'TE UU NO TE AKAU ROA'

MIGRATION AND THE COOK ISLANDS

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Abstract

At the heart of the international migration debate is the movement of people from developing areas of origin to developed destinations. Conventional international migration approaches conceptualise these movements as responses to the inequalities that exist between these two poles as a result of the unequal process of development. The causes of migration are assumed to be factors related to development differentials between two countries. Therefore, the migrant is conceptualised as an automaton responding mechanically to forces beyond their control. Notions of human agency and the other non-economic factors that may influence movements are not included in explanations of the migration process.

More recent debates in migration challenge the assumptions of conventional international migration approaches. Central to this challenge is the notion that migration is a socially constructed process that is constituted by human beings. Proponents of this perspective call for the need to bring back the 'human factor' into migration research to provide a deeper understanding of migration.

Migration has always been an integral component of Cook Islands social and economic change throughout time. While Cook Islanders have always been mobile people, 1996 marked the beginning of the most recent significant population decline as a result of high levels of emigration. The significant population loss following 1996 has presented the Cook Islands with a 'migration problem' and raises issues of future population sustainability. At the heart of the Cook Islands 'migration problem is the need to understand why Cook Islanders decide to depart from, stay or return to the Cook Islands. The challenge therefore in this thesis is to understand the causes and effects of Cook Islands migration from the perspectives of Cook Islanders. This thesis is driven by the need to understand Cook Islands migration from the perspectives of the individual Cook Islander.

The perspectives of individual Cook Islanders, have demonstrated that Cook Islands international migration cannot be conceptualised within the narrow confines of the economic imageries of the conventional approaches. Instead, Cook Islands migration is dynamic process constituting of active agents interacting with various structures (both economic and non-economic) to produce Cook Islands international migration. The perspectives of Cook Islanders have illustrated the complexity of the international migration process. It is a process that is characterised by many flows, influenced by many factors, occurs for many reasons and has varying effects. This thesis presents the Cook Islanders story of international migration.

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Ata-wai-wolo Ata-wai-wolo Ata-wai-wolo e ye maneke

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

'Te uu' – an inspiration

'Te uu no te akau roa ka oki rai aia ki te akau roa'
(The parrotfish from the long reef it will return to the long reef)

Within the lagoon of the island of Aitutaki in the Cook Islands, there is a section of reef that is known as 'te akau roa' – the long reef. Throughout the ages, 'te akau roa' is well known amongst Aitutakians as the best fishing spot in the lagoon. It is home to a variety of fish but none more delectable than the 'uu' – the parrotfish. When the tide is right, there is an abundance of 'uu' at 'te akau roa'. But when the tide changes and the sea is rough the 'uu' swims away from 'te akau roa' to other sections of the reef where it waits till the tide is again right before returning to 'te akau roa'.

The ancestors in their wisdom noted similarities between the movements of the 'uu' and that of people. Firstly, the ancestors observed that in times of hardship or significant change to people's environment and circumstances, they were inclined to migrate away from the islands. When conditions on the islands improved, like the 'uu', they would return. Secondly, the ancestors also understood that despite departing, people maintained a sense belonging to the islands from whence they departed. It was this sense of belonging that kept people connected to the islands and this would ensure that at some stage of their lives, they would return, hence coining the metaphor 'te uu no te akau roa, ka oki rai aia ki te akau roa' – the parrotfish from the long reef, it will return to the long reef. This metaphor is still widely used in the Cook Islands today when referring to the migration of Cook Islanders. It is how Cook Islanders define the meaning of migration and has been my inspiration in trying to understand the Cook Islands migration process.

An academic and personal journey

As a Cook Islander, I have always been surrounded by the flows of people and mobility has been an intrinsic part of my life as with the lives of all Cook Islanders. Growing up in the Cook Islands, I have observed the movements of people away from the islands and sometimes back again and many times back and forth between the islands and the metropolitan Pacific Rim countries of New Zealand and Australia. I have also participated in this process, leaving home to attend university in 1988 and then returning to the Cook Islands in 1991, and again departing in 2005, once more to seek higher education.

Prior to my coming to New Zealand in 2005 to attend Massey University, I was telling a friend about my intentions and she said, "te uu no te akau roa, ka oki rai aia ki te akau roa" – the parrotfish from the long reef, it will return to the long reef. I had heard this metaphor many times before but at this particular moment (because it was used to refer to myself) I was intrigued by it and sought to understand it better. In doing so, I wondered whether Cook Islanders migrated away from the islands like the 'uu', as a result of tides – where movements are dictated by factors outside the control of the individual. I also pondered as to why Cook Islands migrants returned to the Cook Islands to live after many years overseas. Finally, I was curious as to how Cook Islanders perceived the effects of their migration on the country. It is from these trains of thought that the main challenge for this thesis is derived from.

At the outset of this thesis, I was convinced that like the movements of the 'uu', migration was dictated by factors outside the control of the individuals concerned. However, as this thesis journey progressed, I realised that too often generalisations and assumptions are made about the causes and effects of migration without actually gaining the perspectives of those directly involved in it. Those who make up the Cook Islands migration process are not confined to only the emigrants and returned migrants but also those potential migrants who remain at home. Thus, the challenge for me in this thesis is to understand the

causes and effects of Cook Islands migration from the perspective of Cook Islanders.

The experiences of field research and my own reflections of my migration actions have made me appreciate that individuals are not passive but active agents within the migration process. Therefore, I am motivated to portray them as such. In many respects this thesis is an academic journey as well as a personal one.

Research Rationale

Migration is a phenomenon as old as humanity itself. "Of this fact there is no better proof than the spread of human beings to all corners of the earth. A careful examination of virtually any historical era reveals a consistent propensity towards geographic mobility among men and women, who are driven to wander by diverse motives, but nearly always with some idea of material improvement." (Massey et.al, 1998:1) It is this concept of 'material improvement' that has dominated the international migration debate.

At the heart of the contemporary debate on migration are population movements across national borders – international migration in particularly movements from developing to developed countries. The significant flows of population from developing to developed countries have provided both positive and negative and often contradictory impacts for sending countries. These impacts have been predominantly viewed thorough the lens of developmental economists. International migration has for some countries provided a 'safety valve' for overpopulation and the export of labour in return for receipt of remittances. The consequences of migration from this point of view has largely been depicted as negative, with the focus being on 'brain drain', further dependency on remittances, break down of social structures and traditions and so forth. For small countries with small populations, international migration results in depopulation affecting all aspects of society. Indeed, much of the research on international

migration has focused on the question of why people migrate and the consequences of their movements.

The conventional approaches to the causes of international migration are largely drawn from dominant development paradigms and presents explanations of the process at both macro and micro levels of analysis. The functionalist perspective to international migration is a micro approach in the sense that the cause of international migration is seen as the result of voluntarist rational economic decision making by the migrant influenced by the economic disparities and unequal development between the sending and receiving countries. The structuralist perspective is focuses on macro level factors; the cause of international migration centres on differences in economies and development levels between the developing periphery sending and the developed core receiving countries. These perspectives have implications for dependency, the international division of labour and the transfer of labour and capital. More integrative approaches have attempted to integrate the micro and macro perspectives by using the household, systems and networks as units of analysis. From this standpoint, migration provides a strategy to improve the economic and material well-being of the household and the network. The rationale of integrative approaches has implications for dependency on remittances, social stratification, class relations and the formation of transnational communities.

Although the functionalist perspective of international migration highlights individual rational economic behaviour, on the whole, the causal factors of the process from the view of dominant approaches are highly structural. Recent shifts in migration research have recognised the complexity of the migration process and the importance of qualitative methods in unraveling many aspects of migration that have not previously been articulated by either conventional or quantitative approaches to the process. In particular, this shift in migration approach has emphasized the importance of qualitative methods to provide

understanding of the individual's agency and thus highlighting the inadequacies of and challenging dominant approaches to international migration.

This shift in migration approach is evident in research regarding Pacific Islands migration. Pacific Island migration research illustrates the significance of qualitative research in elucidating the multifaceted nature of the process. It reveals a process that is not merely dictated by economistic reactions to push and pull; but rather a phenomenon that results from a combination of individual agency and structures. In particular it emphasizes the significance of non-economic structures associated with Pacific Islands culture in influencing migration actions. By invoking and exploiting structures Pacific Islanders knowingly produce not only the Pacific Island migration process but also reinforce these very structures in a recurring manner. However, despite the significance of agency apparent in the Pacific Islands migration process, its theorisation has predominantly remained entrenched within the dimensions of the household, family or network; rather than from an individual perspective.

This thesis is driven by the need to understand migration from the individual's perspective. This is by no means an emphasis on the individual at the cost of the social, economic or political circumstances, but more exactly to understand the individual within these different contexts.

It is based on the notion that ultimately the decision to migrate or not is that of the individual. This decision incorporates the total environment (the global, local and household dimensions) of the individual, representing a culmination of knowledge against a background of values, beliefs, aspirations, goals, emotions and personality; illuminating both the logic of individual action and the effects of structural factors within which peoples' lives evolve.

Incorporating all of the above factors in migration research raises the issue of a framework that can adequately provide understanding of the international

migration process. Giddens's (1984) structuration theory and its focus on the recursive relationship between knowing and capable human beings (or agency) and wider structures provides this opportunity. According to the structuration theory, as a social process, migration is constituted by agents (human beings), interacting with structures (Giddens, 1984). In emphasizing the agency of the individual, the structuration theory offers a means of understanding people's own formulations of their situation and how they come to make the decisions they make. The structuration framework presents the migrant not as product of materialism derived from his or her location in the global political-economic periphery, but an active agent interacting with structures to produce the migration process. Therefore, this thesis draws upon the structuration theory to elucidate the agency of the individual and the structures that influence the migration decisions and actions of those that constitute the international migration process.

The Cook Islands as a Research Context

Before explaining the choice of the Cook Islands as the research context for this thesis, a brief introduction to the Cook Islands is appropriate.

Geography

The Cook Islands comprises fifteen islands spread out over an exclusive economic zone of about two million square kilometers in the South Pacific. A map of the Cook Islands group, together with its location in relation to Australia and New Zealand, is contained in Appendix 1. The islands of the Cook Islands can be separated into three main categories: the Northern group, the Southern group and Rarotonga.

There are seven islands in the Northern group: Penrhyn, Rakahanga, Manihiki, Pukapuka, Nassau, Palmerston and Suwarrow and are all coral atolls. Being coral atolls, these islands have a limited resource base and because they are low lying, are extremely vulnerable to cyclones and droughts. The islands of the Southern

group are Aitutaki, Manuae, Mitiaro, Takutea, Atiu, Mauke, and Mangaia. Manuae and Takutea are coral atoll islands and are uninhabited. Mangaia, Mauke, Mititaro and Atiu are high-elevated reef islands. The centers of these islands are fertile, surrounded by jagged, dead coral – the 'makatea', remnants of the former reef. Aitutaki on the other hand is cross between a volcanic and coral atoll island. Its soils are fertile enabling a variety of crops to grow. Rarotonga, a high volcanic island with fertile soils, it is the capital and the administrative and center of the Cook Islands.

People and Population

The indigenous inhabitants are Cook Islands Maori. The resident population for all the islands at the 2001 Census was 15,017. This is a decline from the 1986 Census, where the resident population was 18,071. (Cook Islands Statistics Office, 2001) In 2003, figures show that the resident population of the Cook Islands had again declined to 13,900 (Office of the Prime Minister, 2003).

Government

The Cook Islands has been a self-governing nation in free association with New Zealand since 1965. As a result of this special relationship, Cook Islanders are citizens of New Zealand. The Cook Islands Head of State is Queen Elizabeth of England, represented in the Cook Islands by an appointed Queen's Representative. The Cook Islands Parliament has 24 elected members. Rarotonga has 10 members of parliament while the rest of the islands elect the remaining 14. General elections are held every four years with Cook Islanders over the age of 18 eligible to vote. In addition to the central government, the outer islands (those outside Rarotonga) operate local government under statutory powers devolved by Parliament to local councils. Each island and each of the three districts of Rarotonga elects a local council and a Mayor. An Island Secretary manages the local government in the outer islands.

Economy

The largest industry in the Cook Islands is tourism. Visitor arrivals have increased from under 50,000 in the 1990s to 83,000 in 2002 (Cook Islands Statistics Office, 2005). Tourism is largely based in Rarotonga with a growing market in Aitutaki and small operations on other southern group islands. Tourism (and its related activities such as transport, entertainment, and souvenir industries) is currently the country's main source of income of employment. Other commercial activities include the offshore banking, the black pearl and more recently longline fishing industries. Again, apart from the black pearl industry, which is based in the islands Manihiki and Penrhyn, the other industries are based in the capital Rarotonga.

Like its Pacific Island neighbours, the Cook Islands are clearly a small and undiversified economy within a globalised market place. These characteristics provide the backdrop for the study of Cook Islands migration.

Why study Cook Islands migration?

In 1996, the Cook Islands embarked on an economic reform program instigated by its international creditors in response to debts and economic crisis. This resulted in many Cook Islanders leaving the islands. In subsequent years the Cook Islands have experienced continuous population decline with increased migration to New Zealand and Australia. As a small country, this has great implications at economic, social and political levels.

At the National Forum held in November 2003 in Rarotonga, participants from both the private and public sectors voiced concerns over the decline in population, in particular the issue of the diminishing workforce and the importation of foreign labour. It was established at that meeting that the migration issue was of crucial importance to the future development of the Cook Islands. The National Forum called for a population and migration study to be carried out to determine why Cook Islanders were migrating and the impact of migration on the country. To

date this has yet to be carried out. Furthermore, in 2003, the Cook Islands Government launched the 'Oki Mai' Relocation Programme at the Pasifika Festival in Auckland. This was followed by various meetings and presentations conducted by officials from the Cook Islands Government in New Zealand centres where Cook Islanders congregate such as Auckland, Wellington, Tokoroa, and Christchurch. These meetings highlighted the issue of out-migration from the Cook Islands and pleaded with Cook Islanders to return to the homeland. This program so far has had very minimal success.

Migration is a major concern for the Cook Islands. With the significant decline in population, increasingly the future of the country is dependent on coming up with solutions for the perceived 'migration problem' highlighting the need to incorporate migration into the development agendas of the country.

The reasons and possible solutions for the so-called Cook Islands 'migration problem' are likely to be gained through an understanding of the Cook Islands migration process from the perspective of Cook Islanders. Appreciating these factors may provide for the possibility of long lasting policy solutions to the 'migration problem' and some direction for the future development issues of the Cook Islands.

The fieldwork conducted for this thesis is divided into three parts. Firstly, it will examine migration from Rarotonga to Auckland, New Zealand. Secondly, it will investigate return migration to Rarotonga. Thirdly, it will consider the decision making of non-migrants from Rarotonga and selected outer islands. This research focuses on the period immediately following Cook Islands Economic Reform Program in 1996, to 2005. The decision to conduct research in this context arises firstly, from the fact that Rarotonga is the departure and entry point for Cook Islands international migration. Secondly, Auckland has been predominantly, the main destination for the majority of Cook Islands migrants. Thirdly, return migration to the Cook Islands has been predominantly to Rarotonga where the

majority of the population is concentrated. The focus on the period 1996 to 2005 hopes to explain the tendency for migration rather than just the volume and timing. It is an attempt to move away from conceptualisation of the process based on episodes or incidences of negative conditions in an objective environment, and seek explanation of migration in the context of ongoing aspects of Cook Islands lives and livelihoods.

Research Objectives

This thesis emerges from my reaction to the inadequacies of the dominant approaches of international migration in providing explanations of the process. As this study progressed, I have realised that a dynamic social process such as migration cannot be conceptualised by simply focusing on macro economic/political structural factors, and that comprehending the agency of the individual is crucial to providing a deeper understanding of migration. This thesis intends to examine the causes and effects of Cook Islands international migration from the perspective of Cook Islanders. This has led me to define my research objectives:

- to examine the agency of individual Cook Islanders in determining migration actions;
- to determine the structures that impact on the migration decisions and actions of Cook Islanders;
- to discover the causes of Cook Islands migration and its effects from the perspective of Cook Islanders
- and to consider the link between Cook Islands migration and development.

By examining international migration from the perspective of those involved in the migration process, I strove to obtain a deeper understanding of the Cook Islands migration. The perspective of the individual has revealed much. In particular, it has emphasized the agency of the individual that makes the migration decision - a decision that is influenced by structures. Therefore migration is the result of both agency and structure. This allows the individual to explain individual behaviour in relation to structural forces. This is an attempt to

give Cook Islanders a 'voice' and the recognition that they are not objects dictated by structures, but are interpretive subjects in their own mobility.

Thesis structure and Chapter Outline

The perspective of the individual is crucial in providing a deeper understanding not only Cook Islands migration but also development issues related to the process – this is the foundation of this thesis. Chapter 1 has launched the research by providing a brief introduction into the main themes, context and objectives of this thesis.

Chapter 2 provides a review of international migration literature. The discussion on the dominant approaches to international migration demonstrates the inadequacies of these perspectives in capturing the complexity of the migration process. This chapter emphasizes the neglect of agency and other non-economic structures in dominant migration explanations. In line with more recent shifts in migration research, the structuration theory is proposed as an alternative approach to understanding international migration. This chapter will argue that the structuration theory acknowledges both agency and structure. Its focus on qualitative methodologies provides a means of incorporating the different aspects related to migration decision-making and behaviour into analysis of the process. Additionally, the structuration approach also provides an alternative way of comprehending the relationship between migration and development.

The Pacific Islands migration literature will be reviewed in Chapter 3 to illustrate the complexity of international migration and the fallacy of conceptualising the process within purely economic imaginaries. This chapter will demonstrate that the Pacific Islands migration process is the result of the interactions between knowing and capable agents and structures. The significance of culture in determining migration actions will also be highlighted. The review of Pacific Islands migration literature is a testament that the migration process is the result of the interaction between knowing capable agents who are knowledgeable about

themselves and the various structures that influence their decisions and actions. Again the structuration theory is drawn upon as a means of illuminating this recurring relationship. This chapter again stresses the importance of theorising and understanding the agency of the individual in migration research.

Chapter 4 will provide a brief background of the recent population trends and dynamics in the Cook Islands. It will highlight the current issue of population decline faced by the Cook Islands and its devastating effects on the population sustainability of the country.

Chapter 5 will explain and provide justification for the methods that have been chosen to gather the primary data for this research. This chapter will outline how the fieldwork was conducted and provide a reflection on the fieldwork experience.

The findings from the primary research for this thesis will be presented in Chapter 6. This thesis recognizes that the Cook Islands migration process does not only include those who have moved either away from or back to the islands but also those who have remained in the country. Therefore, Chapter 6 will be divided into four main sections. The first section will examine the Cook Islands migration process from the perspective of those who have departed from the islands from 1996 to 2005. It will examine the migration actions and perceptions of the emigrants. The key issues that will be discussed are, the migration decisions; the reasons for migration; choice of destination; the effects, satisfaction and dissatisfaction resulting from migration, intentions of return and the emigrants thoughts on migration, development and the Cook Islands. The second section will focus on the perspective of return migrants. Like the previous chapter, the key issues that will be examined are the return migration decisions; the context in which the decisions are made and the reasons for return migration; and the impact of the decisions on returned migrants' lives. It also considers how return migrants perceive their contribution and impact on the development of the Cook Islands thus, providing an insight into the relationship between migration and

development from the perspective of the returnee. The third section will examine the Cook Islands migration process from the perspective of those who have remained in the country since 1996. It will consider their perception of the causes of migration, the reasons why they did not migrate and their views on migration and development in the Cook Islands. In the final section, the need for migration studies to take agency seriously. The interactions between individuals and structures that aid in turning migration potential into migration action will be highlighted.

Chapter 7 uses the voices (narratives) of those researched to discuss the common perceptions regarding Cook Islands migration. These perceptions highlight the Cook Islands 'migration problem' and its effects on the country. The issues involved in solving this problem are examined demonstrating the unresolved relationship between migration and development.

To conclude the thesis, Chapter 8 will review the arguments made in this thesis. These arguments will be placed in the context of the literature and revisits key themes in understanding the causes and effects of international migration. A reflection of the thesis experience is provided in conclusion.

CHAPTER 2
THEORISING INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION

Introduction

The literature on international migration addresses the challenging task of conceptualising the causes and effects of the movement of people from developing to developed countries. Authors have utilised different theoretical frameworks to approach international migration. As a result, "a fragmented set of theories have developed largely in isolation from one another" and have been drawn upon to explain international migration (Massey, 1993:432). While each of these theories offers explanation for part of the dynamics of migration, none exclusively can conceptualise the process as a whole. This raises the issue of an approach that can adequately explain and incorporate the complexity and multifaceted nature of international migration.

The first section of this chapter, discusses the conventional approaches to explaining international migration. Conventional theories of migration recognise distinct perspectives of international migration – the functionalist and structuralist approaches. However, because of the developmentalist orientation of both these approaches, they ultimately reduce migration to the movement of labour responding to wage differential or inequality between the source and destination countries caused by a difference in levels of economic development. Essentially the underlying causes of migration are perceived as the result of structural economic/political differences between origin and destination countries. The effects of migration have predominantly concentrated on economic benefits and detriments resulting from the movements of labour on national economies. Consequently, the agency of the migrant is neglected and insufficient attention is paid to the non-economic factors that may determine migration (Arango, 2000; Goss and Linquist, 1995; Papastergiadis, 2000).

More integrative approaches to international migration will be discussed in the second section of this chapter. These integrative approaches incorporate into migration analysis the household, systems and migrant networks. In turn, this has lead to the emergence of concern with transnationalism and transnational communities. This section argues that, despite these integrative approaches offering invaluable insights into some of the dynamics of international migration, they are treated as causal merely because of their empirical existence (Goss and Lindquist, 1995). As a result, there is a failure to adequately theorise the interaction between individuals and structures that are essential for supporting the assumptions of these integrative approaches.

Both conventional and integrative approaches to international migration highlight the need to incorporate the agency of individuals in migration analysis. The third section of this chapter argues that the above approaches predominantly conceptualise migrants as objects within the migration process. It argues that more recent shifts in migration literature have highlighted the need for the agency to be brought to the forefront of migration analysis - to theorise the agency of the individual and how it interacts with other structures to produce the migration process. It argues that a (re)conceptualisation of migration is required, one that understands the importance of agency, and where structure and agency can both be incorporated into migration analysis (Findlay and Li, 1999).

The fourth section of this chapter, proposes Giddens's (1984) structuration theory as an alternative framework that can incorporate both agency and structure into migration analysis and that better captures the complexity of the process. At the core of the structuration theory is the notion that the individual is an active agent who is knowledgeable about him or herself and structures in which his or her life evolves. This allows the migrant to be conceived not merely as on object in the migration process but rather as an interpretative subject and an active agent. This section provides a brief discussion of the certain structuration theory concepts that

provide a deeper understanding of the migration process and also the relationship between migration and development.

Conventional Explanations of International Migration

The Functionalist Approach

Functional models of population movement are based on modernisation theory and neoclassical development economics. These models conceptualise migration as the means by which surplus labour from rural agricultural economy is transferred to the urban sector, providing for economic growth and a psychological reorientation of the migrant in the process (Lewis, 1954; Ranis & Fei, 1964; Zelinsky, 1971). The explanations for migration are based on either the general socioeconomic characteristics of source and destination societies or individual perception and decision-making. This is a micro approach in the sense that it assumes that the social process is the sum of individual economic rational calculations (Massey et al., 1993). The approach assumes that each migrant makes rational decisions to maximise their utility on the basis of available knowledge of objective conditions (Todaro, 1969; 1976). Thus labour moves in search of higher wages from areas of capital scarcity and labour abundance to areas of labour scarcity, or from rural to urban areas and from developing countries to developed countries. International migration is therefore a form of investment in human capital (Massey et al., 1993). Functionalists predict that human capital characteristics that raise the potential benefits of migration, and individual, social, or technological factors that lower costs, will lead to increased migration. This increase in migration will result in competition for employment in the destination country whereby eventually depressing wages, while remittances together with the return of skilled migrants to the source area will stimulate economic growth, eventually eliminating spatial inequality and the wage differential that drives migration.

Rural-urban and international migrations have increased in many contexts despite high levels of unemployment and underemployment in urban-industrial

economies (Goss & Linquist, 1995). Nor has economic development of source areas occurred as predicted by the approach (Kearney, 1986). Attempts to salvage this model propose that individuals respond rationally to perceived differentials in wages and the expected probability of securing employment, rather than actual opportunities, hence migration occurring despite limited opportunities for wage labour (Todaro, 1970). According to Kearney (1986:335-336) although this behavioural alteration of normative theory makes sense, it admits the non-equilibrating tendencies in migration and incorporates imperfect information and supra-individual decision-making. Thus the model loses its theoretical distinctiveness and explanatory value.

By categorising the migrant as labour power, the functionalist approach disregards gender, ethnicity and social class, factors significant in the identity, personality and behaviour of the individual (Cadwallader, 1992 cited in Goss & Lindquist, 1995:320). The homogeneous categorisation of migrants also neglects to offer explanation for other dominant forms of contemporary migration such as illegal migrants, and the movement of asylum seekers and refugees. Similarly, the tendency for migrants to follow earlier patterns of movements, demonstrates the persistence of historical links forged under colonialism rather than the economic calculation to move to the nearest job. Furthermore, the functionalist approach fails to acknowledge that politics also strongly conditions the intensity and direction of any migratory flow. As Papastergiadis (2000) argues, although economics may influence many decisions to migrate, political factors are usually the condition that allows migration to materialise. The focus on economic factors in functionalist explanations mechanically reduces the determinants of migration and downplays non-economic factors and the existentialism of the migrant (Arango, 2000).

The Structuralist Approach

The structuralist approach explains migration in terms of the exploitative political-economic relationships between sending and receiving societies.

Migration literature generally identifies two closely related but distinct forms of this approach – the dual labour market theory and the world systems theory. These theories are derived from neo-Marxist development principles of dependency and underdevelopment (Breman, 1985; Portes, 1978; Safa, 1982).

At the core of the dual market labour theory is the notion that migration is the outcome of the uneven spatial development resulting from colonial and neocolonial relationships between developed capitalist economies and the underdeveloped peripheries (De Haan, 1999). In this light, migration is not only a response to the inequalities resulting from underdevelopment but is also a social process by which it is reinforced (Goss & Lindquist, 1995). The process of underdevelopment creates the dual market at the global level (Piore, 1979). Piore (1979) argues that the dual labour market is sustained by the structural labour demand of the modern economies in destination areas. This leads to the stratification of the labour market where migrants are predominately in the secondary labour sector, which is characterised by low wages, low status and undesirable working conditions.

Accordingly, the dual market labour theory does not necessarily provide explanation of the causes of international migration but highlights the importance of structural demand for foreign labour. This is inherent in the economic structure of contemporary developed societies that demands and allows international migration of labour to occur, initiated by recruitment policies of employers and governments in destination areas. According to Arango (2000:290) because it is demand-driven, it excludes 'push' factors therefore explaining only a small part of reality. Essentially, this approach neglects the fact that the majority of migrants move on their own initiative rather than to fill specific job vacancies.

The world systems theory again focuses on the unequal relationship between developed capitalist 'centre' countries and underdeveloped/dependent 'periphery' countries, and the historical relationship between the formerly colonised and the

colonisers, (Breman, 1985; Portes, 1978; Safa, 1982). The thrust of this theory is the structure of the world market – notably the "penetration of capitalist economic relations into peripheral, non-capitalist societies [which] creates a mobile population that is prone to migrate abroad" (Massey et al., 1993:444). International migration is generated as land, raw materials, and labour in areas of origin is drawn into the world market economy and traditional systems are disrupted. The process is further encouraged by the advancement of transportation and technology. In this light, international migration is inevitable; migrants are relocated by the restless drives of capitalism and thus have limited choice in the migration decision (Papastergiadis, 2000). Because of its focus on a macro perspective, this theory fails to acknowledge the importance of micro-level aspects such as individualism, family, gender and culture and the influence of these factors on the migration decision.

The macro level of analysis adopted by the structuralist approach assumes that the real force driving migration is predominantly external to the actions of the migrants. Whether the migrant is being 'pulled' by the structural demands for cheap labour or the unrelenting drives of capitalism, his or her agency in the process is rendered insignificant and ultimately dictated by structural forces (Papastergiadis, 2000). Thus, the structuralist perspective also fails to incorporate into explanations of international migration other micro-level factors that impact on migration.

The Migration and Development Relationship – A Problem of Capturing Realities

Because of the developmentalist orientation of functionalist and structuralist approaches, the frame of reference is national economic development. This not only assumes universality and homogeneous economic behaviour of people but also operates on the conceptions of a dual economy. The dual economy conceives the economic and social differences between two opposite poles – the developed (centre) and the developing/underdeveloped (periphery). The

developing/underdeveloped areas of origin and developed destinations are assumed by these approaches as unproblematic stages upon which migration is played out (Parnwell, 1993). Migration is therefore a feature and consequence of the development process where people are assumed to move in an automatic fashion from the developing/underdeveloped periphery to the developed centre. As a result these approaches conceive of the migrant as a labourer, an object in the process of economic development, or as a victim of transformations in a local economy. The functionalist approach assumes that individuals are merely economically rational beings whose behaviour is determined largely by economic variables. The structural perspective also objectifies migrants by conceptualising migrants as labourers who respond to economic signals such as the uneven penetration of capitalism. Consequently, the common themes in these approaches are the broader political-economic conditions producing migration rather than the migrants themselves. Criticisms of the approaches have focused upon the fallacy of the idea that a phenomenon as complex as migration could have a single cause. As a result analyses frequently confuse the explanation of migration in general with causation of one movement or type of movement in particular. The contradictions to the functionalist and structuralist approaches draws attention to the fact that yet another process or set of processes must be occurring within overall migration practises.

More Integrative Approaches

Attempts to broaden explanations of international migration have resulted with more integrative approaches. These integrative approaches have attempted to link different levels of social organization and analyse migration characteristics simultaneously from both the sending and receiving areas while considering the historical and contemporary processes (Faist, 1997; Massey, 1990).

New Economics Approach

The 'new economics approach' for example, shifts the focus of migration from the individual in microeconomic functional approach to one of mutual

interdependence. Migration is viewed as a family, household, or community strategy to diversify sources of income, minimize risks to the household, and overcome barriers to credit and capital (Stark, 1984; 1991). This does not suggest that the behaviour of individuals should be ignored, but rather that it should be studied in the context of the 'group' (Stark, 1991). Stark (1984; 1991) argues that international migration is a deliberate means to enhance the household's productivity endeavors and increase income relative to others in the community by sending members abroad who will in turn remit earnings back to those at home. Indeed much of the literature on international migration has supported this theoretical view, (Fletcher and Taylor, 1992 on Mexico; Root and DeJong, 1991 on the Phillipines; Thomas-Hope, 1986 on the Caribbean; and Massey, 1987). Lucas and Stark (1985:1495) highlight that remittances are part of a mutually beneficial arrangement between the migrant and his or her family at home. This clearly challenges the economic theory assumptions. As noted by Lucas and Stark (1985), if migrants' movements are solely designed to maximize income then logically they should endeavor to settle abroad permanently, cutting economic ties to their original communities. Arango (2000) observed the inapplicability of the new economics approach to other dominant forms of international migration such as refugees, asylum seekers, illegal migrants' and in particular the movement of complete families. Such movements contradict the assumptions of the new economics approach.

The Systems Approach

The 'systems approach' focuses on both the macro and micro linkages between places linked by migration (Fawcett & Arnold, 1987; Kritz & Zlotnik, 1992). Macro level relations include political systems, economic dependency/dominance, immigration policy, and cultural/linguistic associations. On the micro level interactions include friendship and kinship resulting from the geographic dispersion of populations. Migration is conceived as a chronological process comprising of discrete phases of decision, transition, and adaptation by the individual made within the context of general political economic and specific

social relationships at each stage (Fawcett & Arnold, 1987). The dynamics of migration moves from a consideration of movement as linear, unidirectional, push-pull, cause-effect movement to notions that emphasize migration as circular, interdependent, progressively complex and self-modifying systems in which the effect of changes in one part can be traced through the whole of the systems (Faist, 2000). This explains in part the cumulative causation of migration. Despite the promise of the 'systems approach' as a framework that enables integration of theoretical explanations and all the actors relevant in the process of migration (Kritz, Lim and Zlotnik, 1992), according to Arango (2000:292) it is "no more than a desideratum which has never been fulfilled" and has hardly gone beyond the identification of international migration, at a purely descriptive level.

The Networks Approach

The 'networks approach' is linked to the concept of social capital. Massey (1998) argues that in the process of international migration, access to social capital is achieved through membership in networks and social institutions, which is then converted into other forms of capital to improve or maintain position in society. According to Massey (1993:448), "these migrant networks are sets of interpersonal ties that connect migrants, former migrants, and non-migrants in origin and destination areas through ties of kinship, friendship and shared community origin."

The migrant network serves to reduce the costs and risks of international migration and thus increases the likelihood of movement. Networks are cumulative in nature, as they grow larger and denser with every move hence perpetuating international migration. All these interrelationships are connected to one another over space and time and encapsulated under the rubric of transnationalism (McHugh, 2000:72). Transnationalism is defined by Duany (2002:357) as the "establishment of frequent and intense social, economic, political and cultural links between two or more countries." This definition of transnationalism deconstructs migration as a one-way journey making it distinct

from conventional migration concepts (Portes et al., 1999 cited in Borovnik, 2003:26).

Where is the individual's agency?

These integrative approaches identify the connections between the macro and micro levels of international migration analysis (Faist, 1997). The units of analysis are the household, spaces connected by migration, and migrant networks. All are empirical objects lying somewhere between the individual and society.

With regard to the household as a unit of analysis, Goss and Lindquist (1995) noted that while the household provides a means of bridging the gap between social and individual levels of analysis. The household as a unit of analysis in the 'new economics approach' perceives migration as the result of "very precise calculations" (Guest, 1989 cited in Lindquist and Goss, 1995:327). In effect the rational calculating individual is merely replaced with the rational calculating household. The focus on remittances in the new economics approach again reduces the causes of migration action to economic behaviour. As such, it repeats the "errors of voluntarism in neoclassical approaches to social explanation" (Goss and Lindquist, 1995:327) by downplaying non-economic determinants of migration and the existentialism of the migrant.

The framework for analysis in the 'systems approach' includes networks, intermediary institutions, and other macro dimensions such as the state (Kritz, Lim and Zlotnik, 1992). Despite the fact that this approach incorporates into analysis the structures that enable or allow migration to occur, it fails to clearly articulate the agency of individuals' within the system.

While the concept of networks is able to incorporate the individual and conventional units of household, family and community into a single analytical framework, it emphasizes the naive conceptualisation of rural/peasant

communities in developing societies consistent with dominant development literature. The network is assumed to be operating in idealistic harmonious nature (Goss and Lindquist, 1995:329). The agency of the individual is therefore rendered secondary to the dynamics of the network.

