that “they go to [previous accommodation name] because there are not many of us here” (F1). The context of local organisations trying to maximise their outreach of support is a response to the limited available resources of local organisations, but also the vulnerable position of seasonal workers that comes from being able to access support.

5.2.2. Support from other ni-Vanuatu and RSE workers

In staying together as a collective, ni-Vanuatu participants viewed the situation as positive (M1, F1, M4, F3). Ni-Vanuatu workers often filled the gap left by the local community organisations in providing food and clothing for others in the accommodation (M1, M2, M4). A particular emphasis on those unable to start work was supported by those working in sectors of seasonal work that had restarted operations (M1, F1, F3). In one instance, a worker who was out of work for two months was appreciative of the support stating: “Our brothers... they work in the orchard, and they support us because we live together and they see us not working, they provide

us with food" (F1). This example recognises the importance of social relationships and the collective culture of ni-Vanuatu participants. It also demonstrates that in times of hardship with a lack of support, other ni-Vanuatu workers have stepped up to bridge the gap and provide support to those most vulnerable.

Ni-Vanuatu workers also engaged with other support networks during their pandemic experience. The Vanuatu High Commission in New Zealand made an early appearance at the onset pandemic at the workers' accommodation to share information and update them about the situation surrounding repatriation. However, this visit was a one-off, and there was limited follow-up from workers who relied on asking their employers and team leaders to pass on information regarding their repatriation status (M1, F1).

As a result of the pandemic, ni-Vanuatu workers were limited to their accommodations and workplace. This situation facilitated a living dynamic where ni-Vanuatu relied on each other outside of work in their confined environment. The implementation of rules stating no visitations of outsiders and gatherings also has exacerbated the restrictions of contact with other RSE workers (M1, F3). This resulted in interaction with other RSE workers primarily restricted to the workplace. As such, the support by other RSE workers was facilitated around the guidance of workplace pandemic protocols and lifting morale (M2). However, these contributions by other RSE workers should be considered in the broader picture as ni-Vanuatu workers demonstrated a capacity for learning through experience that built confidence and familiarity in their management of the pandemic (M1, F1, F2).

5.2.3. Family support networks

In times of uncertainty during the pandemic, ni-Vanuatu workers' families were a source of contact to provide support and encouragement. While workers found being away from their homes and families "really hard" (M1) and "sometimes lonely" (F3), workers were able to stay in contact back home in Vanuatu through social networking applications. This feeling was especially relevant during the lockdown when workers were socially isolated from other workers. When asked about communication methods, using cell phones to communicate with family was considered a straightforward and hassle-free process. Workers were relatively

nonchalant in describing the ease of access in communicating as they would “just use the phone to call” (M5) and use the accommodation’s “free Wi-Fi to talk to friends and parents” (F2). This context contrasted the prepaid credit system in Vanuatu, which relied on purchasing data in person and “keeping track of your balance” (F2).

While workers could keep in contact with their families, their engagement provided a sense of emotional reassurance for both sides. Workers were able to discuss their current situation with COVID-19 with their families. These discussions for some participants revolved around "not being afraid of COVID-19 because of the experience", referring to the familiarity with safety protocols implemented in the scheme (M1). On the other hand, families were able to inform workers regarding the current COVID-19 situation in Vanuatu, which had "stopped businesses" (F2) and resulted in "some job losses in the family" (M5). In their discussions, workers were able to reflect and empathise with the perceived hardships back home, which for some, reaffirmed their decision to prolong their stay and work in New Zealand (M1, F3). This feeling aligned with the thoughts of one worker who stated, "our family doesn't have money, so that's why we decided to stay here for two years to support them" (F1). This context of obligation to family outlines the importance of the scheme to provide financial support in wake of hardships faced back home.

In deciding to stay to continue working in the RSE scheme, workers faced challenges from being away from their families. The disconnection and social fractures between families and workers became more noticeable as time and distance away were compounded by the isolation of the pandemic. Feelings of withdrawal in "not wanting to talk to them" (F3) and to "just keep quiet" (M2) have demonstrated ways workers grew fatigued in communicating with their families as the pandemic lingered. As one worker reflected on the situation of other workers:

With the pandemic, we have good and bad things through COVID-19, some of us have the chance to stay longer and earn more money to support the needs of our family back home. Some bad things happen, we stay longer and even some of our friends lose family. Some of the family dies, even divorce took place, some of the wives run away back home because we stay too long (M1).

The reference to "we stay too long" (M1) is important as it recognises the weight of social costs and the regret that stemmed from workers staying past the point they had envisioned. In staying

for additional seasonal work, the nature of economic benefits against the social costs mentioned became more apparent for workers as they extended their time in New Zealand. While participants initially saw the opportunity to continue employment as a positive to support their families, their predicament had become more pessimistic as the pandemic continued.

For most ni-Vanuatu participants, the observance of Christianity practices that engaged family to connect with their faith was integral to maintaining their culture and belief systems. During their conversations with their family, workers turned to their religion to find solace in uncertain times during the pandemic (M1, F1, F3). While participants usually attended service at the local Baptist church near their accommodation, the lockdown and restrictions on gatherings meant the church could not conduct religious observance in person. In the absence of religious observance, communication with family provided support for both participants and their families to stay connected with their faith. This was demonstrated by one worker mentioning his family's "encouragement to continue praying" (M1), whereas another one reminded her family to "just pray for me" (F3). Through prayer, workers could link their faith towards finding strength and resolve in their current predicament.

5.3. Responsibilities of ni-Vanuatu Workers in the RSE Scheme

For the ni-Vanuatu men and women involved in the RSE scheme, the gap between expectations regarding life skills and actual personal management required to adapt to New Zealand culture and society represented a significant challenge. Employers, pastoral care workers, peers, and community organisations have helped to facilitate workers' integration into society and have provided ongoing support for their well-being. Yet, participants in the RSE scheme have faced a responsibility to manage on their own in a new environment away from home support networks. In the RSE scheme, this additional responsibility extends to themes of managing their time, finances and personal well-being. Workers must meet these expectations to maximise their earnings while demonstrating their value to their employer in hopes of being invited to return, as this will continue the financial flows in support of their families.

In New Zealand, ni-Vanuatu workers have performed various jobs during their seasonal work. In the interviews, all workers described a range of jobs in the workplace that included

packaging, grading, strapping the pallets, pruning and cleaning. These jobs were often monotonous and physical, with the potential for prolonged exposure to the conditions. Often workers would be assigned to one job with them performing another at different stages of the year. This timing correlates with the employer's needs, with one worker stating, "wherever they choose me to go inside or outside, I go" (M3). When asked about this lack of choice, participants valued familiarity in their work and were content with the job assigned, relating it to supporting the needs of their families. However, when asked about any concerns relating to their job, workers were reluctant to criticise their employers reflecting the power imbalance, instead reverting to dissatisfaction surrounding external factors such as the weather that limited their potential ability to earn and work (M1, F3).

5.3.1. Time management for ni-Vanuatu workers

Ni-Vanuatu workers identified responsibility relating to time as a skill developed during their stay in New Zealand. As workers often have one day off a week, time outside work is highly valued, with workers deciding to rest, sleep, do laundry and shop for groceries. This expectation of managing responsibilities and being considerate of others is embedded in the scheme through communal living. As workers have no cleaning service and a limited kitchen facility, an emphasis on "cleaning your own mess" (F1) and being able to "cook for yourself" (M3) was identified by both female and male workers as essential to manage for living in New Zealand (Observation 2/09). This context was particularly a learning process for male ni-Vanuatu workers who reflected on their change in responsibilities that depended on being done by women of their households at home (M3, M5, M4).

Socialising with friends outside of the work environment was essential to ni-Vanuatu workers' fostering of new connections and friendships. During my fieldwork in the small township of Te Puke after peak season, seasonal workers were still highly noticeable, often congregating outside on the street in groups after work (Observation, 2/09). The emphasis on their contribution to the local economy was recognised as small grocery shop fronts catered towards their patronage through the advertisement of local foods, remittance services and social spaces on their premises (Observation, 2/09). These shops appeared to be very popular with seasonal workers as they would pull up in a branded work van and be in and out in the space of minutes with goods in hand (Observation, 2/09). In my observation outside of these shops, vans would

often temporarily stop in the road lane and wait for workers to return, demonstrating the swift nature of their shopping visits. When asked about the apparent popularity of these shops over chain supermarkets, some participants commented on their unfamiliarity with Western food, and the local foods such as cassava, taro and kava these shops offered (M1, M2, M5).

In interviewing ni-Vanuatu workers, attitudes towards time management were related to the focus on their job. However, when asked about working on their day off, workers declined to accept, recognising the opportunity from their time off to “take care” (F3) and “needing to have rest” (F1). Two male workers attributed this decision to “long hours like we do” (M3), which is a “hard-working job” (M2) given the work performed in New Zealand. Workers also mentioned comparisons to the context of Vanuatu in relation to the changing views on time management. The process of learning to be “always on time” (M5) and knowing “what day it is and how many hours there are” (M3) was crucial to adapting to a changing work schedule. This developing consciousness of time within decision-making was reflected upon by one participant stating:

You can go somewhere and enjoy but you know you have to think about the next day of work, so it’s not like the islands where you have the freedom to go here and here and stay until morning (M1).

The comparison of the islands and New Zealand in this worker’s reflection is representative of the ambiguity on whether free time is just that. While workers manage and make choices regarding their time outside of work, these decisions are shaped by external obligations and commitments to the RSE scheme and their families. The reference to freedom is important as workers are often constrained in their movements that focus on their availability for work. Therefore, the perception of free time and the time spent outside work meeting these expectations is held to be distinguishable.

5.3.2. Dealing with earnings and sending remittances

With ni-Vanuatu workers learning to manage their time, an additional challenge was managing their earnings in New Zealand. For all of the workers interviewed, the primary motivations for their RSE scheme participation were linked financially to supporting their families back home.

Workers would often send remittances on Wednesday's payday to ensure recipients would receive that money as early as possible (M1, Observation 28/09 and 5/10). In mentioning the nature of their remittances, workers concentrated on supporting their families. The payment of school fees, loans and transportation costs were commonly stated. When asked about their proudest achievements of the RSE scheme, workers' answers were aligned with remittances and focused on their children's continued participation in education rather than material items purchased (M1, M2, F3). Remittances also were extended into the community as church contributions reflected the importance of religion and collective culture for ni-Vanuatu workers (M1, M2, M5).

Participating in the RSE scheme, participants felt they were in a better position to earn more income than the alternatives available locally in Vanuatu. Statements such as "here you can make more money in a week than working in Vanuatu in a month" (M2) and "in the RSE scheme, I earn a lot of money" (F1) reflects the relative earning power the scheme has over workers. When discussing the background circumstances of their entrance into the scheme, most workers had been unemployed or engaged in informal work. For most workers, money earned from the scheme brought about a standard of comfortability in New Zealand that was not present in Vanuatu. Female and male workers expressed their time in New Zealand compared to the conditions back home, stating the "good living" (M2) and "life being really easy" (F2) standards attained in New Zealand. This view, however, was somewhat offset by the cost of living in New Zealand, with one worker noting the relatively higher living costs and their ability to "live off the land" back home that highlighted their ways of self-sufficiency and resilience to the cost of living (M5).

From earning a higher income in New Zealand, a sense of financial independence was developed by ni-Vanuatu workers. As participation in the scheme continued, the feeling of having money was a liberating force for workers that opened up opportunities tied to spending possibilities. The ability to have "more freedom to do things" (M1) and "if you have money, you can do anything" (M3) were interview responses that acknowledged male participants' relationships and the possibilities that came with money. While some participants had designated immediate family members to manage their money and keep track of expenses needed back home, others found it difficult to control spending habits in a new environment (F2, M4, F3). In reflection on this context, one worker stated, "In New Zealand, there are many things here, good jobs, nice buildings, big shops... here we can earn more money to go to the

shops and buy things” (M5). This temptation to enjoy the excesses of a good life in a new environment presented a challenge to participants, which conflicted with their primary goal of saving to financially support their families. This was made more evident that the uncertainty of the pandemic was affecting participants’ job security and potential to earn income.

5.4. Ni-Vanuatu Workers Coping with the Uncertainties of the COVID-19 pandemic

Ni-Vanuatu workers' decision-making in the face of uncertainties reflected the enormous impact the COVID-19 pandemic had on their lives. While the choice to return to their home country had been offered by employers throughout the pandemic, all six that were in New Zealand at the pandemic declaration decided to extend their stay in New Zealand until the end of the seasonal work schedule in September/October 2022. As workers contemplated the choice to return, the majority of those who stayed in New Zealand mentioned there was no other choice or obligation to their families to stay. One man explained his decision to stay stating: "we don't have a choice because when we go back, there is nothing" (M1). One of the women echoed this sentiment, saying, "I decided to stay to have a job because, in my country, I don't have a job" (F1). Although workers had a choice in continuing to stay, the lack of alternative income options meant they felt obliged to continue their work to support their families. These reflections recognise the financial pressure to support the family as the sole breadwinner and the comparative context of dire employment prospects for returning home.

5.4.1. Recognising the pandemic back home

In discussing their decision-making, the experiences of family members were able to inform RSE workers of the pandemic, detailing the challenging economic climate in Vanuatu. The emphasis on the pandemic's impact and the tourism industry is recognised to be closely connected to the employment prospects in Vanuatu. This was reflected by one participant stating: “Before in Vanuatu when there is no pandemic; there are a lot of tourists that come, so there is a lot of money; otherwise, with the pandemic, there is no money” (M3). The connection between Vanuatu’s economic dependence on the tourism industry is essential in the context of workers, as the drying up of tourist income streams has brought about acute financial hardships

in the country. Workers' awareness of the pandemic and its impacts at home demonstrates a situational awareness of external factors that contribute to their decision-making in New Zealand.

Vanuatu's reliance on tourism to sustain its economy also extended to ni-Vanuatu workers and their financial dependence on the RSE scheme. Some of the participants had taken out loans before the pandemic started. These loans were used to support their small businesses or buy productive assets. This expenditure was based on the assumption they would be able to pay back after they had returned to the RSE scheme as had occurred in previous years. In addition, expenses such as school fees and bus fares supported by worker remittances were considered as continued expenditures in the Vanuatu context of the pandemic. One participant reflected on their financial predicament stating: "When we go back, there is nothing; it will affect our loans because some of us have businesses. We have loans to pay so we have no choice but to stay and work" (M1). The decision to stay in New Zealand and continue to work by ni-Vanuatu workers out of financial obligation rather than choice reflects the economic weight of the RSE scheme and the dependence of workers who rely on their participation to sustain their livelihoods. The pandemic has exacerbated this dependence as workers' opportunities outside the RSE scheme remain limited. Uncertainty also exists with workers potentially unable to return with border closures in place at the time of decision-making.

5.4.2. Following rules and guidelines in the workplace

In the workplace, employers had implemented measures to prevent and reduce the spread of COVID-19 in line with guidance from the Ministry of Health. These directives were carried out by team leaders that communicated information to workers. Of the workers interviewed, many shared the same examples of their workplace experience. The compulsory indoor use of face masks, application of hand sanitiser, and the designation of two metres of social distance in the workplace were commonly reiterated. In referencing measures, the use of "we always wear" (M1) and "we have to follow" (F1) by workers reflected language that indicated enforcement and compliance within the workplace. This was well understood by workers who linked their compliance to their safety and well-being, stating, "we all use masks, so that is why we stay safe" (M3) and "it is good we can protect ourselves" (F3).

For ni-Vanuatu workers, the initial implementation of COVID-19 workplace protocols was a challenge and a learning process to overcome. Culturally, ni-Vanuatu workers felt it was difficult to adapt to the restrictions explaining their singing, talking and laughing together to communicate and maintain social relationships (M1, F3). As one participant stated, "we have a culture, you know, to shake hands, talking and laughing and those things with COVID it was really hard for us.... but we learn more and more not to talk and wear masks" (M1). In this context, the enforcement of wearing masks and social distancing provided a barrier that limited interaction and communication among each other. The difficulties of not recognising facial expressions and communicating at a distance created problems in understanding that required constant reconfirmation (M1, F3). However, as workers experienced the pandemic, the adaptation to workplace expectations and protocols became routine for workers that provided confidence in their compliance.

5.4.3. Following rules and guidelines outside of work

The COVID-19 pandemic placed unfamiliar expectations outside of work which largely had been the responsibility of workers to manage. Many rules were enforced by employers and pastoral care outside of work to ensure that workers limited the potential to contract the virus. First, workers were confined to their accommodation flats outside of work with rules that allowed no visitors or seeing friends (M1, F1, F3, M2, M5). While this was enforced, workers were already limited in mobility due to the distance of accommodation to work and town, resulting in the dependence on vans to provide transportation (Observation, 2/09). The vans were driven by a team leader who lived with workers in their accommodation and could make note of workers' movements with the use of transportation (M2, Observation, 3/09). For exceptions to travel, such as getting groceries, workers would have to record their travel details in an open book at the accommodation to ensure pastoral care workers could implement contact tracing (M1). If a positive case appeared in the workers' accommodation, affected workers would use a designated accommodation flat to isolate (M1, M2). Household contacts would stay isolated in their respective flats and undergo daily testing to ensure they did not contract the virus (M1).

For some ni-Vanuatu workers, following the rules communicated to them was a way of managing themselves in response to the uncertainties of the pandemic context. As two workers stated, "we are in a different country, so we just keep quiet and stay at home," (M2) and "we don't experience a big country like New Zealand, so we just follow the rules" (F2) represented the apprehension to deviate from expectations set out. This aversion to uncertainty and causing trouble resulted in workers reverting to existing routines to familiarise themselves with an ever-changing environment. This behaviour was practised outside of work, with workers taking ownership of cooking for themselves and buying groceries in person rather than relying on others. Some workers also harnessed the use of personal rice cookers, washing machines and other electrical appliances that helped manage their responsibilities without assistance during the pandemic (M2, F1, F2, F3).

5.5. Chapter Summary

Participants' engagement with support networks and local organisations has been a crucial contributor towards supporting their economic and emotional well-being in New Zealand. However, as the pandemic has lingered, these relationships between family and local organisations have become strained and, in some cases, non-existent for participants. This situation has placed further responsibility on participants to cope with the pandemic. Participants face diverse expectations from their employers and family that they must navigate in and outside of work. The pressure to be a productive and reliable worker in the eyes of their employer is accompanied by the breadwinner's role in supporting their families. The implementation of pandemic protocols has been particularly challenging for ni-Vanuatu as the enforcement of social distancing and mask-wearing has conflicted with their ways of communication and culture. This environment of uncertainty has pressured participants to find ways to learn and adapt to the expectations placed upon them.

Chapter Six

Discussion and Conclusion

6.1. Introduction

New Zealand's RSE scheme is a managed temporary scheme that promotes seasonal migration opportunities for Pacific and Melanesian countries. Ni-Vanuatu participants in their ongoing engagement make up the largest cohort cementing their identity and culture in communities and the workplace (Bedford and Bedford, 2013). However, their presence has not been reflected in the pandemic, with the lack of engagement to promote the voice of seasonal workers to speak on behalf of their own experiences. As such, this research has utilised a qualitative methodology to listen, observe and analyse the lived experiences of ni-Vanuatu RSE scheme participants during the COVID-19 pandemic. In seeking to engage participants, the research process focused on gaining insights through interviews and reflexivity as discussed in Chapter Four to facilitate the voice of participants towards providing a better understanding of their reality as seasonal workers in New Zealand.