Goss and Lindquist (1995: 330-331) argue these perspectives are treated as a causal category by virtue merely of their empirical existence without adequate theorisation of their logical and structural characteristics. As a result these integrative approaches do not theorise the interplay between individual agency and the household, system or the network that is propositioned to build a dynamic momentum into international migratory flow (Faist, 2000:14). In Goss and Lindquist's (1995:331) opinion, "the problem that the integrative approaches attempt to resolve, that is the contradiction between functionalist and structuralist perspectives results not merely from different levels of analysis, nor even from ideological predilection, but from an inability of theories to coherently articulate structure and agency." It is unlikely that structure and agency can be coherently articulated if the agency of the migrant is rendered secondary.

Agency in migration studies

The conventional approaches to international migration present a one-sided view of migration decision-making. While each of the international migration approaches discussed above presents theoretical frameworks that contribute to explanation of part of the migration process, none in isolation makes provision for conceptualising all relevant components of the process. However, including these approaches into popular migration debate allows understanding and acceptance of the importance of the perspective of the individual to gain a deeper understanding of the international migration process. This requires a shift from conceptualising individuals as objects responding to broader forces to interpretive subjects that are active agents within migration processes. This position has caused lively debate in current migration literature (see Findlay and Graham, 1991; Halfacree and Boyle, 1993; Skeldon, 1995; White and Jackson, 1995; Boyle, Halfacree and

Robinson, 1998). According to Findlay and Graham (1991) and White and Jackson (1995), much is to be understood about migration from an open, engaged consideration of social theory. White and Jackson (1995) argue that migration analysis is enriched by broadening focus to consider the perspectives that individuals hold about the migration process. They argue that migrants are not the product of the natural evolution of economic processes but rather that migration is socially constructed. This supports Chapman's (1985:2) observation that "[t]he world of individual and social experience – in this case mobility and identity – is not a natural, physical, or mechanical object but rather a human construction." By recognizing migration as a socially constructed process, it is argued that the emphasis in migration research requires a shift from macro and quantitative to micro and qualitative levels of analysis in order to comprehend the realities of those involved in the migration process (Lawson, 2000; McHugh, 2000). This shift necessitates a rethinking in the way that migration is conceived – where the agency of the individual is significant and where the interactions between the individual and structures can be articulated.

Interacting Agency and Structure – The Structuration Theory

The structuration theory developed by Anthony Giddens (1984) examines the recursive relationship between knowing and capable human beings (agency) and wider structures – a relationship which Giddens terms 'the duality of structure'. The structuration theory is admittedly and has been criticised as being abstract and complex (see Philo and Sadler, 1991; Craib, 1992; Cloke, Cassell, 1993; Loyal, 2003 for further discussion). However, Giddens proposes that structuration is not a decidedly coherent theory but an approach containing several different concepts which operate as tools to open and elucidate social life and argues that it should be applied as such. Giddens (1984:288) suggests that in applying these concepts, researchers should elucidate individual's 'frames of meaning' to provide a sophisticated account of individual motivations. In doing so, this will demonstrate not only the agency of the individual but also how he or

she interacts with various structures to produce actions which in turn produces social processes.

In terms of migration, Giddens opens up the possibility of migration analysis to breakout of the narrow conception of migrants as independent actors behaving in a voluntarist fashion or as puppets whose actions are entirely determined by structural mechanisms (Findlay and Li, 1999). Instead, migration can be conceived as a social process that results form the constant interactions between individuals who determine their specific behaviours and actions and at the same time are embedded in wider structures that in part define the conditions of their existence. Understanding this process starts with comprehension of 'agency'.

The Concept of Agency

Craib (1992:35) explained Giddens's concept of agency as, "[m]y action is rooted in my knowledge of myself and the world, and the rationalization is the causal expression of that." This illustrates that at the heart of the structuration theory's concept of agency is the freewill and knowledgeability of the individual not only of him or herself but also of the situations or circumstances in which he or she is situated in. This suggests that the way in which the individual formulates decisions and actions is in response to this knowledge of the 'self' and the situations that he or she is situated in and should be examined.

Giddens (1984) argues that each agent (or individual) possesses practical, discursive and unconscious levels of consciousness. At each of these levels, the agent is knowledgeable about the actions that he or she undertakes. At the practical level of consciousness, this knowledge is tacit, where it entails that agents know how to act. The agent also possesses a level of discursive consciousness. This enables agents to provide explanations for actions and connotes the possibility of changing patterns of action. Discursive consciousness therefore refers to the understanding or knowledge, which the agent achieves by reflecting upon his or her actions through describing, monitoring and giving

rational accounts for actions. Giddens also advocates that not all motives for action can be found at the conscious level. Agents also operate on an unconscious level, which involves actions caused by unconscious motives. Motives are seen as the agents 'wants' and they refer to potential for action rather than action itself (Craib, 1992). These 'wants' draws attention to the agent's internal conditioning factors that influences action, such as, aspirations, ambitions and goals of the individual that provide overall plans or programs for action.

The structuration theory therefore, proposes that the vast majority of actions are intentional. However, Giddens also argues that intentional actions produce unintentional consequences. These unintentional consequences become the basis for new actions, emphasizing the reproductive nature of action. Giddens in emphasizing the intent and the reproductive nature of action argues that action must be seen as a process rather than combined discrete acts. This process is characterised by the constant reflexive monitoring of action, rationalisation of action and motivation for action.

The reflexive monitoring of action is a routine feature of human conduct. The agent continually evaluates what he or she does, how others react, the circumstances under which the action takes place and the setting of the interaction. The rationalisation of action is the process whereby the agent maintains a tacit understanding of the grounds for his or her activities – the reasons for action. Giddens maintains that reasons should be considered as causes for action. He argues that "...reasons are causes...the rationalization of action are causally implicated, in the continuation of day-to-day actions (Giddens, 1984:345). In contrast, the concept of motivation for action refers more to the potential for action. According to Craib (1992:37-38), motives predominantly occur in special situations, where, for example, everyday flow of activities is threatened or breached.

When applied to international migration, the concept of agency gives ownership of the migration decision to the individual – ultimately it is the individual who chooses to migrate. Migration action results from both knowledge of the 'self' and of the 'world' (as suggested by Craib, 1992) The knowledge of the self builds into migration research an awareness of personality, personal experiences, responsibilities, the freewill of the individual and also issues of social identity. While knowledge of the 'world' implies the influence of factors external to the migrant in influencing migration actions. This notion of agency suggests that individuals are able to translate their perceptions of the 'self' and the 'world' in ways that are meaningful in their lives. This corresponds with Thomas-Hope's (1992) conceptualisation of Caribbean migration where she too concluded that actions related to migration are formed in the minds of individuals based on perceptions that are meaningful to themselves in the context of migration.

This differs from the conventional approaches to international migration that emphasize the stresses – 'pushes' or 'pulls' of the origin and destination (Lee, 1966) – caused by the environment and neglects the way in which an individual formulates and deals with these stresses. Primacy is given to the environment rather than to the individual (Halfacree & Boyle, 1993). Giddens's conceptualisation of agency overcomes this problem. When placed in the context of migration, the concept of agency suggests that the individual formulates appropriate responses to factors that influences upon his or her life and is able to provide reasons for migration actions. In doing so, these reasons for migration are then perceived as the causes of migration. This process is continuous involving reflexive monitoring of action, rationalisation of action and motivation for action. To understand the concept of agency and the structuration theory further, Giddens's conception of structure will be presented in the following section.

The Concept of Structure: Rules and Resources

At the heart of the structuration theory's conceptualisation of structure is the notion that structure cannot exist on its own. Its existence is enabled by agents engaging in action that allow it to exist. At the same time, it is structure that enables human agency. Giddens uses the example of capitalism to illustrate this relationship. He argues that capitalism would not exist without the actions of those who operate in capitalistic ways. At the same time it is capitalism that prompts capitalist actions. Thus human agency and structure continuously (re)produce each other in a never ending recursive process.

Structures are explained in the structuration theory as rules and resources, which the individual agent draws upon, in the construction of social life and thereby also structure. Rules and resources are the medium by which an agent knowingly employs to produce social practises, and it is through individual and collective actions that structures are reproduced or transformed.

For Giddens, rules are broadly understood as the means, deeply rooted in the agent's tacit practical consciousness, that are used for action – they operate as formulas that tells the agent 'how to go on in social life'. According to Giddens, there are two aspects to rules. On the one hand, they relate to the constitution of meaning and on the other, to the sanctioning of conduct. Rules are implicit, taken-for-granted procedures, the 'know-how' of carrying on in established ways which can be applied in a range of different contexts. Therefore rules are embedded in systems of social interaction.

Rules cannot be conceived without resources since the latter actually provides the means by which transformative rules are incorporated into social practises. Resources are the medium by which individual actions are facilitated or constrained. Resources comprise of the material features of the environment and also the authoritative channels that conditions actions (Giddens, 1984).

This conceptualisation of structures is considerably broader than that assumed in conventional international migration approaches. In these approaches, structures are usually perceived as factors relating to economic/political development paradigms (Massey et.al., 1993; 1998; 2000). This limits conceptualisation of structures to the development differentials that exist between sending and receiving areas which then results in fallacy that international migration action is only caused by these development differentials. The structuration theory's concept of structures as rules and resources allows other structural factors outside economic imageries to be included into migration research. For example, in the migration process the interactions between the individual and family is evident in the discussions regarding remittances resulting from migration (see Bertram and Watters, 1985; Lucas and Stark, 1985; Massey, 1998; Poirine, 1998). This interaction is perceived as economic rationalisation both on the part of the individual and the family. The structuration theory permits the migration researcher to break out of these strictures and perceive the individual as a crucial member of the family whose actions are essential for maintaining the existence of the family. Likewise, the family as a social system is crucial in dictating and sanctioning the actions of family members. Individual actions and the family therefore both influence each other in a reproductive nature. Broadening the scope of understanding of the interactions between the individual and family enables the researcher to incorporate other non-economic factors that may influence these actions into migration analysis (Findlay and Li, 1997).

Giddens's concept of 'resources' as material features of the environment and also authoritative channels that conditions actions allows for the inclusion of other factors that influence migration actions. For example, one could argue that technological advances in communication and transportation are material features of the environment of the individual that enable migration actions. Political aspects such as immigration policies can also be considered as resources that allow rules to be invoked in migration practises. These two factors in part determine the intensity and flow of international migration, yet they are

downplayed in conventional approaches of explaining the process. The structuration theory's conceptualisation of structures provides the opportunity to extend the boundaries on the understanding of structures imposed by dominant approaches of international migration and therefore capture more adequately the complexity of both the migration decisions and actions.

Combining structure and agency

The structuration theory argues that social processes such as migration are the result of the recurring relationship between agency and structures. Yet this relationship is complex. It is complicated by the fact that there are many structures that may impact simultaneously upon the individual to produce social processes (Craib, 1992; Loyal, 2003). The many structures influencing migration decisions complicate the process of identifying a particular cause for an action taken because the individual may have many reasons for his or her actions (Craib, 1992). This has implications for understanding social processes such as international migration. It hints at the difficulty in determining a single cause for international migration and implies that there are many reasons for international migration actions – where more than one structure impacts upon the individual in determining migration actions. The notion that there are many reasons for migration also suggests that factors that may trigger migration actions may not be directly causal in that it is likely that there are other issues involved that enables these actions. This acknowledges the complexity of the migration process. Where a variety of structures impact on the individual and where impacts are diverse depending on how the individual perceives these impacts in relation to his or her life. However, what remains constant is that it is the individual who takes actions; he or she is knowledgeable about the context of these actions.

Migration and Structuration

Application of the structuration theory in research has been guided by Giddens's (1984: 288) suggestion that researchers firstly elucidate 'frames of meaning' and analyse the conditions of social system integration. Halfacree and Boyle (1993) have developed some of Giddens's ideas with regard to exploring the meaning of migration through use of the biographical approach to reveal the practical consciousness that underlies human actions such as migration. Goss and Lindquist (1995) utilize the structuration framework to conceptualise international labour migration as the result of knowledgeable individuals who operate strategically within the migration institution, drawing upon rules and resource that both constrains and provides opportunities for individual actions. Findlay and Li (1997) adopt a structuration framework in exploring the interconnectedness of people and place identities to capture the practical consciousness of migrants and also the global influences of structural forces.

These studies have demonstrated the usefulness of conceptualising international migration within a structuration framework to transcend the boundaries of understanding the process imposed by the limitations of the dominant approaches. In particular, structuration theory allows analysis to focus on the individual without neglecting structural factors that may influence migration. For example, within a structuration framework, macro-differentials between countries may lead to a propensity for migration, however, the probability of migration occurring is dependent on the perception by the individual of the impact of these economic variables upon his or her life. They only become causes of migration in the decision making process. This departs from the dominant conceptualisation of migrants as objects that respond mechanically to broader structural forces – instead they are active agents within the migration process.

As Giddens suggests, it is crucial to understand the individual's 'frames of meaning' to understand action – how the individual behaves in relation to structures (Craib, 1992). Emphasizing the individual and his or her relationship

with structures means that the causes and effects of international migration can be determined by gaining the perspective of the individual. This viewpoint highlights the essentiality of qualitative methodologies. It provides the opportunity to understand the complexity of international migration from the realities faced by those within the process – a view of the process through the eyes of the individual involved.

Structuration of the Migration and Development Relationship

The recursive nature of structure and agency can be likened to the relationship between migration and development. The migration and development relationship is a reciprocal one (De Haas, 2005). Migration is both a constituent part of development processes and a factor affecting development in migrant sending and receiving countries. However, Appleyard (1992) cautions that the relationship between international migration and development is complex and remains unresolved. He notes that the migration/development relationship is further complicated by the complexity of not only international migration per se, but also because development itself is an intricate process which is difficult to define.

Understanding development in terms of migration

To understand the idea of development one should consider how this idea has been defined and interpreted and become so influential. Staudt describes the idea of development as "...a process of enlarging people's choices, enhancing participatory democratic process, providing human beings with opportunities to develop their potentials and carrying out development goals of a nation in order to promote economic growth and national self-reliance" (Staudt, 1991 cited in Cowen and Shenton, 1995:27). From Staudt's description, Cowen and Shenton made a clear distinction between "development as an action" and "development as a goal of action" (1996:175). According to Cowen and Shenton (1996), "development as an action" refers to the immanent process of development. On

the other hand, "development as a goal of action" refers to the intentional process that takes place in the name of development.

Immanent development refers to capitalist development. The expansion of capitalism involves new relations of production and exchange and results in a number of complex outcomes: urban industrial development, rapid urban growth, rural stagnation and social and political changes. Immanent development favours rapid urbanization, rural depopulation and accelerated migration within national borders or internationally.

To address the negative consequences of immanent development, Cowen and Shenton (1996) argue that 'trustees' (those who are in charge of development) formulate policies to remedy the situation. This interventionist role often played by governments is intentional development. It affects migration by trying to either encourage or discourage migration depending on the current development level or the development needs of a country. For countries where out-migration can hinder development, 'trustees' (the government) can practise intentional development in relation to migration by formulating policies that will 'retain' rather than 'repel' potential migrants.

Intentional Actions and Unintentional Consequences

Defining development within the concepts of immanent and intentional development can also be likened to Giddens's notion of the recurring relationship between intentional actions producing unintentional consequences producing intentional actions. If migration actions are intentional, this produces unintentional consequences, at the national level; these are the effects of migration. As the 'trustees' of development, the government produces intentional actions that counteracts these effects. In turn these intentional actions of government can impact on migration actions. From a structuration point of view, the success of government intentional development policies in relation to migration will depend on the impact of the intended strategies upon the

individual. If the impact is perceived by individuals as positive then the desired results may be achieved. This highlights the need to seriously consider the agency of individuals not only within the migration process but also in relation to development agendas.

Conclusion

Emphasis on the agency of the individual challenges the dominant approaches that explain international migration. Conventional approaches to understanding the causes and effects of international migration have predominantly centred on the analysis of the broader political-economic conditions producing migration. The migrant is objectified as an 'agent of development' whose behaviour is determined largely by political-economic factors. Even in more integrative approaches to international migration such as the 'new economics of migration', 'systems' and 'networks' theories, the agency of the migrant and his/her interrelationships with systems and networks is insufficiently articulated.

Drawing on empirical research and the premise that migration is a social process, human geographers raise the issue of more engagement between migration research and social theory. Linking migration to social theory shifts the emphasis on understanding international migration from the perspective of national economies to that of the individual. In this respect, the individual is no longer objectified, but rather, the individual is an interpretive subject in his or her mobility. This emphasizes the need to understand the agency and perspective of the individuals in relation to structural forces and presents a challenge to (re)conceptualise international migration.

The structuration theory (Giddens, 1984) provides an exciting context in which international migration can be conceptualised. In recognizing the duality between agency and structure, the migration researcher is provided with the opportunity to break out of the confines of conventional approaches. It allows the individual to be perceived as an active agent who determines specific actions and at the same is

embedded in wider structures. Emphasis is given to qualitative methodologies to elucidate the individual's 'frames of meaning' and thus also the interaction between agency and structure. This interaction is complex, implying also the complexity of the migration process. This complexity questions the assumptions of dominant migration discourse in terms of the diversity of structures that impact upon migration actions instead of the narrow conception of migration as a result of the economic rationalities derived from development paradigms. Yet, at the same time, the relationship between migration and development cannot be ignored. These contradictions exist and are evident and elaborated upon in the literature regarding Pacific Islands migration.

CHAPTER 3

INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION, DEVELOPMENT AND THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

Introduction

As with other developing areas of the world, the perspective of national economic development has influenced conceptions of Pacific migration. Based implicitly on functionalist and structuralist perspectives, Pacific migration is perceived as "primarily a response to real and perceived inequalities in socioeconomic opportunities that are themselves a result of dependent and, or uneven sectoral and regional development, a function of the penetration of capitalism into these global peripheries" (Connell, 1990:3; Connell and Conway, 2000:57). This view emphasizes the global processes of capitalism and exploitation (in neo-Marxist terms), and as a result it underestimates not only the agency of Pacific Islanders within the migration process but also the significance of migration to Pacific livelihoods.

The significance of migration in the Pacific Islands is emphasized in the MIRAB model of Pacific Island development. This chapter argues that while the MIRAB model challenges the assumptions of dominant development discourse in relation to the specific characteristics of Pacific microstates, it also positions the causes and effects of international migration within the developmentalist orientation of conventional explanations of the process. At the same time, it also draws attention to the agency of the individual and other non-economic structures that influence migration actions.

Qualitative research and the gaze of indigenous researchers echo the current debate in migration literature in challenging the conventional economic based explanations of migration behaviour. This chapter discusses these challenges and

argues that Pacific Island migration is more than a simple and functional response to income differentials. There are other significant structures that also influence the dynamics of Pacific Islands international migration. The structuration theory is drawn upon to illuminate the structures that influence migration. Particular attention is paid to the influence of culture and its associated values to not only illustrate its impact on the individual's migration actions but also to demonstrate the interaction between agency and structure that produces international migration.

While Pacific Island migration literature reflects these interactions, the individual is predominantly perceived as a part of the family, the household, or the network. This chapter argues that there is a need to understand migration from the perspective of those who make up the Pacific Islands migration process, not only as members within the family, household or network, but as individuals.

It will highlight that the perspective of the individual demonstrates people who are able to formulate appropriate actions depending on the impact of structural forces on their lives in ways that are meaningful to themselves and in the context of migration. This chapter suggests that structural forces create the environment in which migration actions takes place. In part, this environment is influenced by the nature and level of national development, highlighting that the development agendas of Pacific Islands governments need to consider the perspectives of the individuals in relation to migration because these perspectives collectively can impact on national population dynamics.

Mobile Pacific Islanders

Pacific Islanders are characteristically mobile. The movements of Pacific islanders have generally been divided into three empirical categories determined by cultural-geographical features (Goss and Lindquist, 2000). Polynesian states are characterized by international migration, Melanesian states by internal

migration, while Micronesian states experience both international and internal migration as well as importing foreign labour (Connell, 1990; see also Crocombe, 1994). The Northern Micronesian and the Polynesian states characterised by international migration are those with colonial links to United States and New Zealand. In Polynesia, the inhabitants of Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau automatically qualify for New Zealand citizenship and thus have no immigration restrictions to either New Zealand or Australia. Special immigration arrangements between Samoa, Tonga and Pacific Rim countries have ensued continuing mobility between these island and metropolitan centres of the Pacific rim. Net migratory losses from the island states to Pacific rim countries has resulted in more than 400,000 people of Pacific ethnicity (those who could claim Pacific islander identity by birth) living in rim centres of the Pacific (New Zealand, Australia and the United States) and elsewhere outside the homelands (Ward, 1997:185). Undoubtedly the high numbers of islanders moving from the Pacific Islands have implications for the role of migration in the development of Pacific Island countries.

The MIRAB model

Dominating the literature on Pacific Island migration and development is role of migration and its generation of remittances encapsulated in the MIRAB model of Pacific Island economies proposed by Geoff Bertram and Ray Watters (1985). In the MIRAB economies model, Bertram and Watters (1985), explicitly treat small island nations as specific cases in terms of their development conditions and opportunities due to the inapplicability in general of theoretical models of development or underdevelopment to particular characteristics of Pacific Islands "smallness, fragmentation and isolation" (Overton, 1993:267). Within the MIRAB economies, international migration (MI) plays a key role in island economies as it generates remittances (R), aid (A) finances local bureaucracy (B) to provide most sources of income and employment (Bertram and Watters, 1985). Bertram and Watters (1985) argue that small Pacific Island countries have few resource-based development opportunities, but have maintained relatively high

standards of living (in comparison to other developing countries) as a result of rent incomes. The notion of "rentier economies" (Poirine, 1998:65-66) carries with it implications of dependency and the scorn of economists and development experts who doubt the sustainability of MIRAB as a basis for island development (James, 1993; Poirine, 1998). Economists argue that 'rentier economies' are unproductive and increase consumption levels for recipients despite perceived significant productive outcomes from remittances by those involved in remittance networks (James, 1993; Marsters, 2004).

The transnational corporation of kin

Part of the sustainability of the MIRAB economy is reliant on the perpetuation of migration therefore generating remittance flows influenced by family based 'transnational corporations of kin' (Bertram and Watters, 1985). Households operating as 'transnational corporations of kin' allocate labour across different modes of production in geographically different locations (Bertram and Watters, 1985). This notion of Pacific kin groups as transnational economic entities has attracted much attention in the migration, remittances and development debate in the Pacific (see for example, Underhill, 1989; Hayes, 1991; Brown and Connell, 1993; James, 1993; Marsters, 2004). Bertram (1986:820) asserts that:

> "In the South Pacific setting, migration involves not the dismembering of kin groups but their internationalization (or transnationalization).... Family or kin units in the small Pacific societies act and calculate on a transnational scale, especially via the regional labour market.... The great majority of households are able to judge the relative merits of wage employment (locally and offshore)...."

The 'transnational corporation of kin' represents the rational economic decision of a family group. This concurs with the 'new economics approach' to international migration were "families deliberate carefully about which member would be most likely to do well overseas and be reliable in sending remittances" (Connell and Conway, 2000:59). From the MIRAB perspective, the motivation for migration represents the rational economic calculations of households in response to the economic structural differences between origin and destination areas. As Bedford

(1992) observes, migration occurs so that Pacific people are able to gain employment and earn incomes that are otherwise unavailable or limited in their island countries despite the fact that employment may be at the lower end of the employment spectrum, supporting also a dual market labour theory perspective.

Despite the MIRAB economies model challenging assumptions of the dominant development discourse in relation to specific Pacific microstate characteristics, it has in many respects remained entrenched in popular development orientation by emphasizing the economic rational behaviour of the 'transnational corporation of kin' operating in the dual market economy.

The focus on the household in the metaphor of the 'transnational corporation of kin' presents the idealised notion of harmonious families working together to maximize resources and opportunities amongst members in different locations and is critiqued by Hayes (1991:43) as the "fallacy of misplaced familism". Bedford (2000:241) notes that ethnographic evidence suggests conflict and tension within Pacific Island kin groups, and as James (1991) observes, there is a shift towards individualism in Pacific societies.

Bertram (1997:16) in reviewing the MIRAB model concedes that the original MIRAB thinking of families harmoniously operating together is flawed and asserts that:

> "the continual dialectic between centrifugal forces of individualism and centripetal pull of family solidarity (backed by a variety of sanctions and rewards) makes it clear that a much richer story of the behavioural, microeconomic foundations of migration and remittance flows is required."

Therefore Bertram highlights the inadequacy of examining migration from purely economistic constructs. He acknowledges that a richer story of the process is possible through understanding the constant interaction between the individual and the family in Pacific Island migration analysis. Understanding this 'continuous dialectic' requires the incorporation of the perspective of the

individual into migration analysis and a shift beyond the confines of economic logic.

Questioning economic rationalisation: Culture and the individual

Pacific writers dispute the dominant conceptualisations of migration based on structural economic determinants driven by economic development paradigms (Hau'ofa, 1994; James, 1993; Liki, 2001; Marsters, 2004). The remittance behaviour of Pacific Islanders suggests that relationships amongst family members represent more than simply a "profitable allocation of household resources, potentially of long run benefit to the growth of living standards in the sending community" (Bertram and Watters, 1985:498; Marsters, 2004:50). The altruistic motives for remitting behaviour noted by Poirine (1998) and the persistence of remittances over time (contradicting remittance decay hypothesis) (Brown, 1998), not only questions the notion of rational economic behaviour but suggests that perhaps there are other causes and meanings for the actions of Pacific Island migrants and those who remain in the homeland. As Marsters, Lewis and Friesen (2006:32) argue, migration and resulting remittances represent flows of people, goods, money, emotions and identity-forming values, which play an integral part in constituting individual and social experience in ways more significant than the simply economic.

Liki (2001:73) challenges researchers in Pacific Island migration to direct greater energy towards understanding the "locally orientated significance that Islanders attach to their purposes and values in travel". This challenge indicates the need to move beyond the economic imageries of dominant explanations of international migration. Liki also reveals the lack of voice and perspective of the individual regarding his or her migration. This challenge corresponds with the propositions of the Giddens's (1984) structuration theory that the individual's 'frames of meaning' must be elucidated to provide explanations of human actions in relation to structural forces.

Pacific Island migration dynamics: A combination of agency and structure

Much of the recent writings on Pacific Island migration resonates the debates prevalent in wider migration literature and the fact that the process cannot be explained by a single cause. As observed by Ward (1997: 179), the "second diaspora of Pacific Islanders...has involved many more people and has proved one of the most interesting of modern times in terms of motivations, complexity and economic and social consequences."

Structure as Resources

The view that structural economic differentials between the islands and destination Pacific rim countries continues to be seen as a primary cause of Pacific Islands international migration (Connell, 1990) despite new imageries of the process. As observed by Bedford (1992) and others, Pacific Islanders migrate to rim centres to seek and take advantage of economic opportunities not readily available on their islands. This reasoning maintains the notion that ultimately individuals are driven by economic rationality dictated by the economic differentials between origin and destination areas. It emphasizes the stresses or the 'push' and 'pull' of the origin and destination (Lee, 1966) but neglects the way in which the individual formulates and deals with these stresses. Undoubtedly, many factors associated with Pacific Islands migration are related to the nature and level of national development, but the association is usually neither a simple nor a direct causal one. This association is further complicated by the fact that there are other structures that not only influence but also provide opportunities for movement and enables migration actions. How people understand and relate to this opportunities and enabling factors are essential factors for the understanding of international migration.

Whatever may influence the decision to migrate, political factors are usually the conditions that allow migration to materialise (Papastergiadis, 2000). According

to Chapman (1991: 265), "the stream of Pacific Islanders leaving for metropolitan countries with which their societies had historical or administrative ties grew from a trickle to a flood". The structuration theory (Giddens, 1984) proposes that these authoritative channels are resources that provide opportunities for movement, which individuals knowing exploit to enable their actions. The intensity and concentration of population flows between the Pacific Islands and Pacific rim countries support these assumptions. However as explicitly argued by Pacific writers a far richer story of Pacific Islands migration is gained through understanding islander mobility from a cultural perspective.

The cultural perspective

The cultural perspective of Pacific Island migration draws upon Hau'ofa's (1994) argument that the propensity for Pacific Islanders to engage in migration is because it has always been a part of Pacific livelihoods from ancient times. This "ancient islander characteristic" (McCall and Connell, 1993:4) is cultural and has persisted with time to become the norm and very much part of the lived realities of contemporary Pacific Island societies (Ward, 1997). The influence of culture in understanding Pacific Island migration, however, should not be merely confined to explaining the tendency for islanders to move as 'an ancient islander characteristic', but also clarify the motivations of everyday migration related actions.

Culture Ensuring the Maintenance of Links

A unique feature of Pacific Island migration is the strength of linkages between the islands and rim-based communities. At the heart of many Pacific Island cultures is the relationship between human beings and place (Bonnemaison, 1985). This relationship has been articulated since time immemorial through metaphors that have and still characterise the Pacific Island migration process. For example, in Bonnemaison (1985) work with the Tanna community in Vanuatu, meanings of movement are explained in the metaphor of the 'tree and the canoe'. In this metaphor, the human being is likened to a tree that must take

root and stay fixed in its place. On the other hand, the human being is also part of the local group that is compared to a canoe that follows 'roads' and explores the wide world (Bonnemaison, 1985:30). This metaphor represents the complex dynamics of islander mobility that spreads out spatially and socially, yet, is anchored in the community of origin. This has similarities with, the metaphor of the parrotfish, the tides, and the reef described in Chapter 1 that explain how Cook Islanders define and find meaning in their population movements. These metaphors illustrate that firstly, migration is an accepted and expected part of Pacific Island life. Secondly, migration is understood to be circular (as noted by Hooker, 1994; Underhill, 1989 in their work regarding Cook Islands migration). The migrant is free to move away and return because despite departing he or she still belongs to the area of origin. These metaphors remain entrenched within Pacific Islanders consciousness and are invoked when required within the migration context. It remains significant in islanders' 'frames of meaning' (Giddens, 1984), thus allowing them to move away from the islands, maintain connections, and if they so desire, return to their island homes.

Culture and the 'family'

Also crucial to understanding Pacific Island societies and culture is the 'family'. According to Anae (1998), the family from a Pacific perspective includes the extended family, descent group or kinship, and is the cornerstone of Pacific Island lives. The 'family' governs cultural practises; associated values such as reciprocal love – which exemplifies the practise of giving, gifting and support. The 'family' as the foundation of Pacific cultural practises and values also plays a crucial role in Pacific Island migration.

The networks theory of international migration recognizes that social networks such as kin provide potential migrants with information about available destinations, contacts with gatekeepers, and sometimes with funds for transportation and other expenses. At the destination, assistance in accommodation and employment are made available, thus reducing the costs of

migration. The Pacific Island 'family' can be likened to the network as they organize and support members in various locations using multiple ways (Marsters, 2004). However, unlike the notion of 'network' in international migration approaches, the Pacific 'family' is not merely an economic unit, instead, it is founded on cultural practises, and values (Liki, 2001; Marsters, 2004). Family members do not support each other solely because of economic logic, but simply, because it is 'what the family does'. The cultural values of the family are firmly entrenched within the consciousness of Pacific Islanders.

International migration has enabled families to expand socially and geographically, while the cultural practises and values of the 'family' ensure the strength of ties between its members in diverse locations (Underhill, 1989). This knowledge of 'what the family does' is drawn upon when making migration decisions. By engaging in the cultural practises and values, the strength of the family is maintained and when the strength of the family is maintained its members will engage in cultural practises and values - each influences the other in a recurring manner, thus, perpetuating its significance in the Pacific Islands migration process. This constant interaction plays a vital role in shaping Pacific Island migration dynamics.

Pacific Islands Identities

The cultural values associated with Pacific Islands migration results in islanders developing what Bedford (2000) calls 'multiple identities' to cope effectively with living and maintaining links in many locations. Thaman (1985) as a Pacific Islander in reflecting on her life lived in various destinations; noted that identity undergoes continual alteration where one learns to adapt to life and living in particular locations. Marsters, Lewis and Friesen (2006:42) noted with regard to migration and remittance practises in Mauke and Manihiki in the Cook Islands, people are both always and never simply at home or away. The home island has a series of very powerful meanings and the senses of home, but other places also have senses of home and identity-producing qualities. Pacific Islanders live

transnational lives. For Pacific Islanders, the ability to live transnational lives is in part supported by the locally defined meanings of migration, and the cultural values of the family. At the same time, living transnational lives also strengthens locally defined meaning of migration and the cultural values of the family.

If Culture is a Structure then it is a Rule

Jackson (1989) argues that understanding culture is to deal with peoples 'maps of meaning'. The cultural aspect of Pacific Islands migration demonstrates that it belongs to both the individual and groups, existing through the shared and negotiated practises of everyday life. Migration is both infused with cultural values and instills individuals with such values. The structuration theory concept of structure allows culture to be understood as a 'rule' embedded in systems of social interaction. As a rule, culture operates as a formula that tells islanders 'how to go on in social life' (Giddens, 1984). Culture on one hand, relates to the constitution of meaning, and on the other, sanctions the conduct of Pacific Islanders in the migration process. It is therefore an essential part of understanding people's 'frames of meaning' (Giddens, 1984). Pacific Islands migration literature suggests that Pacific Islanders knowingly apply cultural knowledge in the context of migration. In doing so, reproducing and reinforcing the relationship between agency and structure.

However, the significance of culture in determining migration actions in Pacific Islands migration literature has predominantly focused on the individual as part of the family, household, or network. James (1993) observes that Pacific Islanders are increasingly embracing westernized individualism. These observations are also supported by Connell and Conway (2000) who state that family decisions regarding migration behaviour may hold less weight in an era of individualism. As a corollary, there is a need to examine migration from the perspective of the person involved in the process not only as a member of a group but as an individual.

The 'self' in Pacific Island migration

When placed within the Giddens (1984) structuration approach, Pacific Islands migration is a process that involves the 'self'– where individuals make migration decisions based on their own internal conditioning factors and their interpretations of the contexts and circumstances in which they are situated and also their perceptions of migration. This is perhaps most aptly illustrated by Poirine (1998) who argues that, migration opens up a set of available opportunities for migrants where they exercise choice over their lifestyles depending on their geographical, cultural, social and economic environment at different stages of their lives. This argument provides insight into how the migration decision is made and what influences this decision.

Poirine's view of migration definitely gives ownership of the migration decision to the migrant - ultimately the decision to migrate is that of the individual. By incorporating the life stages of the migrant into his viewpoint, Poirine, admits the importance of personal experiences, personality and other internal conditioning factors of the migrant in any consideration of migration. The notion that migration is a 'choice' made by individuals indicates that people are not merely orientated by the structures; instead, they are instrumental in creating the process.