This chapter sets out to critically answer how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected the ability among RSE workers to make choices. This chapter has been divided into two sections. The first section of this chapter will relate to research question one and discuss the impacts of COVID-19-related restrictions and disruptions on ni-Vanuatu RSE workers. This discussion will draw upon qualitative findings from interviews and observations analysed in the fieldwork process. These findings will be related to the existing literature to gain a holistic understanding of the RSE scheme and how changes that are affecting participants had resulted from the pandemic.

The second section will discuss research question two, which explores whether the RSE scheme has enabled the agency of ni-Vanuatu workers. This question is addressed in subsections, with each theme relating to what was identified in the literature as an essential component in enabling agency for people. In bringing together the discussion regarding participants' experiences of agency, the conceptual frameworks of Lister (2004) and Klocker (2007) are utilised. These frameworks help to understand the different ways and forms of agency in the RSE scheme. The framework in its application will detail participants' actions, feelings and behaviours in the RSE scheme and link these to compartmentalised

conceptualisations of agency. Finally, the chapter will present a conclusion encompassing the emerging key results and explaining the contributions of this research report in the broader context of future research possibilities.

6.2. Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on ni-Vanuatu RSE Workers

The pandemic has been recognised in the findings to have widespread implications concerning the position and well-being of ni-Vanuatu RSE workers. This section will highlight the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic through the experiences of participants and discuss these in light of the existing literature. There are two subsections that were selected, 6.2.1 concerns the pandemic's implications for ni-Vanuatu social relationships. In 6.2.2, the pandemic and ni-Vanuatu culture in the RSE scheme will be discussed.

6.2.1. The pandemic and its impact on ni-Vanuatu social relationships

The pandemic has increased the engagement of RSE workers with local organisations and support networks. This engagement has helped support workers to alleviate financial pressures through the provision of goods to offset the impact of the pandemic through the lockdowns and associated border closures. As Tubadji et al. (2020) and Dennison (2021) discuss, pandemics have historically exacerbated existing inequalities as those in more economically and socially vulnerable positions are disproportionately impeded to cushion the impacts of the pandemic. This context is relevant to seasonal workers, as Dauvergne and Marsden (2014a) explain, which is due to their subordinate position in the labour market resulting from their employment terms restricted to specific industries and employers. In the context of the RSE scheme, this places participants in a vulnerable position in coping with the pandemic, with Curtain and Howes (2020) acknowledging employers' power to make decisions for participants without their participation.

Unable to legally change their scope of work, or employer, to adapt to their work situation during the initial lockdown period, participants demonstrated across the findings to rely on outside support from local organisations, employers and other RSE participants. The nature of assistance in food provisions, clothing and one-off payments reflects the intention to enable

participants to sustain themselves rather than facilitate the environment that enabled sending remittance. In this instance, the introduction of the pandemic has conflicted with labour institutions, as explained by De Haas (2009), who view international migration as a tool fostering development underpinned by the triple win argument (see Chapter Three). The impact of the pandemic has instead situated RSE workers as economically precarious, relying on obligation and the altruism of the destination country to facilitate participant support and well-being. The inability of sending remittances is therefore also culturally precarious for ni-Vanuatu, who have a strong sense of community as mentioned in Chapter One.

Williams (2011) and Bedford (2013) had noted that RSE workers are prominent members of their local churches and contribute to the community through their presence in town and at community events. In acknowledging the continuity and longevity of the RSE scheme, these existing relationships have laid the foundations for establishing and enduring social networks. This engagement has helped integrate RSE scheme participants into their local New Zealand communities as well as facilitate the presence of their culture and identity. The acceptance of ni-Vanuatu culture in the Te Puke community was observed during the fieldwork process, with storefronts actively creating social spaces to assemble while also directing advertising to the specific needs of ni-Vanuatu workers (Observation, 2/09). Further evidence of their social embeddedness in their communities was recognised by Nunns et al. (2020), who refer to the examples of the community rallying around and supporting participants through the mobilisation of aid and financial assistance in times of disaster and hardship back home. This research report's findings of increased engagement in the pandemic from local organisations and support networks align with previous instances of supporting RSE workers and their strong connections with their communities.

Over time as the pandemic has continued, many of the existing relationships at the start of the pandemic have become strained or non-existent with ongoing restrictions. Nunns et al. (2020) have noted local community organisations and their previous support for RSE workers. However, these efforts were identified by participants in my research to have been concentrated locally or were one-off events. Participants stated there was a decline in engagement between local support networks (see Chapter Five). This situation demonstrates these organisations' lack of capacity to deal with the scale of support and ongoing needs of RSE workers during the pandemic. The breakdown in relationships between workers and their family and the extended period away in New Zealand reflects the exacerbation of social costs that comes with participating in seasonal work programs. These social costs relate to participants' lack of labour

rights and flexibility in the RSE scheme, which Hugo (2009) states restrict family reunification, and Williams (2011) relates to the different cultural expectations in a new environment. In the pandemic environment, participants in my study explained they were able to adapt to enforced restrictions and expectations as a learning process that required constant re-confirmation and increased anxiety. These results reflect the context of migrants in navigating the pandemic, which Yen et al. (2021:1222) label the "coping with coping paradox" that saw migrants' anxiety increase with the pressure to adapt and navigate unfamiliar contexts (see Chapter Three).

6.2.2. The pandemic and its impact on the ni-Vanuatu culture

As discussed in Chapter Two, the COVID-19 pandemic had significantly impacted global mobility forcing immediate border closures. This event had resulted in seasonal workers becoming stranded in-country for the foreseeable future, unable to be repatriated home. As was explained by Fassani and Mazza (2020) and Mukumbang (2021), migrant workers are acknowledged to be highly vulnerable to the pandemic because of their economic precariousness, communal living circumstances and their limited integration into support systems. As Dauvergne and Marsden (2014a) have noted, this position of vulnerability is closely linked to the restrictive contracts temporary labour workers agree to, and that limit their decision-making and mobility in order to participate. Among the ni-Vanuatu participants, six had become stranded in New Zealand at the declaration of the pandemic. All six decided to continue to stay and work in the RSE scheme, even with multiple opportunities for repatriation. Ni-Vanuatu participants' decision to stay on and work was attributed to their financial obligation to support family members back home.

The analysis of findings in Chapter Five has demonstrated that ni-Vanuatu workers had difficulty communicating with each other during the pandemic restrictions. As previous observations by Williams (2011) on the RSE scheme have revealed, ni-Vanuatu participants have needed help adapting to New Zealand's culture and expectations. During the pandemic, with the restrictions in place, participants expressed their discontent with adjusting to a pandemic environment that limited their ability to socially engage through singing, talking and laughing in the workplace. Astonitas Villafuerte (2018) related this struggle in behaviour to the engrained Vanuatu culture underpinned by social relations as part of a collective. The

importance of the collective is noted by Regenvanu (2010), who recognised the social embeddedness of behaviour as tied to Melanesian principles, which emphasise reciprocity, humility and respect. With face-to-face communication disrupted in the workplace, the isolative restrictions of social distancing have highlighted ni-Vanuatu as individuals in remaining adaptive. This, however, may be seen as leading to increased social anxiety and tension for participants around the pandemic. Bailey (2009) has observed, as Vanuatu is a collective culture, it plays a significant role in resolving seasonal worker disputes through dialogue and mediation. Facilitating an understanding and agreement between both parties depends on face-to-face communication in their approach to de-escalate issues between ni-Vanuatu in the scheme. The absence of these mechanisms in the pandemic because of social distancing has left a hole for ni-Vanuatu in this respect to exercise their culture and identity through social engagement.

6.3. Ni-Vanuatu Participants and their Agency in the RSE scheme

This section explores how ni-Vanuatu participation in New Zealand's RSE scheme contributes or hinders enabling agency experience within their COVID-19 environment. The exercise of choice, free will, self-confidence and knowledge are four integral components that enable agency for individuals in their settings. These integral components will be discussed in three sections that relate to the RSE scheme's policy implementation alongside participants' lived experiences.

6.3.1. Ni-Vanuatu participants and their exercise of choice

The exercise of choice is a critical component for the enabling of agency. It is relevant to the context of RSE workers who have experienced changes to their exercise of choice during the New Zealand pandemic. As discussed in Klocker's (2007) conceptualisation of agency, the exercise of choice from the options available in a person's environment is a crucial determinant in reflecting whether a person has thick or thin agency. The exercise of choice is essential for individuals to imagine and aim towards achieving what they value through the possibilities available. In Klocker's (2007) conceptualisation of agency, all individuals are positioned on a continuum between the different ends of thick and thin. Thin agency is when people and their

everyday decisions and behaviours are placed within extremely restrictive environments, characterised by the limited number of choices available. However, acknowledging the lack of options in their environment does not constitute any ability for an individual to hold agency. As Bell and Payne (2009) state, those most disempowered within the most restrictive settings can exert some individual consciousness to act. On the other hand, thick agency is referenced on the notion that individuals can exercise choice from a wide range of options (Klocker, 2007). Once positioned, Bell and Payne (2007) assert that an individual's agency is not statically rooted on this continuum but is actively shaped by their environment's structures, contexts and relationships. In conceptualising Klocker's (2007) continuum as actively changing, Table 6.1 explores the identified factors within this research impacting on participants, resulting in the thinning of their agency.

Table 6.1: Thinning Agency: Factors and Impacts

Identified Factors	Impact on Participants	Impact on Agency
Pressure and obligation to financially support family back home	Increased anxiety and social pressure Decreased self-autotomy over decision making Decreased self-worth	Thinning: Limited available scope of choices for participants to pursue.
Terms of entry into the RSE scheme for participants	Decreased mobility Decreased individual autonomy and independence Decreased confidence	Thinning: Limited number of choices for participants in their environment.
Imbalance of power held by employers	Decreased confidence Decreased self-esteem Decrease in cultural identity	Thinning: Participants are more limited in challenging existing power structures.

Source: Self-produced by the author using Klocker (2007) and Nunns et al. (2019).

Until the start of the pandemic, RSE workers in my study viewed their participation as enabling their agency to the extent of increased financial earning power, which became a liberating force. Participants understood that their position to earn relatively higher incomes facilitated an expansion of choices in New Zealand and back home. Kabeer and Mahmud (2009) note that if parents can increase their agency, the quality of human capital investments may be enhanced.

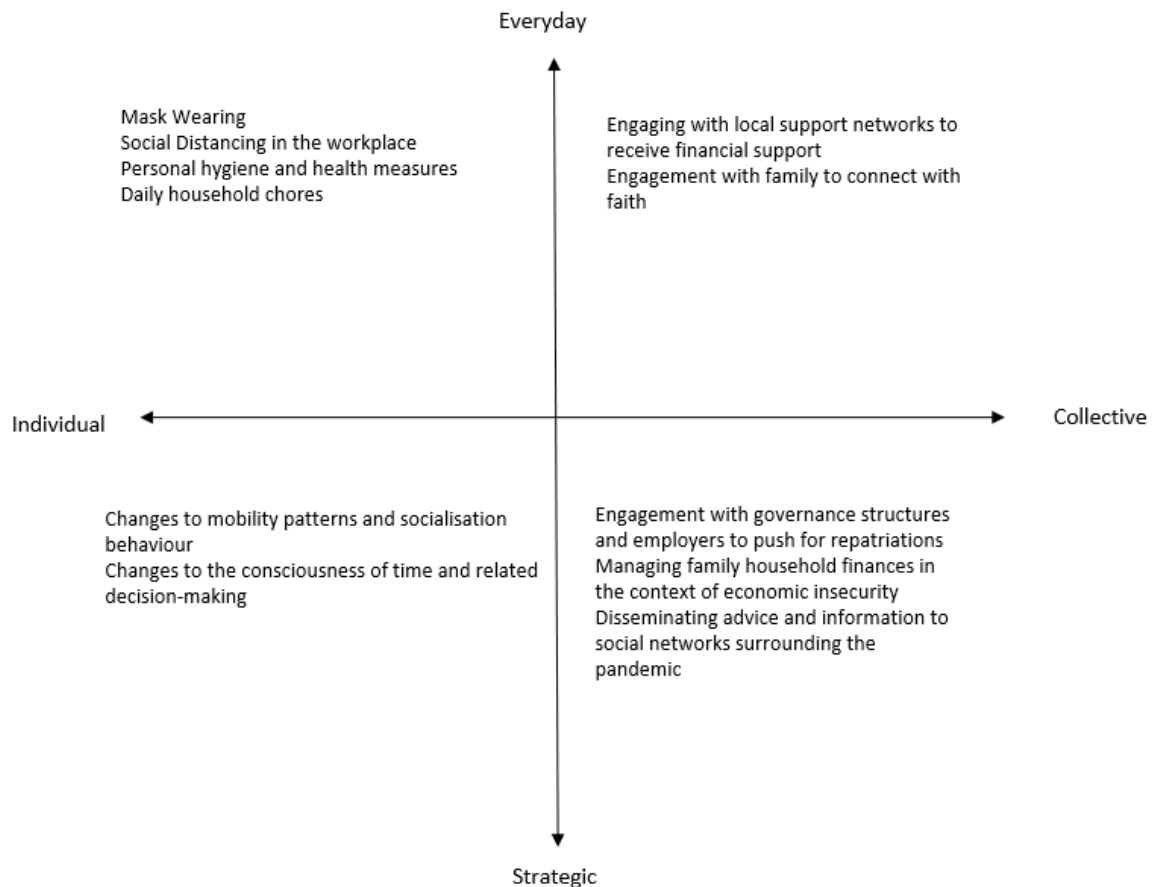
This context is aligned with the RSE scheme enabling an increase in participants' agency with increased financial earnings widening the exercise of choices for participants who prioritised remittance spending on their children's education. This investment may also enable other agency in the form of intergenerational agency. As Moncrieffe (2009) has noted, parents investing in their children's education give the maximum opportunities for a child to succeed in life and facilitates the exercise of a higher degree of agency than compared to their lifetime.

The RSE scheme was recognised by Bailey (2009) as an employer-led initiative that differs by explicitly emphasising employers' responsibility to manage the seasonal worker process and experience. This context reduces participants' exercise of choice over their living and working situation in the scheme as they are legally mandated to be organised with the responsibility held by employers (Winters, 2016). Participants were also noted by Gibson and McKenzie (2010) as restricted in their employment options regarding their scope of work and performance of roles tied to the employer. This restrictive context is aligned with my findings highlighting the lack of choice participants have when performing roles. In one specific instance, the lack of choice was evident in the findings, as a participant's role dictated whether a participant could work or be unemployed for an extended period during a pandemic. This example ties the lack of choice of participants in the RSE scheme to the heightened economic precariousness that Fassani and Mazza (2020) had argued relates to seasonal workers in their vulnerable position and restrictive environment (see Chapter Two).

The lack of choice exercised by participants also applies to accommodation, as organising communal living accommodation and overseeing pastoral care are the responsibility of employers (Winters, 2016). Accommodation, where some of the interviews were held, was conveniently located close to their work. However, this meant that due to the rural nature of seasonal work, participants were isolated geographically and socially from the local community and surrounding support networks (Observation, 3/09). As mentioned in the findings, participants lacked the choice in resisting the move to another accommodation premises. Employers and pastoral care personnel undertook this decision to minimise the capacity in each room to manage the risk of an outbreak. An unintended consequence of this action resulted in participants missing out on assistance from local organisations. The lack of choice by participants is an example symbolising Bailey's (2019) view recognising the employer's influence over the design and implementation of the RSE scheme. Participants lacking exercise of choice over their living situation and mobility is problematic as this has

further isolated ties between participants and local organisations, which Hugo (2009) had noted the RSE scheme design was already limited in their social integration options.

Figure 6.1. Lister’s agency framework and ni-Vanuatu RSE participants dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic



Source: Findings adapted into Lister's (2004) framework

For ni-Vanuatu participants, implementing individual, everyday behaviours described in Lister’s (2004) framework (Figure 6.1), was highlighted using social distancing and mask wearing. While compliance was located in an environment of expectations set out by employers and societal norms regarding COVID-19 measures, participants linking their compliance to personal safety imply participants’ actions were made in the exercise of personal choice rather than the perception of coercive enforcement as discussed by Kavanaugh and Singh (2020). Participants being able to follow health-related measures reflects Chan and Reidpath (2003)

observations, who assumed those under public health restrictions must be capable of exercising a sufficient level of agency to adhere to those placed upon them. In the RSE scheme, a sufficient amount of participants' agency was enabled through access to personal protective equipment and appropriate health information. Also, in reference to Figure 6.1, participants were able to collectively build networks to share and disseminate information indicating the strategic planning involved in their exercise of agency.

6.3.2. Ni- Vanuatu participants and their free will in decision-making

Free will is defined by Sen (1999) as a crucial component linked to the exercise of an individual's agency in decision-making. This application links individuals' exercise of agency to pursue their aspirations and things they value without coercion and duress. As discussed in Chapter One, Regenvanu (2010) and Warsal (2009) recognise Vanuatu culture as underpinned by a collective mentality placing high consideration over principles of reciprocity and social kinship, which closely tie ni-Vanuatu participants to their homeland. With the continuation of the pandemic, the lack of demonstrated financial and emotional support from the family had started to fracture existing relationships with participants. The pressure and obligation to support their family had infringed on participants' free will, with decision-making understood to be made in the context of lacking viable employment opportunities back home. This obligation meant participants reluctantly felt there was no other choice than to extend their stay to financially support their families, even though a choice to return home was offered. For some participants, the financial obligation to stay outweighed the value they placed on their willingness to reunite with loved ones resulting in further social pressure to maintain relationships. The social consequences of divorce and homesickness arising from an extended period away are consistent with Moala-Tupou's (2016) observations that recognise the emotional costs of seasonal migration in disruption to the stability of family structures.

The influence employers hold in facilitating the options available to participants is connected to the terms of participation in the RSE scheme. As was explained in Chapter Three by Curtain and Howes (2020), employers can selectively invite participants to return for each seasonal cycle contributing to the pressure on participants to meet or exceed their employer's expectations. Unwilling to deviate from expectations, the pandemic has brought about unfamiliarity through implementing public health measures, which is aligned with the findings

of Ayouni et al. (2021), who outline the actions of social distancing, quarantine, and mask-wearing implemented to prevent the spread of the virus.

Adapting to social distancing and lockdown measures, participants have taken an extremely cautious approach withdrawing themselves from social interaction to manage the risk of the virus and the threat of losing future employment. The lack of independence and free will over how to externally cope with the pandemic in the scheme has led to ni-Vanuatu feeling isolated. Isolation contradicts the ni-Vanuatu collaborative culture that communicates freely and expressively to retain their ni-Vanuatu identity in the working environment, which was observed by Bailey (2009). Participants discussed this form of negative emotions by highlighting their pandemic experience to feelings of loneliness and hopelessness. This emotional state has implications for participants acting on their own volition and independence to resist the undue constraints and coercive factors in their environment, which Nadelhoffer et al. (2014) argue is linked to reducing an individual's capability to exercise agency.

6.3.3. Ni-Vanuatu participants and their building of self-confidence and knowledge

Social engagement with other RSE workers, whom ni-Vanuatu participants could relate to through their shared experience, has enabled participants' agency. With the experience of similar difficulties in coping with the pandemic, ni-Vanuatu participants could act and identify as a collective to share knowledge and processes that benefited their situation. These actions aligned with observations made by Bailey (2009) in the RSE scheme highlighting ni-Vanuatu cultural ways of sharing information to facilitate connections of a group identity. Table 6.2 recognises these contributions by others that have impacted on participants towards the thickening of their agency.