Poirine implies that the individual in determining migration actions incorporates personal factors and the impact of the total environment upon his or her life. This suggests as Giddens (1984) that the individual performs reflexive monitoring of action where he or she continually evaluates what he or she does, how others react, the circumstances under which the action takes place and the setting of interaction. Poirine's opinion also suggests that the migrant is able to justify the migration 'choice' implying the rationalisation of action in relation to the continuous flow of events in the individual's life. The notion that the migrant makes the 'choice' also means that if the everyday flow of one's activities is threatened, the individual has the opportunity or potential to migrate – the

motivation for action. Therefore individuals are knowledgeable and capable agents interacting with wider structures.

Structuration, Migration and Development in the Pacific

The notion that migration is the action of knowledgeable and capable agents demonstrates the intentionality of migration action. However, the migration actions of Pacific Islanders also produce unintentional consequences (Giddens, 1984). These unintentional consequences are not merely confined to the individual, but relates to the effects of migration at the national level. With the magnitude of migration from the Pacific Islands relative to island populations', Ward (1989:245) predicts that by 2080 "almost all of the descendants of today's Polynesians or Micronesian islanders will live in Auckland, Sydney, San Francisco and Salt Lake City." Ward's opinion suggests that excessive migration is a threat to the sustainability of the island populations. While Pacific Islanders intentional migrate, Ward's opinion suggests that excessive migration threatens the sustainability of island populations – the significant decline in island population may be the unintentional consequences of Pacific Islands international migration.

Giddens's (1984) structuration theory proposes that unintentional consequences become the basis for new actions. In terms of the relationship between migration and national development, Giddens notion of unintentional consequences corresponds with Cowen and Shenton's (1996) concept of 'intentional development'. In this regard, Pacific Island governments' (as the 'trustees of development) need to formulate policies that will ensure the sustainability of island populations. This highlights the need for migration to feature more prominently in national development planning (De Haas, 2005).

For those Pacific Islands where population sustainability is threatened by extensive emigration, greater understanding of the causes and consequences of international migration from the perspective of islanders is required. These

perspectives together also with how Pacific Islanders perceive development may provide valuable insights into formulating intentional development policies that may ensure population sustainability.

Conclusion

Incorporating the perspective of the individual into migration analysis not only challenges the prevailing conceptualisations of the process but also enhances understanding of international migration. To a certain extent this has been illustrated by the literature regarding Pacific Islands international migration. The Pacific Islands migration literature has highlighted the flaws in conceptualising international migration within conventional economic imageries. The literature and discussion provided, has demonstrated a complex process, where migration may be caused by many factors; however the association between the reasons for migration and migration action is neither simple nor directly causal. There are other structures that allow and enable the process of migration in the Pacific. The historical/political relationship between the Pacific Islands and rim countries in part influences migration dynamics. Qualitative research and gaze of indigenous researchers has also revealed the significance of cultural logic in producing the propensity for migration and also influencing actions related to the process. These structures have highlighted that migration flows are sustained when the propensity for movement is accompanied by the impetus or opportunity to do so. Pacific Islands migration is a demonstration of the interaction between agency and structure where Pacific Islanders are knowledgeable individuals who operate strategically, drawing upon rules and resources that allow, enable and perpetuate migration actions. Yet, agency has primarily been conceptualised in the context of the family, household, or network highlighting the need to examine and agency and thus migration from the perspective of the individual.

Ultimately it is the individual who transforms the potential for migration into action. The Pacific Islands migration literature has highlighted that Pacific Islanders are knowledgeable agents who operate strategically within the migration

process by drawing upon rules and resources (structures) that enable migration actions. The interaction between Pacific Islanders and various structures has revealed how people come to make the migration decisions that they make and the actions that result from these decisions. This has emphasized the knowledgeability of the individual and the intentional nature of migration actions.

However, intentional migration actions also produce unintentional consequences. In the Pacific, international migration has produced unintentional consequences at the national level. The Pacific Islands migration literature has drawn attention to the issue of future population sustainability in the islands. The threat of future population sustainability may be the unintentional consequences of high levels of migration from the Pacific Islands to metropolitan rim centres. These are the effects of migration on the country. The notions of intentional action producing unintentional consequences at national levels and intentional development, has highlighted the significance of considering migration in development agendas. Where the effects of migration (in particular emigration) are negative, greater understanding of the causes and effects of the process is required. Because the process is constituted by individuals, understanding their perspectives regarding migration is crucial and may provide direction for national development agendas to ensure future population sustainability. However before examining the perspectives of individuals, the influence of migration on national population dynamics also needs to be determined as migration plays a crucial role in shaping population dynamics. The influence of migration on Pacific Island populations will be revealed when examining the extent in which migration shapes the population dynamics of the Cook Islands.

CHAPTER 4

MOBILE PEOPLE
POPULATION CHANGE IN THE COOK ISLANDS

Introduction

The Cook Islands population dynamics presents an example of the unintentional consequences that result from intentional migration actions. Population dynamics are the processes in a population that lead to its growth or decline. The three demographic components of population dynamics are fertility, mortality and migration, all of which counterbalance one another. While fertility increases population, mortality decreases it. Migration can either be a growth factor or where there is considerable out-migration a slow or negative rate of growth. In the case of the Cook Islands, international migration has lead to a significant decline in population.

This chapter examines the population dynamics of the Cook Islands for the period between 1996 and 2001. In doing so, it will illustrate the effects of migration on the demography of the Cook Islands during this period. The increase in emigration from the Cook Islands in 1996 coincided with significant economic structural change. This chapter discusses this process and its effects on Cook Islands migration. Finally this chapter will consider future population projections for the Cook Islands based on three different levels of migration. This will demonstrate the significance of addressing migration issues to ensure the sustainability of the Cook Islands population.

Growth or Decline?

The most basic way of describing population growth is simply to calculate the difference in population size at two different points in time (Secretariat of the

Pacific Community, 2005). The population growth rate measures the change in a country's population as the result of births, deaths and migration.

Censuses have been conducted regularly in the Cook Islands since 1902. These censuses have demonstrated that the population of the Cook Islands has fluctuated over time. Up until the early 1970s, the population has increased, reaching 21,322 people in 1971. Between 1971 and 1976 the population declined quite dramatically as a result of the opening of Rarotonga's International Airport in 1974. The availability of air travel prompted many Cook Islands to migrate to New Zealand. Between 1986 and 1996, the population slowly recovered growing by about 150 people per year as a result of reduction in international migration. However in 1996 significant migration again occurred resulting in a decline in population (as demonstrated in table 4.1).

In the Cook Islands, the population growth rate is primarily determined by migration. Net migration therefore refers to the number of immigrants minus the number of emigrants. Hence population growth is the sum of natural increase plus net migration. Table 4.1 illustrates the resident population change between 1996 and 2001.

TABLE 4.1: Resident Population change between 1996 and 2001

Island/Region	Population Size		Population Change		Average annual rate of growth (%)
	1996	2001	No.	%	
Rarotonga	**10,374**	**9,451**	**-923**	**-8.9**	**-1.9**
Southern Group	**5,258**	**3,777**	**-1,481**	**-28.2**	**-6.6**
Aitutaki	2,272	1,743	-529	-23.3	-5.3
Mangaia	1,083	739	-344	-31.8	-7.6
Atiu	942	600	-342	-36.3	-9.0
Mauke	643	469	-174	-27.1	-6.3
Mitiaro	318	226	-92	-28.9	-6.8
Northern Group	**2,439**	**1,789**	**-650**	**-26.7**	**-6.2**
Palmerston	49	48	-1	-2	-0.4
Pukapuka	778	662	-116	-14.9	-3.2
Nassau	99	72	-27	-27.3	-6.4
Manihiki	656	497	-159	-24.2	-5.6
Rakahanga	249	158	-91	-36.5	-9.1
Penrhyn	604	351	-253	-41.9	-10.9
Suwarrow	4	1	-3	-75	-27.7
Cook Islands	**18,071**	**15,017**	**-3,054**	**-16.9**	**-3.7**

(Source: Statistics Office: Government of the Cook Islands, 2001)

From 1996 to 2001, the total number of births for the Cook Islands was 1,787 with 557 deaths registered (Government of the Cook Islands, 2001). Table 4.2 illustrates that when the number of death is subtracted from the number of births, there is a natural increase of 1,230. Without migration, this would imply that the resident population in 2001 would have been about 19,301 (18,071 + 1,230). However, despite this natural increase the resident population decreased from 18,071 to 15,017 between the 1996 and 2001 censuses, resulting in a net decline of 3,054. This reveals that between 1996 and 2001, 4,284 more Cook Island residents left the country than arrived, resulting in a net migration rate averaging – 857 persons per year as illustrated by table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Number of registered births and deaths, estimated net migrants and overall population change for the intercensal periods 1991-2001

	Total no.		Average annual no.		Rate[a]		
	1991-1996	**1996-2001**	**1991-1996**	**1996-2001**	**1991-1996**	**1996-2001**	
Births	2,630	1,787	526	357	29.6	21.6	CBR
Deaths	553	557	111	111	6.2	6.7	CDR
Net migrants	-1,524	-4,284	-305	-857	-1.7	-5.2	Migration rate
Overall change	**553**	**-3,054**	**110**	**-611**	**0.6**	**-3.7**	**Average annual rate of growth**

CBR= crude birth rate; CDR=crude death rate;
[a] = based on respective mid-period population size

(Source: Statistics Office, Government of the Cook Islands, 2001)

Since the 2001 census, a further 317 births and 102 deaths were registered in 2002, and 294 births and 82 deaths in 2003. If there were an absence of migration, this would have led to an increase of 427 people (Secretariat of the Pacific Community, 2005). However, data from the Cook Islands Statistics Office show that despite natural growth, the resident population of the Cook Islands has further declined to 13,900 in 2003 (Government of the Cook Islands, 2003). This indicates the continuing negative net migration trend and thus constitutes a loss of human resources.

According to the Cook Islands censuses of 1996 and 2001, the majority of migrants were from the productive sector of the population. Exactly half of all migrants were between 15 – 34 years while the other half were outside this age range. This has impacted on the availability of local labour in the Cook Islands. Furthermore, 30% of migrants were between the ages of 0 – 14 years indicating a high tendency for family migration (Government of the Cook Islands, 2001). Again this would mean that a high percentage of the future local labour force has also emigrated.

It is apparent that the impact of migration on the population dynamics of the Cook Islands is considerable producing a negative annual rate of growth. The high

levels of emigration also impacts on the human resources of the country where the majority of Cook Islands emigrating are from the productive age ranges. The impact of migration on human resources will also become more apparent in the future due to the significant percentage of children (who constitute the future labour force) that are also leaving the Cook Islands.

Where are Cook Islanders migrating to?

The main destination of emigration from the Cook Islands is New Zealand. As New Zealand citizens Cook Islanders are not faced by immigration restrictions, hence making migration to New Zealand as an easy option for many. In recent years Australia has also gained popularity as a destination, again made possible by the New Zealand citizenship of Cook Islanders.

In 2001, Cook Islands Maori were the second-largest Pacific ethnic group living in New Zealand, comprising 52,600, an increase of 5,200 or 11 percent between 1996 and 2001 (New Zealand Statistics, 1996; 2001). During the 2001 Australian census, 8,154 people responded to being of Cook Islands decent (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2001). However it must be noted that the actual number of Cook Islanders in Australia may be higher as some Cook Islanders would classify themselves as New Zealanders. Unfortunately, comparative figures are not available for 1996.

As table 4.3 shows, there is an increase of enumerated Cook Islands-born population both the 1996 and 2001 New Zealand and Australian censuses. The Cook Islands-born population in New Zealand increased from 13,758 in 1996 to 15,222 in 2001, and the Cook Islands-born population in Australia increased from 2,964 to 4,742 during the same period.

Table 4.3: Summary of information on Cook Islanders in New Zealand and Australia from 1996 and 2001

Census Information	New Zealand		Australia	
	1996	2001	1996	2001
Total number of Cook Islands Maori/ People of Cook Islands descent	47,400	52,600	-	8154
Cook Islands born population	13,758	15,222	2,964	4,742

(Source: New Zealand Statistics, and Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS))

1996 – 2001: A good time to leave

The increase in Cook Islanders emigrating to New Zealand and Australia following 1996 is perceived as the result of the 1996 Cook Islands Economic Restructuring Program. At the beginning of March 1996, an assessment was made of the country's financial and economic situation. The government had borrowed excessively not only for overly ambitious development programs but also to maintain its inflated public service. Crocombe and Crocombe (1997) argues that the increase in government jobs (that is, paid posts, most not involving any significant work) occurred just before the 1994 general election to ensure the re-election of the Cook Islands Party. "With the government employing 3400 directly (and others indirectly), and the government controlling contracts, purchase of supplies, and so on, probably more than 95 percent of the 3700 households in the nation depended on government funds. Since their primary interest was power rather than public service, the political leaders set out to buy public support at any cost" (Crocombe & Crocombe, 1997:218) In fact, by 1996, government debt was $169 million, 113 percent of gross domestic product (Crocombe & Crocombe, 1997). A looming liquidity crisis was identified.

It became clear that the Cook Islands Government could not meet its financial obligations up to the end of the fiscal year. Designed and driven by the Asian

Development Bank (ADB) – a major lender of development finance to the Cook Islands government, and the New Zealand government – a reluctant, *de facto* lender of last resort, the Cook Islands government adopted the ADB's comprehensive economic restructuring program (ERP) in mid-1996 (Rasmussen, 1998; Marsters, 2004).

The reform agenda consisted of a five-pronged strategy:

- public sector reform
- strengthening financial and economic management
- stimulating private sector-led growth
- reforming the leading sectors
- achieving sustainability and social equity issues (Mellor, 1997:17).

This reform agenda was not unique to the Cook Islands, with similar programs adopted in other developing countries. As with neo-liberal reform policies in other parts of the developing world the 'right-sizing' of the public sector took the lead in the reform agenda.

Prior to economic reform the Government consisted of 35 ministries and nine major ad-hoc bodies. There were also about 37 State Owned Enterprises (SOEs) of various sizes (Asian Development Bank, 1995:156). As a result of the public sector re-structuring, the number of ministries was reduced to 20. This reduction was accompanied by a dramatic decrease in the number of public service employees, as illustrated by table 4.4. Throughout the Cook Islands 1,444 (50%) public service jobs were lost.

Table 4.4: Numbers of Public Service Employees Before and After Restructuring (Salary and Wage Workers excluding Members of Parliament)

Island	June 1996	June 1997	Total jobs lost
Rarotonga	1,699	942	757
Aitutaki	284	114	170
Atiu	143	54	89
Mangaia	192	76	116
Mauke	114	45	69
Mitiaro	64	28	36
Manihiki	95	46	49
Nassau	6	4	2
Penrhyn	137	54	83
Pukapuka	102	53	49
Rakahanga	45	21	24
Total	**2,881**	**1,437**	**1,444**

Source: Cook Islands Public Service Data cited in Corydon Consultants, 1997:49)

To assist those who had lost their jobs, the government in conjunction with NZODA established the Transition Service.

Assistance included:

- the dissemination of information through a resource booklet entitled, *There is life outside the Public Service* and through the Public Service Association newsletters *What's Happening?*;
- a three-month benefit payment (Family Bridging Support) to those who had been transitioned;
- an employment service which included a vacancy register, job referral service and wage subsidies to employers taking on surplus public servants;
- free training programs in skills required by the private sector or for income-generation in primary production; and
- enterprise assistance in the form of loans and grants, small business workshops and on-going business advice.

Despite these measures, many of those transitioned had been dependent on the public service for most of their working lives and had become accustomed to the 'public sector culture' where they were accustomed to getting paid for minimal productivity (Crocombe and Crocombe, 1997). While some were successfully

absorbed by the private sector many were ill prepared for work outside government. Some of the transitioned were successful in establishing their own private income generating ventures. However, many found life outside the public service difficult and did not have the capabilities necessary to successfully manage private business enterprise. For those on the outer islands the impact of the 'transition' was more intensified. With less opportunities in the private sector and a very limited economy, government encouraged people to 'return to the old ways of planting and fishing to survive' and to develop businesses from these activities (Marsters, 2004:81). For many of those transitioned both in the outer islands and Rarotonga the preferred and easiest option was to collect their three-months transition benefit payment and emigrate to New Zealand and Australia.

After 1996

Following the economic restructuring of 1996, the economy has recovered and has been among the strongest in the Pacific. In 2000 the nominal GDP growth reached 10.25%. Growth was heavily reliant on the tourism sector where visitor arrivals have increased from under 50,000 in the 1990s to almost 75,000 in 2002 (Office of the Prime Minister, 2003:12). Tourism activities are predominantly based in Rarotonga with a growing market in Aitutaki. In addition the offshore financial center, the black pearl industry and more recently long-line fishing have also contributed to the growth. Despite growth the Cook Islands economy continues to operate with a trade deficit which in 2000 was estimated to be equivalent to 53 per cent of GDP (Marsters, 2004:77).

While economic recovery is evident in the capital Rarotonga the outer islands (apart from Aitutaki) have not improved. The development agenda of the Cook Islands has remained focused on Rarotonga while neglecting the developmental needs of the outer islands exacerbating the already significant inequalities between Rarotonga and the outer islands. For many in the outer islands the only viable option was to emigrate both to Rarotonga and to a greater extent New Zealand and Australia.

The Cook Islands' government in an attempt to identify reasons for emigration included on immigration departure cards categories for purpose of departure. The categories included were to identify Cook Islanders or permanent residents that were leaving for vocational purposes; traveling on business; departing for employment or educational reasons; visiting friends or relatives abroad; leaving permanently; or for any other reasons. Those Cook Islanders departing who did not wish to declare their reasons for departure were also enumerated. This data is illustrated in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Resident Departures by Purpose of Departing

Period Year	Total	Vacation	Business	Employment Or Education	Permanently	Visiting Friends/ Relatives	Other	Not Stated
2000	8,920	2,356	780	302	-	2,273	1,309	1,900
2001	9,111	1,986	1,338	8	195	3,560	1,558	466
2002	9,419	1,352	1,335	8	127	3,715	1,759	1,123
2003	10,221	1,390	1,420	5	176	4,199	1,678	1,353
2004	11,696	1,706	1,547	5	348	4,839	1,862	1,389

(Source: Statistics Office, Government of the Cook Islands, 2001)

The data in table 4.5 is inconclusive due to the high number of those categorised as 'other' and 'not stated', what is decisive is that at the time of departure many did not see emigration as 'permanent'. However, it must also be noted that the number of those emigrants who perceived emigration as a permanent move have increased. Evidently, the volume in all categories except that of 'employment or education' although fluctuating has been quite substantial in the context of the resident population indicating high mobility.

High levels of emigration from the Cook Islands constitute a significant loss of human resources resulting in a considerable gap in the labour market. With the expansion of tourism and related activities, many businesses have resorted to importing workers from overseas in particular, Fiji, Tonga and Asian communities.

Local resident Professor Ron Crocombe suggested that Cook Islanders often leave because they lack confidence in the government (Cook Islands News, 12 July 2001:1). In 1998, government acknowledging the failure and weaknesses of the current political system established a Commission of Political Review and consultation throughout the Cook Islands and with Cook Islanders in New Zealand indicated that Cook Islanders wanted change. Cook Islanders overwhelmingly proposed the reduction in the Members of Parliament, Ministers, Term of Parliament and the cost of the whole political system. Parliament has failed to address the key recommendations of the Commission despite continuous pressure from the public for political reform. It was hoped that the 1996 economic restructuring program would eventuate with not only a stronger economy but also a "cleaner government, and a more confident people" (Crocombe & Crocombe, 1997:227), it may appear that this was too much to hope for. Unstable government, self-serving politicians and a deterioration of work and leadership ethics, has continued to characterize politics in the Cook Islands. Local newspapers, the Cook Islands News and Cook Islands Herald continuously reports on Minister's and high government political appointees abusing not only their positions in authority but also public funds. Crocombe and Crocombe (1997:223) state that, "few governments in the world have seen such a massive vote of no confidence" in relation to the acceleration of emigration from the Cook Islands following1996.

Also adding much to the incentive to emigrate is the high cost of living in the Cook Islands, with prices more than people can afford. Inflation in the Cook Islands corresponds to that of New Zealand levels, (estimated at about 2 percent per annum by 1998/99) (Mellor, 2000). However, wages on the other hand have not been consistent with the rising inflation.

The government in acknowledging the significant population decline, in 2002, appropriated to a 'transition fund', a total of $100,000 to assist with the return of Cook Islanders to the Cook Islands. This assistance applied to those who were returning home for two-year contract government jobs. However, only

NZ$35,000 was spent before the government terminated the program (Cook Islands News, 30 Oct 2002:1) demonstrating a lack of commitment to the project. An "assistant minister declared that those who do not want to work in the country were fleeing the country to live off benefits in New Zealand, an explanation that ignores poor salary conditions in an increasingly expensive environment, the lack of effective unions for workers, and a tendency for national politicians to lash out at the media for criticizing official policy and action" (Jonassen, 2003:176). Meanwhile the government's lack of action in addressing these problems have resulted in further emigration by Cook Islanders with the gap in the labour market being filled by foreign workers and increasing number of foreign permanent residents. According to Jonassen (2005:193), "the growing number of foreign permanent residents who are automatically eligible to participate fully in parliamentary elections suggests a potential for dramatic changes to the judicial system and land laws. Unless such issues are addressed, the future for the ethnic Maori of the Cook Islands looks uncertain."

What of the Future?

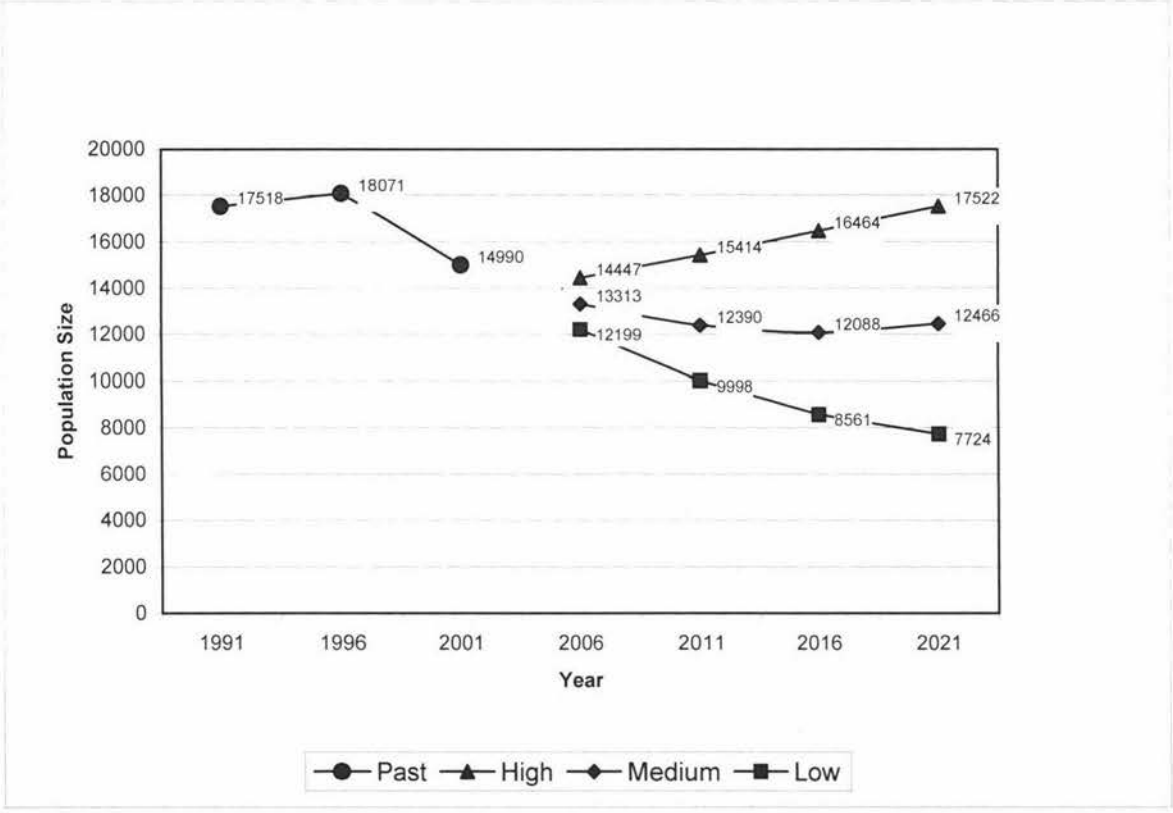
Economic and social conditions must be considered together with population variables in formulating development plans for any country. For governments to cater effectively for the specific needs of different population groups at different points in time, it is important that planners and policy makers gain an idea of population dynamics in the future (Secretariat of the Pacific Community, 2005:42). Based on the 2001 Cook Islands census the Secretariat of the Pacific Community in conjunction with the Statistics Office of the Government of the Cook Islands have compiled population projections for the period from 2001 to 2021. These population projections present two extreme (high and low) and intermediate (medium) variants of future population scenarios. The projection assumptions are based on the key population variables of fertility, mortality and migration. Table 4.6 and Figure 4.1 show these population projections.

Table 4.6: Future population trend according to three projection variants, 2001-2021

	Population Size			
Year	Past	High	Medium	Low
1991	17518	17518	17518	17518
1996	18071	18071	18071	18071
2001	14990	14990	14990	14990
2006		14447	13313	12199
2011		15414	12390	9998
2016		16464	12088	8561
2021		17522	12466	7724

(Source: Secretariat of the Pacific Community, 2005)

Figure 4.1: Future Population trends according to three projection variants, 2001-2021

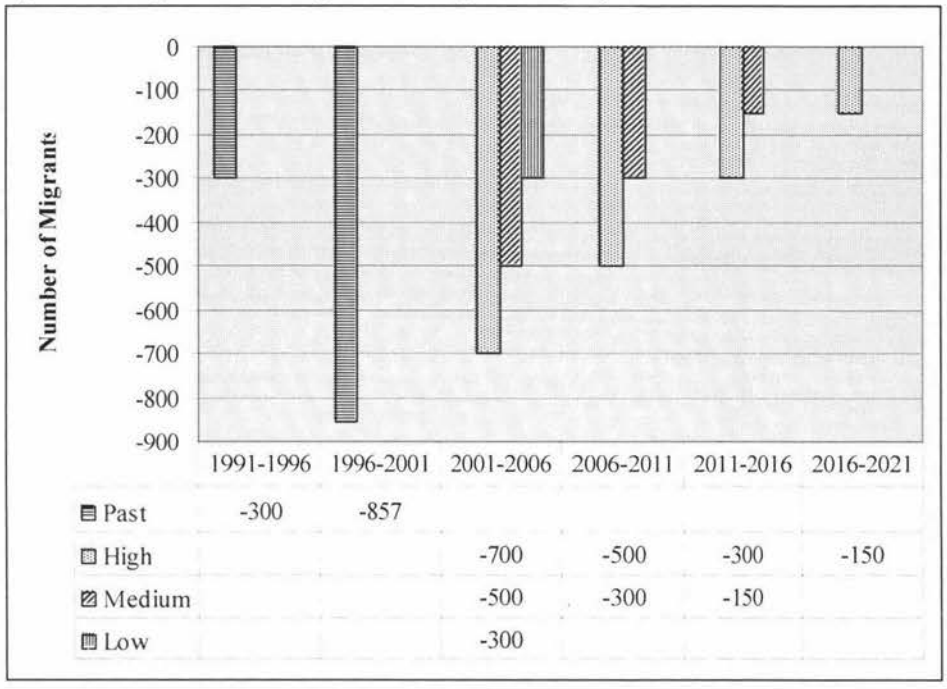


(Source: Secretariat of the Pacific Community, 2005)

The projection variants in table 4.6 and figure 4.1 show an initial decline of the resident population to the year 2006 (established on actual registered number of births, deaths and migration until 2004). It is stressed that given recent and ongoing high levels of negative net migration that are not sustainable in the long run, much care is advised when interpreting these population projections. While

fertility and mortality are relatively stable, migration patterns and trends can change quite suddenly and dramatically. For a country with high levels of migration such as the Cook Islands this has serious consequences for the reliability of population projections (Secretariat of the Pacific Community, 2005). The levels of past migration and assumed future levels of migration are illustrated in figure 4.2 below.

Figure 4.2: Migration Assumptions for Population projections, 2001 – 2021



Source: Secretariat of the Pacific Community, 2005

The levels of migration chosen are more moderate than the levels of migration experienced during the period 1996 – 2001. The reason being is that the levels of negative net migration of these periods are not sustainable. Application of 1996 – 2001 net migration levels would mean that at least some groups of the population would simply disappear. The population growth level of -3.7 % (1996-2001) would cause the population to halve every 19 years if it were to continue. Therefore should the 1996 – 2001 levels of migration persist, the result would be devastating to the livelihood of these islands, and their socio-economic environment would surely collapse. Therefore, figure 4.2 illustrates that it is

assumed that the high level of negative migration of the period 1996-2001 will gradually decline from -700 persons during the period 2001-2006 to -150 people at the end of the projection period (2021). When these migration assumptions are combined with fertility assumptions nine scenarios are produced. The scenarios for the year 2021 are shown in Table 4.7 below.

Table 4.7: Resident population size in the year 2021 according to 9 projection scenarios (combination of three different fertility and migration assumptions)

		Migration Assumptions		
Fertility Assumption (TRF from 2001 to 2021)		**Low**	**Medium**	**High**
	Slow decline **(2.9 → 2.5)**	**17, 522 (HIGH** Population Variant)	13,065	8,495
	Medium decline **(2.9 → 2.0)**	16,716	**12,466 (MEDIUM** Population Variant)	8,078
	Fast Decline **(2.9 → 1.5)**	16,019	11,950	**7,724 (LOW** Population Variant)

(Source: Secretariat of the Pacific Community, 2005)

The *High Population Variant* projection in table 4.7 is the result of assuming that there would be no negative net migration (zero net migration) from the year 2006 onwards(Secretariat of the Pacific Community, 2005). Zero net migration has not occurred since 1974, when Rarotonga's International Airport opened. This scenario furthermore assumes that current fertility levels only decline very slow or marginally until 2021, a scenario that seems unlikely in the view of historical international population dynamics (Hayes, 1992).

Table 4.7 shows that the *Medium Population Variant* projection assumes that fertility would further decrease from its current level and the number of net migrants would gradually decrease from its 1996-2001 high level of -857 annually to -500 during the period 2001-2006 and then gradually to zero during

the period 2016-2021. The population would presumably decline to 12,390 in the year 2011 (as illustrated in table 4.6 and figure 4.1) and would stabilize at around that level for the remainder of the projection period.

It must be emphasized that the assumed migration rates illustrated in figure 4.2 are moderate compared to the actual migration rate of -857 persons for the period 1996-2001. However, despite a more moderate migration rate, when combined with predicted fast decline in level of fertility, the *Low population variant* projection shown in table 4.7 results in a population that seems unrealistically small. The implications of this scenario are devastating for the Cook Islands. It would result in the collapse of the country's socio-economic structure. The future of the Cook Islands depends on anticipating and addressing further depopulation (Secretariat of the Pacific Community, 2005).

Conclusion

The population of the Cook Islands since 1902 has fluctuated over time. While increasing in the early 1970s, it declined dramatically after 1974 due to the opening of the Rarotonga airport and the commencement of regular air travel. However between 1986 and 1995, the population slowly recovered due to a decline in emigration and slight increase in return migration. This chapter has shown that in 1996, the population again declined and further diminished in 2001.

This decline has been attributed to the 1996 economic reform program. This program has been outlined in this chapter. Although the economic reform program may have driven emigration in 1996, the continuing decline in population suggests that this is not the only cause of movement out of the Cook Islands. The quantitative census data that has been presented in this chapter provides generalized information and characteristics of Cook Islands population dynamics including migration. From this information future population projections have also been presented. These projections have demonstrated that should high levels of emigration persist the sustainability of the population of the

Cook Islands will be threatened. It is therefore essential that the causes for emigration should be understood and addressed.

While assumptions have been made on what causes Cook Islanders to leave, the reasons for leaving the Cook Islands cannot be established by quantitative census data and can only be explained adequately by the people themselves. There is a need for deeper understanding of the migration process – an understanding deriving from the bottom up – from the perspective of Cook Islanders. At the same time as Cook Islanders are departing, there have been those who have returned to the Cook Islands after living overseas (unfortunately, there is no accurate census data available for Cook Islands return migration). A greater understanding of the motivations for return to the Cook Islands is required if government hopes to encourage return migration. Furthermore, the opinions of those Cook Islanders who remained in the country should also be sought. Gaining these various perspectives requires a shift in focus from macro to micro levels of analysis and from a quantitative to a qualitative approach.

CHAPTER 5

IN THE FIELD - METHODOLOGY

Introduction

International migration studies have predominantly been approached from two contrasting perspectives. These are analysis of migration at the macro and micro levels. As Gardner (1981:67) describes, factors affecting migration at the macro level are the characteristics of places that provide opportunities and satisfactions that may make an area more or less attractive to an individual. Micro level factors focus on the individuals to explain migration behaviour (De Jong & Gardner, 1981:5). Because the focus of this thesis is gaining the perspective of individuals involved in the Cook Islands migration process therefore the approach of this study is primarily from a micro perspective. The previous chapter (4) illustrates that census data provides generalized information and characteristics of migration. However, only micro analysis at the individual level will, as Fuchs (1983) states, not only illuminate migration behaviour but provide a deeper understanding of the migration process and its effects.

This raises the question of how the information required for analysis is to be obtained – the method of research and how this is to be carried out. This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section was written prior to the fieldwork taking place (hence the difference in tense between the three sections). It is a proposal and justification of the methods that were used to undertake this study. The second section was written after the fieldwork. It discusses how the fieldwork was carried out. The final section is a reflection of the methods and the fieldwork experience. As the chapter progresses the changes that took place in the field in comparison to the initial proposition in the first section will be highlighted.

Before going into the field

Methods

According to Tuhiwai Smith (1999:164) the "method is important because it is regarded as the way in which knowledge is acquired or discovered and as a way in which we 'know' what is real." The method that will be employed in this study will primarily focus on a qualitative approach in which "...data are collected and analysed through abstractions, descriptions, interpretation of a phenomenon, examines people's words and actions in narrative and descriptive ways more closely representing people's real life experiences" (Berg, 1995:10). The application of qualitative methods in this study is aimed at bringing the 'human factor' into migration analysis (Boyle et al., 1998: 71). This approach will allow a deeper understanding of migration issues from an individual perspective; a perspective absent from quantitatively based and macro studies. Data collection will be by way of conducting semi-structured in-depth interviews with those who have migrated from the Cook Islands to Auckland, New Zealand; migrants' who have returned to the islands; and those who have remained in the country during the period 1996 to 2005. This method will allow for interaction between the researcher and the participants. It will provide opportunities for participants to reveal their own concerns and give insights into the meaning behind people's attitudes and behaviour. The genuine interest in participants lives, evidenced when the researcher allows participants to express their ideas and opinions, builds trust and creates an environment in which sensitive issues can be explored (Chambers, 1997; de Vaus, 1991). With this in mind, I will facilitate all interviews personally. Additionally, I will endeavor to keep a journal of my experiences in the field. I trust that this will be useful.