Table 6.2: Thickening Agency: Factors and Impacts

Identified Factors	Impact on Participants	Impact on Agency
Support and encouragement from other RSE workers	Increased knowledge Increased self-confidence Increased self-esteem Increased self-sufficiency	Thickening: Participants could develop their capacity and knowledge to cope with the pandemic. Participants are collectively able to share experiences
Family Support Systems	Increase in self-belief Increase in personal worth Increased confidence in decision-making	Thickening: Ability to focus on taking advantage of opportunities and widening choices. Ability to resist the power structures and factors that thin agency in their environment.

Source: Self-produced by the author using Klocker (2007) and Nunns et al. (2019).

The dissemination of information as a support system was crucial to ni-Vanuatu participants as it helped break down the unfamiliarity and uncertainty that had heightened participants' anxiety and fears. Seeing another participant successfully adapt in similar circumstances gave participants a sense of self-confidence and the means to build their capacity to cope with the pandemic. Developing self-confidence is essential to the RSE scheme context of enabling agency, as Hicks et al. (2016) noted, with participants able to resist the policies within their environment that may impinge on their agency and well-being. As a result of knowledge derived from support systems, the strengthening of reasoning to act on their aspirations has aligned with White and Wyn (1998), who see this capability as a critical part of enabling agency.

Participants' agency was further reinforced as participants could learn and implement shared knowledge into their own experiences. Thus, enabling them to share, help and relate to other participants, gaining self-esteem and self-sufficiency as described in Table 6.2. This view of migrants as actively involved in helping share knowledge and assist others runs counter to the modernisation perceptions of migrants as passive participants critiqued by Silvey and Lawson

(1999) and Kochan (2016). Participants' active role in the learning process culminating with the sharing of knowledge places ni-Vanuatu individuals as agents, as defined by Sen (1999), who recognised people's efforts to bring about change through their participation in community. In my study, it could be seen that their involvement has allowed participants to expand their belief to imagine the possibilities and take advantage of the opportunities in their environment that align with their communal values, which also relates to Klocker (2007).

As shown in the analysis of the results in Chapter Five, communication with the family has been a vital source of encouragement to participants providing the support to sustain a sense of internal belief and strength in their current predicament. This encouragement is demonstrated in the communication of updates surrounding the family's situation, allowing participants to reflect and empathise with the social and economic hardships back home. As participants were to communicate freely, the transfer of information flows, even in a pandemic environment that has isolated participants, is a testament to the increasingly connected world that Czaika and Haas (2014) have argued enabled international migration on a grander scale. For some participants, the communication between their families highlighted the importance of staying and contributing to the financial betterment of their families. The reflection on their contributions gave participants the increased confidence and self-worth to shift their outlook towards maximising opportunity rather than negatively perceiving themselves as victims of the circumstance. A greater sense of personal worth and confidence resulting from their efforts are aligned with the United Nations (2020) efforts of linking people's self-confidence to participating in decision-making activities towards achieving their desired choices.

6.4. Conclusion

This research has demonstrated the conflicts and challenges ni-Vanuatu RSE scheme participants face in navigating the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The key findings of the research highlight the multiple roles placed upon participants in everyday situations as they manage the responsibilities of becoming primary breadwinners, valued employees and family members. Meeting these expectations and obligations weighs heavily on participants' physical, emotional and spiritual well-being as they are constantly stretched to manage their time in fulfilling these roles. With the pandemic, the environment has significantly changed participants' engagement in the scheme, bringing uncertainty and unfamiliarity for participants' future involvement. As demonstrated in the findings, the absence of support systems consisting

of religion and social engagement resulting from pandemic measures has isolated ni-Vanuatu individuals to the detriment of their collective cultural identity. This absence has added pressure on existing cultural obligations that tie participants into their responsibility for supporting their families.

In the context of ni-Vanuatu RSE scheme participants, changes to the implementation of the RSE scheme could have the potential to further harness the exercise of agency of participants. The development of social relationships embedded in the RSE scheme has helped to build internal capabilities to strengthen participants' exercise of agency. The opening of spaces in support and knowledge sharing is an outcome built on the connection participants have in their combined experience and culture. These connections have also been vital towards channelling financial aid and instilling emotional support for participants to learn and adapt to factors that infringe on their agency. This research has demonstrated that ni-Vanuatu seasonal workers have adapted to overcome initial pandemic restrictions, but workers are still impeded by a lack of choice and free will that has exacerbated their vulnerability in their environment. As Mukumbang (2021) argues, seasonal workers are highly vulnerable to the pandemic because of their economic precariousness, communal living circumstances and their limited social integration. The pandemic and associated health measures implemented has seen workers' lived experience and control over decision making become restricted, with those needing financial support at the mercy of others. This situation is a stark contrast to the conception of the RSE scheme that enables economic development through the power of financial remittances and savings (Gibson and McKenzie, 2010).

The research motivation for selecting this topic stemmed from observing a need for more voices, noticed in an article that omitted seasonal workers when speaking about their current hardships during the pandemic (Radio New Zealand, 2020). As such, this research report has contributed to the body of knowledge by engaging ni-Vanuatu involved in the RSE scheme to understand their lived experiences and the choices available from their perspective. Further research on giving voice to participants would be beneficial for providing the means to address their needs and integration into the scheme. This inclusion would ensure that support services and pastoral care can better accommodate participants' holistic welfare and well-being. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought unprecedented hardships to RSE scheme participants, eliciting a more comprehensive and in-depth response from the stakeholders. However,

ensuring sustained accountability to participants with the pandemic subsiding will require future renewed investigation.

References

- Abella, M. (2006) 'Policies and best practices for management of temporary migration', paper presented at the *International Symposium on International Migration and Development*, Turin, Italy, 28–30 June.
- Abrams, E. M., & Szeffler, S. J. (2020). COVID-19 and the impact of social determinants of health. *The Lancet Respiratory Medicine*, 8(7), 659-661.
- Ali, S., Asaria, M., & Stranges, S. (2020). COVID-19 and inequality: Are we all in this together? *Canadian Journal of Public Health*, 111(3), 415-416.
- Alkire, S. (2005). Subjective quantitative studies of human agency. *Social Indicators Research*, 74(1), 217-260.
- Alkire, S. (2007). The missing dimensions of poverty data: Introduction to the special issue. *Oxford Development Studies*, 35(4), 347-359.
- Alkire, S., & Deneulin, S. (2009). *Introducing the human development and capability approach. An introduction to the human development and capability approach*. London: Earthscan.
- Arango, J. (2000). Explaining migration: a critical view. *International Social Science Journal*, 52(165), 283-296.
- Astonitas Villafuerte, L. M. (2018). *Seasons of Change: ni-Vanuatu and the Recognised Seasonal Employer's (RSE) Scheme* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Auckland]. Retrieved from ResearchSpace. <http://hdl.handle.net/2292/45088>
- Ayouni, I., Maatoug, J., Dhouib, W., Zammit, N., Fredj, S. B., Ghammam, R., & Ghannem, H. (2021). Effective public health measures to mitigate the spread of COVID-19: a systematic review. *BMC Public Health*, 21(1), 1-14.
- Baber, Z. (1991). Beyond the structure/agency dualism: An evaluation of Giddens' theory of structuration. *Sociological Inquiry*, 61(2), 219-230.
- Bailey, R. (2009). *Unfree labour? ni-Vanuatu workers in New Zealand's Recognised Seasonal Employer Scheme*. [Master thesis, University of Canterbury]. Retrieved from UC Research Repository. <http://dx.doi.org/10.26021/4235>
- Bailey, R. (2014). *Working the Vines: Seasonal Migration, Money and Development in New Zealand and Ambrym, Vanuatu*. [PhD thesis, University of Otago]. Retrieved from OUR Archive. <http://hdl.handle.net/10523/5063>
- Bailey, R. (2016). Working together for a better life. Contemporary ni-Vanuatu labour mobility in New Zealand. In J. Leckie, A. McCarthy & A. Wanhalla (Eds.), *Migrant Cross-cultural encounters in Asia and the Pacific* (pp. 98-113). London; New York: Taylor & Francis.

- Bailey, R. (2017). *Seasonal Worker Programs and Opportunity for Religious Observance*. (In Brief 2017/36). Department of Pacific Affairs. The Australian National University.
- Bailey, R. (2018). *Blacklisting and Reporting in Seasonal Worker Programs*. Australian National University, Department of Pacific Affairs.
- Bailey, R. (2019). *New Zealand's Recognised Employer Scheme (RSE). 10-year longitudinal case study*. Department of Pacific Affairs. The Australian National University,
- Bailey, R., & Kautoke-Holani, A. (2018). *Encouraging and Enhancing Economic Development in RSE and SWP*. Australian National University, Department of Pacific Affairs.
- Bakewell, O. (2014). Relaunching migration systems. *Migration Studies*, 2(3), 300-318.
- Ball, R. (2010). *Australia's Pacific Seasonal Worker Pilot Scheme and its interface with the Australian horticultural labour market: is it time to refine the policy?*. Asia Pacific Press.
- Bandura, A. (2001). Social cognitive theory: An agentic perspective. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 52(1), 1-26.
- Banks, G., & Scheyvens, R. (2014). Ethical Issues. In Scheyvens, R. (Ed.). *Development fieldwork: A practical guide*. (pp. 160-187). Sage.
- Bartholomew, K., Henderson, A. J. Z., & Marcia, J. E. (2000). Coding semi-structured interviews in social psychological research. In H. Reis & C. M. Judd (Eds.), *Handbook of Research Methods in Social and Personality Psychology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 286-312.
- Baubock, R., & Ruhs, M. (2021). *The Elusive Triple Win: Can temporary labour migration dilemmas be settled through fair representation?*. Paper No. RSC, 60. Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies.
- Bauza, V., Sclar, G. D., Bisoyi, A., Owens, A., Ghugey, A., & Clasen, T. (2021). Experience of the COVID-19 pandemic in rural Odisha, India: knowledge, preventative actions, and impacts on daily life. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(6), 1-17.
- Bedford, C. E. (2013). *Picking winners?: New Zealand's recognised seasonal employer (RSE) policy and its impacts on employers, Pacific workers and their island-based communities*. [Doctoral dissertation University of Adelaide]. Retrieved from University of Adelaide Research and Scholarship. <https://hdl.handle.net/2440/82552>
- Bedford, C. E., & Bedford, R. D. (2013). Managed Seasonal Migration Schemes for Pacific Workers: Just a 'band aid'?. In *Inaugural State of the Pacific Conference (SOTP)* 1-35.
- Bedford, C., Bedford, R., & Ho, E. (2009). *The social impacts of short-term migration for employment: A review of recent literature*. Population Studies Centre: University of Waikato.

- Bedford, R., Bedford, C., Wall, J., & Young, M. (2017). Managed temporary labour migration of Pacific islanders to Australia and New Zealand in the early twenty-first century. *Australian Geographer*, 48(1), 37-57.
- Bell, S., & Payne, R. (2009). Young people as agents in development processes: reconsidering perspectives for development geography. *Third World Quarterly*, 30(5), 1027-1044.
- Bennett, J. A. (2021). Everyday life and the management of risky bodies in the COVID-19 era. *Cultural Studies*, 35(2-3), 347-357.
- Bhatt, N., Bhatt, B., Gurung, S., Dahal, S., Jaishi, A. R., Neupane, B., & Budhathoki, S. S. (2020). Perceptions and experiences of the public regarding the COVID-19 pandemic in Nepal: a qualitative study using phenomenological analysis. *BMJ Open*, 10(12), 1-11.
- Bonnemaizon, J. (1984). Social and cultural aspects of land tenure, in P Larmour (ed.), *Land tenure in Vanuatu*, (pp.1-7). Institute of Pacific Studies, University of the South Pacific, Suva.
- Boseley, S. (2020, April 15). Coronavirus: should everyone be wearing face masks? *The Guardian*. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/14/should-everyone-be-wearing-face-masks?CMP=fb_gu&utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Facebook
- Bottomore, T. (1981). A Marxist consideration of Durkheim. *Social Forces*, 59(4), 902-917.
- Bottomore, T., & Nisbet, R. (1978). *Structuralism. A History of Sociological Analysis*. New York: Basic, 557-598.
- Bourdieu, P. (1990). *The logic of practice*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Brickenstein, C. (2015). Social protection of foreign seasonal workers: From state to best practice. *Comparative Migration Studies*, 3(1), 1-18.
- Cameron, E. (2011). *Social development outcomes of participation in the New Zealand Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme for ni-Vanuatu seasonal migrant workers*. [Master's thesis, Massey University]. Retrieved from Massey Research Online. <https://mro.massey.ac.nz/handle/10179/2520?show=full>
- Camfield, L., & McGregor, A. (2005). Resilience and wellbeing in developing countries. *Handbook for Working with Children and Youth: Pathways to Resilience Across Cultures and Contexts*, 189-209.
- Cappellini, B., Marilli, A., & Parsons, E. (2014). The hidden work of coping: Gender and the micro-politics of household consumption in times of austerity. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 30(15-16), 1597-1624.

- Carlsnaes, W. (1992). The agency-structure problem in foreign policy analysis. *International Studies Quarterly*, 36(3), 245-270.
- Castles, S. (1986). The guest-worker in Western Europe—an obituary. *International Migration Review*, 20(4), 761-778.
- Castles, S. (2006). Guestworkers in Europe: A resurrection?. *International Migration Review*, 40(4), 741-766.
- Castles, S. (2008). Development and migration—migration and development: What comes first?. *Development*, 2(9), 1-18.
- Castles, S., & Delgado Wise, R. (2008). *Migration and development: Perspectives from the South*. Universidad Autónoma de Zacatecas.
- Castles, S., & Ozkul, D. (2014). Circular Migration: Triple Win, or a New Label for Temporary Migration?. *Global and Asian Perspectives on International Migration*, 4, 27-49.
- Cawston, H (2022, June/July). *Parish welcomes Hawke's Bay RSE workers*. Retrieved from https://www.wn.catholic.org.nz/adw_welcom/parish-welcomes-hawkes-bay-rse-workers/
- Chan, K. Y., & Reidpath, D. D. (2003). “Typhoid Mary” and “HIV Jane”: responsibility, agency and disease prevention. *Reproductive Health Matters*, 11(22), 40-50.
- Chant, S. (1992). *Gender and migration in developing countries*. London: Belhaven Press.
- Ciupijus, Z. (2010). Ethical pitfalls of temporary labour migration: A critical review of issues. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 97(1), 9-18.
- Coe, R. (2012). Conducting your research. In J. Arthur, M. Waring, R. Coe & L. Hedges (Eds.), *Research Methods and Methodologies in Education*. Thousand Oaks: California.
- Connell, J. (2015). Temporary labour migration in the Pacific. *Migration and development: Perspectives from small states*, 60-91.
- Connell, J., & Petrou, K. (2019). *Pacific Labour Mobility*. The University of Sydney.
- Coulthard, S. (2012). Can we be both resilient and well, and what choices do people have? Incorporating agency into the resilience debate from a fisheries perspective. *Ecology and Society*, 17(1). 1-13.
- Cox, M., Alatoa, H., Kenni, L., Naupa, A., Rawlings, G., Soni, N., ... & Bulekone, V. (2007). *Unfinished state: Drivers of change in Vanuatu*. Australian Agency for International Development.
- Cummings, M. (2013). Imagining transnational futures in Vanuatu. In A. Quayson & G. Daswani (Eds.) *A Companion to Diaspora and Transnationalism*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

- Curtain, R., & Howes, S. (2020). *Governance of the Seasonal Worker Programme in Australia and sending countries*. Development Policy Centre, The Australian National University.
- Curtain, R., Dornan, M., Howes, S., & Sherrell, H. (2018). Pacific seasonal workers: Learning from the contrasting temporary migration outcomes in Australian and New Zealand horticulture. *Asia & the Pacific Policy Studies*, 5(3), 462-480.
- Czaika, M., & De Haas, H. (2014). The globalization of migration: Has the world become more migratory?. *International Migration Review*, 48(2), 283-323.
- Datta, K. (2009). Transforming South–North relations? International migration and development. *Geography Compass*, 3(1), 108-134.
- Dauvergne, C., & Marsden, S. (2014). The ideology of temporary labour migration in the post-global era. *Citizenship Studies*, 18(2), 224-242.
- Dauvergne, C., & Marsden, S. (2014b). Beyond numbers versus rights: Shifting the parameters of debate on temporary labour migration. *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, 15(3), 525-545.
- Davies, S. E. (2013). National security and pandemics. *UN Chronicle*, 50(2), 20-24.
- De Haas, H. (2007). Remittances, migration and social development. *A Conceptual Review of the Literature*, 1-46.
- De Haas, H. (2009). *Mobility and human development*. New York: United Nations Development Programme.
- Deneulin, S. (2008). Beyond individual freedom and agency: Structures of living together in Sen's capability approach to development. In *The Capability Approach: Concepts, Measures and Application* (pp. 105-124). Cambridge University Press.
- Dennison, M. (2021). The great leveller? COVID-19's dynamic interaction with social inequalities in the UK. *History and Philosophy of the Life Sciences*, 43(4), 1-4.
- Doshi, P. (2011). The elusive definition of pandemic influenza. *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*, 89, 532-538.
- Drake, L., Liunakwalau, H. M., & Hango Hango Community Association, Port Vila. (2022). Locating the traditional economy in Port Vila, Vanuatu: Disaster relief and agrobiodiversity. *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, 63(1), 80-96.
- Dutta, M. J. (2021). Communication Inequality, Structural Inequality, and COVID-19. *Communicating COVID-19*, 85-98.
- Dwiartama, A., & Rosin, C. (2014). Exploring agency beyond humans: The compatibility of Actor-Network Theory (ANT) and resilience thinking. *Ecology and Society*, 19(3). 1-10.

- Emirbayer, M., & Mische, A. (1998). What is agency? *American Journal of Sociology*, 103(4), 962-1023.
- Fargues, F. (2008). *Circular migration: Is it relevant for the south and east of the Mediterranean?*. Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute, Florence.
- Fassani, F., & Mazza, J. (2020). *A vulnerable workforce: Migrant workers in the COVID-19 pandemic*. Publications Office of the European Union Luxembourg.
- Fernandez, A., Della Giusta, M., & Kambhampati, U. S. (2015). The intrinsic value of agency: The case of Indonesia. *World Development*, 70, 92-107.
- Fijian Government. (2014). *Fiji and New Zealand formalise Fijian participation in the recognised seasonal employer work scheme*. Retrieved from <https://www.fiji.gov.fj/Media-Centre/News/FIJI-AND-NEW-ZEALAND-FORMALISE-FIJIAN-PARTICIPATIO?rss=news>
- Gaventa, J. (2003). Power after Lukes: an overview of theories of power since Lukes and their application to development. *Brighton: Participation Group, Institute of Development Studies*, 3-18.
- Geddes, A. (2015). Temporary and circular migration in the construction of European migration governance. *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 28(4), 571-588.
- Gibson, J., & Bailey, R. L. (2021). Seasonal labour mobility in the pacific: Past impacts, future prospects. *Asian Development Review*, 38(1), 1-31.
- Gibson, J., & McKenzie, D. (2010). *The development impact of a best practice seasonal worker policy: New Zealand's Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) Scheme*. The World Bank.
- Gibson, J., & McKenzie, D. (2011). Australia's PSWPS: Development impacts in the first two years. *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, 52(3), 361-370.
- Gibson, J., & McKenzie, D. (2014). Development through seasonal worker programs: the case of New Zealand's RSE program. *International Handbook on Migration and Economic Development*, 186-210.
- Giddens, A. (1986). *The constitution of society: Outline of the theory of structuration* (Vol. 349). University of California Press.
- Gill, H., Vos, J., Villa-Torres, L., & Ramirez, M. S. (2020). Migration and Inclusive Transnational Heritage: Digital Innovation and the New Roots Latino Oral History Initiative. *The Oral History Review*, 46(2), 277-299.
- Girum, T., Lentiro, K., Geremew, M., Migora, B., & Shewamare, S. (2020). Global strategies and effectiveness for COVID-19 prevention through contact tracing, screening, quarantine, and isolation: a systematic review. *Tropical Medicine and Health*, 48(1), 1-15.