Logistical Issues

As the mother of three young children, my studies have more or less been conducted around the timetable of my children. Conducting my fieldwork will coincide with the school holidays. This will enable me to take my children 'out into the field'. Because my study is amongst my own community, I know that

there are bound to be babysitters amongst my family to care for the children while I conduct my fieldwork.

The fieldwork for this study will be conducted in two parts. Firstly, fieldwork will be conducted in Rarotonga for three weeks during July 2005. This will include the collection of data from returned migrants' and those who have remained in the Cook Islands. It will explore the participants' decision to return to and remain in the Cook Islands during the period 1996 to 2005 in order to illuminate the causes and effects of Cook Islands migration and return migration from the perspective of those who have returned to and remained in the islands. The timing of the fieldwork will coincide with the Cook Islands Constitution Celebration when dance teams from the outer islands of the Cook group will travel to Rarotonga. This will allow me to carry out interviews with outer islands participants in Rarotonga (thus eliminating the time and cost of travel to these islands) in order to gain insight into Cook Islands migration from the perspective of those residing in the outer islands.

Bearing in mind the three-week time frame, I realise that perhaps I may be ambitious in what I hope to achieve in the time allocated. This means that I will need to have a back up plan should I run out of time. As Babbie (2001:91) suggested, "Before you observe and analyse, however, you need a plan. You need to determine what you are going to observe and analyse, why and how." Therefore should I run out of time, I would conduct a survey (see Appendix 4) instead of in-depth interviews with those who have remained in Rarotonga. This will involve asking these participants the same questions. I am aware that this will control the input that triggers each informant's responses. However it will also allow the output or responses to be reliably compared (Jones, 1985:5).

The second part of the fieldwork will be conducted in Auckland, New Zealand in September. This phase will focus on Cook Islanders who have emigrated from the Cook Islands. The data collected will examine the migration decision and

experiences of Cook Islanders who have left the Cook Islands from the period 1996 to 2005. Like the first part of the fieldwork, informal semi-structured in-depth interviews will be conducted. It is hoped that this will shed light from the perspective of emigrants, on the migration process, its causes and consequences.

The Sample

I propose to conduct semi-structured in-depth interviews with approximately 30 people who have returned to Rarotonga, who have remained in Rarotonga and who have emigrated from the Cook Islands during the period 1996 to 2005. Furthermore I will endeavor to conduct semi-structured in-depth interviews with people from the outer islands to gain their perspectives on international migration. I hope to carry out 5 interviews each from the outer islands of Aitutaki, Mauke, Manihiki and Penryhn. I realise that statistically, this is a small sample. However, in qualitative research, sample size is not a critical consideration since the emphasis of the analysis is focused on understanding the meanings and situations of specific issues in a specific context rather than overall representation (Bradshaw & Stratford, 2000:44-45).

Because of my familiarity with Rarotonga and its community, I have identified some people that are returned migrants whom I could contact to participate in this study. I hope that these people would then refer me to somebody else, in a snowballing approach. In the case of those who have remained in the Cook Islands, I choose to randomly select them, using the phone directory and see if they would like to participate in this study. With regard to outer islands participants, I would have to approach the group leader to see which of the team members would be willing to participate. In Auckland, my approach will be ultimately a snowballing one. I know that I will be able to identify some emigrants who may fall into the period of study through family and friends. I am hopeful that these initial participants will be able to refer others who may also be willing to participate in this research.

Ethical Issues

As the object of this study concerned human beings, ethical issues are very important Babbie, 2001; Scheyvens et al., 2003). Before conducting interviews (and survey, should this eventuate), I will introduce myself, explain the study and its purposes, and clearly clarify the participant's rights. I will also explain the structure of the research process and assure each participant that the data that is collected will remain confidential before the consent of the participant is sought. All these factors will be contained on an information sheet (see Appendix 2), which will be given to the participants. I will highlight that participation is completely voluntary and that the consent form (see Appendix 3) should only be signed if they agree to participate. They will also be made aware that they are not obliged to answer questions that they do not wish to and that they could withdraw from the interview and the study at any time during the process.

In order to preserve the anonymity of the participants' personal details such as names, date of birth, age are not to be included in the study. Participants will be identified by code and number only. Those who have emigrated will be identified with the code EM. Therefore, for example, information provided by the second participant interviewed from the emigrant sample group will be identified as EM2. The same principle will apply to the rest of the research sample. Returned migrants with be identified with the code RM; while those have remained in Rarotonga from the period 1996 to 2005 will be identified with the code NM. The Outer Islands participants will be identified as follows: AIT for those from Aitutaki; Mauke participants will have the code MAU; those from Manihiki will be identified with the code MHK; and participants from Penrhyn will be coded PEN. Responses by those who participate from the general Rarotonga population will be represented by the code RAR. This recognizes Seidman's (1988:56) claim that "...anonymity is the central issue of informed consent".

Before embarking on the fieldwork I am mindful that there are other basic guidelines that must be followed aimed at respect for and protection of the rights

and interests and sensitivities of the people being studied. Tuhiwai Smith (1999:120) asserts in relation to Maori researchers, that codes of conduct are set in cultural terms. Because of the cultural affinity between New Zealand Maori and Cook Islands Maori, I too realize that while conducting research amongst Cook Islanders, I must have a respect for people; present myself face to face; look, listen and speak; share and be generous; be cautious; not trample over the 'mana' of people; and not to flaunt my knowledge (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999:120).

In the field

Prior to going into the field, meetings were held between me and my supervisors to ensure that I had a good grasp of the ethical issues of carrying out fieldwork. Furthermore, a discussion on the codes of ethical conduct in research as stipulated by the Massey University Ethics Committee was also carried out with lecturers from the Massey University Institute of Development Studies to ensure that I fully understood the ethical issues of conducting fieldwork. These meetings and discussions aided in preparing me for my fieldwork experience.

Returning to Rarotonga

I arrived in Rarotonga on the 2 July 2005, to conduct the first phase of the fieldwork required for this thesis. I was excited to return 'home' to be in familiar surroundings and at the same time I was nervous at the uncertainty of how people would respond to me as a researcher. I quickly came to understand what Tuhiwai Smith (1999:5) meant when she said, "there are a number of ethical cultural, political and personal issues that can present special difficulties for indigenous researchers who in their own communities, work partially as insiders...and partially as outsiders..."

An insider and an outsider

Having spent most of my life in Rarotonga, I could safely say that I knew many people on the island. Therefore having already identified some people that I wished to interview prior to arriving in Rarotonga it was time to see whether they

would be willing participants in this research. In most instances when I approached people to participate, they were receptive because they have either known or seen me before – I was one of them, an insider. By the same token, I also felt that because of this familiarly, in some instances, the participants were in the beginning of the interview rather guarded with their responses. This made me feel like an outsider. The feeling of being an outsider was accentuated when I interviewed those from the outer islands of Manihiki, Penrhyn, Aitutaki and Mauke. While I was known or had been seen in Rarotonga, I was unknown to these outer islanders. I was naïve in thinking that since I was a Cook Islander; it would be easy for me to gain interviews with all Cook Islanders regardless of whether they were from Rarotonga or the outer islands. In these instances I tried to establish a feeling of trust that eventuated from building rapport. I created trust by showing genuine interest, assuring confidentiality and not being judgmental. As Miller and Glanner (2004:133) asserts, these are important elements of building rapport and eventually trust. Building rapport and trust was also established through clarification of who I was. As with other Pacific societies, one's identity is grounded in the family – the *'kopu tangata'*, where one is identified not as an individual in the Western sense of the word, but as a member of the collective extended family group (Liki, 2001). Though I had explained what my name was, and the purposes of my study, I also had to explain whom my parents were, where they were from, where I grew up, whom I was married to and so forth, in effect disclosing my personal background. Knowing my personal background people then felt more comfortable in sharing their thoughts with me. Once again through this process of establishing my 'kopu tangata' connections, I was again an insider and I understood what Miller and Glassner (2004:127) meant in saying, "the issue of how interviewees respond to us is based on who we are – in their lives..."

The Coconut Wireless

Rarotonga being the small place that it is, people tended to hear about things very quickly – a process that is locally known as the 'coconut wireless'[1]. After a few days in Rarotonga and completing a few interviews, it became common knowledge that I had gone to university in New Zealand and was now back to do research. I was contacted by the local television station news team and asked if I could do an interview. At first I was hesitant but remembered that cultural protocols, values, and behaviours are an integral part of methodology. This provided an appropriate way in which I could provide information regarding my research and perhaps a means of sharing knowledge and the principle of reciprocity that Tuhiwai Smith (1999:15) emphasizes in the application of indigenous methodologies. Furthermore, it also provided me with the opportunity to ask those who were interested in participating in the study to contact me. During the television interview I was mindful that I must come across in the story as 'humble' and not flaunt my knowledge, as advised by Tuhiwai Smith (1999:120). I was pleasantly surprised with the effect that this news item generated. It not only led to a number of people contacting me eager to participate but before I would approach participants they knew what I was going to speak to them about. Furthermore, when I conducted the second phase of my fieldwork in Auckland, I discovered that some of the Auckland participants had heard about my research through conversations with those back in the Cook Islands (accentuating the connection maintained by emigrants with those back in the islands). While in Rarotonga, I was often greeted by "how's your research going? You want to talk to me about your research don't you?" and so forth.

Rarotonga Interviews

Prior to going into the 'field', I had decided that I would focus on qualitative methods, using semi-structured in-depth interviews to gather information. When carrying out the interviews, I acted as a facilitator, only asking questions when the

[1] The 'coconut wireless' refers to the way in which the happenings in the community are made known, through word of mouth. Admittedly, sometimes the 'news' relayed by 'coconut wireless' can become rather exaggerated as it gets relayed from one person to another.

need arose. During the interviews I realised that interviews often lack a linear direction. Participants often changed the direction of the interview, giving freely of information at one point, while at other times needing to be prompted to complete his/her narrative (Marsters, 2004:19). This method gave participants the opportunity to tell of their migration experiences and air their thoughts. The primary issue of conducting informal in-depth interviews was as Jody and Glassner (2004:125) stressed was "...to generate data which would give an authentic insight into people's experiences."

Before conducting an interview, I met the possible participant and explained my study before asking for their participation (as outlined in the previous section). When the person consented to the interview, a time and place at the convenience of the participant was then identified. The majority of the interviews were conducted either in participants' homes or places of work.

In seeking interviews with outer island participants, I realised that I could not just approach them individually. These people had come to Rarotonga as a group to compete in the dancing competition for the Constitution Celebrations. At the time island groups were living in their respective hostels. I knew that I had to gain permission from the leaders of the various groups. As Leslie and Storey (2003:153-155) suggest, it is important that before researchers gain access to research participant, they make contact with the so-called "gatekeeper" on the research site. As I had predicted once I had gained permission from the group leaders, they also assisted in identifying possible participants whom I could interview.

Though I had initially estimated that interviews would last between 45 minutes to an hour, this was rarely the case. The majority of my interviews exceeded an hour. I found that once people were comfortable with sharing their thoughts with me it was likely that the conversation would exceed my estimated timeframe.

As I had anticipated, I was fast running out of time and I still had to gain the perspective of those who had remained in Rarotonga during the period 1996 to 2005. I had to resort to Plan B, which was the survey (see Appendix 4). During my last two days remaining on the island I surveyed 66 people. Survey participants were selected randomly. I walked down the main street of Avarua[2] and asked people if they were willing to take part in the survey. The survey was short and precise so as not to greatly inconvenience participants. However, I found that there were also many people who were quite happy to converse with me and elaborate on the answers they had provided. For this I was glad and appreciative because their comments offered further insights into their thoughts and behaviour. I also recorded these comments and have included them in this thesis.

During the Rarotonga fieldwork stage, I strove to have a balanced representation of both female and male participants from a wide range of age groups. Despite trying to have a balanced representation of both genders, there were more women and men participants. The gender and age characteristics of the participants in the Rarotonga fieldwork stage are illustrated in table 5.1 below.

Table 5.1: Gender and Age Characteristics of the Cook Islands participants in this research

Characteristics	Returned Migrant	Outer Island Resident	Survey Participant
Gender			
Female	17	10	37
Male	13	10	29
Age (in years)			
18-24	0	4	8
25-34	7	3	15
35-44	14	3	25
45-54	4	4	12
55-64	1	4	4
65+	4	2	2
Total Number	30	20	66

[2] Avarua is the main administrative and commercial centre of the Cook Islands.

In Rarotonga, I interviewed 30 returned migrants. There were 20 interviews conducted with people from the outer islands and the survey conducted had 66 respondents.

In Auckland

Phase two of my fieldwork was conducted in Auckland in September 2005. I was apprehensive for two main reasons. Firstly, I did not really know the actual whereabouts and contact details of those who had emigrated from the Cook Islands to Auckland during the period 1996 to 2005. However, I was confident that I could find them with the help of family and friends. Secondly, although I had been to Auckland many times before, I was not really familiar with the city and how to get about. But nonetheless, I was determined to overcome both of these factors.

Identifying Participants

As I had anticipated, once I had made contact with a few people, they were able to point me into the direction of others who had also emigrated around the same time. I found this 'snowballing' method very useful because it not only identified other potential participants but when they had been referred to me by their friends or family, they were more inclined to participate because 'so and so' have too. However, I always stressed that participants fully understood that they were under no obligation to participate. Again, as in the Cook Islands, people were very receptive and were only too pleased to participate. In Auckland, I conducted 25 interviews. The gender and age characteristics of the participants interviewed in Auckland are outlined in table 5.2 below.

Table 5.2: Gender and Age Characteristics of the Auckland participants in this research

Characteristics	Emigrant
Gender	
Female	17
Male	8
Age (in years)	
18-24	1
25-34	10
35-44	6
45-54	3
55-64	5
65+	0
Total	25

Although I had planned to carry out 30 interviews, this was not possible due to the time required for travel, the participants' schedules and the horrendous Auckland traffic.

Because of the difference in the size of Auckland in comparison to Rarotonga in the Cook Islands, virtually all participants were contacted by telephone in the first instance. During this initial phone call I told them who I was, outlined my study and then sought their consent for participation. When they agreed, we then arranged the time and place for the interview at the participants' convenience. Some participants (20%) wished to be interviewed over the telephone. A number of participants preferred the relative anonymity provided by the telephone, while others found it difficult to arrange a time and place for the interview thus choosing to be interviewed by telephone. The majority (80%) of participants were happy to be interviewed face to face. For those who preferred this option, interviews were conducted at participants' homes at their convenience.

The Interviews

Again because of the focus on qualitative methods, semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted. As with the interviews conducted in the Cook Islands, I acted as the facilitator and encouraged the participant to relate in their own terms their migration decisions and experiences. In using the semi-structured interview approach, the specific questions that I had were asked only when needed. I found that my role to some extent had switched from being a guide to being a follower depending on the excitement of the participant on what was being talked about (Atkinson, 1998).

Similar to interviews conducted in the Cook Islands, I found that the majority of my interviews lasted for more than an hour. This was particularly true in the instances where face-to-face interviews were conducted in the participants' homes. Again I discovered that people were comfortable and happy to share their thoughts with me particularly in the comfort of their own surroundings.

Reflections of the field

Changing ideas

The fieldwork conducted for this study highlighted the flaws regarding my initial thoughts on migration and the Cook Islands. My focus in this research was primarily on the causes and effects of Cook Islands migration. Halfacree and Boyle (1993) noted that migration could not be broken down into a simple cause and effect situation; instead one would need to enquire around the subject, building up a picture of the migration decision and its effects from a variety of angles. I employed this strategy when conducting my interviews. However, I was unprepared for the responses that I received. The rich stories told by the participants' revealed new clues and opened up new dimensions of the migration process.

Prior going into the 'field' I had assumed that the stories I would hear would generally support the assumptions of the dominant approaches to international

migration. These assumptions being firstly, that the causes of migration were primarily economic; and secondly, that migration is determined by structural forces outside the control of individuals. However, these assumptions were challenged by those who participated in this research. Cook Islanders did not perceive themselves as passive automatons dictated by outside forces. But rather, in making migration decisions, they were knowledgeable agents, capable of formulating responses influenced by structural factors in ways that were meaningful to themselves. In addition, the participants in this research also indicated that there were certain political and social structures that allowed migration potential to be transformed into migration action. This illuminated the realities of the multidimensional and multifaceted nature of migration. It highlighted the need to consider migration as a unified social process with the main actors being the people situated within the process – whether they were emigrants', returned migrants' or those who remained in the islands, they were all part of the Cook Islands migration process.

I had underestimated not only the agency of the individual but also the social and political structures that allow and enable the migration process. Migration was a result of the interactions between individual agency and structures. Consequently, by utilising various structures in the context of migration, Cook Islanders reinforce and sustain not only these structures but also the migration process. This highlighted the need to (re)conceptualise international migration in a way that enabled the integration of conventional structural explanations, the agency of those involved in the process and the systems and structures that allow the process to occur. This meant that I needed to understand the relationship between structure and agency, which in turn led me to examine migration within a structuration theory framework.

The beauty of qualitative research

I believe that I would not have been able to attain these deeper insights into migration had I not employed a qualitative approach during my fieldwork

experience. During the interview process I acted only as a facilitator and sought to allow the interview to be driven by the participants thus developing their own narratives. While I had estimated the length of the interview, I quickly realised that the course of the interview could not be pre-determined and allowed the participants to speak freely. I also realised that allowing the participants to speak freely was for them an empowering and illuminating position where they could reflect and speak about their lives in ways not often available (Miller & Glassner, 2004:132). During this process I became conscious that "participants are the teachers and we [the researchers] are their students" (Kleinman & Copp, 1993:29).

The insider/outsider indigenous researcher

As a Cook Islander, I was able to position myself as an insider within the Cook Islands communities, whether they were in the islands or in New Zealand. Even in some instances where I sometimes felt like an outsider, this was overcome by building rapport and trust. I also realised the significance of not only my identity, familiarity with the culture but also my fluency in Cook Islands Maori in ensuring successful interviews. As Veeck (2001:34) asserts, "language proficiency is a centerpiece of successful fieldwork". During the interviews I was able to converse both in English and Cook Islands Maori. I believe that this was important in not only hearing but understanding the voices of the participants'. It also made both participant and I as the researcher feel more at ease and conversation flow more freely during the interview process.

Insider researchers have been critiqued as maybe being "overfamiliar with the community" which could lead to "too much participation at the expense of observation" (DeLyser, 2001:442). Prior to going into the field, I was mindful of this and have tried to avoid being in this situation. This was achieved by taking the role as facilitator and a back seat (so to speak) when interviewing participants. I had gone into the field equipped with the words of indigenous researcher Tuhiwai Smith (1999:139) when she stated that "the comment 'she or he live in it

therefore they know' certainly validates experience but for a researcher to assume that their own experience is all that is required is arrogant."

Conclusion

The focus of this study has always been at the outset to let the voices of those that make up the Cook Islands migration process to be heard. This could only be achieved by using qualitative methods of research, in this case semi-structured in-depth interviews. I have acted as a facilitator by allowing the participants to speak freely. The rich stories and narratives of the participants provided insights into dimensions of migration that I had not anticipated at the start of this journey.

During this fieldwork experience, my identity as an inside researcher and having familiarity with the Cook Islands culture and language has allowed me to be attuned to the participants, thus enabling me to hear their voices. Listening to the voices of the participants has been a humbling experience where I perceived myself as the student and participants as my teachers. I now appreciate as DeLyser (2001) argued, that by being an inside researcher, I am explicitly studying not just others but also myself, attempting to gain insight through everyday life truly lived along with the rest of the community. I also came to appreciate that "the researcher is an instrument in her/his research" and cannot conveniently tuck away the personal behind the professional, because fieldwork is personal (England, 1984, cited in DeLyser, 2001:446).

The methodology adopted in this research has provided a deeper understanding of international migration. The participants in this research have shown that migration is a dynamic social process that cannot be explained by solely economic constructs or structural perspectives. Instead, greater understanding of international migration is achieved by acknowledging the people and gaining the perspective of those individuals involved in the process. Cook Islanders tell the story where migration is the result of an interaction between agency and structure.

This is a story in which migration action is ultimately determined by the individual and where he or she is able to formulate appropriate responses to the influences of structural forces. These voices and stories must be heard if a deeper understanding of Cook Islands migration is to be achieved.

CHAPTER 6

THE 'UU'
WHY DO COOK ISLANDERS MOVE, STAY OR RETURN?

Introduction

At the heart of international migration debate is the movement of people from developing areas of origin to more developed destinations. As discussed in Chapter 2, the causes of migration are perceived by conventional approaches of international migration as responses to the inequalities that exist between these two poles as a result of the unequal processes of development (Parnwell, 1993). Therefore in this light, the causes of migration are factors related to development differentials between countries, which are outside the control of the migrant that inexorably compel individual action (Papastergiadis, 2000). Migration tends to be treated as an isolated event, and migrants as automatons, responding mechanically to forces beyond their control (McHugh, 2000). Notions of human agency and other non-economic factors that may influence movements are not in the picture. As a result, individuals are conceptualised as objects responding to broader structural forces and presents a one-sided view of migration decision making. These approaches present theoretical frameworks that explain only part of the migration process, therefore, cannot conceptualise all relevant components of the process.

More recent debates in migration literature challenge the assumptions of conventional international migration approaches. These challenges are based on the notion that migration is socially constructed. As a socially constructed process, it is argued that the emphasis in migration research requires a shift from macro and quantitative to micro and qualitative levels of analysis in order to comprehend the realities of those that constitute the migration process (Lawson,

2000; McHugh, 2000). These arguments call for an approach where understanding the perspective of the individual is important and where the interactions between the individual and structures can be articulated.

The structuration theory (Giddens, 1984) is such an approach. It provides the opportunity for migration to be understood as a social process that is constituted by knowing and capable agents interacting with structures and the result of this interaction is migration action. The structuration theory opens up the possibility in migration research to not only challenge conventional perspectives but also broaden explanations of the process. Central to the structuration approach is the elucidating the agency of the individual and how they understand and relate to structures (Craib, 1992). In doing so, the need for qualitative methodologies is highlighted. It is argued that qualitative methodologies have the potential of capturing the variety of migrants' experiences and the complexity of the decision to migrate (De Haan, 2000). Therefore to extend and, at the same time, deepen existing explanations of the migration process, the perspectives of those in the migration process must be understood (Thomas-Hope, 1992). The structuration theory has been drawn upon to help illuminate the complexities of the Cook Islands migration.

Migration has always been an integral component of Cook Islands social and economic change throughout time. While Cook Islanders have always been mobile people, 1996 marked the beginning of the most recent significant emigration of Cook Islanders. The decline of Cook Islanders resident in the country, and the growing Cook Islands population residing in New Zealand and Australia has presented the Cook Islands with a migration problem. As discussed in Chapter 4, there are concerns that those returning are not offsetting the balance of those that are leaving and there is apparent trepidation for the sustainability of the Cook Islands resident population. At the centre of the Cook Islands migration problem is the need to understand why Cook Islanders decide to stay, depart from or return to the Cook Islands.

The results of the fieldwork conducted for this thesis is presented in this chapter. The fieldwork focuses on understanding international migration from the perspective of Cook Islanders that constitute the Cook Islands migration process. The interviews conducted during the fieldwork stages of this thesis have demonstrated that migration affects all members of society. As such, migration analysis must not be limited to migrants but also include non-migrants in order to gain a more holistic picture of the migration process (Thomas-Hope, 1992). It includes the migration experiences of both those who departed from and those who have returned to the Cook Islands. Furthermore, it also includes the opinions of those who remain in Cook Islands. This chapter is divided into three main sections. The first section will examine the migration experiences of Cook Islanders who have emigrated from the Cook Islands and are living in New Zealand. The second section looks at the perspective of returned migrants. The third considers the opinions of those have remained in the Cook Islands. Drawing upon the structuration theory (as discussed in Chapter 2), this chapter will highlight the agency of the individual in determining migration action and the recurring relationship between agency and structures in producing international migration.

The data collected focuses on the period from 1996 to 2005 and hopes to explain the tendency for migration, and not solely the volume and timing. It is an attempt to move away from the conceptualization of the process based on episodes or incidences of negative conditions in an objective environment, and seek explanation of migration in the context of the ongoing aspects of Cook Islands lives and livelihoods. The narratives provided by those who have participated in this research will be drawn upon to allow their voices to be heard[3].

[3] To preserve anonymity, participants' are not identified by name but rather by code as discussed in Chapter 5. Codes that begin with EM represent a participant who has emigrated; RM refers to a returned migrant; MAU represents participants from Mauke; AIT, participants from Aitutaki; PEN, participants from Penryhn and MHK indicates participants from Manihiki. Narratives from the survey conducted in Rarotonga are identified by RAR and the numerical order of the participant in the survey, for example RAR6.

This chapter will argue that the perspective of the individual better captures the complexity of the migration process – a process that results from the interactions between active agents and structures. The perspective will demonstrate that the causes of emigration are diverse. However, emigration is not merely the result of these causal factors. There are also other structures that encourage and allow Cook Islands migration. In addition, this chapter will demonstrate that despite the diverse reasons for migration, it is perceived that the causes of the process are related to the nature and level of national development. It is also perceived that similarly there is an important correlation between return migration and development.

Section One: The Emigrant

The significant decline in Cook Islands population in 1996 is perceived by many Cook Islanders as a direct result of the 1996 Economic Restructuring Program in which 50% of the people employed in the public service lost their jobs. As discussed in Chapter 4, for many Cook Islanders that faced unemployment, the easiest option was to emigrate to New Zealand or Australia. This perception supports the assumptions of the conventional theoretical perspectives on international movements of people from developing to developed countries. These perspectives view those who emigrate as investors in human capital (Massey et.al, 1993). At the heart of these perspectives is the assumption that emigrants move in search of employment or higher wages. The causes of migration are therefore perceived as the economic/political differentials between sending and receiving countries caused by differences in levels of economic development.

This viewpoint emphasizes the broader economic conditions producing migration rather than the migrants themselves. The migrant is therefore conceptualised as a passive agent, an object in the process of economic development whose movements are dictated by factors outside of his or her control. As a result, the perspective of the emigrant has largely been ignored. This section is an attempt to present the perspective of the emigrant[4]. The stories and voices of Cook Islanders who have emigrated will be used to provide a deeper understanding of Cook Islands international migration. The emigrant's migration decision - the reasons for migration, the choice of destination, intentions of return and his or her perceptions regarding migration and Cook Islands development will be examined. In doing so, this section will examine the causes and effects of Cook Islands migration from the perspective of those who have migrated from the Cook Islands.

[4] As discussed in Chapter 5, there were 25 participants who migrated from the Cook Islands to Auckland who participated in this research.

Characteristics of emigrants

The complexity of understanding and explaining international migration is due to the difficulty of defining the process and also the characteristics of those who constitute it. Emigrants are normally defined as those who depart from their countries of origin to settle in destination areas. In this research, definition of the emigrant is a person of Cook Islands descent who has normally resided in the Cook Islands and has now departed from the islands following 1996 to settle in New Zealand for a period of more than one year. (The demographic characteristics of emigrants that participated in this research are outlined in the table in Appendix 5.)

The emigrants reflect the Cook Islands statistical data (1996 and 2001 censuses) regarding some of the characteristics of those who leave the islands. The majority of emigrants are between the ages of 20-34 years at the time of emigration. In addition, there appears to also be a significant number of children who emigrated, indicating the prevalence family migration from the Cook Islands. However, other age groups included in this research recognise and acknowledges that emigration from the Cook Islands occurs in a wide range of age groups.

The decision to emigrate

Dominant theoretical perspectives by neglecting the agency of migrants perceive migration as a mechanical response to broader structural forces that influence migration. The participants in this research contradict this point of view. This is aptly illustrated by the following participants:

> "I was at a stage in my life where it was time for me to move. I decided to go back to studying. You know I could have gone to Fiji on scholarship but I didn't want to.... I wanted to come to New Zealand. I decided I would come to New Zealand....It was me who decided to come to New Zealand...." (Participant EM15)

> "I decided to come to Auckland.....I [have] been here before three times but only for holiday. I want[ed] to see what its like to live here." (Participant EM6)
>
> "The decision to come to Auckland was difficult to make because I knew what living here [Auckland] was like having lived here before....But I had to come back, because I wanted the boys to go to school here. I wanted a better education for them and secondary school standard here is better than Raro [Rarotonga]....I wanted them to go to a single sex school....I had gone to school here...." (Participant EM25)

In explaining the decision to leave the Cook Islands, emigrants insist that they were not automatons but rather were knowledgeable agents making informed decisions. The decision is influenced by the actual experiences of the emigrants, their perceptions of life and opportunities available in the islands and New Zealand and the view held by the individual of the migration process itself. It suggests that decisions are formed against a background of the individual's values, beliefs, aspirations, emotions and personality. Thus migration decisions are not only influenced by factors external to the emigrant but also by those within. Claiming ownership of the migration decision emphasizes the agency of the emigrant in the migration process. It suggests that structural factors that are expected to lead to a propensity to emigrate are perceived in ways that enhance the achievement of individual goals. They emerge as reasons for migration in the decision making process. This implies that migration results from the impact of structural forces upon the individual – a combination therefore of agency and structure. This becomes more apparent when examining the reasons for migration from the perspective of the Cook Island emigrant.

Reasons as Causes

Criticisms of the conventional theoretical perspectives of international migration have focused upon the misleading notion that such a complex process could have a single cause. In trying to determine the causes of migration, Giddens's (1984) structuration theory concept of agency is drawn upon. Giddens maintains that the reasons provided by individuals should be considered causes of action. If the

reasons for movement provided by those who migrated from the Cook Islands are to be considered as causes of migration then the criticisms of dominant theoretical perspectives are proven correct.

This research presents a picture of diverse motives and motivations. The majority of participants (48%) cited more than one reason for migration. Forty four percent could identify one primary reason for migration, while 8% came initially for a holiday and decided to stay. As Connell and Conway (2000:57) state "the variety of reasons put forward to explain migration sometimes seems interminable and the problems of generalization considerable." However from the primary data collected the reasons provided can be separated into four general groups.

The first group consists of those whose reasons for migration arise from the economic and employment disparities between the Cook Islands and New Zealand. The second group perceived migration as a result of social disparities between the two countries in the areas of education and health, though as Connell and Conway (2000) contend, such social issues are often a function of economic issues. However, because of their considerable significance in determining migration, they have been grouped separately. The third group provided a combination of reasons. Those who have been grouped into this group could not identify a primary cause of migration. Their reasons for migration were many, consisting of both economic and non-economic motives. Hence in this group the reasons for migration were often interrelated and overlapping. For the fourth group, migration resulted from non-economic factors in particular issues to do with family and personality. This data is summarised in Table 6.1 below.

Table 6.1: Reasons for Migration from the Cook Islands by general type

Type of Reason	**%**
Economic and Employment	20
Social (education and health)	20
Combination of reasons	28
Non-economic	32

Table 6.1 highlights that the reasons for migration are both materialistic and non-materialistic in nature and at times a combination of both. To further understand these reasons, some of the stories of the participants are presented in the following section.

Providing the reasons

As dictated by functionalist approaches, international migration results from the disparity in wages between the sending and receiving countries (Massey, 1993; 1998). Higher wages are often seen as a crucial factor in improving livelihoods. This certainly was the reason for participant EM8, who arrived in Auckland in 1998. She said, "I came to New Zealand to find a better life because of more money." Similarly, participant EM9 moved to New Zealand from Rarotonga in 1997 in search "...for a better life and more money."

For some the reason for migration was employment. For example, participant EM12, a young nurse, moved to New Zealand in 1996 to advance her nursing career. She said:

> "In 1996...the nurses were asked to reapply for positions. I was unhappy because I didn't see the reason why we had to apply... but I had wanted to move for a whole year. In Rarotonga you can't move on, there are no opportunities for you to advance or to specialise.... I wanted to specialise in theatre nursing. The 1996 reform gave me a reason to move and so I applied to MIT to further my training. I was already a registered nurse so I did a bridging course to get New Zealand registration. Then I did my training to specialize as a theatre nurse."

This participant illustrates that unusual circumstances, (like the 1996 Cook Islands economic reform program) can provide motivation for migration. However, as she also points out, she had wanted to emigrate for a whole year prior to 1996, indicating that the potential for migration was already in place.

Health appears to be another common reason for migration from the Cook Islands. For example, participant EM16, a middle aged man, suffered from kidney failure. Treatment for his condition is unavailable in the Cook Islands. He said that, "I feel that I have to stay in New Zealand because of my health....If anything goes wrong at least I'm here [in New Zealand], 5 minutes away from the hospital....If I go back to Raro [Rarotonga] if anything goes wrong they can't fix me there." His wife and children also moved to New Zealand. This illustrates that health as the cause of migration often does not only involve a sick individual but also members of the person's family. Another participant EM1, who also continues to reside in New Zealand because of health reasons, explained that when he moved to New Zealand, the rest of his family also migrated. Of his ten children, only one child resides in the Cook Islands.

Education also has long been recognised as a major factor influencing Pacific migration (MacPherson, Bedford & Spoonley, 2000). Like its other Pacific neighbours, the pursuit of education and training has been identified as a major cause of Cook Islands migration (Hooker, 1994). Participant EM25, for example, migrated to New Zealand because she wanted her children to attend college in New Zealand. She perceived education in New Zealand as far superior to that available in the Cook Islands and essential if her children were to succeed in the future. Acquiring education overseas is perceived to improve one's life chances by achieving higher and safer incomes at the completion of education.

Participant EM24, had completed college in the Cook Islands and sought higher qualifications and hence moved to Auckland in 1997. While the primary motivation for her migration was for higher education achieving a Diploma in Business Studies at Manukau Technical Institute, she also acknowledges that migration allowed her to "get off the island" and "probably to escape from my stepfather." As she explained further, "I was young, I wanted to leave .... It wasn't just that I wanted to study, I wanted to get away... from the island and my home life...."

This last quote clearly illustrates that migration journeys may have a variety of causes for particular people. It also demonstrates the view held by young emigrants - the need to move away from the islands. As Participant EM6, who moved to New Zealand when he was 19 years old explained:

> "I think when you [are] young you need to leave the islands. I was young when I came to Auckland. I mean you can't just go through life with only experiencing life in the islands....I wanted to experience life overseas. I think a lot of young people feel like that...I wanted to see what life has to offer outside of the islands. To see if it was better, maybe it is better, but you never know till you try...."