- Government of Vanuatu (2022). *About Vanuatu*. Retrieved from <https://www.gov.vu/index.php/about/about-vanuatu>
- Hamilton-Irvine, G. (2022, December 12). ‘Human rights abuses’: Hawke’s Bay leaders react to damning RSE report. *Hawkes Bay Today*. Retrieved from <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/hawkes-bay-today/news/human-rights-abuses-hawkes-bay-leaders-react-to-damning-rse-report/IWG4XGJEQFCFHHVGRLWYIQ3R3I/#:~:text=The%20RSE%20scheme%20is%20enabling,and%20contracts%20heavily%20favouring%20employers.>
- Hay, C. (2020). How privilege structures pandemic narratives. *Apa Newsletter on Feminism and Philosophy*, 20(1). 1-6.
- Hay, D. J., & Howes, S. (2012). *Australia’s Pacific Seasonal Worker Pilot Scheme: why has take-up been so low?*. Australian National University, Development Policy Centre.
- Heckmann, F., Honecopp, E., & Currell, E. (2009). *Guest worker programs and circular migration: What works*. Immigration Paper Series 9. European Forum for Migration Studies.
- Hicks, C. C., Levine, A., Agrawal, A., Basurto, X., Breslow, S. J., Carothers, C., . . . & Donatuto, J. (2016). Engage key social concepts for sustainability. *Science*, 352(6281), 38-40.
- Hill, E., Withers, M., & Jayasuriya, R. (2018). *The pacific labour scheme and transnational family life: policy brief*. University of New South Wales, Social Policy Research Centre.
- Hugo, G. (2009). Best practice in temporary labour migration for development: A perspective from Asia and the Pacific. *International Migration*, 47(5), 23-74.
- Ibrahim, S., & Alkire, S. (2007). Agency and empowerment: A proposal for internationally comparable indicators. *Oxford Development Studies*, 35(4), 379-403.
- International Labour Organisation (2019). *ILO Global Estimates on International Migrant Workers: Results and Methodology*. Retrieved from https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_808935.pdf
- International Labour Organisation (2022). *Synthesis report - Temporary labour migration: Unpacking complexities*. Retrieved from https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/labour-migration/publications/WCMS_858541/lang--en/index.htm
- International Organization for Migration (2008). *IOM and Labour Migration*. Retrieved from https://www.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbd1486/files/our_work/ICP/IDM/Labour-Migration-Infosheet-2008.pdf

- Kabeer, N., & Mahmud, S. (2009). Imagining the future: Children, education and intergenerational transmission of poverty in urban Bangladesh. *IDS Bulletin*, 40(1), 10-21.
- Kavanagh, M. M., & Singh, R. (2020). Democracy, capacity, and coercion in pandemic response: COVID-19 in comparative political perspective. *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law*, 45(6), 997-1012.
- King, R. (2012). Geography and migration studies: Retrospect and prospect. *Population, Space and Place*, 18(2), 134-153.
- Klocker, N. (2007). An example of 'thin' agency: Child domestic workers in Tanzania. *Global Perspectives on Rural Childhood and Youth*, 1, 100-111.
- Lawson, V. A. (1998). Hierarchical households and gendered migration in Latin America: feminist extensions to migration research. *Progress in Human Geography*, 22(1), 39-53.
- Lawton, H. (2019, July 25). *Australia's seasonal worker program now bigger than NZ's*. [Blog]. DevBlog. Retrieved from <https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2019-07/apo-nid250331.pdf>
- Lenard, P. T. (2012). Why temporary labour migration is not a satisfactory alternative to permanent migration. *Journal of International Political Theory*, 8(1-2), 172-183.
- Lenard, P. T., & Straehle, C. (2010). Temporary labour migration: Exploitation, tool of development, or both?. *Policy and Society*, 29(4), 283-294.
- Li, D.K. (2020, February 6). Coronavirus hate attack: Woman in face mask allegedly assaulted by man who calls her 'diseased'. *NBC News*. Retrieved from <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/coronavirus-hate-attack-woman-face-mask-allegedly-assaulted-man-who-n1130671>
- Liao, M., Liu, H., Wang, X., Hu, X., Huang, Y., Liu, X., . . . & Lu, J. R. (2021). A technical review of face mask wearing in preventing respiratory COVID-19 transmission. *Current Opinion in Colloid & Interface Science*, 52, 1-21.
- Lilomaiaava-Doktor, S. (2009). Beyond "migration": Samoan population movement (malaga) and the geography of social space (vā). *The Contemporary Pacific*, 21(1), 1-32.
- Lister, R. (2004). *Poverty. Polity*.
- Lister, R. (2015). To count for nothing: Poverty beyond the statistics. *Journal of the British Academy*, 3, 139-165.
- Lune, H., & Berg, B. L. (2017). *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences*. Pearson.
- Marston, C., Renedo, A., & Miles, S. (2020). Community participation is crucial in a pandemic. *The Lancet*, 395(10238), 1676-1678.

- Martens, P., & Raza, M. (2010). Is globalisation sustainable?. *Sustainability*, 2(1), 280-293.
- Martin, J.P. (2006). *Managing migration. International migration outlook 2006*. Paris: OECD Publishing.
- Martin, P. L. (2003). *Managing labor migration: Temporary worker programs for the 21st century*. Geneva: International Institute for Labour Studies.
- Massey University (2017). *Pacific Research Guidelines and Protocols*. Pacific Research and Policy Centre, Massey University.
- Massey University (2022). *In-house Ethics Form*. Department of Development Studies, Massey University.
- Massey, D. S., & España, F. G. (1987). The social process of international migration. *Science*, 237(4816), 733-738.
- Massey, D. S., Arango, J., Hugo, G., Kouaouci, A., Pellegrino, A., & Taylor, J. E. (1993). Theories of international migration: A review and appraisal. *Population and Development Review*, 19(3), 431-466.
- McKenzie, D., Martinez, P.G., and Winters, L.A. (2008). *Who is coming to Vanuatu under the New Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) program?* Working Papers in Economics 9/08, Department of Economics, University of Waikato, Hamilton.
- Mehra, B. (2002). Bias in qualitative research: Voices from an online classroom. *The Qualitative Report*, 7(1), 1-19.
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (2019). *Strategic Intentions 2019–2023*, Wellington.
- Moala-Tupou, L. (2016). The Social Impacts of seasonal migration on left-behind children: An exploratory study from Lifuka, Tonga [Master's thesis, University of Waikato]. Retrieved from Waikato Research Commons. <https://hdl.handle.net/10289/10614>
- Moncrieffe, J. (2009). Introduction: Intergenerational transmissions: Cultivating children's agency?. *IDS Bulletin*, 40(1), 1-8.
- Morgan, E. (2022, August 9). Human rights abuses of RSE workers completely unacceptable. *Stuff*. Retrieved from <https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/300657983/human-rights-abuses-of-rse-workers-completely-unacceptable>
- Mukumbang, F. C. (2021). Pervasive systemic drivers underpin COVID-19 vulnerabilities in migrants. *International Journal for Equity in Health*, 20(1), 1-7.
- Nadelhoffer, T., Shepard, J., Nahmias, E., Sripada, C., & Ross, L. T. (2014). The free will inventory: Measuring beliefs about agency and responsibility. *Consciousness and Cognition*, 25, 27-41.
- Newland, K. (2009). *Circular Migration and Human Development*, Human Development Research Paper, no. 42. New York: United Nations Development Programme.

- Nunns, H., Bedford, C., & Bedford, R. (2019). *RSE impact study: New Zealand Stream Report*. Ministry of Innovation and Employment (MBIE).
- Nunns, H., Bedford, C., & Bedford, R. (2020). *RSE impact study: Synthesis Report*. Ministry of Innovation and Employment (MBIE).
- Nussbaumer-Streit, B., Mayr, V., Dobrescu, A. I., Chapman, A., Persad, E., Klerings, I., . . . & Zachariah, C. (2020). Quarantine alone or in combination with other public health measures to control COVID-19: A rapid review. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews*, 9, 1-78.
- O’Leary, Z. (2014). *The essential guide to doing your research project*. Sage.
- O’Leary, Z. (2017). *The essential guide to doing your research project (3rd Edition)*. Sage.
- Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (2019). *International Migration Outlook 2019*, OECD Publishing, Paris. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1787/c3e35eec-en>.
- Otago Daily Times (2008. July 30). *Seasonal workers being exploited, says church*. Retrieved from <https://www.odt.co.nz/news/national/seasonal-workers-being-exploited-says-church>
- Otto, I. M., Wiedermann, M., Cremades, R., Donges, J. F., Auer, C., & Lucht, W. (2020). Human agency in the Anthropocene. *Ecological Economics*, 167, 1-9.
- Panda, S.S. & Mishra, N.R. (2018). Factors affecting temporary labour migration for seasonal work: a review. *Management Research Review*, 41(10), 1176–1200.
- Pang, J. (2023, February 4). Inside RSE worker accommodation, where four bedrooms can earn landlords \$3500 a week. *New Zealand Herald*. Retrieved from <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/local-focus-inside-rse-worker-accommodation-where-four-bedrooms-can-earn-landlords-3500-a-week/WNCJNH4CJVB55BEZNFPP6MTCAE/>
- Petrou, K., & Connell, J. (2017). Rural-urban migrants, translocal communities and the myth of return migration in Vanuatu: The case of Paama. *Journal de la Société des Océanistes*, 144(145), 51-62.
- Pham, L. T. M. (2018). *Qualitative approach to research a review of advantages and disadvantages of three paradigms: Positivism, interpretivism and critical inquiry*. The University of Adelaide.
- Pleasants, N. (2019). Free will, determinism and the “problem” of structure and agency in the social sciences. *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 49(1), 3-30.
- Radio New Zealand (2020, August 26). *RSE workers stranded in NZ: 'Tonga needs to look after its own citizens' – employer*. Retrieved from <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/country/424500/rse-workers-stranded-in-nz-tonga-needs-to-look-after-its-own-citizens-employer>