This participant (EM6) highlights the notion of migration as a transition to adulthood where the young are expected to move away from the islands. This may be a function of economic issues as Connell and Conway (2000) suggests, but it is definitely one which clearly involves the agency of the individual and his or her interpretation of the world around them. This participant also reflects a common perception of the migration process held by migrants. In many respects, migration remains, in different forms a time-honoured strategy of trying to better one's live.

For some emigrants migration provided the means of beginning life anew. This was certainly the case for participant EM05, who moved from Rarotonga with her partner in 1999. Her partner had spent time in prison as a result of a drunken driving causing death conviction. Upon his release, they thought that they would move to Auckland to start a new life. "We wanted to get away and leave that old life behind. To start somewhere new, in a new environment ... we needed to go away." This participant indicated that their migration was driven to a certain extent by shame. Emotional factors are rarely mentioned in the literature as motivators for migration and yet they were often threaded into explanations for leaving. This is particularly true in incidences where the causes of migration are non-materialistic; this is indicated by those who emigrated for family reasons.

The importance of family in migration is noted by the 1999 OECD report on migration (cited in Phizacklea, 2004:122) which states that, "Immigration for family reasons continues to predominate..." For example, participant EM04 moved to Auckland from Rarotonga in 1996 to care for her sickly grandchild. She explained that, "My grandchild was sickly, there was nobody to care for her and I mean that nobody can care for her like I can. I had to; nobody loves her like me.... I left my job and came to live in New Zealand." Like this woman, participant EM21 and her husband also resigned from their jobs in Rarotonga and moved to New Zealand in 1996 because of the unstable health of their daughter. "We wanted to be close to our daughter, when she needed us."

The importance of family in influencing the decision to migrate is also explained by participant EM12. She stated that, "It was time for a change. My parents had moved to New Zealand. My brothers and my sister all live overseas. I was the only one in my family left in Rarotonga. There was nothing to keep me there. Besides my partner [an expatriate New Zealander] wanted to come back to Auckland.... It was time to move. With everybody in my family gone, yep there was really nothing keeping me there." This participant validates also the high incidences of family migration from the Cook Islands.

Massey (1998) acknowledges that as families depart and take up residences overseas those left behind also have the tendency to move and rejoin family members. However, what is unacknowledged is that the causes for migration for these migrants is not merely the need to be with other family members, but more importantly motivation for migration is influenced by emotions – a sense of obligation, nurturing, caring, love and so forth. This indicates that these factors also need to be recognised in order to gain a deeper understanding of international migration.

The reasons for emigration provided illustrate the diversity of causes for migration. The reasons why Cook Islanders emigrate cannot be captured within the narrow economistic imageries of the conventional approaches of international migration. The voices of Cook Islanders reveal a migration process that is driven in some instances by economic logic, while in others by factors unrelated to economic constructs. The diversity of causes for Cook Islands migration reveals the varied responses that individual Cook Islanders' make when responding to the situations in which their lives are situated in. This becomes more apparent in the following section.

The conditions behind the reason

For some emigrants in this study, the 1996 economic restructuring program influenced their migration. For these migrants, the 1996 situation in the Cook Islands provided motivation for migration. Emigration as a response to the events of 1996 coincides with the assumptions of the structuration theory that motivation for action predominantly occurs in special situations where the everyday flow of activities is threatened or breached (Craib, 1992; Giddens, 1984). When these Cook Islanders faced unemployment or when their jobs were jeopardised, this provided incentive for migration.

The majority of those who have departed from the Cook Islands did not perceive their movement as a result of the events of 1996. This dispels the notion that massive population movements are the result of unusual circumstances (Benmayor and Skotnes, 2005). It suggests rather that migration is a process that in many instances seems to be related to particular stages of the individual's life, aspects of their personality and their understanding of the world around them.

Understanding the reasons as causes in migration decision making

As suggested by the structuration theory (Giddens, 1984), to understand actions such as migration, the agency of the individual must be included in analysis. Giddens suggests that the individual is an active agent, aware and knowledgeable

of the actions that he or she undertakes. The practical level of consciousness ensures that the emigrant knows how to act. To explain actions, the emigrant has discursive consciousness, where he or she is able to give rational explanations for migration. Also involved in migration decision making are motives that exist in the unconscious level of the migrant. These are the internal conditioning factors that influence migration such as aspirations, ambitions and emotions, personality that may provide overall plans for migration action.

The experiences of the participants is evidence that migration results from the interaction between structural factors in the emigrant's environment and the impact of these factors upon his or her life. Whether these structural factors are material or immaterial in nature, emigrants interpret them in ways that are meaningful to themselves and in the particular context of migration. This therefore does not only emphasize the 'pushes' or 'pulls' of the origin and destination areas (Lee, 1966), but also the way in which the individual articulates and deals with these 'pushes' and 'pulls'.

In explaining the reasons for emigration, participants indicate that factors that cause migration are diverse. The way in which these factors are perceived to enhance the achievement of goals at the individual level become critical as causes for movement during the migration decision making process. As highlighted in Chapter 3 regarding Pacific Islands migration, these causes and the impact they have on the individual's life are not the only influences on the migration decisions. There are other structures that enable and allow migration propensity to be transformed into migration action. This is further illustrated when considering how emigrants choose the migration destination.

Choosing the destination

It appears that choosing New Zealand as the main migration destination for Cook Islanders is an unproblematic process. This is largely related to two factors.

New Zealand Citizenship

The first factor results from the political/historical relationship between the Cook Islands and New Zealand. At the time of Cook Islands independence (1965), the difficulty of sustaining a fully independent micro-state was recognised. Instead the Cook Islands opted for the status of 'self-governing in free association with New Zealand'. This constitutional status ensured that Cook Islanders remain New Zealand citizens. As a result, Cook Islanders are able to move freely between the islands and New Zealand. Table 6.2 indicates that the majority of the Cook Island emigrants in this research had made previous visits to New Zealand prior to the current migration, with 50% having made more than 3 visits.

Table 6.2: Visits to New Zealand prior to current migration

Visits to New Zealand Prior to current move	Percentage of Sample
No prior visits	5
1 prior visit	5
2 prior visits	10
3 prior visits	10
More than 3 prior visits	50
A former resident of New Zealand	15
Educated in New Zealand	5
Total	100

This indicates the high occurrence of travel between the Cook Islands and New Zealand. As participant EM12 explains, "This is my first time to live away from home [Rarotonga]. But I must say that I am well traveled...I've been here [New Zealand] lots of times before, I think I've lost count of how many times I've been here." The high level of mobility between the islands and New Zealand is also reiterated by participant EM2 in saying, "I think when I was 6 was the first time I

came to New Zealand. Then we use to come over [to New Zealand] almost nearly every Christmas till the time I left school..."

Prior travel to New Zealand ensures a sense of familiarity. To a certain extent, Cook Islanders have a fair idea of what to expect when relocating. This is illustrated by participant EM16: "I [have] been here [to New Zealand] plenty [of] times....I think that because I [have] been here before it makes it easier when I come over to live because you know the place and you kind of know what its going to be like." This suggests that Cook Islanders are knowledgeable about the environment to which they are emigrating to. Therefore, the decision to emigrate is an informed one that is not merely based on perceptions and information heard but also actual experiences.

It is apparent that the absence of immigration restrictions for Cook Islanders migrating to New Zealand ensures considerable movement between the two countries. It is a key factor influencing the intensity and flow of the Cook Islands migration process.

The structuration theory (Giddens, 1984), proposes that structures such as the authoritative channels that allow actions like migration should be considered as 'resources' which individuals knowingly exploit to produce action. The fact that New Zealand is the most common destination for Cook Islands migrants demonstrates that indeed New Zealand citizenship is a resource that Cook Islanders knowingly exploit in the migration process. The knowledge of Cook Islanders in exploiting New Zealand citizenship as a resource is also evident in the ability of Cook Islanders to access social and financial entitlements in New Zealand. It is perceived that having access to these entitlements not only attracts Cook Islanders to New Zealand but also keeps them there. As participant EM1 explained:

> "I'm much better off here [in New Zealand]. Over here I get the government benefit. I get the disability benefit because of my health. My wife gets the unemployment benefit because she doesn't

> work, because she looks after me. We have a house from the Housing [state house] and our rent is cheaper because it's a housing house.... We can live on that money we are getting. It is easier than back home. If I can't work back home, I will have no income."

Even for those who have not yet accessed 'benefit' payments from the New Zealand Ministry of Social Development, they feel assured that these services are there, should the need for them arise. According to participant EM13, "Here in New Zealand when you get in trouble, I mean on the bones of your ass, you always have backup. You can always go to WINZ.[5]" This highlights the importance of New Zealand citizenship in not only enabling Cook Islands migration but also its significance in assisting with the lives of emigrants. For some, the availability of New Zealand state provided social and financial assistance that can be assessed by Cook Islanders appears also be a key factor in the decision to reside in New Zealand.

The 'Family'

The second fundamental factor in choosing New Zealand as a destination is the presence of family in New Zealand. Participant EM11 illustrates this by saying, "I think the main reason why I chose to move to Auckland was because of family. My sister was here [in Auckland]. Because she was here it was easier for me to come here instead of going somewhere else where I have no family." In fact, like the above participant, all the emigrants on arrival in Auckland initially lived with family before gaining their own accommodation. This fact is illustrated by participant EM15:

> "When I arrived [in New Zealand], I lived with my aunty .... I knew that I was going to live there anyway before I came here. I mean everybody has family here and we all know that if you come here you live with your family. Anyway I lived there and when I start working I use to help by buying food and paying for the power and the phone and at the same time saving to get my own place. When I had enough for my bond and all that, like buying me some furniture and stuff, but then other family gives you some stuff you need so

[5] Work and Income New Zealand – the division of the Ministry of Social Development responsible for 'benefit' payments.

> that makes it a bit easier, I found my flat and move there. I mean that's what happens when people come [to New Zealand], they live with family until they can stand on their own two feet and then move out and find their own place. That's what everybody I know does."

The importance of family in helping migrants establish themselves in the destination also includes assistance in finding employment. As participant M16 explained:

> "I would say that for me finding work here was easy through my cousin. I asked my cousin if he knew of some places where I can find work. My cousin told me that there were jobs at the place where he worked.... I had to apply myself and I got the job. But I think that if my cousin hadn't told me about the job there I won't have got to know about it.... I think that that happens all the time with people when they come over [to New Zealand]. Because that what our people do.... If you are working somewhere and you know that there are jobs going there then you tell your family or friends to apply for the jobs. That's how a lot of people find work."

The importance of family in perpetuating international migration is recognised by the networks approach of the process (Massey, 1993; 1998). The networks approach theorises that social networks reduce the cost of migration. This focus on the 'cost' of migration, however, reduces the actions of the network to economic logic. The participants in this research indicate that the importance of family in facilitating Cook Islands migration cannot be understood merely in economic terms, supporting the literature on Pacific Islands migration. The family is the medium by which Cook Islanders produce social practises. These social practises are deeply seated in the culture and in the psyche of Cook Islanders. Participant EM02 illustrates this:

> "When I thought that we would stay here [in Auckland] I think that it was because of my brother being here [in Auckland]...because we would have a place to stay until we found our feet.... That's because that's what we do isn't it, us Cook Islanders? .... I think that its part of our culture...knowing how important family is to us. Because we are family we have to help each other out. That's just the way it is, isn't it?"

A rule that is the 'family'

The voices of the participants above suggests that 'family' assistance is a somewhat 'taken-for-granted' procedure where migrants have the 'know-how' of carrying on in established ways (Craib, 1992: 46). The structuration theory proposes that such mediums that produce social practises may be considered as rules. Rules are deeply rooted in the agent's tacit practical consciousness, which is used for action – they operate as formulas that tell the agent 'how to go in social life'. Clearly the interactions between the emigrant and the family in the Cook Islands migration context support these propositions. The family from a Cook Islands outlook reflects the literature regarding Pacific Island migration. Understanding the 'family' in the context of migration is not limited to economic support in the destination country, but it is a thread woven through the fiber of Cook Islands culture that lends itself to migration (Asang, 2000). Emigrants and their families invoke it by knowingly applying it in the migration process and thus reinforcing not only the rule of family obligation, love and support, but also Cook Islands culture.

The Culture of Migration

As discussed in Chapter 3, Hauofa (1994) argues that Oceanic peoples have always been mobile often navigating considerable distances in their social and economic exchanges before the division of their islands into colonial territories. Therefore migration plays a central role in Pacific Island cultures. Central to the cultural dimension of migration is understanding how emigrants 'see' and 'talk' about migration (Halfacree and Boyle, 1993). Participant EM24 best captures how Cook Islanders 'see' and 'talk' about migration. As she explained:

> "I suppose migration is something that we have always been part of. When you think about it our people are the result of migration...moving to our islands from Avaiki.... I mean for me, I have always known that I would move away from the islands. I think it's in you. I mean I was born in the Cook Islands, then we moved to New Zealand for a little while, then back again to Aitutaki.... When you reach a certain age, I think, or when things are not going right you have to move....You have to experience new things, find new opportunities. That's part of life isn't it? But

> I think that we are lucky because for us when we want to, moving to New Zealand or Australia is easy. So, I think that, that makes it easy for us to move and that's why migration is such a big part of us."

Participants highlight that migration is a taken for granted fact in the lives of Cook Islanders. It is often related to certain stages of a person's life and experiences. The general acceptance of this point of view perpetuates the Cook Islands migration process, in particular the notion of leaving the islands. In this regard, migration is both a reflection and a constitutive element of culture.

Overseas but never away

The Pacific Islands migration literature emphasizes that a key aspect of the cultural dimension of the process in the region is the connection maintained by emigrants with their homelands (Hau'ofa, 1994; Ward, 1997; Bedford, 2000). These connections are sustained by variety of ways.

Obvious links between Cook Islanders in New Zealand and the islands are maintained via frequent phone calls, internet, through contact with other Cook Islanders either around New Zealand or those who travel to New Zealand from the islands. All the emigrants in this research have some contact in the islands, even for those who have no immediate family in the islands; there are extended family members and friends who sustain the flow of information between the two locations. As participant EM16 elucidated, "I usually know what's going on in the islands because I ring home often or my missus will ring up her family. Every week I read the Cook Islands News on the net and besides no matter where you go in Auckland, there is always someone from back home that you will run into."

What is more interesting is that maintaining contact with the Cook Islands for the majority of migrants also has meant visits back to the islands. Only 20 % of the interviewed migrants had not been back to the Cook Islands since moving, 24% had returned once, 12% twice, 16% three times, 12% four times, and 16% had

been back to the Cook Islands more than 5 times since emigrating. The main reasons for return trips to the Cook Islands were for holidays, funerals, headstone unveilings, weddings, to accompany a sick relative, or for church or community activities. This indicates that Cook Islanders perceive absent members to be very much a part of the activity and continuity of not only the family but also the community. It provides emigrants with a sense of 'rootedness' in the islands despite residing overseas. As discussed in Chapter 3, this can only be understood in cultural imageries, in particular, how islanders define migration. The introduction to this thesis in Chapter 1 explains how although Cook Islanders leave; they maintain a sense of belonging to their homelands. It is this sense of belonging that ensures links are maintained with the islands. By invoking these cultural notions of migration to define their journeys, Cook Islanders sustain these local and cultural definitions of migration. At the same time, these cultural notions enable the dynamics of Cook Islands migration.

The connection between emigrants and the Cook Islands also extended to the flow of funds and goods between the New Zealand and the homeland and vice versa. Whilst the flows from destination to origin areas are well documented in migration literature, reverse flows are largely neglected. All of the participants have received goods from the islands in particular island foods and crafts. Twenty eight percent of participants received cash from the islands to assist in times of hardship. This suggests that the flows of funds and goods between the islands and destination are reciprocal in nature (Hauofa, 1993). As Liki (2001) argues, Pacific Island remittance flows are misunderstood because they are not driven by economic rationality but rather by culture and its emphasis on the values of the 'family' and 'giving'. These cultural values are further illustrated when examining the flow of remittances between the emigrants in New Zealand and the Cook Islands. Table 6.3 shows the cash remittance flows between New Zealand and the Cook Islands.

Table 6.3: Cash Remittance Flows between New Zealand and the Cook Islands

Cash Remittance Flows	Percentage of Participants
No cash remittances sent	32
Irregular cash remittances (un/solicited) sent	40
Regular cash remittances sent	12

Of the 32% that did not remit to islands the primary reason given was that they had no more immediate family left in the islands also indicating the high incidences of family migration from the Cook Islands. Those who remitted regularly were confined to those whose parents were still in the Cook Islands. All stated that their remitting behaviour was unsolicited but rather felt that it was that it was their duty to help support their parents, displaying the significance of family and cultural values. As participant EM23 explained: "My mum doesn't ask me for money and I know she's alright but I just send her some anyway just to help her out.... I mean it's our job as children to look after our parents, isn't it?"

Those who sent remittances but on an irregular basis, did so when requested or when they could afford to.

> "My family don't ask me for money because they know that life here is not easy, but when I can afford it I send them a little something and it feels good when I can give them a little bit of money." (Participant EM23)

> "My family will never ask for money unless they really need it. When they do ask then I try and send them some." (Participant EM12)

This does not suggest remittance decay, but rather, as Marsters (2004) implies, the flexibility of remittance behaviour as families respond to the changing economic situations of those connected within the remittance network. Those within the remittance network are knowledgeable of their environments and how they should be dealt with in terms remittances.

The issue of remittances is not as clear-cut as it seems (Brown and Walker, 1995). Much of the funds that flow from New Zealand to the Cook Islands are not accounted for as remittances. For example, as participant EM01 declared:

> "I don't send money home because it is hard here to have the extra money to send. But many times I have family that come over for holidays or people that I know that come over and when I see them I slip a $20 into their hand.... That's just the way we are, us Cook Islanders."

This participant clearly demonstrates the spirit of giving that appears to define Cook Islanders. It is a cultural value that is imbedded in culture and in the consciousness of Cook Islanders.

In addition there are various fund raising teams known as '*tere*' that come from the Cook Islands to raise finance for various community initiatives. Of those migrant participants' in this study 80% have made contributions to fundraising 'tere'. The cultural aspect of giving is explained further by Participant EM10: "When our people come from the islands and want money for whatever, we give. We can't help it; it's part of our Cook Islands way, it's our culture...."

Agency and Culture

The connections maintained by emigrants with their homeland are driven by culture logic associated with the sense of belonging to the homeland reflecting the viewpoint of indigenous researchers of Pacific Island migration. The connection with the homeland is also sustained because of the relationships between individual and his or her families, and the community. These relationships are also determined by cultural values of obligation, love and giving. Cultural values drive emotions - the internal conditioning factors within the individual that motivates these actions related to migration. By engaging in these cultural practises, individuals maintain these cultural values. These practises clearly demonstrates not only the agency of the individual in invoking these cultural constructs with relation to migration but also the interrelationship between agency and the structure that is culture.

Not passive dupes

The reasons for migration provided by the participants of this research indicate that emigrants are not passive individuals that respond mechanically to external forces outside their control. Cook Islanders are active participants in the migration process. It is the individual that makes the migration decision. The causes for migration are diverse. Causal factors and how it impacts upon the life of the individual in part creates the propensity to migrate. This propensity for migration is also in part shaped by cultural logic that encourages movement and allowed by New Zealand citizenship. This illustrates that migration flows are sustained when the predisposition for migration is accompanied by the impetus and opportunity to do. Cook Islands migration therefore results from an interaction between individuals and the world around them.

The decision to emigrate formed by an individual is based on actual experiences and perceptions of the world including his/her place in the total environment. It is not only influenced by factors external to the emigrant but also conditioning factors from within. The migration decision incorporates fact, perceptions, aspirations, goals, feelings and emotions. The interview participants illustrate that Cook Islanders are able to articulate their total environment in the context of migration in ways that are meaningful to themselves. As participant EM19, a young Cook Islands woman, aptly explained:

> "We agreed that in all reality it's [the Cook Islands] is a great place to live, but I think that if you don't have a lot of money or anything set up its very hard to aim high there [Cook Islands]. This is true for young people like us. A lot of key businesses are owned by a small group of people who have the monopoly over things like shipping, airlines, and all that. It's hard for us to start from scratch and compete in a very limited market or economy. You can just go so far as what the country offers. It just wasn't offering. Our dreams had expanded beyond anything that was available there [in the Cook Islands]. That's why we came here [to New Zealand]. Here [in New Zealand] there are more opportunities. Maybe here our dreams will be fulfilled."

Fulfillment of migration dreams is reliant upon the how well emigrants are able to adapt to life in New Zealand and the achievement of migration goals.

Are dreams fulfilled?

Thomas-Hope (1993) argues that emigrants who depart from small islands are seeking change. Depending on motives for migration, emigrants have an apparent expectation that life in New Zealand would be better than that which they departed from. The decision to migrate in part is formed by the perceptions of life in the place of origin compared to the destination. The effects of emigration on the lives of those who migrated to New Zealand required adjustments to a different environment[6]. The significant effects to the lives of emigrants were related to the faster pace of life, the differences in the scales of economy, the weather, cost of living, homesickness and so forth.

Satisfaction

The daily lives of the emigrants' and the success at addressing various issues that they face ultimately reflects their satisfaction with the decision to emigrate. The majority of migrants' (84%) despite facing some negative effects with living in New Zealand felt that their decision to emigrate was the right decision. For them migration has been a great learning experience, a challenge and a personally enriching experience. As participant EM12, a young woman, elucidated:

> "I am glad I came. I have no regrets. Even though in the beginning I was homesick.... It has boosted my self-esteem. I've moved ahead in my job. In many ways you become a different person while still the same person.... I have grown personally and socially I have made new friends."

For those participants with children the move has definitely been positive. Some responses received from emigrants' were as follows:

> "I love it here because of the opportunities it gives me and my children." (Participant EM13)

[6] The adjustments and issues faced by emigrants are summarised in Appendix 6.

> "Our son has just come back from spending a year in Brazil on a student exchange program.... He would never get that opportunity to go on something like that if we had stayed in Raro." (Participant EM21)

Participant EM03 perhaps summed up the feelings of most of the emigrant parents by saying:

> "The schools here are better than those back home. In Rarotonga you always hear about the school not having enough books, no photocopier, no computers, and all that. Over here they have more resources; they have everything. Even the teachers are so good...they are interested in your children's learning. Back home, to most teachers it is just a job...they don't care if your child is doing alright or what.... children here have a better chance to get a good education."

For the 16% who regret their migration decision, the negative effects of life in New Zealand far outweighed the positive. According to participant EM02, "I miss the islands. We had more money in the islands." Participant EM07 also reflected these feelings by saying: "I don't really like to live here [in New Zealand]. We had a good life there [in Rarotonga]. I don't have to pay bills there, only the power. You have to pay for everything here."

The ability of emigrants to address the issues that they face in New Zealand demonstrates that generally, they are knowledgeable agents within the migration process. They are able to negotiate situations that they face. This reflects the practical consciousness of the emigrant that ensures that they know how to act in various situations of their daily lives. The ability to reason or provide rational explanations for their actions displays a discursive consciousness. In instances where the migration decision is regretted, this expresses the continuous reflexive monitoring of migration action. In such cases where the emigrant subsequently feels that their perception of social and economic conditions, or the relative importance of their sense of well-being are not substantiated by the experience, this may provide motivation for return to the Cook Islands.

The movement of labour

The literature on international migration with its focus on the movement of labour contends the receiving countries benefit from the emigration of the 'skilled' labour from developing countries, while sending countries suffer the 'brain or skill drain'. In examining this argument in relation to Cook Islands migration the occupations of emigrations in the Cook Islands (prior to emigration) and in New Zealand (at the time of this research) is presented in the table below.

Table 6.4: The occupations of emigrants in the Cook Islands prior to migration and in New Zealand at the time of the interview

Cook Islands Occupation	New Zealand Occupation
School teacher	Unemployed – Sickness Benefit
Mechanic	Factory Worker
Self-employed (Building Business)	Unemployed – Benefit
Administration Clerk	Unemployed – Benefit
Banking Consultant	Stay-at-home-mum
Construction	Airline Baggage Handler
Housewife	Unemployed – Benefit
Laundry services	Stay-at-home – mum
Church Minister	Church Minister
Construction	Factory Worker
Immigration Officer (Public Servant)	Contract Worker in Dubai
Nurse	Theater Nurse
Pharmacist Assistant	Stay-at-home-mum
Retired	Retired (Pension)
Banking Consultant	Operations Clerk (administration)
Air Raro Engineering	Factory Worker
Salesperson/Musician	Unemployed – Sickness Benefit
Church Minister	Church Minister
Stay-at-home-mum	Self-employed (Part dairy owner)
Family Business	Self-employed (Craft shop owner)
Secretarial	Secretarial
Secretarial (Public Servant)	Data Entry Operator
Trust Officer	Legal Secretary
Student	Stay-at-home-mum/Student
Solicitor	Solicitor

The above table shows that while residing in the Cook Islands, 92% of interview participants were formally employed. In New Zealand this figure had declined to 60% (including those who are self-employed). This clearly indicates the loss of labour from the Cook Islands, but not necessarily a gain in labour for New Zealand. 12% of the participants were receiving the New Zealand government

unemployment benefit and 8% the sickness benefit. This does not represent a skill transfer, but rather the possibly of increases to the costs of unemployment in New Zealand. The work activities of the participants in this research can be divided into three major groups – the unemployed, employed and entrepreneurs. The experiences of the participants in the New Zealand labour force are outlined below:

Employment Status in New Zealand

The unemployed

There are three cohorts for unemployed emigrants. The first group consists of women who choose to stay at home and care for their children while their partners are working. These women do not collect the unemployment benefit but do receive financial assistance through the New Zealand government's working for families program. The level of assistance received is determined by their partners' income. The second cohort comprises of those who are without partners and thus receive the unemployment benefit. The third group consists of those who cannot be gainfully employed due to health reasons. They receive financial assistance through the sickness or disability benefit.

Jonassen (2003:176) quotes that an "assistant minister [in the Cook Islands government] declared that those who do not want to work in the country were fleeing the country to live off benefits in New Zealand...." However emigrants' clearly contradict this viewpoint. No participant stated 'benefits' or the 'dole' as a reason for migration. Being on the 'benefit' is the result of circumstances faced. Those receiving benefits have found alternative means to be productive not only in sourcing extra finances informally, but also by contributing as useful members of their families and the community. Those who are unemployed and staying at home to care for children clearly indicated that when circumstances changed they would become employed. As participant EM08 explained her unemployment status, "If I had to pay for childcare then it would take most of my pay and it won't be worth my time working.... When my kids are older I will work." In

addition to the high cost of childcare there are also issues of safety for the children, as participant EM05 elaborated, "Over here you can't trust anyone else to look after your kids. You just never know. I will never forgive myself if anything happened to my kids. When they are older I will definitely work."

The employed

The majority (53%) of those employed participants felt that they had better jobs in New Zealand compared to the Cook Islands. 20% thought that there was no difference in jobs that they have now in comparison to their previous employment in the islands, while 7% though in effect having the same type of occupation in New Zealand, preferred the work, conditions and income received in the Cook Islands. The other 20% felt that their current employment, though it paid more, was at a lower occupational scale in comparison to previous employment in the Cook Islands.

The majority of employed emigrants' earned on average three times more in comparison to what they earned in the Cook Islands. Despite higher earnings only 38.5% believed that they were financially better off in New Zealand. Another 38.5% thought that their financial levels were the same in New Zealand as they had been in the Cook Islands, while 23% stated that they were financially worse off in New Zealand. For one emigrant (Participant EM25), her earnings in the Cook Islands were considerably higher than in New Zealand. She described her earning in New Zealand as "...peanuts..." compared to her income in the Cook Islands. However, this was not an issue because her reason for migration was for the sake of her children's education and she was willing to make that sacrifice. This participant (EM25) clearly contradicts the economic rationalisation of migration. Instead what is highlighted is the importance of one's internal conditioning factors in determining migration actions. Once again this emphasizes the agency of the individual and how he or she is able to formulate responses in relation to migration and the achievement of personal goals.

The entrepreneurs

A small percentage of emigrants (8%) established their own businesses and were self-employed. Interestingly, these participants' did not explicitly state their reasons for migration as 'economic gain' but rather for a change, experience new challenges and to seek new opportunities. These people enjoy life in New Zealand because of the challenges they face. For them the future looks optimistic as their businesses are "progressing along quite nicely" (Participant EM20). As explained by participant EM19, who together with her partner purchased a dairy on a busy Otahuhu street, her work situation was: "...satisfying. Because here the competition is much more fierce and you have no time to sit back and relax. You have no other option but to take that opportunity and grow."

The opportunities provided by starting and successfully operating their own businesses would eventually mean financial security for these emigrants. However the economic achievements of these businesses are clearly linked to the feelings and emotions (internal conditioning factors) of emigrants as they represent change, challenges and opportunities.

Those interview participants employed in New Zealand and those who have started their own businesses highlight the links between the Cook Islands and New Zealand labour markets. Cook Islanders move relatively easily between the two labour markets.

The effect of labour movement on the Cook Islands

Emigration from the Cook Islands definitely constitutes a loss of labour from the country. While the emigrants did not see their individual departures from the Cook Islands as having any significant effects on the country; the high total emigration levels resulting in the decline of the general local population caused serious concerns. As participant EM24 explained:

> "When you talk about migration and development I think you have to look at it on the whole. Usually the effects depend on the quality of the people that's moving. But in a small country with a small working

> population like the Cook Islands, everybody counts. I don't think that the Cook Islands is going to stop functioning just because we have moved away. The country has to find other ways to move forward."

The apparent decline in the locally available workforce is supplemented by the importation of foreign labour in particular Fijians, Tongans, Chinese and Filipinos. It is perceived that the increase of foreigners in the Cook Islands will have a huge impact on the future of the country. The emigrants explain this with comments such as: "Foreigners will own the islands soon. Already most of the businesses are owned by foreigners" (participant EM2). "When the gap in the population is filled by foreigners this will create problems in the future" (participant EM21). "This will be a problem in the future. They might take over like what we see overseas. Even over here [in New Zealand] Indians own all the dairies, all the bakeries are owned by Asians. The same will happen back home" (participant EM23). "Look at China they are in now. There's going to be intermarriage... that will change everything" (participant EM25)

The solution for this problem according to the majority of the emigrants is for Cook Islanders to return home. Participant EM10 challenges Cook Islanders overseas by saying:

> "Who is going to work our economy back home? Sometimes people need to think about the future of our islands and stop complaining about the foreigners and do something about it before its too late. For me I'd rather go back to the islands and be counted."

How many take up this challenge remains to be seen

Intention of Return

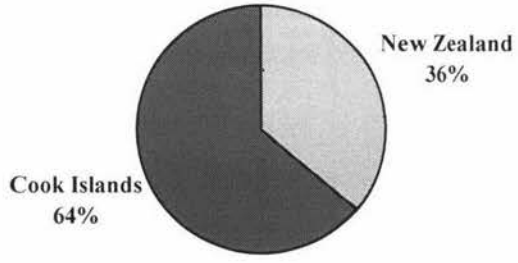
Satisfaction with the migration decision does not imply that emigration and settlement in New Zealand was permanent. Although 64% participants' interviewed were convinced that their migration was only temporary, none could specify a time of return to the Cook Islands. It thus appears that while emigrants

may intend to return home, they often did not have a specific idea on the timing of their return (Ahlburg & Brown, 1998). Some examples of responses to timing of return are:

> "When I pay off all my bills I will go home." (Participant EM06)
>
> "I want to get my piece of land and then I will definitely go home." (Participant EM22)
>
> "If I win lotto today, I'd go back tomorrow." (Participant EM15)
>
> "First I want to learn as much as I can on this side and experience this lifestyle more before I go back. Maybe when I'm older in my fifties." (Participant EM10)

The other 36% of the participants' stated that they were certain that they would live in New Zealand for long time but however did not discount the idea of ever going back to live. This indicates the ambiguity and indeteminancy of the migration experience (Connell, 1994).

Figure 6.1: Where will the emigrants be living in the future?



Prospects of going back to the Cook Islands were not only dependent on their success in New Zealand but could also be influenced by the state of affairs in the islands. All emigrants qualified their prospects of returning to the Cook Islands in

terms of "if...". For example, "I would return if I could get a job that I would like" (participant EM15). "If the pay was better" (participant EM9). "If there were better job opportunities there for me to advance" (participant EM12). "If the government could improve social services" (participant EM3). "If the health facilities were improved" (participant EM1) "If my children could be guaranteed good education" (participant EM16). "If the cost of living improved" (participant EM7. "If the political climate improved" (participant EM13).

All the participants distinguished the government as the key facilitator in providing incentives for Cook Islanders to return. This implied that government actions and policies have failed to entice these Cook Islanders to stay in the islands and also to indicate a definite return home. Many participants' views regarding the government and migration could be summed up by participant EM 13 in saying:

> "I think a lot of people migrate because they are frustrated with the government. How those in government just don't seem to care about what's happening to the people. They are all out to look after themselves, never mind about the poor buggers that vote them in.... Look at the schools. They don't even have some of the basic things that are needed for the kids. Then there is the health. It is terrible. That's why sick people have no choice but to come to New Zealand. Then there is the nepotism and politics. How are people supposed to get ahead? But still they keep on wasting money on themselves and on stupid things. They are not making the right decisions."

Participant EM04 clarifies the role of the government in saying, "The government has to make a choice. It has to make the country viable so that Cook Islanders would stay and those here would go back."

These statements provide a picture of how emigrants view the issue of migration and the Cook Islands. It implies that the actions of government have produced an environment that impacts negatively upon the individual. Some of the characteristics of this environment are – poor wages, lack of employment opportunities, inadequate social services, bad health services, poor education

provision, high cost of living, political interference and a highly political climate. This picture is formed in the minds of emigrants and is influences perceptions of the Cook Islands and of the migration process. However, emigrants also suggest that the impact on the individual by the environment of the islands can be changed through the actions and policies of those in government. They believe that this would turn the potential for return migration into actual return.

Summarising the 'uu' that emigrated

This section has sought to understand the Cook Islands migration process from the perspective of the emigrant. The emigrants who participated in this research have demonstrated that they are not passive automatons merely dictated by structural factors outside of their control; but are active agents within the migration process. They take ownership of the decision to emigrate and insist that ultimately the emigrant makes the migration decision.

The reasons for Cook Islands migration are many and varied. For some emigrants, the reasons for emigration reflect the historical-structural factors manifest in global inequalities and differences between the Cook Islands and New Zealand. Comparisons between the social and economic environments of the Cook Islands and New Zealand are made. New Zealand is assumed to offer higher wages, more employment opportunities, better health, and superior education provision. These factors provide motivation for emigration. For others, the differentials in development levels between the Cook Islands and New Zealand were insignificant in the decision to emigrate. Rather emigration was influenced by family and emotions related to the family. Emigration is also viewed a means of escape from the confines of small islands or unhappy relationships. The transition to adult; seeking change, a new life, more opportunities and challenges are also presented as reasons for emigration. Whatever the reasons maybe, migration has remains a time honoured strategy of improving one's life.

While the individual and the factors that contribute to the decision or disposition to emigrate are one issue, a separate issue concerns the factors that enable and allow movement and thus influences migration dynamics. In the Cook Islands migration context, these factors are New Zealand citizenship, the family and the culture of migration.

Cook Islands migration therefore is the result of the combination of individual agency and various structures that influence migration decisions and also those that sustain the process. From the emigrants' perspective, the migration decision is influenced by the past and present experiences, and future projections of their lives; perceptions of life in the Cook Islands and New Zealand; and opinions of the migration process. Threaded into explanations of emigration are emotions, values, beliefs, aspirations, goals and personalities. Thus migration action is influenced by external factors as well as those from within an emigrant.

The voices of the emigrants have demonstrated that they are knowledgeable agents who are able to formulate appropriate responses and actions that arise from the impact of external factors upon their lives. The reflexive and rationalisation of action in determining satisfaction with migration or intentions of return to the Cook Islands, highlights that the emigrant continually evaluates his or her actions, the circumstances in which it takes place and the setting of interaction. In cases where emigrants feel that their sense of well-being is not substantiated by the migration experience this can result in motivation for action and the potential of return migration. These factors highlight the ambiguity and indeterminancy of the migration experience.

The perspective of the individual has provided understanding of the complexity of the migration process. It is a process that results from the interaction between agency and structures. It is caused by diverse motivations and encouraged and allowed by political and social/cultural structures. While the emigrants themselves demonstrate the diverse reasons for migration, they hold a common

perception that migration is related to the nature and level of national development in the Cook Islands demonstrating the apparent relationship that exists between migration and development.

Section 2: The Returned Migrant

Introduction

It is estimated that one third of emigrants return to their native lands (Murphy, 1999 cited in Zhao, 2001). International migration literature offers few explanations for return migration (Stark, 1996) despite the fact that return is an integral part of the migration process.

As discussed in Chapter 4 and also in the previous section, emigration was rarely perceived as permanent. Whilst the growing population of Cook Islanders overseas (in particular in New Zealand and Australia) may suggest otherwise, there is ever present the intention or propensity to return to the Cook Islands. For some Cook Islanders this propensity or intention to return has resulted in actual return. With the significant decline in the Cook Islands population resulting from high levels of emigration, the solution to the future population sustainability of the country depends on not only retaining its current population but more so, encouraging return migration. Potter (2005) suggests that to encourage return migration and its potential in enhancing national development, the causes of return migration, and the return migration experience needs to be understood.

This section examines return migration to Cook Islands. Using the stories and voices of those who have returned, this section will discuss the reasons for return, the migration experience, future mobility and views of return migration and development. This section will once again establish significance of individual agency in the migration process. Like the previous section, it will demonstrate that the returned migrant makes the decision to return. It will also demonstrate that return migration challenges the assumptions of the conventional approaches of international migration in that the direction of the return flow is opposite to that

of the accepted indices of development. Furthermore, it will reveal that for the majority of returned migrants the causes of return migration are personal factors and influenced the family, once again contradicting the assumptions that migration is dictated by rational economic behaviour. This section demonstrates that returned migration has the potential to contribute positively to national development. Like the previous section, this section will illustrate the indeterminancy of the migration experience where the possibility of remigration is ever present. The factors that may influence remigration are both related to internal conditioning factors and also the national development issues that may impact upon the life of the individual.

Characteristics of Returned Migrants

Official statistical information on returned migrants is unavailable as returned migrants are not separately categorised in Cook Islands migration statistics. This is perhaps due to the complexity of defining returning Cook Islanders. The complexity of movements makes defining a returned migrant difficult (Thomas-Hope, 1999; Zhao, 2001). However, for this research, a returned migrant is defined as a person of Cook Islands descent (whether born in the Cook Islands or abroad) who has previously lived abroad for more than two years, has returned to the Cook Islands, and is currently residing there for a period of more than one year[7].

This research recognises that essentially there are three categories of returned Cook Islanders. The first consists of those who have been born in the Cook Islands and have migrated both as children with their parents or on their own accord, have lived overseas for a period of more than two years and then returned to the Cook Islands. Another group consists of those not born in the Cook Islands but who claim Cook Islands nationality by descent and are now residing in the Cook Islands. The third group comprises of those who were born overseas,

[7] 30 returned migrants were interviewed for this research.

returned to the Cook Islands at a young age, later re-migrated and lived overseas for more than two years and then returned to the islands.

A table on the demographic characteristics of the returned migrants is outlined in Appendix 7. While 60% of the participants were born in the Cook Islands, 40% were born overseas mainly in New Zealand. 10% of those born overseas had returned to the Cook Islands before the age of 21 and have again migrated and subsequently returned.

The majority of returned migrants interviewed ranged from 25-44 years of age. Return migration for those below the age of 24 years appears to be low. The mean age of returnees' is 38.9 years. While it has been assumed in the past that most returned migrants were of retirement age, the sample does not indicate this. The majority (18) of the returned migrants were single at the time of return. Of the 12 participants who returned with partners, 8 indicated partners who were also Cook Islanders, 1 being a New Zealand born Cook Islander; while 4 of the returnees' partners were non Cook Islanders.

The returned migrants show that during the years 1996 and 1997 immediately following the economic restructuring program, the incidences of return migration were somewhat lower in comparison to later periods reflecting the uncertainty of that particular time. However, the period following these two years show that frequency of return migration somewhat increased coinciding with the improvement and recovery of the economic state of the Cook Islands.

The Reasons for Return

The Conditions Surrounding the Return

Participant RM09 left the Cook Islands for Auckland, New Zealand in 1993 with her partner and three young children. She explained her decision to move as such: "...at the time when you had children in college there were no options for you. You were forced to leave school and I had one child after another. After

getting pregnant to the third, I realised that there weren't many options here [in Rarotonga] except stay home and look after babies, which I didn't want to do.... I swore that I would never come back here except maybe to retire." After a few years in New Zealand her marriage failed and her parents traveled to New Zealand and bought her children back to Rarotonga. This allowed her to get her feet on the ground and she found a good job, which enabled her to relocate to Wellington. For her, future prospects were good, but as she described, "My mum said is this good job and great money satisfying for you. Here are your children who need you most at home [in Rarotonga] and here you are making all this money. Is it really worth it? I thought about it and decided no." In 1998 she returned.

According to participant RM10, "...the recession had just taken place so there was not much money around. I was working in the family business but I wasn't getting paid any money. We couldn't afford it. I thought I might as well go overseas and experience a different lifestyle for a while.... I had plenty of friends overseas and they were getting jobs and getting paid reasonably well ...I went overseas for that reason as well as to have some fun." He moved to Australia and worked on a cruise ship. From there he got a job on bigger cruise ships in the United States. While there he made a substantial amount of money. His mother kept on asking him to come back, so he negotiated with his mother to buy her business if she wanted him to come back. As he explained, "I did want to come back [to the Cook Islands] but I wanted to make sure that I had something that I could do. I wanted to come back here [to Rarotonga] and set up business...I know the market place in the Cook Islands so I figured that there is opportunity there. I'll come back so long as I can get that shop. I was confident that I could make it work..." His mother agreed and so he came back in 2001.

Participant RM02 left the Cook Islands in 1990 because he wanted to travel. He migrated to Northern Queensland with a group of Cook Islanders to work in the hospitality industry on Hayman Island. In 2003, he decided to return to

Rarotonga because "...my parents were getting on and I wanted to be here when they needed me..."

Participant RM12 left Rarotonga for the first time when she was 8 for one year and then came back. She then departed again for New Zealand when she was 17 for job training returning in 1983. She worked for year as a nurse and then got married to someone whom she had met in New Zealand prompting her to move again in 1984. "In 84 I expected to go away and that I would do further training and that I would come back eventually. When? But eventually I would." Despite the uncertainty of 1996 they returned. "I was really prepared to come back. I didn't have a job to come back to, but I felt confident that I would get that.... Coming home was the priority.... If anything it was the ideal time for us to come back. Because it made us even more stronger to make a difference. This was the right place to be and the right time. Maybe it was the wrong time for some people but for us it was the right time. Because we had 3 children at that time, they made the difference in our decision. We felt that this would be a better place to raise them." But she stresses "that the main reason for wanting to come home was that I needed some spiritual healing.... I needed to get grounding.... It was more of spiritual thing, more of a touching ground and getting back to things that really mattered and things that really mattered that I couldn't find in New Zealand. It was family that was the base. I needed to be around my family. People that really cared. People that I really love. So here we are still."

Participant RM05 moved from Rarotonga to New Zealand in 1953 when he was 10 years old with his grandparents who had raised him. While growing up and working in Auckland it was always his intention to come back and retire in Rarotonga where he knew that he could claim land. He returned to Rarotonga in 1979 with a Cook Islands rugby team for a holiday and while in Rarotonga got his piece of land. In 2003, he returned to Rarotonga, built a house and currently enjoying his retirement. He explained, "I've been away for a long time. It's been

an enjoyable journey but it doesn't matter where you are you always have roots here [in the Cook Islands]."

Participant RM13 was seven when his aunty took him to Auckland in 1976 to reunite with his parents who had moved 8 months prior. Upon completing his undergraduate degree at Canterbury University in Christchurch, he moved to England for three and a half years before again returning to Auckland for a few years and then migrating back to Rarotonga in 2001. He explained the cause of his return as, "...it was the pull of home...mum's from Raro, dad's from Atiu.... Knowing more about the culture and where you are from... we've been away for so long. None of my brothers and sister were interested in coming back and of anyone in our family, mum said that you're the only one who will do it, and I did."

Participant RM16 was born in New Zealand to a papaa[8] father and Atiuan mother. He had never been to the Cook Islands prior to his migration to the islands in 2003. What then caused his migration to the Cook Islands? For him it was, "...that wanting feeling of not being here [in the Cook Islands]. This was the first time I had been here having been born overseas.... Wanting to come back to the roots. Wanting to find out what I had missed out on.... I guess that if I liked it enough to want to stay here. That happened in the first week that I landed here. It was like 'yes' I belong here."

Participant RM18 was also born in New Zealand also to a Cook Islands mother and papaa father. Growing up her family made numerous holiday trips back to Rarotonga. In 2002 she returned to the Cook Islands to live, with her husband and children. As she explained, "I hadn't thought that I would live here but I hadn't thought that I wouldn't either. I wasn't something that you thought you would get around doing. But it was just that circumstance made it easy to do that.... This was where we were from. It was important to me and I wanted my

[8] Papaa is the Cook Islands term used to refer to those people who are of European descent.

kids to have that same sense of connection. It's one thing to travel backward and forwards but it's another thing to actually live here." Her husband applied and got a job with the Ministry of Education on a one-year contract. This instigated and enabled the family to move to Rarotonga.

Participant RM22 a half-caste Cook Islander was born in New Zealand. After completing a law degree he moved to Europe for 8 years and later to Australia for three years. While in Australia he decided to come back to the Cook Islands. He explained his motivation for migration to the Cook Islands as follows: "I got to a point in Australia where I was by myself and wanted to come to Raro and one of the main reasons was to help out my mum.... Through a concern for my mum and the other reason was that I wasn't enjoying Australia after a while. It was too fast and I had a very stressful job. My mum was getting older." In 2002 he returned to Rarotonga.

These stories present a view of the varied circumstances in which the decision to return is made and the experiences that shape the return migration decision. The interview participants indicate that migration is rarely only one way. As discussed in the previous section, more often than not, the dream or conscious intention of a migrant is to return to the home country. The stories of returned migrants reveal that the propensity for return reflects a combination of the potential and the actual conditions which influence the decision made and those that finally encourage or facilitate the move (Thomas-Hope, 1999). These factors are diverse and will be illustrated further in section below.

Identifying the reasons for return

In acknowledging the complexity of the conditions that influence and encourage return migration, the reasons for return migration are presented in Table 6.5 below. As with the previous section the structuration theory's concept of agency is drawn upon where reasons provided are considered causes of action.

Table 6.5: Reasons for return migration to the Cook Islands

Reason(s) Stated	Number of citations
Retire	3
Parents	3
To raise children	3
Parent and business opportunity	2
Wanted to come home, needed spiritual healing	1
Change, looking for something different	1
Parents and a near death experience	1
Parents and homesick	1
Death of parent and a need to be home	1
Parent and dissatisfaction with life prior to return	1
Influenced by partner a non-Cook Islander who wanted to retire in Cook Islands and land ownership	1
Influenced by partner who remained in Cook Islands and child	1
Change, to know where I'm from	1
Failed relationship and children who were living in the Cook Islands	1
Employment and parents	1
Family, job insecurity in New Zealand, dreams of Rarotonga	1
Family business and child who remained in Cook Islands	1
Partners employment	1
Build house and then decided to stay	1
Redundancy in New Zealand and children	1
Partners job and need for children to have connection to their heritage	1
Find roots	1
Short-term employment contract and saw opportunity for self-employment.	1

Return migration is evidence that moves occur in directions which run counter to the gradient of traditionally accepted gradients of development. In addition, the reasons for return migration also demonstrate that movements are not primarily determined by economic variables as assumed by dominant perspectives of the process. The reasons for return migration appear to be largely related to the family issues (in particular parents and children); a change in lifestyle; and the rediscovery of self, culture, roots and identity. This agrees with the observations made by Ganziano (2004: 231) that "personal and family aspects seem to play a more important role than economics in the decision to return." The reasons for return migration also suggests that the stages in the life cycle of an individual is an important factor that in part conditions the timing for return.

Making the decision to return to the Cook Islands according to the returned migrants was not difficult. They were going 'home'. Even for those who were not born in the Cook Islands nor spent a large part of their lives there, they also felt that they were going 'home'. This emphasizes the sense of 'rootedness' (Liki, 2001) that islanders maintain to their homelands. For those who were not born in the Cook Islands, their return contradicts arguments that absence from the country of origin in particular for second and third generation islanders born overseas results in a lack of sense of belonging to the islands (Lee, 2004). Instead, returned migrants reveal the multiple identities maintained by Pacific Islanders (Bedford, 2000). These returned migrants also reflect the resurgence of the importance of identity and culture amongst islanders abroad (Bedford, 2000; Liki, 2001).

Propensity or Intention to return

Every person with Cook Islands 'lineage' abroad could be regarded as a potential returnee. The participants who were not born in the Cook Islands or who had left the Cook Islands as young children, though none had planned to ever reside in the Cook Islands, highlight the potential for return to the islands exists. For some of the returned migrants' the plan was always to return, it was just a matter of finding the right time to do so. Even for those who had no intentions of returning, circumstances in their lives made them want to return to Cook Islands. For example according to participant RM03, "I said I would never come back. No way I'm coming back but then everything changed.... I missed my parents, I really missed this place." Participant RM09 said, "In some ways I suppose I realized that New Zealand wasn't all that it was made out to be. I realized what I left behind."

Understanding the reasons

The returned migrants, like the emigrants in the previous section, highlight that migration is rarely absolute or final (Connell, 1994) but is a process of reflexive monitoring, where the migrant constantly evaluates his or her life, and the circumstances in which it is situated in. This emphasizes the practical level of

consciousness of the returned migrant where he or she knows how to act in situations lived. By being able to provide reasons for return, the returnees also bring to light the rationalisation of action (Giddens, 1984). The returnees maintain an understanding of the grounds for return migration. This demonstrates discursive consciousness by being able to describe, monitor and give rational accounts for migration action. Like the emigrants in the previous section, returned migrants highlight the agency of the return migrant in the migration process.

Connection with 'home' prior to return migration

The literature regarding return migration maintains that those with the intent to return maintain contact with the homeland (Ahlburg & Brown, 1998; Thomas-Hope, 1999). Like the emigrants in the previous section, all returned migrants maintained contact with the Cook Islands while living overseas. Contact was either with family members; other Cook Islanders both living overseas or those who traveled overseas for visits; the news media and of course visits to the Cook Islands for family occasions, community activities and holidays reflecting the transnational linkages established between migrants and the home country (Hau'ofa, 1994; Connell, 1997; Bedford, 2000).

For those returned migrants who had parents, children or siblings residing in the Cook Islands during their absence, contact with home also extended to include the flow of funds and goods. Table 6.6 shows cash remittance flows between returned migrants and the Cook Islands prior to return.

Table 6.6: Cash remittance flows between returned migrants and the Cook Islands prior to return

Cash Remittance Flows	Percentage of Participants
No cash remittances sent	53
Irregular cash remittances sent	27
Regular cash remittances sent	20
Reverse cash remittances received	0

Similar to those migrants in previous section, those who sent regular cash remittances did so unsolicited. As participant RM11 explained, "I found that I was at a place where I could provide these things [cash and goods]. I didn't feel like I was being pushed." Irregular cash remittances were only sent when requested or when the remitter was in a position to do so. For those who did not remit some had no immediate family in the Cook Islands or their families did not request or require remittances. However, all the returnees that had immediate family in the Cook Islands had at various times sent goods to the islands.

Sixty percent of returnees had also participated in various Cook Islands community activities in New Zealand. These returnees also contributed to the many fundraising 'tere' that travel between the Cook Islands, New Zealand and Australia. As participant RM28 explained, "All those years of living in Tokoroa, many 'tere kimi moni'[9] pass through Tokoroa and our community always support them. I remember when I went to Aitutaki one year for a holiday and I saw all the halls that our money had helped build.... I'm glad that I helped. I can say that I helped build that hall even though I didn't live in Aitutaki." This again displays the strength of ties maintained between the community abroad and that in the islands and how migrants are still very much part of the island community. Like the previous section, it also shows that actions associated with migration are not entirely driven by economic logic but more so by cultural values and practises.

Of the 30 participants interviewed, only three had not visited the Cook Islands prior to relocation. On average most returnees visited the Cook Islands every two years particularly at Christmas time. This again contradicts "the old implication of almost complete social and economic separation at the household level" (Ward, 1997: 179-80) and is evidence of the circulation that is prevalent in the Cook Islands migration process.

[9] 'tere kimi moni' are fundraising groups that visit the Cook Islands diaspora to raise funds for projects in the islands.

Of those returnees who were born and had lived overseas prior to migration but had frequent visits, the majority of these trips were during their childhood and teenage years. These brief visits to the Cook Islands prior to return migration aided in not only making the decision to return but also in adapting to life in the Cook Islands. For the three participants who had no prior visits, one was New Zealand born, while the other two had left at young ages. Of these participants, one did not see his not having any prior visits to the Cook Islands as a problem. In contrast, the other two participants maintain that prior visits would have enabled them to better adjust to living in the Cook Islands. One participant (RM 13) tells of how he came back and set up a bar/restaurant business. It lasted a year and half. He explained that, "I don't think that was the right industry for me to come back to and also not really knowing what the place is like. You know you have an idea what the Cook Islands is like but you don't really know until you've been here. In hindsight I should have come back and worked for a year and see what I really wanted to do."

Similar to those migrants in the previous section, returned migrants reveal the strength of ties by migrants with the homeland while living abroad thus contradicting the implications of complete social and economic separation favoured by economic based explanations of migration and the actions associated with the process. The interview participants demonstrate that these migration actions cannot be explained entirely by economic logic but more so by cultural sense.

The connections maintained with the homeland also assisted with successful adaptation to life in the Cook Islands upon return. In general, the returnees reveal that they possessed an awareness of what was to be expected upon return to the islands.

Living in the Cook Islands after return

After residing overseas and having already explained the reasons why they had decided to live in the Cook Islands, overall reactions related to issues of adjustment and effects of living in the Cook Islands. (The major issues respondents' reported and adjustments they felt they had to make are summarised in Appendix 8.) There were many adjustments that had to be made upon return to the Cook Islands. However, the majority of returned migrants had expected these changes and could deal with them accordingly.

The most significant adjustment was the high prices of goods in comparison to prices in New Zealand and Australia. As Participant RM09 explained, "Here it was hard to go the store and buy a bottle of coke for $4, when you can get it for 99 cents in New Zealand. I was getting a lower salary, I didn't mind that, but you have to fork out for luxuries that cost too much. The impact was that a luxury was a luxury. You bought it when you could afford it and you didn't take it for granted like in New Zealand. "

The lower pay and high prices were however compensated by other factors. According to Participant RM12, "I think I was earning 3 times more [in New Zealand]...it wasn't an issue.... We have a really supportive family. There were foods that we didn't have to pay for. We didn't have to pay for rent. So we were saving all those extra things that we didn't have to pay for. We weren't extravagant..." Participant RM08 said: "In New Zealand when we get our pension by the weekend we don't have anymore money just the petrol money.... But over here there's always money. I only pay for the power, the phone and my food. The food is plenty. In New Zealand I will get hungry, over here I don't.... When I drive down the road people will give me a bag of taro, nu, a bag of maniota or a bunch of bananas.... Did you know that we have only had tiopu raiti[10] once here."

[10] 'tiopu raiti' is literally translated as rice soup. It is regarded as a low cost dish that is prepared when very little else is available to eat as a meal.

The voices quoted above, demonstrate the ability of migrants to cope effectively with living in different locations reflecting Bedford's (2000) concept of 'multiple identities' that is prevalent in Pacific Islands migration literature. The ability to adapt to life in Cook Islands also indicates the knowledgeability of the returnee with regard to the decision to return and the capabilities of dealing with situations appropriately.

For all the returned migrants the issues of the living in islands were minor compared to the quality of life that they now experienced. As participant RM18 puts it: "Who needs the stress and the hassle when we can have a good life without having lots of money. You don't have the same level income but you don't have the same level of outgoings so it all pans out in the end anyway."

For many returnees the negative adjustments were far outweighed by positive changes that came with the free, slower and relaxed way of life. Even for some who had some negative experiences such as resentment from some local residents or family whether it be because of the fact that they have been away for too long or when trying to acquire land, these issues resolved themselves in time. This supports Thomas-Hopes argument that "...even during a protracted absence from the home country most ...migrants remain, in various ways, part of their...household..." (1993:146).

According to Potter (2005), the successful adaptation or adjustment made by the return migrant to life in the home country will also enhance the contribution that he or she makes to the development of the home country. The section that follows discusses the contributions made by return migrant to the Cook Islands.

Contributing to the country

Much of the literature on return migration focuses on the potential for returned migrants to contribute to the development of their home countries. Return migrants represent a return of both financial and human resources to migrant sending areas (Potter, 2005; Thomas-Hope, 1999; Zhao, 2001). The returnees who emigrated from the Cook Islands indicated that migration allowed them to not only enhance but expand the knowledge and skills that they possessed at the time of initial emigration. On return the skills and knowledge gained were utilised in the various undertakings. These returnees also indicated that the migration process had also enriched them personally. For example, according to participant RM9, "I've always considered myself quiet, shy, afraid to speak out. It was different when I came back from New Zealand. I could actually say, 'hey that's not right'." Those returnees born or raised abroad perceived also that the country benefited from their skills and experience. For those who returned with partners, there were additional human resources gained. Table 6.6 shows the occupations of the returned migrants' prior to emigration, while overseas just prior to return and upon return to the Cook Islands.

Table 6.7: Occupation of return migrants' in the Cook Islands prior to movement overseas, while overseas and upon return migration to the Cook Islands

Occupation in the Cook Islands prior to movement overseas	Occupation while residing Overseas	Occupation upon return migration
Waitress	Kitchenhand then chef	Manageress of family restaurant business
Electrician & part-time restaurant work	Hospitality	Self-employed co-owner of bar and restaurant
Housemaid	Factory work	Shop assistant
New Zealand Born and raised	Administration	Administration
Migrated as child	New Zealand Dairy Board	Retired
Nurse	Nurse	Self-employed clothing retailer
New Zealand Born and raised	Bus driver	Self-employed movie rental business
Teacher	Teacher	Retired
Receptionist	Banking consultant	Finance analyst (Public Servant)
Family retail business	Hospitality	Self-employed owner of 3 retail stores
Student	Administration	Administration (Public Servant)
Nurse	Nurse/midwife	Senior midwife (Public

		Servant)
Migrated as child	Sales and marketing	Marketing (Public Servant)
Planter	Self-employed	Retired
Student	Part-time work while studying	Self-employed architecture and interior design
New Zealand born and raised	Postgraduate student	Administration
Student	Real estate	Self-employed tourist accommodation and nono exporter
Fisheries officer	Fisheries consultant	Aid management division (Public Servant)
New Zealand born and raised	Hospitality	Self-employed co-owner of bar and restaurant
Student	Policy Analyst	Director Policy and Planning (Public Service)
Television presenter	Security	Self-employed security business
Student	Administration	Family media business
New Zealand born and raised	Solicitor	Solicitor private practise
New Zealand born and raised	Police/Security	Administration (Public Servant)
School Teacher	English teacher	Family media business
Student	Stay at home mum	Stay at home mum
Administration	Airline hostess/ student	Motel manageress
School teacher	Forestry	Retired
Shop assistant	Waitress	Stay at home mum and nono exporter
New Zealand born and raised	Entertainment	Freelance entertainer

The table above demonstrates that apart from one respondent who chose to stay at home with her young children, the returnees of a working age group were all involved in various forms of employment and income generation activities. The majority of returnees (30%) have proven to be entrepreneurs and have started their own businesses. This was made possible through the accumulation of capital while overseas combined with the opportunities for business presented in the homeland. As participant RM12 explained, "I think that there is a lot of opportunity here - untapped opportunity. One of the real advantages of being in the Cook Islands and especially if you're in business is that you don't have as many regulatory constraints as in New Zealand and Australia.... Being a Cook Islander also helps." Participant RM16 also elucidated, "...especially since being here on our home turf, you have all the other Europeans running their businesses here and you are working for them again. I wanted to kind of change that around." Another participant, RM02 saw starting a business as upward social

mobility. He said, "I guess I didn't want to work for anybody else. I wanted to do something for myself.... I think that now, people want to know me, now that I have this business. For me this is a step up."

The 30% that have started businesses and the 10% who are employed in family businesses felt that they were making a positive contribution to development in the Cook Islands not only through paying taxes and employing other Cook Islanders but also by being Cook Islanders in business. One participant, RM22, a solicitor stated, "I hope that I am a role model for young Cook Islanders to see there's a Cook Islander or part Cook Islander who has a reasonably successful practise. I think that there is a need for more Cook Islands solicitors. Over half of the profession are non-Cook Islanders.... So I think that I have had an impact on development and just coming back and contributing .... So I see it as part of my duty to come back and help rebuild the country. Because we are the future..."

Twenty three percent of returnees were employed in the Public Sector. These people felt that time abroad had enhanced and improved their skills enabling them to make a positive contribution to the country. As one participant (RM12) commented, "I would think that the people would value what I have contributed to the well-being of our people. I expect that I would have contributed in that sense. Of course that has a ripple effect in terms of the economy if that is what people want to look at. To provide my services and my skills with regard to health delivery, then I feel that I have contributed." Another participant, RM17, commented, "I think that I have contributed through the practise of the skills that I have acquired while in New Zealand and that is policy skills. Because when I started at the Ministry their understanding of policy was very very different to how they understand policy now, and how we would apply policy and how we would develop policy now is different to when I started."

Those returnees who were retired despite not being formally employed believe also that they contribute positively to the country. According to participant

RM05, "When I bought my materials to build my house, I paid VAT[11] (Value Added Tax). I also collect the New Zealand pension, $230 a week; I will spend my money here. Surely this will contribute to the country." Another retiree, participant RM08, stated, "Even though we have come back to retire, but we also brought back 5 workers in our children and grandchildren."

Returned migrants contributions are not confined to economic or financial aspects, but also extends to include social and cultural involvement at the community and national levels. Of the thirty participants, over half (53%) were involved in community activities, non-governmental organizations, sports, and so forth. For example, participant RM19 said, "I have run for parliament. Regardless that I didn't win I still felt that it was a small community effort. I've helped out in the mental health. I was president there...I guess that is a contribution to society." According to participant RM20, "I like tutoring people. I like working with people who want to further themselves.... Also I get people coming in here.... I get people coming to see me and I help them out with their studies.... Also I belong to two NGOs. SPCA[12], I go out to schools and talk to children and other people and I'm involved with another group, an environmental group AMEG[13] (Avana Muri Environment Group) which is looking at Avana, Muri lagoon, to clean it up. I like to think that I am doing something for the community." Participant RM07 stated, "I think that my biggest input into the community is through sports; rugby league and basketball. I use to play these sports in New Zealand in Australia. I try to pass on my knowledge and skills in these sports through coaching."

The majority of returnees felt that in general like themselves, most returned migrants contributed positively to the development of the Cook Islands by utilizing skills that they have acquired overseas. As participant RM18 explained:

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[11] VAT stands for Value Added Tax that is imposed on goods and services in the Cook Islands. This is similar to New Zealand's system of Goods and Services Tax.
[12] SPCA is a group that champions the welfare of animals.
[13] AMAG stands for Avana Muri Environment Group, an organization that promotes environmental awareness.

> "Of the people that I know that have come back, they do make a positive contribution.... There is a difference in work ethic with people who come back after working so many years in New Zealand or overseas.... The ones who come back with skills and a chunk of work experience...they make a contribution."

The contributions of returned migrants also reveal a paradox of international migration and the Cook Islands. For the returned migrants who initially departed from the Cook Islands, their enhanced skills and accumulated finances are the direct results of emigration. Had they stayed in the Cook Islands, there is a possibly that they would not have contributed to the country in extent that they do after return migration. As participant RM09 explained:

> "I left young and learnt while I was in New Zealand. Personal wise, work wise, and I have come back with a different view to the Cook Islands. I think that I wouldn't have been able to make the contribution that I feel I now make to the country. I wouldn't have gained the experience or skills that I now have if I didn't leave. I had to leave to be able to come back."

In fact like this participant, all returned migrants have very similar opinions. They see migration as an inevitable process where one has to leave and gain experiences outside of the islands. As participant RM16 explained:

> "I think a lot of people really want to go and experience what is out there. I think they would have made up their minds to go ages ago.... The young ones will go. They are bombarded with images of the outside world everyday. They need to experience that. It is only when you experience life outside of the islands that you appreciate the islands I think. It's inevitable that some people will go and it's inevitable that some are going to return as well."

The participants in this study clearly demonstrate that return migrants have the potential to make different kinds of contributions to the national development of the country (Thomas-Hope, 2000). The majority make positive contribution at the both the community and national levels. As Connell and Conway (2000: 53) contend, "return migrants' represent people endowed with human capital, capable of enriching the social and cultural capital stocks of their island communities."

The returnees also indicate that the positive contributions that can be made by returned migrants to the country are dependent on the experiences of migration. The ability of returned migrants to find their place in the community and the labour force of the Cook Islands in part contributes to the satisfaction with the return migration decision and the future mobility intentions of returnees.

Satisfaction and future mobility intentions

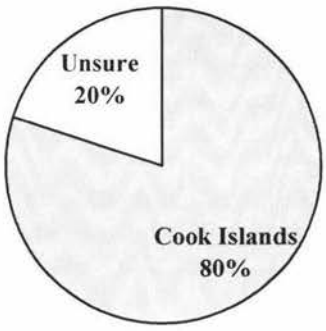
The majority (90%) of returned migrants were happy with their lives in the Cook Islands and the felt that the decision to return was the right one. As participant RM01 explained, "Even though I was born in Auckland, I don't think that I can ever call New Zealand home...this is my home. One time I went to Auckland for three days. I couldn't even stand it. After one day, I just wanted to come back." These thoughts are echoed by Participant RM19, "I don't think I would like to live anywhere else. We look forward to going away. We flew around the world, and we go to Australia often...but the best part of the holiday is landing at Rarotonga Airport."

Ten percent of participants stated that although satisfied with the decision to return, they also missed certain aspects of their lives overseas. They affirmed however, that despite these feelings they had made commitments to live in the Cook Islands. As participant RM21 explained, "When I got here I missed Australia a lot.... When I was in Australia and was preparing to come back, can't wait to come home. Got over here, Australia's picture is always in my mind. A lot of people ask me will we go back to Australia. I say we will go back for holiday, not to live...." In fact, despite return a high level of mobility still exists. Cook Islanders have the freedom to go overseas for holidays and short visits. As participant RM15 explained, "My future is definitely here...this is the luxury of being here is that you can still go to New Zealand, Australia and all of those other countries. That's what they are there for. Being here is a real blessing, for us we can still take off and have a break from the island and come back." According to participant RM17, "I'm very happy that I moved back. But I realise too that

sometimes I need to go away. For maybe one or two years just to upskill and professional development and come back again."

While the majority of the returnees see their futures in the Cook Islands, others could not confirm where they would be residing in the future revealing once again the indeterminancy of the migration experience. For participant RM 20, living in Cook Islands is dependent on the employment situation of her husband a very highly qualified demographer who cannot gain permanent employment in the Cook Islands. She explained her situation as follows: "All he wants is the chance to work here I think, to contribute because he has a lot to contribute.... We really need to talk about our future. Is it right for me to stay here and for him to go away.... Opportunities are here; there is a problem, migration. He is the expert. He can give the information. But he is not being given the chance...." For this respondent, the unavailability of work for her husband in the Cook Islands is major determinant on whether her future is in the Cook Islands or not. As she explained further: "Until my husband and I resolve our situation, I'll just plod along here. I like it here. I think there a lot of things happening. I wouldn't want to go away and this country does become Hawaii or whatever and I had not been here to say what I felt. I'd only have my own self to blame taking off like that.... Just have to get my husband a satisfying job." Another participant (RM19) said: "I've actually come to a bit of a crossroad. I have an 11-year-old son. Before we came here my husband and I made a pact that when he is out of the primary school we got to take him overseas. So we worked it out that by the end of 2006 we may have to move for the sake of our child's education.... If that wasn't the case I would be quite happy to stay here." Figure 6.2 illustrates where the return migrants will be living in the future. While 80% indicated that they would remain in the Cook Islands, the other 20% were unsure.

Figure 6.2: Where will the returned migrants be living in the future



The 20% of returned migrants who are 'Unsure' indicate that the possibility of remaining in the Cook Islands is dependent on the circumstances that they and their families face. These circumstances are not only related to the social and economic conditions of the Cook Islands but also factors that personally affect the individuals concerned. The decision to stay in or move from the Cook Islands combines the different circumstances faced by the individual in the present, the individuals' past experiences, and future expectations. It also incorporates the individual's values, beliefs, aspirations and goals, which are also influenced by emotions and personality. As participant RM3 said: "Only time can tell, it depends on what is happening here in comparison to what is happening overseas and what my I want to do, my goals in the future will be". This reflects the agency of individuals in migration decision making. Like the previous section, it reveals that the migration decision making process is one that is continual involving the reflexive monitoring of action, the rationalisation and the motivation for action. The impact of the individual's environment on his or her life, combined with internal conditioning factors provides the propensity for movement.