- Rahim, A., Rayp, G., & Ruysen, I. (2021). *Circular Migration: Triple Win or Renewed Interests of Destination Countries?* Ghent University.
- Rajan, S. I., Sivadasan, T., Jayanth, R. S. S., & Batra, P. (2021). Household Pandemic Response: The Socioeconomic Impact of COVID-19 on Migrant Households in India. *Asian Economics Letters*, 3(2), 1-5.
- Ramasamy, S., Krishnan, V., Bedford, R., & Bedford, C. (2008). The Recognised Seasonal Employer policy: seeking the elusive triple wins for development through international migration. *Pacific Economic Bulletin*, 23(3), 171-186.
- Regenvanu, R. (2010). The traditional economy as a source of resilience in Vanuatu. In T. Anderson, & G. Lee (Eds.), *In defence of Melanesian customary land*. (pp. 30–34). Sydney: Australian Aid.
- Robertson, R., & Scholte, J. A. (2007). *Encyclopedia of globalization*. Routledge.
- Robson, E., Bell, S., & Klocker, N. (2007). Conceptualizing agency in the lives and actions of rural young people. *Global Perspectives on Rural Childhood and Youth*, 1, 152-165.
- Ros, A., Gonzales, E., Marin, A. and Snow, P. (2007). *Migration and Information Flows: A New Lens for the Study of Contemporary International Migration*, Working Paper Series.
- Rosewarne, S. (2010). Globalisation and the commodification of labour: temporary labour migration. *Economic and Labour Relations Review*, 20(2), 99-111.
- Rosewarne, S. (2019). The making of the agricultural industry's temporary migrant workforce: Beyond exploitative experiences?. *The Journal of Australian Political Economy*, (84), 5-12.
- Ruhs, M. (2021). Guest workers: Enduring questions and policy controversies. *International Migration*, 59(6), 238-241.
- Sabar, G., Babis, D., & Sabar Ben-Yehoshua, N. (2022). From fragility to empowerment through philanthropy: The Filipino labor migrant community in Israel during COVID-19. *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies*, 20(1), 49-64.
- Schlosser, M. (2015). Agency. *The Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*: Department of Philosophy, Stanford University.
- Secor, A. J. (2003). Citizenship in the city: Identity, community, and rights among women migrants to Istanbul. *Urban Geography*, 24(2), 147-168.
- Sen, A. (1985). Well-being, agency and freedom: The Dewey lectures 1984. *The Journal of Philosophy*, 82(4), 169-221.
- Sen, A. (1999). *Commodities and capabilities*. OUP Catalogue.

- Siegel, M., & Fransen, S. (2013). New technologies in remittance sending: Opportunities for mobile remittances in Africa. *African Journal of Science, Technology, Innovation and Development*, 5(5), 423-438.
- Silvey, R., & Lawson, V. (1999). Placing the Migrant. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 89(1), 121-132.
- Skeldon, R. (2010). Managing migration for development: Is circular migration the answer? *The Whitehead Journal of Diplomacy & International Relations*, 11(1), 21-33.
- Skeldon, R. (2012). Going round in circles: Circular migration, poverty alleviation and marginality. *International Migration*, 50(3), 43-60.
- Smith, R. (2021). The Meaning of 'Free' Work: Service as a Gift, and Labor as a Commodity for ni-Vanuatu Labor Migrants. *Work, Society and the Ethical Self: Chimeras of Freedom in the Neoliberal Era*, 27-48.
- Stewart-Withers, R., Banks, G., McGregor, A., & Meo-Sewabu, L. (2014). Qualitative Research. In R. Scheyvens (Ed.). *Development Fieldwork: A Practical Guide*. Sage: London, 59-80.
- Stones, R. (2007). *Structure and agency*. The Blackwell encyclopaedia of sociology.
- Strauss, K., & McGrath, S. (2017). Temporary migration, precarious employment and unfree labour relations: Exploring the continuum of exploitation in Canada's Temporary Foreign Worker Program. *Geoforum*, 78, 199-208.
- Sumner, A. (2010). Child poverty, well-being and agency: What does a '3-D well-being' approach contribute?. *Journal of International Development*, 22(8), 1064-1075.
- Takashima, R., Onishi, R., Saeki, K., & Hirano, M. (2020, December). Perception of COVID-19 restrictions on daily life among Japanese older adults: A qualitative focus group study. *Healthcare* 8(4), 450-470.
- The Australian Government (2022).. *Pacific Labour Mobility*. Retrieved from <https://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/pacific/engagement/pacific-labour-mobility>
- The Centre for Global Development. (2022). Northern Australia Worker Pilot Program (NAWPP). Retrieved from https://gsp.cgdev.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/CGD-Legal-Pathways-Database_Northern-Australia-Worker-Pilot-Program-NAWPP-1.pdf
- The New Zealand Government (2006, March 24). *Seasonal Work Permit Pilot extended to September*. Retrieved from <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/seasonal-work-permit-pilot-extended-september>
- The World Bank (2006). *Pacific Islands at home and away: expanding job opportunities for Pacific islanders through labor mobility* (English). World Bank Group. Retrieved from <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/158921468099585796/Pacific-Islands-at-home-and-away-expanding-job-opportunities-for-Pacific-islanders-through-labor-mobility>

- Todaro, M. P. (1969). A model of labor migration and urban unemployment in less developed countries. *The American Economic Review*, 59(1), 138-148.
- Triandafyllidou, A. (2010). *Towards a better understanding of circular migration*. San Domenico di Fiesole, Italy: European University Institute.
- Triandafyllidou, A. (2013). *Circular migration between Europe and its neighbourhood: Choice or necessity?*. OUP Oxford.
- Trifan, R. (2015). The contribution of circular migration to economic growth in developing countries. In *Proceedings of FIKUSZ Symposium for Young Researchers* (p. 241). Óbuda University Keleti Károly Faculty of Economics.
- Tubadji, A., Webber, D. J., & Boy, F. (2020). Cultural and economic discrimination by the great leveller: the COVID-19 pandemic in the UK. *Covid Economics*, 13, 51-70.
- Underhill-Sem, Y. J., & Marsters, E. (2017). *Labour mobility in the Pacific: A systematic literature review of development impacts*. New Zealand Institute for Pacific Research.
- United Nations (2020). Coronavirus: Pandemic alert should be trigger for countries to do more against COVID-19. Retrieved from <https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/03/1059231>
- United Nations Development Programme (2020). *Human Development Report 2020: The next frontier - Human development and the Anthropocene*. Retrieved from <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/hdr2020.pdf>
- Vadean, F. P., & Piracha, M. (2009). *Circular migration or permanent return: What determines different forms of migration?* IZA Discussion Papers 4287, Bonn: Institute for the Study of Labor.
- Van der Ploeg, J., & Long, N. (1994). Heterogeneity, actor and structure: towards a reconstitution of the concept of structure. *Rethinking Social Development*, 62-90.
- Vertovec, S. (2007). *Circular migration: The way forward in global policy?* Working Paper No. 4. Oxford: International Migration Institute.
- Viney, K., Johnson, P., Tagaro, M., Fanai, S., Linh, N. N., Kelly, P., ... & Sleight, A. (2014). Traditional healers and the potential for collaboration with the national tuberculosis programme in Vanuatu: results from a mixed methods study. *BMC Public Health*, 14(1), 1-9.
- Wang, S., Chen, X., Li, Y., Luu, C., Yan, R., & Madrisotti, F. (2021). 'I'm more afraid of racism than of the virus!': racism awareness and resistance among Chinese migrants and their descendants in France during the Covid-19 pandemic. *European Societies*, 23(1), 721-742.
- Warsal, D. (2009). *The Impact of Culture on Women's Leadership in Vanuatu, Secondary Schools*. [Master's thesis, University of Waikato]. Retrieved from Waikato Research Commons. <https://hdl.handle.net/10289/2776>

- Whatman, R., Bedford, C., & Bedford, R. (2017). RSE: the ghosts of schemes past, present and yet to come. In *invited paper for the RSE Employers' Conference, Blenheim* 6-7.
- White, R., & Wyn, J. (1998). Youth agency and social context. *Journal of Sociology*, 34(3), 314-327.
- Wickramasekara, P. (2002). *Asian labour migration: Issues and challenges in an era of globalization*. Geneva: International Labour Organization.
- Wickramasekara, P. (2011). *Circular migration: A triple win or a dead end?* Global Union Research Network. Geneva: International Labour Office.
- Wickramasekara, P. (2013). *Decent work, youth employment and migration in Asia*. International Migration Paper 13. International Labour Organization.
- Williams, A. (2011). *The Experiences of the Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme and ni-Vanuatu Temporary Workers in Te Puke, New Zealand* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Otago]. Retrieved from OUR Archives.
<http://hdl.handle.net/10523/1680>
- Williams, S. N., Armitage, C. J., Tampe, T., & Dienes, K. (2020). Public perceptions and experiences of social distancing and social isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic: A UK-based focus group study. *BMJ open*, 10(7), 1-8.
- Winters, L. A. (2016). *New Zealand's Recognised Seasonal Employer Scheme: An Object Lesson in Policy Making—But for Whom?* Institute of Development Studies.
- Yen, D. A. W., Cappellini, B., Yang, H. P., & Gupta, S. (2021). Coping with coping: International migrants' experiences of the Covid-19 lockdown in the UK. *British Journal of Management*, 32(4), 1219-1241.
- Zimmermann, K. F. (2014). *Circular Migration*. IZA World of Labor.
- Zohry, A. (2005). *Migration without borders: North Africa as a reserve of cheap labour for Europe*. *Migration without borders series*. Paris: UNESCO.