Summarising the 'uu' that returned

This section provides understanding of the migration process from the perspective of the returned migrant. The returned migrants illustrate the agency of the individual in the migration process. Like the emigrants in the previous section, the individual ultimately makes the decision to return. In making the decision to return, the migrant is influenced by personal factors rather than economic determinants. For the majority of returnees these personal factors predominantly involve the family, in particular parents and children. For others these personal factors are those which arise from issues of belonging, culture, identity and so forth. This contradicts the assumptions of dominant approaches to international migration that propose that migration is driven by economic logic.

Returned migrants contribute positively to the economic, human, social and cultural capital of the nation in a variety of ways. Yet these contributions also highlight a paradox in Cook Islands migration – where emigration was essential to enhance the extent of their contributions to the country. Whether these returned migrants continue to contribute positively to the Cook Islands is dependent on their future intentions of remaining in the country. Whilst the majority indicate that their return is permanent, there remains the propensity for remigration. Influencing the decision to remigrate are factors which are internal to the individual and also external. Like the emigrants in the previous section, internal factors that condition the potential for migration are the individual's values, beliefs, aspirations, emotions and personality. The participants in this research - both emigrants (in the previous section) and returned migrants generally suggest that external factors influencing migration decisions are related to the nature and level of national development in the Cook Islands. These factors become critical motivators of movement in the decision making process.

Section 3: Those who remained

Introduction

Dominant approaches to international migration perceive migration as a feature and consequence of the development process. People are assumed to move in an automatic fashion from developing to developed countries. Whilst the consequences that result from the development processes undoubtedly impacts on everybody within society, the nature of these impacts upon peoples' lives are not the same for everybody. There are people who choose not to migrate for the purposes of residing overseas for prolonged periods of time. Such is the case of the Cook Islands.

As an integral component of Cook Islands society, migration affects everybody, not only those who emigrate or returned, but also those who remained in the Cook Islands. It must be emphasized in this section that those who remain in the Cook Islands are by no means immobile. The participants in this section have at various times of their lives participated in migration actions either residing overseas for short periods of time,[14] left the island for short business related travels or have vacationed and visited relatives and friends overseas. However, what is common about these participants is that during the period of high levels of emigration following 1996, they have continued to reside in the Cook Islands.

The aim of this section is to examine how the general Cook Islands population understand Cook Islands migration. This section is divided into two parts. The first part of this section concentrates on the perspectives that those from the outer islands of Manihiki, Penrhyn, Mauke and Aitutaki hold of international migration. Interviews were used to gain these perspectives. In doing so, an insight into how people from the outer islands understand migration will be presented. It will also reveal the influence of culture as a structure interacting with the individual to

[14] Short period of time is defined as less than one year.

produce migration actions. The perspectives of outer islanders present the view that for Cook Islanders migration is related to the nature and level of national development.

The second part concentrates on the perspective held of Cook Islands migration by Cook Islanders residing in Rarotonga since 1996. The data was largely obtained from a random street survey of 66 Cook Islanders conducted in Avarua, Rarotonga and some of the comments in which those surveyed elaborated on their responses. It examines public opinion on emigration from and return migration to the Cook Islands. It also assesses future intentions for emigration. The first part of this section will confirm the perceptions held regarding Cook Islands migration. It is perceived that the factors that cause migration are those associated with the nature and level of national development. Furthermore, it will reveal that although the environment in terms of the nature and level of nation development is shared, the responses to this environment are varied. This again will highlight the agency of the individual in determining migration actions.

The Outer Island Perspective

The high levels of emigration from the Cook Islands are more pronounced in the outer islands of the Cooks group[15]. Generally, those from the outer islands lament the decline in the population of their respective islands. Participant MAU1, from the island of Mauke stated: "I fear for the outer islands because of the drain of people. I think its people that make the place...." Participant MAU2 also said that, "There are more pigs in Mauke than people. Pigs are running wild, it's sad...when you do out on to the road between 12 and 4 [o'clock] you don't see anyone." Things are similar in the Northern group, according to participant PEN1 from the island of Penryhn: "...before there was a lot of people in Penryhn. Now there's not many people there. There are more plenty of Penryhn people

[15]As discussed in Chapter 4. For this section five people from each of the outer of Manihiki, Penrhyn, Mauke and Aitutaki were interviewed for this research.

here [in Rarotonga] but there are more Penryhn people in New Zealand and Australia."

Population decline in the outer islands is perceived as inevitable. As participant PEN3 explained, "I would say that life in Penryhn is good. There is plenty of food, plenty of fish and paua, but one thing is missing is money. There are no jobs there [in Penryhn].... That's why people are leaving. They need money for the life that they want to live. Can't help it because the things people want now costs money. The only way they can get money is to leave the islands." This is reiterated by participant AIT4, "When I look at my own family like my brothers and sisters, I think they left because they think that there are better jobs in New Zealand and Australia, jobs that you can't get over here. My other sister went away for schooling. Yeah they go away because of the things they can't have here."

This demonstrates the perceived influence of the social and economic conditions of the outer islands on motivations for emigration. Emigration from the islands allows islanders to expand opportunities beyond the confines of small islands (Thomas-Hope, 1993). Similarly, there is an important correlation between return migration and development. This is elaborated upon by Participant MHK3 from the Northern group island of Manihiki. He stated that "...when the pearl [industry] was good and going strong, many Manihikians came back and started [pearl] farming.... At moment it's [the pearl industry] not so good then they leave. But I know that if it [the pearl industry] pick up again then they will come back again...that's how it goes." Similarly on the southern group island of Aitutaki, participant AIT1 also noted that: "I don't think that our people leaving is a lasting problem because if they leave they'll come back...some people live there [overseas] for 15 maybe 20 years maybe more but they will come back. I can see that changes in Aitutaki are attracting people back. Now in Aitutaki there are many tourist business. Aitutakian people are starting their own business for the tourist. So I can see quite a few return. Not only old people who want to retire

like what's been [happening] before but some young people too who have spent time in New Zealand and Australia and even young people who have Aitutakian blood from Rarotonga they are coming back to the island. They are building their houses, a few have started businesses, yep, the changes on the island are attracting people back." Just as emigration is perceived as inevitable, so is return migration.

Underhill (1989) noted in her study of mobility in the Northern group island of Manihiki that mobility patterns are dominantly circular and it is these recurrent patterns that both create and sustain bi-or multi-local households. More importantly, these movements speak of a social and family system that cannot be contained within the limits of an atoll environment. The notion of the 'family' plays a significant role in shaping the dynamics of Cook Islands migration. As participant PEN5 explained, "...people go away, they have to I think because of the things they want they can't have in Penrhyn...even people from Penrhyn go away, [but] they still belong to the island.... See like me, I went to Australia...and [at] that time my brother was in Penryhn...he was the one looking after our home and our lands and all that.... Then when he want[ed] to leave I came back to Penryhn. Now its my turn to stay home and look after the place...I look after not only our place but the whole families homes and lands...when they want to come back its there for them." In return he explained, "when I want to go to New Zealand or Australia for holiday my family looks after me.... They know they have a home here and I know that I have a home to go to in New Zealand or Australia."

These interviewed participants illustrate how Cook Islanders define migration. Migration does not mean a severing of ties to the homeland but rather that despite moving one maintains a sense of belonging to the islands. It is a cultural value that is deeply embedded in the consciousness of Cook Islanders regardless of whether they have moved away or have remained in the islands. There appears to be a tacit understanding of migration and the role it plays in maintaining the existence and the strength of the 'family'. Cook Islanders are knowledgeable of

the conditions of their existence and of their journeys. The values of 'family' acts as a rule that dictates migration behaviour and at the same by invoking the values of the 'family' individuals sustain not only the 'family' but also its impact in shaping the dynamics of the Cook Islands migration process.

The perspectives of those from the outer islands indicate also the fluidity and continuity of Cook Islanders mobility. These people like others in the Pacific do not live in closed societies (Hooker & Varcoe, 1999). International travel is an important and almost commonplace aspect in the lives of all Cook Islanders regardless of whether they live abroad, in Rarotonga or the outer islands of the Cook group. They are assured by cultural knowledge that they can remain at home yet be able to go away if they wish and despite leaving they will remain 'rooted' to the islands.

These cultural notions associated with migration are significant in shaping the dynamics of Cook Islands migration. Migration is an expected part of Cook Islands culture. Yet, despite the influence of Cook Islands culture on Cook Islands migration, the perception that factors that cause movements are related to the nature and level of national development continues to prevail. This is apparent when examining the perspectives of Cook Islanders surveyed in Rarotonga.

Rarotongan Perspectives

Why are Cook Islanders emigrating?

This was a key question in the survey conducted for this section of the research. The most dominant perception of why people migrated was the fact that incomes were higher overseas. This is understandable considering that more than half (53%) of those surveyed earned less than $19,000 and perceived incomes overseas to be considerably more. Interestingly, many were of the opinion that there were more employment opportunities overseas despite the apparent

abundance of job vacancies in the Cook Islands labour market due to a shortage of local labour and the extremely low incidences of unemployment on Rarotonga.

Education and health were also key reasons cited for emigration implying that not only are these sectors perceived as more advanced overseas but rather that people regarded the standard of education and health in the Cook Islands as bad in comparison to New Zealand and Australia. Many people also felt that some people in particular the young, need a change from the confines of the small island environment, attracted by the big city life.

Politics was also seen as a reason for emigration. A number of people commented that some people emigrated because they were frustrated with the political situation in the Cook Islands. They saw migration as 'people voting with their feet'. The high cost of living in the Cook Islands in comparison to New Zealand also served as a reason for emigration.

While the welfare system in particular the 'dole' was also cited as reason for migration. One respondent cited 'more women overseas' while another could not state specific reasons but said that 'different people moved for different reasons'. Table 6.8 summarises the results on the issue of why are Cook Islands emigrating?[16]

[16] It must be noted that in a survey the answer options provided may control the responses received. Note however, in Appendix four, a 'Other' option is provided whereby the respondent can indicate opinions not listed.

Table 6.8: The reasons why Cook Islanders migrate

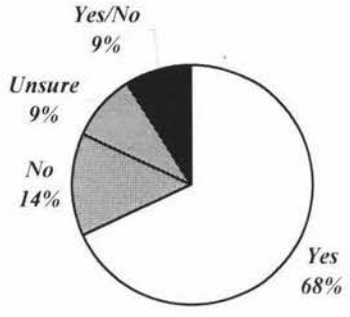
Reasons cited	Number of citations
Higher income overseas	37
More employment opportunities overseas	36
Education	20
Health	19
For a change/to get away from the island	15
Politics	12
Cost of living	5
The welfare state in New Zealand	3
More women	1
More conveniences like takeaways, variety of things available in shops	1
Different reasons for different people	1

It is evident that many perceived the causes of Cook Islands migration as factors that arise from the differentials in economic and social development between the Cook Islands and New Zealand. This clearly indicates the link between migration and its relationship with the nature and level of national development.

Is emigration a problem?

As discussed in Chapter 1 and in the section on emigrants, the high levels of migration from the Cook Islands are perceived as a 'problem' for the country. Those surveyed were asked if emigration from the Cook Islands is a problem to determine if this viewpoint was common. The graph below illustrates the responses received.

Figure 6.3: Is emigration from the Cook Islands a problem?

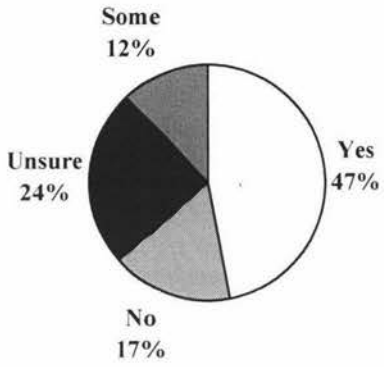


A significant majority (68%) of those surveyed said 'yes' out-migration from the Cook Islands is a problem; 14% said 'no'; 9% were 'unsure' while the other 9% said 'yes and no'. The 9% who stated 'yes and no' generally said that it depends on who is moving. Where those moving the skilled, productive and so forth? What and the nature of their movement? Was it temporary, permanent, did they leave to better themselves before coming back? If those moving were the skilled, educated and productive then it would was a problem. If movements were temporary then it was not a problem as it is widely assumed that emigrants' would return with increased knowledge, skills and so forth. Figure 6.3 therefore indicates that the overwhelming majority (68%) support the assumption that migration from the Cook Islands is a problem.

Do returning Cook Islanders contribute positively to the country?

The migrants in the previous section have indicated that returning Cook Islanders contribute positively to the country. The survey sought to examine whether Cook Islanders in general supported this outlook. The results of regarding the issue of return migration are illustrated in Figure 6.4 below.

Figure 6.4: Do returning Cook Islanders contribute positively to the country?



The majority of Cook Islanders hold the opinion that returning Cook Islanders contributed positively to the country. Some Cook Islanders did not think that returnees made any contribution. Others where unsure, while some stated that only 'some' returned migrants contributed positively. Those who felt that they contributed positively commented on the fact that many returnees are entrepreneurial and have started their own businesses or have taken over employment roles normally filled by expatriates. Those who saw 'some' as making positive contributions felt that those who could be part of the labour force certainly contributed, but those that did not like retirees could possibility become a burden to society. Those that stated 'no' to positive contributions by returnees felt that those who came back were not making any significant contributions. Some in this group also seemed resentful to the fact that the returnees came back when things were improved. One person commented that, "Where were they when things were bad? Now that things are starting to improve they want to come back and hop on the band wagon" (participant RAR17). Generally, those surveyed implied that Cook Islanders should only return if they could make positive contributions to the country. The majority of the survey participants believe that returning Cook Islanders contribute positively to the country.

Intentions of emigration

The survey participants were asked if they had any future intentions of emigration. The results relating to this question is illustrated in figure 6.5.

Figure 6.5: Intentions of Emigration

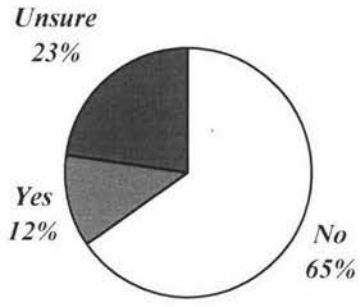


Figure 6.5 indicates that the majority of those surveyed did not have any immediate intentions of emigrating from the Cook Islands. While others stated that they were definitely going to emigrate. Those definitely emigrating were noticeably from the 18-35 age groups reflecting a greater likelihood of younger Cook Islanders leaving the country. Almost of quarter of those surveyed were 'unsure'. There remains a high potential for emigration amongst this group. The most common reasons stated by those who were 'unsure' were: "depends on my children's education" (participant RAR6); "depends how things get on here" (participant RAR39); "you don't know what will happen in the future" (participant RAR14). These responses highlight the uncertainty of future migration and the connection between mobility and the social and economic conditions of the Cook Islands.

Why do they remain in the Cook Islands?

Those surveyed were asked why they remained in the Cook Islands. The responses received are grouped into the following categories as demonstrated in Table 6.9 below.

Table 6.9: Reasons why Cook Islanders remain in the Cook Islands

Reason for remaining	Percentage of those surveyed
Enjoy the lifestyle	42
Life in the islands is challenging	7.5
It is home	18
Have made commitments to stay in the islands	12.5
A combination of factors	20

The overwhelming majority (42%) of those surveyed indicated that they enjoyed living in the islands primarily because of the lifestyle. The slower pace of life, the community orientated way of life, safety of children, the climate and so forth were some of the aspects relating to the satisfaction with the lifestyle in the islands. A high proportion (20%) of those surveyed stated that their reasons for staying in the Cook Islands were a combination of factors. Examples of responses received are: "It's my home and besides I love living here, my parents are here" (participant RAR52) "I've just built a new house and I enjoy my work here too and I like living here" (participant RAR23). "This my home, it's where my family come from. I have my own home, it's a good place to live, its safe, it's got a nice pace of life" (participant RAR11).

The fact that the Cook Islands is 'home' for 18% of those surveyed was the reason that they remained in the country. While for 7.5% they found the challenge of living in the islands reason for not moving. For example some of the responses received were: "I'm always on the go here, it's a challenge" (participant RAR5). "I just started a business and it's a challenge to see if I can make it work" (participant RAR63). "There's always something to look forward to here... I think it's challenging" (participant RAR20).

These responses indicate that the reasons why Cook Islanders reside in the country are related to more personal rather than economic factors. Similar to the migrants in the previous chapter, internal conditioning factors such as emotions, beliefs, aspirations and so forth are also threaded into explanations of Cook Islanders decisions to remain in the islands.

Analysing the decisions

All Cook Islanders are potential emigrants. While some act upon the propensity to emigrate, others do not. This suggests that despite the shared environment, its impact upon individuals differ. This emphasizes the agency of the individual in making the decision whether to migration or not. Those who remain in the Cook Islands demonstrate that they are able to make decisions based on the experiences and circumstances surrounding their lives and also their aspirations for the future. What is interesting is the importance of non-economic variables in making the decision to stay. This indicates that contrary to popular opinion (in conventional perspectives) of international migration, not everybody's decisions are driven by economic rationale. Rather, it appears that internal conditional factors within the individual are the primary motivators for non-migration actions. In making these decisions, again non-migrants display the rationalisation of action, where they understand the grounds for choosing whether to emigrate or not.

For those who indicated that they would emigrate, the majority where of the younger age group. Some of the explanations provided were: "I'm young of course I will go away" (participant RAR46). "I think everybody has to go away" (participant RAR55). "Why not, I got to see the world and what it offers" (survey no.32). "This place sucks" (participant RAR59).

The causes of migration identified by the survey participants demonstrate the perceptions held by non-migrants of Cook Islands migration – that the causes of migration are those related to the nature and level of national development.

Furthermore, those who remain perceive that emigration from the Cook Islands is considered a problem and return migration is generally beneficial to the country.

Summarising the 'uu' that remained

Those who remain in the Cook Islands have demonstrated that a common perception of the causes of emigration from the Cook Islands that is shared amongst Cook Islanders. The many factors that are associated with the propensity to emigrate are related to the nature and level of national development. However, the fact that these Cook Islanders remained in the islands during a period of high emigration from the Cook Islands indicates that the ways in which economic variables are perceived in relation to the individual only become critical as causal factors in the decision making process.

The participants in this section have revealed that a shared environment does not impact equally on all concerned, thus emphasizing the agency of the individual in forming decisions related to migration. For those who remain in the Cook Islands, this is a 'choice' that is made for whatever reason. The reasons why people remain in the country are predominantly non-economic driven by personal factors – the internal conditioning within the individual. These factors are related to values, beliefs, emotions, aspirations and personality.

Those who remain in the Cook Islands also indicate that emigration is a problem for the Cook Islands, while those who return generally contribute positively to the country.

Those in the outer islands have demonstrated the importance of culture in shaping the dynamics of the Cook Islands migration process. The cultural imageries of Cook Islands migration influences migration behaviour and at the same time by invoking these cultural practises individuals sustain the cultural dimensions of the process, highlighting the significance of non-economic structures such as culture in understanding international migration as argued in Pacific Islands migration

literature. However, like those who remain in Rarotonga, outer islanders share the common perception that the causes of migration are those factors related to the nature and level of national development. Similarly, the outer islanders perceive that there is an important correlation between return migration and development.

Conclusion:

Cook Islands migration in the structuration theory perspective

This chapter has illustrated that examining the perspective of the individual, seeks to understand people's formulations of their situations or circumstances and how they come to make the decisions that they make. Guided by the structuration theory, this chapter has shown that the perspective of the individual captures the variety and indeterminancy of migration experiences, the complicated nature of the migration decision making and the complexity of the causes of international migration and has thus provided a deeper understanding of the process. The usefulness of the perspective of the individual in expanding understanding of Cook Islands migration has been further accentuated when the process is examined from the perspective of those that constitute it – the emigrants, returned migrants and the non-migrants.

This chapter has demonstrated that the causes of Cook Islands migration are complex. Emigration from the Cook Islands occurs for diverse reasons, contradicting the assumptions made by conventional international migration approaches. Emigration from the Cook Islands cannot be explained solely in terms of the development differentials between the Cook Islands and New Zealand. Indeed, for some people the causes of emigration are related development differentials between the two countries. However, for other people these have had no bearing on their migration decisions. Instead, their movements are caused by non-economic factors such as the family and values associated with it. While for other people, their emigration is a combination of factors. For these people the causes of movement are those related to both economic and non-

economic factors. Threaded also into explanations of emigration are emotions, values, belief – the internal conditioning factors of the individual that are often neglected by economic rationale based approaches of international migration.

This chapter has highlighted that whilst these factors may trigger or create propensity for movement, there are other structures that provide the opportunity, encourages or enable migration actions – New Zealand citizenship, the family, and the culture of migration. These factors are crucial in understanding Cook Islands migration also because they in part create the context in which migration decisions are made. The structuration theory allows the inclusion of these factors in migration research where they are conceptualised as rules and resources that influence migration actions.

Also revealed in this chapter is that migration is rarely only one way. Return migration is evidence that moves occur in directions which run counter to the linear flows assumed in dominant approaches. Furthermore, the causes for return migration are more inclined to be personal and factors associated with the family rather than those based on economic logic. Likewise in section 3, those who remain in the Cook Islands have demonstrated that actions are not determined solely by economic motivations and again highlight the significance of non-economic factors in influencing behaviour.

A key concept that has been illustrated in this chapter is the active individual who determines his or her actions. This chapter has demonstrated that those who constitute the international migration process are not passive automatons that are dictated by structural forces beyond their control. Migration is a self-selective process. Ultimately, it is the individual who makes the decision to emigrate, remain, or return. As suggested by the structuration theory's conceptualisation of agency and structure, the individual is a knowledgeable agent who is aware of him or herself and the situations or circumstances in which he or she is situated in. The actions of those that constitute the Cook Islands migration process have

illustrated that they are able to formulate appropriate responses and actions to factors that influences upon their lives and is able to provide reasons for these actions. These responses have been varied and have resulted in emigration, returned migration and non-migration.

This chapter has also demonstrated the importance of internal conditioning factors relating to the existentialism of the individual in influencing migration actions. These factors cannot be conceptualised within the dominant approaches of international migration. The explanations for migration action in this chapter have illustrated the significance of personality, personal experiences, responsibilities, freewill, issues of social identity and the stage of the life cycle in inspiring migration actions. These have been conceptualised within a structuration approach to provide understanding of this dimension of the concept of agency.

The knowledgeability of the agent has also been illustrated in this chapter with regard to the satisfaction of the migration decision and life lived in the destination whether it is in the Cook Islands or New Zealand. In this regard, the emigrants and returned migrants have illustrated once again their ability to formulate appropriate responses to the situations that they face. However, satisfaction with the migration decision does not indicate permanent migration; ever present is the potential for either return migration or remigration, highlighting also another key issue in this chapter - the ambiguity and indeterminancy of the migration experience. This has demonstrated that migration is a process rather a set of discrete events. It is a process where migrants and non-migrants constantly reflexively monitor and rationalise their actions in relation to their lives. Where the relative importance of their sense of well-being is not met, this provides motivation for migration action.

This chapter has illustrated that migration as a social process is the result of the interaction between agency and structures. The interaction is complex; however,

this complexity provides a richer story of the realities faced by those who constitute the Cook Islands migration process.

Despite the variety of migration experiences, this chapter has also illustrated that common perceptions of Cook Islands migration and its causes exists amongst Cook Islanders – the causes of Cook Islands migration are related to the nature and level of national development. This is a contradiction of the realities of those within the process, yet it is precisely these people that maintain these views. Vandsemb (1995) argues that perception in part also creates the environment of the individual, these thoughts conveys also how humans see the world. Therefore these perceptions must be considered to also offer valuable understanding of how Cook Islanders see their world. This will be the focus of Chapter 7.

CHAPTER 7

COMMON PERCEPTIONS: COOK ISLANDS MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

Chapter 6 has illustrated that the Cook Islands migration is one that represents varied population flows, different motivations and many effects on the lives of those who constitute the process. Yet despite this complexity, common perceptions of the migration prevail.

At the fore of these common perceptions is the understanding that migration is inevitable and that people will depart. At the same time, people are also likely to return. However, in the case of the Cook Islands, the rate of emigration far exceeds that of return migration. This presents the Cook Islands with a 'migration problem'. Those researched indicate that the effect of this 'migration problem' is a view shared by Cook Islanders regardless of whether they are emigrants, return migrants or non-migrants. This chapter will discuss this 'migration problem' and the common perception of the effects of Cook Islands migration on the country.

It is perceived that the solution for this 'migration problem' is dependent on addressing the causes of Cook Islands migration. Despite their own migration experiences, those researched indicate that there exist also common perceptions regarding the causes of Cook Islands migration. These common perceptions will also be examined in this chapter.

The perceived causes of migration are related to the nature and level of national development in the country. As a result, the government of the Cook Islands is perceived as instrumental in providing the solutions for the 'migration problem'.

Once again, this chapter draws upon the stories and narratives of those Cook Islanders who have participated in this research. Their voices will demonstrate the relationship between Cook Islands migration and development. These voices also provide some direction for development in the Cook Islands. The future of the Cook Islands is dependent upon Cook Islanders; it is only fair that their perspectives whether they are realities lived or perceived regarding migration and the Cook Islands are heard and acted upon.

Unintentional Consequences: The effects of Cook Islands migration on the country

The perspective of the individual reveals that migration action is intentional. However, it also produces unintentional consequences. At the national level, these become the negative effects of international migration. Those researched perceive that the main effect of migration on the Cook Islands is the significant decline in the local population and the increase in foreigners residing in the country. The decline in local population constitutes a loss of local labour. As a result many businesses have resorted to bringing in foreign workers. As participant RM10 explained:

> "...being in business myself, I know about the problems of getting workers and good workers at that.... I'm lucky because my business is not so big, but for others...they have no choice, they have to get outside workers from Fiji because there just isn't the people here to do the work...."

The table below illustrates the work and entry/resident permits issued to foreigners during the period 1996 – 2004.

Table 7.1: Permits Issued to Foreigners 1996-2004

Years	Work Permits Issued	Entry/Residence Permits	Total
1996	414	227	641
1997	413	195	608
1998	448	182	630
1999	448	190	638
2000	595	157	752
2001	682	203	885
2002	728	228	956
2003	1026	199	1225
2004	983	208	1191

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration, Government of the Cook Islands.

The above figures indicate a significant increase of work permits issued from 2000 to 2004. The figures in shown in the Entry/Residence Permits column represents the family members of the employees granted work permits[17]. The combination of the two columns shows the number of foreigners entering, working and residing in the Cook Islands during this period.

The increasing number of foreign workers relative to the local population validates the concerns regarding the presence of foreigners in the Cook Islands. There is an apparent fear that Cook Islanders could become a minority in their own country. As participant EM23 commented:

> "I think the number of foreigners will be a problem in the future. At the moment most of the businesses are owned by foreigners....There are a lot of foreign workers there at the lower job scale too. A lot of these workers that come as singles are ending up with Cook Islanders...there will be intermarriage...we have now half Indian, Filipino kids.... Some of them come with their families. Then they stay long term and end up being permanent residences and starting their own businesses...like the Filipinos....I think we [Cook Islanders] should be very afraid"

[17] These figures do not correspond with the figures in the work permits columns. The reason for this is that there were a number of single men and women issued with work permits for employment especially in the hospitality industry.

The physical presence of foreigners is not the only concern. According to Professor Ron Crocombe (personal conversation. July, 2005), a significant area of impact is in the low-skilled and low prestige jobs held by many foreign workers in the hospitality, construction, domestic and fishing industries. As a consequence many Cook Islanders refuse to train for or fill these occupations. This is supported by participant RM03 who observed that:

> "...local people don't want to be cleaners, or waitresses, or labourers anymore now. Those jobs are for the Fijians, Indians, Chinese now...not for locals."

The low status accorded to certain jobs will allow generalisation of the status of Cook Islanders according to the work they perform. In addition, it is also perceived that foreign workers who are employed in the high status jobs receive higher wages or special allowances that are not generally available to Cook Islanders. This encourages emigration, as Cook Islanders have no desire to be employed in low-status jobs dominated by foreign workers and feel that higher paid employment overseas is a better option. These factors can all lead the transformation of Cook Islands' social thought and practises where status is dependent on one's employment. The institution of new ethnically based distinctions could be highly divisive, creating separate categories of personhood and increased racism. There is a possibly that this could be the future of the Cook Islands. As participant RM20 stated:

> "I think the way the Cook Islands will look in ten years time is a result of the migration pattern...for us [Cook Islanders] at the moment it doesn't look too good."

Why do Cook Islanders leave? A common perception

Chapter 6 has highlighted that whilst the 'environment' that provides the context for emigration is shared, it has differing effects on various people. For some it has triggered emigration, for others it has influenced return migration, and for many it has had no influence in turning migration potential into action. Despite these different responses to the impact of the environment on migration, Cook

Islanders generally perceive that many factors that cause emigration are related to the nature and level of development in the country. This perception is shared by Cook Islanders regardless of whether they are emigrants, returned migrants or non-migrants. The factors related to the nature and level of development in the Cook Islands that causes emigration are discussed below.

Low wages

According to the Cook Islands 2001 census, the average annual income of those Cook Islanders employed in the Cook Islands was $14,121 for men and $10,328 for women. In contrast, the New Zealand 2001 census show that employed Cook Islanders in New Zealand were earning on average $26,000 for men and $21,300 for women. This corresponds with the information provided by the majority of migrants in the previous chapter. The difference in income levels between New Zealand and the Cook Islands is probably best elucidated by Participant EM9:

> "...at the end of the day when you look at your pay slip, four hundred odd dollars is a hell of a lot compared to the one hundred and eighty you use to get in Raro."

The actual wages earned in the Cook Islands and the knowledge and the assumption of higher earnings overseas impacts on the individual in that migration is perceived as a means of achieving higher earnings.

Employment Opportunities

In the period immediately following the 1996 Cook Islands economic reform program many Cook Islanders who departed hoped to find employment overseas. As Participant EM22 explained:

> "When I was transitioned there was no point for me to stay in Rarotonga. Jobs at the time were scarce. For someone like me who has always been independent and to suddenly be without work was hard. I had to find work. That was why I came to New Zealand."

In recent years, however, there has been an apparent labour shortage in the Cook Islands, in particular on Rarotonga. Participant RM10 observed that:

> "...there are so many jobs out there.... Look at the papers everyday there's tonnes of vacancies. So people can just get jobs like that."

Nonetheless, it must be noted that the overwhelming majority of vacancies in the Cook Islands are for jobs at the lower spectrum of the employment scale, in particular, jobs in the service industries. This implies that perhaps the majority of those leaving are at the lower end of the employment spectrum, those people who are likely to be earning lower wages. As participant RM15 remarked:

> "It's a shame because I think that people who are leaving it's not the well educated but the *tumu enua* people, the common people, still going by the old cliché that there are greener pastures on the other side..."

This supported by the observation made by participant EM25:

> "...there might be lots of jobs there [in Rarotonga] but not everyone wants to be a waitress, or a hotel housemaid. I know of another Cook Islands lawyer who wants to go back and has for the past two years been applying for jobs but still jobs like ours get given to expats."

This particular participant (M25) raises an important issue that some feel as a disincentive to remain or to return to the Cook Islands – that is the lack of employment opportunities at the higher levels of the employment scale and perceived preference for expatriates rather than locals in these employment sectors. Participant RM20 also highlighted this by saying:

> "We have so many Cook Islanders here who are getting frustrated.... I was working with a person who came back from Australia with a MBA, he was working as the night watchman at the Edgewater Hotel...he couldn't find a job here.... There are a lot of highly educated people in the Cook Islands; it's just that they are not given the opportunity. We would rather hire foreigners. Maybe they are the wrong political party or the wrong family and they just leave."

This participant mentions another significant factor that is perceived to influence emigration - Cook Islands politics.

Politics

Professor Ron Crocombe in the Cook Islands News (12 July 2001) suggested that Cook Islanders often leave because they lack confidence in the government. The past ten years has seen continuous changes in government and varying coalitions being formed. Unstable government, self-serving politicians and a deterioration of work and leadership ethics, characterises politics in the Cook Islands. The feeling of many Cook Islanders towards government has perhaps been best captured by participant EM15:

> "Most of the news we hear from home is about politics – *te iu.* When you hear about what goes on in the government no wonder people want to leave and who would want to live in a place that is run by those kinds of people.... Bloody idiots. People in government don't care about everybody else, just themselves and their supporters. For me, I know that qualifications doesn't count there. It is who you know in the government – *te iu.*"

'*Te iu*', Cook Islanders both at home and abroad are '*iu*' (sick and tired) of Cook Islands politics.

Education and Health

Health and education are also perceived to be causal factors of Cook Islands emigration. The complaints and criticisms raised by those in this research regarding education and health is evidence of the frustration amongst Cook Islanders with the provision and management by government of these crucial social services. As participants EM16 and EM1 respectively declared:

> "It is my kids that honestly keep me here [in New Zealand]. You know their education. It's so much better the standard over here....We'll stay for the kids' sake, for their education."

> "It is because of my health I can't go back.... I mean that's why I was bought to New Zealand by the [Cook Islands Ministry of] health; they don't know what's wrong with me there [in Rarotonga].... I did go back and I got sick again and had to be sent back to New Zealand. I know that if I go back to live there [in the Cook Islands] I will die. So I know that the health system there is terrible."

These participants highlight the fact that the perception of health and education held by Cook Islands migrants' not only influences movement away from the islands but also impacts on intentions of returning home to live.

Cost of living

The high cost of living in the Cook Islands, with prices more than people can afford is also perceived as an incentive to move away. Inflation in the Cook Islands corresponds to that of New Zealand levels, (estimated at about 2 percent per annum in 1998/99) (Mellor, 2000). However wages on the other hand have not been consistent with rising inflation. 2003 saw increases in the housing category (including rents and maintenance cost), which jumped by 4.2 percent, and in miscellaneous goods and services, which rose 5.15 percent (Cook Islands News, 24 May 2004). Overpricing of imported goods in many stores exacerbated the inflation problems faced by the average Cook Islander (Cook Islands News, 28 May 2004). Participants EM03 and EM23 explained the difference in cost of goods in Rarotonga in comparison to New Zealand:

> "When I went back to Raro [Rarotonga] to get my mum... I went to the shop to buy us some food. I thought I was going to buy some chops but then I saw the price.... It was $20 for about 6 pieces of frozen chops. In New Zealand I can get so much more for that price." (Participant EM03)

> "...food wise, and shopping wise it's is so much cheaper in New Zealand [than the Cook Islands]." (Participant EM23)

Forming Migration Stereotypes

Those researched suggest that Cook Islanders associate these above factors with the propensity to emigrate. These factors that are perceived to cause migration are related to the nature and level of national development. From this viewpoint, migration provides Cook Islanders with an escape from the islands or with the opportunity to extend one's environment beyond the confines of the Cook Islands. Migration action is therefore purposive and intentional. As Participant RM08 observed:

> "When people leave, they leave for a purpose. They don't go just for the sake of going....They have a purpose of going and they know why they are leaving and what they hope to achieve when they go and it's the same thing when they come back."

In this sense, migration itself is critical in determining the view of the Cook Islands environment brought into focus. Those researched is evidence of the fact that Cook Islanders share this outlook and suggests that these perceptions are formed with the belief that they are common. As a result migration stereotypes have developed and, in turn, these inform individual opinions, thus reinforcing and perpetuating a general view.

Changing perceptions and influencing movements

However, those that have participated in this research also indicate that common perceptions of Cook Islands migration can be altered. It is perceived that the actions of the Cook Islands government play an instrumental role in changing these perceptions. As participant PEN3 explained:

> "I think it's because of the government. Because if you think about it, the government is responsible for what goes on in a country, isn't it? I think that Cook Islanders are leaving and it's the government's fault.... If they [Cook Islanders] believe that government's doing a good job then people won't leave. If people believe that the country is doing well and that their needs are being met then they have no reason to go away. I think that if Cook Islanders in New Zealand and Australia can see that the country is doing well because the government is running things properly then they will want to come back."

This supports the perception that the factors associated with the propensity for migration are related to the nature and level of national development. It also suggests that the development policies of government have the ability to reduce emigration as well as attract Cook Islanders living abroad by changing the nature and level of national development. As participant RM20 observed:

> "There's definitely a connection between development and migration here. You see that especially when people get frustrated [if] they can't find a job or [if] there's nothing for them here....If

> government isn't putting enough into the social services, they are not being developed adequately. The education system is not too good, and the health, or whatever. In the business sector, [there is] not too much going to help business people. That too will impact on whether or not they will stay. Which is why government can put money into doing concrete things like doing concessions for the business people, try and bring the cost of living down a bit.... You really need to look at why are people going. Lets say for example, because of the education system is not good enough; government has to do their part."

Intentional Development

The perspectives of Cook Islanders highlight the need for the government to incorporate migration into the development policies of the country if the Cook Islands 'migration problem' is to be solved. The perceptions of those researched likens government to the 'trustees' in Cowen and Shenton's (1995; 1996) definition of development (as discussed in Chapter 2). The 'trustees' are in charge of development. As Cowen and Shenton argue, migration is a consequence of an inevitable process that is related to immanent development. As the 'trustees', government needs to adopt intentional development to counter the detrimental effects of immanent development. This mirrors the concepts of the unintentional consequences of migration actions that become the basis for new intentional actions that is proposed by the structuration theory (Giddens, 1984). This relationship between immanent and intentional development and unintentional consequences and intentional action is perhaps best illustrated by participant RM27:

> "When I left in 1996, I don't think that government had anticipated that so many people would leave.... But when you are in that kind of negative environment like what we were in 1996 people are bound to move away... that kind of environment affects the way people think of the country.... I think that the solution to the migration problem lies with the government, I mean we all have to do our part, but at the end of the day it is the government that we elect that has the job of leading our country into the future. They [the government] have to learn from their past mistakes and make sure that these aren't repeated.... Their [the government's] actions tell the people what kind of future they will have or they can

> expect here [in the Cook Islands]. If the government wants to the stop the migration problem, then they have to seriously start at looking at the issues why people leave. Is it the pay? Is it education or health? Is it not enough opportunity for our local people or whatever? They really have to do things that address these issues and when these issues are addressed people won't leave in droves."

This participant suggests that government should play an interventionist role by trying to either encourage or discourage migration depending on the current development level or needs of the country. Those researched indicate that the Cook Islands needs to discourage emigration and encourage return migration.

Admittedly, as demonstrated in Chapter 6, migration is an integral part of Cook Island's society where mobility is often encouraged by non-economic factors such as the family and a culture of migration, which in turn is enabled by the advantages of New Zealand citizenship. The taken-for-granted fact that Cook Islanders are likely to emigrate remains a critical challenge in addressing the migration issue. But at the same time also, the taken-for-granted fact that emigrants intend to return, combined with the cultural sense of belonging embedded in islanders' consciousness, offers some consolation and also incentive for the formulation of intentional development initiatives.

It is perceived that the environment that is created by intentional development is a crucial factor that impacts upon the lives and thus migration decisions of individuals. As participant RM09 explained:

> "If people are not doing well here, they can choose to go away and find new opportunities. It is all too well for government to say that Cook Islanders should come back. But come back to what? The government has to create the right environment for Cook Islanders to come back to...like create a national strategic plan for the whole country...we don't have a national strategic plan to work towards and really try to stick to plans. It starts with government."

This outlook is also supported by participant RM27:

> "They [the government] need to create a better environment for those in the country and I think that it will also bring back those who left because I think every Cook Islanders intention is to eventually return so government should make sure that they [Cook Islanders] have something to return to."

These participants indicate that intentional development agendas should not be restricted to enticing potential returning Cook Islanders but should target the country as a whole. As Ganziano (2004:226) argues, "...the best policies are not those specifically designed for migrants, but those designed for the entire home population from which migrant can benefit."

The unresolved relationship

The common perceptions held by those researched hint at the relationship between migration and development. However, it must also be noted that this relationship is not straightforward as it seems and remains unresolved (Appleyard, 1992). Part of the difficulty in resolving the migration and development relationship lies in the differences between the common perceptions of the link and the actual realities of those in the migration process. As Chapter 6 has highlighted, Cook Islands migration takes place for multiple reasons. These multiple reasons produce different patterns of circulation in migration. In expressing their migration experiences, those researched indicate that more complex structures exist in which both population and resources cross national boundaries. The multiple reasons for migration indicate that the exact factors that influence the individual in his or her migration decision can never be specified. All that can be done is to estimate some that seem to be of significant importance. The voices of those who have participated in this research indicate that factors relating to the nature and level of national development are of significant importance in migration decisions, thus also providing some direction for Cook Islands development. Addressing these factors is the challenge for the 'trustees' of the development – the government of the Cook Islands.

Conclusion

Chapter 6 has demonstrated the complexity of international migration. However, despite this apparent complexity and diversity, common perceptions regarding the causes and effects of the process prevail. The effects of Cook Islands migration on the country are perceived as negative and have created a 'migration problem' for the country. At the heart of this problem is the significant decline in the local population and the increase in the presence of foreigners. It is indicated that this will have significant implications for the future of the Cook Islands.

Addressing this 'migration problem' requires understanding of the causes of migration from the Cook Islands. There is a common perception that the causes of Cook Islands migration are factors related to the nature and level of national development. The view that government is instrumental in changing these perceptions and therefore influencing movements is common and shared. This implies that government creates a significant part of the environment in which individuals lives' evolve. This environment created is related to the propensity for migration by the extent of its effects upon the lives of individuals and how individuals articulate particular responses to these impacts. If the impact is negative, this creates emigration. If the impact is positive, this results non-migration or return migration. This indicates that government adopts intentional development agendas that will create the 'right environment' to retain the resident population as well as influence return migration. To achieve this, it is suggested that government implements policies that target the betterment of the country as a whole whereby the migrant also benefits.

This demonstrates a relationship between migration and development. Yet this link remains unresolved. The lived realities of those that constitute the migration process indicate more complex structures in which Cook Islanders and their movements evolve. Motivations for Cook Islands migration are diverse and movements are complicated. This indicates the impossibility of specifying the exact causes of migration. However, the voices of those researched indicate what

can be considered as those of significance importance in influencing migration decisions. In doing so, this provides some direction for the Cook Islands' development and challenges the government of the Cook Islands to address these issues if the 'migration problem' is to be solved.

Chapter 8
Conclusion

This chapter marks the end of my thesis journey of attempting to understand Cook Islands international migration. The challenge for me in this thesis was to understand the causes and effects of Cook Islands international migration from the perspective of those that constitute the process. These perspectives have indicated that the causes and effects of migration are as complex as the process itself. Gaining the perspectives of Cook Islanders has provided an opportunity to capture the variety of migration experiences and the complexity of the decision to migrate. Listening to the voices of participants has allowed those that constitute the migration process to be interpretative subjects of their own mobility rather than objects of development.

At the outset of this thesis journey my understanding of Cook Islands international migration was dictated by the conventional approaches of international migration that have been aptly discussed by Massey (et al., 1993,1998) and others. These conventional approaches conceptualise migration as a feature and consequence of the development process. Migrants are assumed to move automatically from developing to developed countries. The migrant is therefore viewed as a labourer whose behaviour and actions are dictated by broader economic variables (Massey, 1993, 1998). Conventional perspectives mechanically reduce the determinants of migration, downplays non-economic factors that influence movements and neglect the existentialism of the migrant (Arango, 2000).

The experiences of fieldwork and the perspectives of individuals that constitute the Cook Islands migration process have highlighted the flaws in conceptualising migration within the economic imageries of conventional approaches. The migration experiences of Cook Islanders reflect the literature on Pacific Islands migration and support the argument that migrants are interpretive subjects in their

own mobility and are therefore active agents within the migration process (Findlay and Graham, 1991; Halfacree and Boyle, 1993; Skeldon, 1995; White and Jackson, 1995; Boyle, Halfacree and Robinson, 1998). To elucidate the agency of the individual, the structuration theory (Giddens, 1984) was drawn upon. The structuration theory allowed migration to be conceptualised as a social process that results from the constant interactions between individuals who determine their specific behaviours and actions, yet, at the same time are embedded in wider structures that in part define the conditions of their existence.

Conceptualising migration within a structuration theory framework emphasizes the need to understand the agency of the individual. Giddens (1984:288) suggest that in applying the structuration theory to migration, researchers should elucidate the individual's 'frames of meaning' to provide a sophisticated account of individual motivations. This suggestion matched my own intentions in this thesis, which was to examine the causes and effects of Cook Islands migration from the perspective of Cook Islanders.

This thesis has gained the perspectives of Cook Islanders regarding international migration. In doing so, this thesis also contributes to the wider understanding of international migration - the understanding that the migration process is constituted by active agents; that migration actions are intentional and influenced by various structures; the need to take agency seriously and to understanding the interactions between agency and structures in producing migration; the complexity of the migration decision making process and the diversity of reasons for migration actions; the notion that intentional migration actions produce both intentional and unintentional consequences; and the difficulty in resolving the relationship between migration and development.

I have followed the example set by other Pacific researchers before me that have aimed at allowing the voices of Pacific Islanders in the international migration

process to portray a rich story of migration. The voices of Cook Islanders has allowed for a rich story of Cook Islands migration to emerge in this thesis.

Key findings

The agency of the individual

This thesis has sought to examine the agency of individual Cook Islanders in determining migration actions. The participants in this thesis have demonstrated that Cook Islanders are not objects in the process of development (Lewis, 1954; Ranis and Fei, 1964; Zelinsky, 1971; Massey, 1993, 1998) or victims in the transformations of the local economy (Portes, 1978; Safa, 1982; Breman, 1985; Massey, 1993, 1995). Instead, the fieldwork results show that individual Cook Islanders are active agents within the migration process. The individual makes the decision whether to migrate or not.

The interviewed migrants have demonstrated that the migration decision is influenced by the actual experiences, perceptions of life and opportunities in the islands and New Zealand and the view held of the migration process itself. Also incorporated into the migration decision making process are the individual's values, beliefs, aspirations, emotions, and personality. Furthermore, the participants have illustrated that Cook Islanders are able to articulate their total environment in the context of migration in ways that are meaningful to themselves. These factors involved in the migration decision making process reflect the concept of agency in the structuration theory (Giddens, 1984) that recognises the freewill and knowledgeability of the individual not only of him or herself but also of the situations or circumstances in which he or she is situated in. The participants in expressing their migration decisions have confirmed that they maintain a tacit understanding of the grounds for their individual migration actions – these are the reasons for migration that can then be considered as the causes for Cook Islands migration (Giddens, 1984:345).

The causes of Cook Islands migration – interactions of agency and structure

At the heart of this thesis is the need to determine the causes of Cook Islands migration. The fieldwork results have revealed that a single cause for Cook Islands migration cannot be identified. In reality, migration occurs for a variety of reasons supporting the argument that such a complex phenomenon cannot be explained by a single cause (Thomas-Hope, 1992). This thesis has illustrated the causes of migration from the realities of those who emigrate from and those who return to the Cook Islands.

For those who emigrate, some people are motivated by factors that reflect the economic structural inequalities between the Cook Islands and New Zealand (Connell, 1990; Bedford, 1992; Connell and Conway, 2000). For others, migration away from the islands is influenced by emotions usually associated with the family and those that they love (Phizacklea, 2004:122). Other emigrants leave because they want to escape from the islands; seek change and new opportunities; begin a new life; gain life experiences and so forth (Thomas-Hope, 1993; Connell and Conway, 2000). While for others, emigration is motivated by a combination of both materialistic and non-materialistic factors (Thomas-Hope, 1992). The diversity reasons for emigration present difficulties in conceptualising Cook Islands migration within the traditional conventional approaches of international migration (Arango, 2000).

This perspective of returned migrants in this thesis has illustrated movement occurs in directions that run counter to the assumptions of traditionally accepted indices of development on which the conventional approaches of international migration are derived from (Kritz, Lim and Zlotnik, 1992). Return migration to the Cook Islands is not confined to only those born in the Cook Islands but also the children of emigrants born and raised abroad. This indicates that every person of Cook Islands descent is a potential return migrant (Thomas-Hope, 1992; Potter, 2005).

The reasons for return migration are predominantly more personal rather than economic (Ganziano, 2004). Much return migration is influenced by the family and cultural values of belonging and identity. The significance of culture in determining these movements reflect the literature on Pacific Island migration and clearly illustrates the difficulty of conceptualising the process within the conventional perspectives of international migration (Liki, 2001; Marsters, 2004).

However, this thesis has revealed that the association between the propensity for movement and the reasons that influence it are neither a simple nor a direct causal one. Also impacting on the formation of migration decisions are the structures that allow or encourage migration to occur.

Structures that influence Cook Island movements

This thesis has sought to determine the structures that impact on the migration decisions and actions of Cook Islanders. While the reasons for migration provide the impetus for migration, the participants have indicated that there are other structures that provide the opportunity to transform the propensity for migration into migration action. In the Cook Islands migration context, these structures are New Zealand citizenships that allows free entry to New Zealand; the family that supports migration; and the culture of migration that encourages the propensity for movement. These structures cannot be conceptualised within the narrow economic imageries of conventional approaches (Arango, 2000). However, as this thesis has argued, Giddens's (1984) structuration theory provides an opportunity to incorporate these non-economic factors into migration research. The structuration theory's conceptualisation of these types of structures as resources and rules illuminate how individuals interact with these structures to produce Cook Islands migration (Giddens, 1984; Craib, 1992).

The Cook Island migrants have illustrated that indeed New Zealand citizenship is a resource that Cook Islanders exploit in the context of migration. Participant

RM18 perhaps best captures the usefulness of New Zealand citizenship in influencing the dynamics of Cook Islands migration:

> Because the New Zealand passport is the one thing that makes the choice to migrate so easy because they [Cook Islanders] don't have any entry restrictions ...they are not migrating to Tahiti or to LA, they are going to New Zealand and Australia because they can.

The results of the fieldwork have indicated that Cook Islanders knowingly utilise their New Zealand citizenship in not only gaining free entry into New Zealand but also in accessing financial assistances provided by the New Zealand state.

The influence of the family and the culture of migration influencing migration have also been elucidated in this thesis. The interviewed participants have illustrated that values associated with the family and culture are taken-for-granted procedures that Cook Islanders invoke in the context of their movements between the islands and New Zealand. As Liki (2001) argues these factors as significant influences on migration decisions and actions cannot be understood or explained within narrow economic constructs.

Combining agency and structure to produce Cook Islands migration

Gaining the perspectives of individuals has demonstrated the complexity of understanding the causes of Cook Islands migration. Cook Islands migration is not a process where individuals are automatons responding to wider structural influences, instead, migration actions are intentional emphasizing the agency of the individual in determining their own movements (Giddens, 1984; Craib, 1992; Goss and Lindquist, 1995; Findlay and Li, 1997). The voices of Cook Islanders in this research have confirmed that Cook Islands migration is the result of individual agency interacting with various wider structures. Cook Islands migration is caused by diverse motivations that incorporate the individual's past and present experiences; future projections of their lives; perceptions of life in the Cook Islands and New Zealand; and the opinions held of the migration process.

Influencing migration decisions are also the political and social/cultural structures that encourage and allow the process.

The Effects of Cook Islands migration

Examining the effects of Cook Islands migration from the perspectives of Cook Islanders has been one of the objectives of this thesis. This thesis has examined the effects of migration at both the individual and national levels.

On the individual level, Cook Island migrants have indicated that because the migration decision is generally an informed one, the issues that may impact upon the lives of the participants' were already expected and appropriate responses were formulated to minimise any negative effects. Once again the ability to deal appropriately with issues faced has reflected the knowledgeability of the individual regarding migration decisions and has indicated that the migrant continuously evaluates what he or she does and the consequences of their actions. This reflects the structuration theory's (Giddens, 1984) concept of agency in which the individual practises reflexive monitoring of actions, rationalisation of actions and motivation for action.

In examining the effects of migration at the national level, the perspectives of the individuals have revealed that there are common perceptions held by Cook Islanders regarding international migration and its effects. First and foremost is view that migration is an expected part of life. Cook Islanders expect that people will emigrate but they will also return. Those that return are generally perceived to be beneficial to the development of the Cook Islands. Return migrants represented a return of both financial and human resources to the country (Connell and Conway, 2000:53). However, even though, emigration is perceived as an inevitable part of life, the high level of emigration is not offset by the level of return migration. This thesis has indicated that from the viewpoint of Cook Islanders the high level of emigration has resulted with a decline in the local population and labour force and an increase in foreign workers recruited to fill the

gap in the labour market. The decline of the local population and increased presence of foreigners is perceived as the main effect of migration on the country. The general view amongst Cook Islanders is that this effect of migration will have a significant impact on the future of Cook Islands society. It seems that the lost of the local population and increase of foreigners in the Cook Islands is an unintended consequence of the intentional migration actions of Cook Islanders (Giddens, 1984; Cowen and Shenton, 1995). The scenario of the declining local population has therefore presented the Cook Islands with a 'migration problem'.

Cook Islanders generally indicated that the solutions to the Cook Islands 'migration problem' are dependent on the actions of government to address the factors that provide Cook Islanders with the impetus to emigrate. Despite the rich migration experiences and the diversity of reasons for migration provided by migrants in this thesis, they together with Cook Islanders who have resided in the country since 1996 perceived that the factors associated with the propensity to migrate and those which trigger the move are related to the nature and level of national development. As a result of the connection made between migration and national development, the government has been perceived as the 'trustee' of development (Cowen and Shenton, 1995). Cook Islanders have implied that government needs to adopt intentional development policies that will curb emigration and encourage return migration (Appleyard, 1992; Cowen and Shenton, 1995). These intentional development policies need to address the causes of Cook Islands emigration, it is perceived that this will not only curb emigration but also encourage return migration. The shared perceptions of Cook Islanders regarding the causes and effects of Cook Islands migration have indicated the relationship between migration and development.

The relationship between Cook Islands migration and development

The relationship between migration and development is complex (Appleyard, 1992; DeHaas, 2005). This thesis has revealed that the main issues to consider when determining the relationship between migration and development is

whether migration assists or hinders development and whether development can discourage emigration and encourage return migration (Castles, 2000:275). This thesis has indicated that the impact of migration on the Cook Islands development is a paradoxical issue. On one hand, Cook Islanders perceive emigration as a problem because it removes valuable human resources from the country (De Haas, 2005:1272). On the other hand, returned migrants have demonstrated the valuable contributions that they can make to the country as a result of emigration through the return of enhanced skills and finances achieved while living abroad (Connell and Conway, 2000:53; De Haas, 2005: 1272).

Likewise the issue of whether development encourages return migration and discouraging emigration is also inconsistent. This thesis has shown that the incidences of return migration to the Cook Islands increased when the economic situation of the Cook Islands had recovered from the effects of the 1996 economic reform program. At the same time, the reasons for return migration agree with the observation of Ganziano (2004: 231) that personal and family aspects predominate in influencing return migration decisions. This thesis has demonstrated that Cook Islanders perceive that development has the potential to discourage emigration. Yet, the realities of Cook Islands migration dynamics where emigration is expected, enabled by New Zealand citizenship and the family and encouraged by a culture of migration may contradict these perceptions.

This thesis has indicated the various contradictions in the relationship between Cook Islands migration and development. These contradictions have implied that the migration development relationship is unresolved (Appleyard, 1992). In addition, the actual realities as opposed to perceptions of those in the Cook Islands migration process further complicate this already complicated relationship. This thesis has argued that the reasons for migration are diverse and multifaceted. These motives have produced different patterns of circulation that are testament for the transnational nature of islanders' lives. Perhaps it would be true to say that the "futures of the Cook Islands and Cook Islanders do not, and

will never, map onto each other in any simple way" (Marsters, Lewis, Friesen, 2006: 32).

One last word

Migration is an integral part of Cook Islanders' lives where the propensity for migration is ever present. This propensity for migration is turned into action by the individual who is influenced by various structures in making the migration decision. This thesis has illustrated how people formulate responses to their various situations and how they come to make the migration decisions that they make departing from the conventional approaches to international migration, in which the migrant is conceived as an object in the process of economic development. Instead, this thesis by focusing on the perspective of the individual has allowed the person to be an interpretative subject of their own mobility. This has allowed a richer story of migration to emerge.

The intentional migration actions of Cook Islanders have also resulted in unintentional consequences of population loss that is being replaced by foreigners. This is perceived as the main effect of Cook Islands migration on the country. The loss of the local population and the increase in foreigners has presented the Cook Islands with a 'migration problem'. This thesis has revealed that Cook Islanders perceive that the solution to this problem lies in the efforts of government to address the causes of migration and thus highlighting the relationship between migration and development. However, this relationship is complex and unresolved. The migration and development relationship is also further complicated by contradiction between the realities of those in the migration process and their perceptions of the process. This thesis has illustrated the diverse reasons for migration. It is impossible to specify the reasons why Cook Islands migrate. However, if the perceptions of Cook Islanders regarding migration and development are considered, then those that are related to the nature and level of national development that seem of significant importance can

be addressed. This is the challenge for the 'trustees' of Cook Islands development – the Cook Islands government.

This thesis has sought to reveal the perspective of the individual regarding the causes and effects of Cook Islands migration. This thesis journey has been a humbling experience for me. During this journey, I have come to realise that as a Cook Islander I was studying not just others but also myself, attempting to gain understanding through everyday life truly lived along with the rest of the Cook Islands community. Therefore my fieldwork and this thesis experience is also personal. This personal dimension has made me attempt to listen a bit harder to the voices of Cook Islanders. Listening to these voices has motivated me to give Cook Islanders a voice, one that has to be heard in order to understand the Cook Islands migration process and provide direction for the future of the Cook Islands.

The end of this journey and the beginning of others

As this thesis journey draws to an end, as a Cook Island migrant myself I reflect upon my own migration journey. My primary reason for coming to New Zealand was to further my education. In forming the migration decision I was also influenced by my own personal beliefs in the value of education and my goals for the future. The choice of New Zealand as my destination was because of the advantages of having New Zealand citizenship. New Zealand citizenship allowed me free entry to the country and access to student allowances. Choosing New Zealand as the destination was also influenced by the fact that I have studied and lived there in the past. In addition I had many family members living in New Zealand. I was familiar with and to an extent at home in New Zealand.

It has been always been my intention to return to the Cook Islands but the specific timing of return was not determined at the time of the decision. In fact before coming to New Zealand together with my husband, we had thought that perhaps we would stay in New Zealand for a period of around five years. However, at this point in time, I have decided to return home after the completion of this

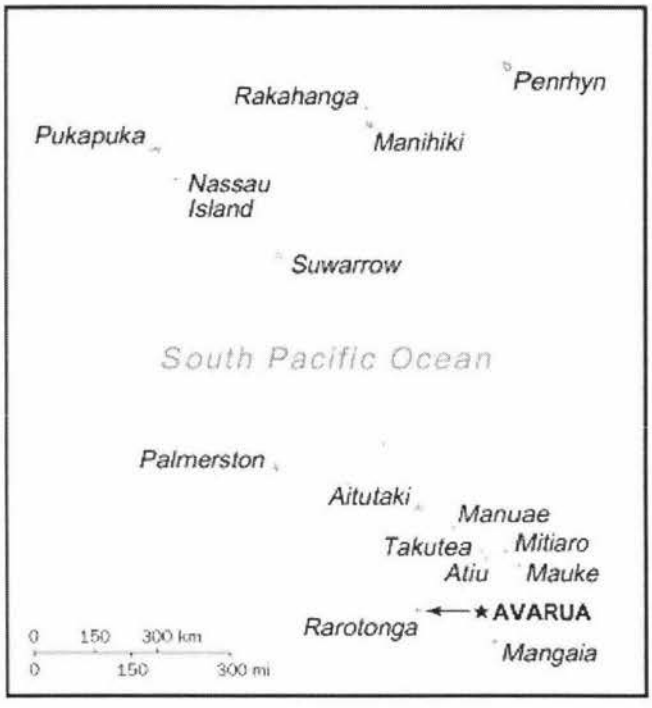
thesis. The reasons for my decision to return have primarily been influenced by personal factors and the presence of my parents in the Cook Islands. It has also been influenced by homesickness, a sense of belonging and the feeling that perhaps I could contribute positively to the country. I cannot definitely say that my return to the Cook Islands will be permanent. In fact, I would be more inclined to believe that there is a possibility that I would remigrate in the future. This would depend on the circumstances and situations that I may find myself in and where I perceive that my interests will be best served. Threaded into the explanations of my migration are also the interests of my husband and children.

Do I believe that I am a passive dupe whose movements are entirely dictated by structural forces? The answer is no! Do I believe that my migration is spontaneous in the sense of being entirely voluntary and based on free choice? Again the answer is no! From my experience, it is 'I' who makes the decision to emigrate, to return, and may be in the future to re-migrate. My migration is a response to a variety of structural forces, some with place-specific manifestations, others that are not visible but felt and experienced, as well as an outcome of individual needs and wants. This response is set against a background of my values, beliefs, aspirations, emotions and personality. I am like the Cook Islanders that I have researched. I am an active agent interacting with various structures to produce the Cook Islands migration process.

APPENDICES

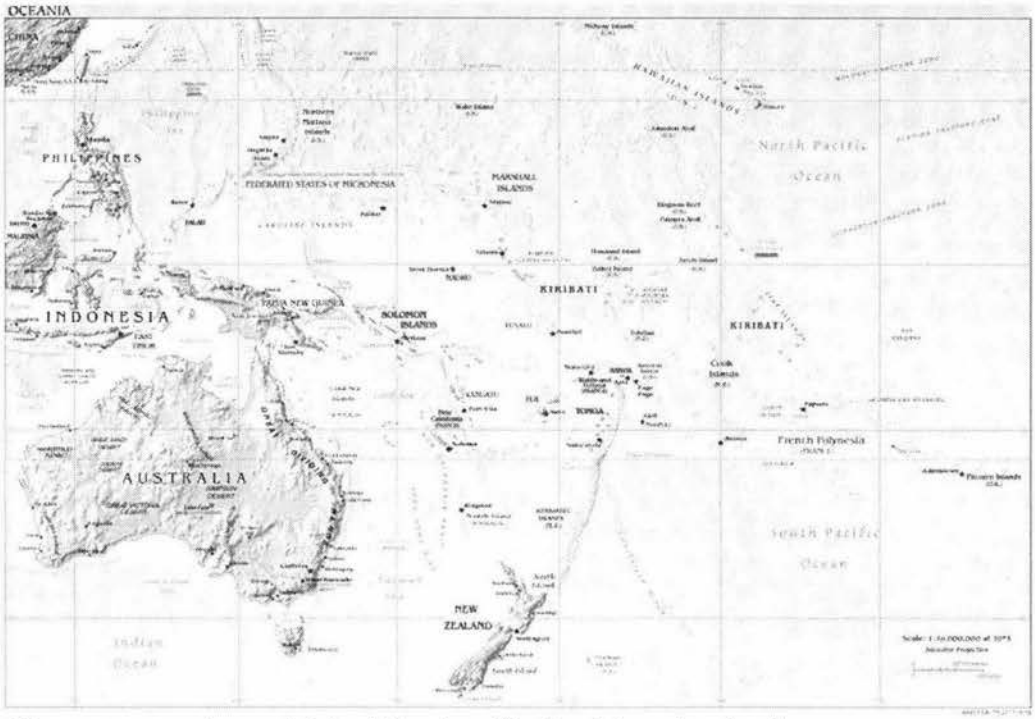
APPENDIX 1

The Cook Islands



(Source: www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/cw.html)

The location of the Cook Islands within Oceania



(Source: www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/cw.html)

APPENDIX 2

INFORMATION SHEET

Kia Orana. My name is Elizabeth Wright-Koteka. I am currently enrolled as a student at Massey University in Palmerston North, New Zealand where I am undertaking a Master's Degree majoring in Development Studies. As a requirement to my Master's Degree, I am conducting a research project entitled 'Te uu no te akau roa': Migration and the Cook Islands.

The aim of my research is to examine the relationship between migration and development in the Cook Islands. The focus of my research is firstly, an attempt to finding the answers as to why people have migrated from the Cook Islands and how this decision has impacted on their lives. Secondly, it investigates why those who have returned to the Cook Islands have done so and how this has impacted on their lives. Thirdly, it seeks the opinions of those who have remained in the Cook Islands on the issue of Cook Islands migration. Finally, it examines the implications of the migration and development relationship in the Cook Islands.

I have requested your participation in this research because you have migrated from, returned to, or remained in the Cook Islands from the period 1996 to the present. What your participation involves is an interview that will not take longer than an hour. This will be arranged at a time and place that is convenient for you. With your permission I will be taking notes and using a cassette tape to record the interview.

You have my guarantee that everything that will be discussed will remain confidential to me and will be destroyed at the completion of the thesis. I will make transcripts of the interviews which my supervisors may need to look at, however, I will ensure that the information they receive will not separately identify you.

My research thesis and any other publications that result from this study will summarise trends and themes from the information that you or others have given.

Should you agree to participate, please understand the following:

- You are under no obligation to take part in this research.
- You have the right to refuse to answer any particular questions.
- You are entitled to request that your name and location not be recorded on the cassette tapes and notes.
- If you allow your name to be recorded, it will only be used for classification purposes and will be deleted from my notes at the completion of the research. Your name will not be used in any publications resulting from the study.

- Except where required by law, I will take precautionary steps to ensure that the information you give remains in confidence between you and me.
- If you wish to withdraw at any stage during the research you are free to do so. You may also request that the information you have provided before withdrawing be discarded and not used for the purposes of the research.
- I will welcome any questions that you have about the study at any stage of the research.
- If you wish, you will be given a summary of the findings of my research.

Please find attached a consent form. I will be grateful if you would read the form and sign it in my presence if you intend participating in the research.

This research is partially funded by:
- The Massey University School of People, Environment and Planning Graduate Research Fund; and
- The Cook Islands Government Department of Human Resources.

If you have any concerns regarding this research please take note of the following:

"This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher named above is responsible for the ethical conduct for this research. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher, please conduct Professor Sylvia Rumball, Assistant to the Vice-Chancellor (Ethics & Equity), telephone (06) 350 5349 or email humanethicspn@massey.ac.nz."

Ata-wai-wolo e ye maneke

APPENDIX 3

'Te uu no te akau roa': Migration and the Cook Islands

CONSENT FORM

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

I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time and to decline to answer any particular questions.

I agree to provide information to the researcher on the understanding that my name will not be used without my permission. The information will be used only for this research and publications arising from this research project.

- I agree/do not agree to have my name and location recorded on the understanding that this information will be destroyed once the research is complete.
- I agree/do not agree to the interview being cassette taped.
- I require/do not require a summary of the findings of the research.

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

I also understand that I have the right to ask for the cassette tape to be turned off at any time during the interview.

SIGNED: _____

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

APPENDIX 4

'Te uu no te akau roa': Migration and the Cook Islands since 1996

SURVEY

(Please circle the correct answer or that which best expresses your opinion and thoughts. Should you have any further thoughts regarding the questions raised, please feel free to express them to the researcher.)

Age: 18-24yrs 25-34yrs 35-44yrs 45-54yrs 55-64yrs 65+yrs

Gender: Male Female

Occupations: Which sector are you employed in?

a) Student
b) Self-employed
c) Private Sector
d) Public Service
e) Domestic Services

Earnings: Which of the following best describes your annual earnings?

a) less than $10,000
b) between $10,000 - $20,000 per year
c) between $20,000 - $30,000 per year
d) between $30,000 - $40,000 per year
e) over $50,000

Do you think that emigration (out-migration) from the Cook Islands is a problem? Yes No Unsure

Do you think that returning Cook Islanders contribute positively to the country?

Yes No Unsure

What do you think are the main reasons why Cook Islanders leave the Cook Islands?

a) More employment opportunities overseas
b) More money overseas
c) For a change
d) Education
e) Health
f) Politics

If you would like to list other reasons, Please list these below:

_____
_____
_____

What is the main reason why you remain in the Cook Islands?

_____

Are you planning to emigrate (leave) from the Cook Islands to reside overseas?

Yes No Unsure

APPENDIX 5

Demographic characteristics of the emigrants that have participated in this research

(i) Sex:			
Female	17	Male	8
(ii) Place of Birth:			
Northern Cook Islands	2	Southern Cook Islands	5
Rarotonga	15	New Zealand	2
Papua New Guinea	1		
(iii) Year of migration			
1996	4	1997	5
1998	2	1999	2
2000	4	2001	4
2002	3	2005	1
(vi) Age at time of migration			
20-24 years	4	25-29 years	7
30-34 years	1	35-39 years	5
40-44 years	2	45-49 years	3
50-54 years	1	55-59 years	1
60+ years	1		
(v) Age at time of interview			
20-24 years	1	25-29 years	4
30-34 years	6	35-39 years	1
40-44 years	5	45-49 years	2
50-54 years	1	55-59 years	3
60+ years	2		
(vi) Family status of migrants			
Moved with partner	18	Partner also Cook Islander	17
Single at time of movement	6	Partner New Zealander	1
Partner remained in Cook Islands	1		
Children			
Children who moved with parents			
1 child	9	2 children	1
3 children	3	3+ children	4
No children	8		

APPENDIX 6

The effects and adjustments faced by emigrants with living in New Zealand

Issues and Adjustments	Frequency of citation
1. Income	25
2. Cheaper food and goods/ wider variety of foods and goods	25
3. Faster pace of life	25
4. Higher income earned/ finding steady income	23
5. Having family support on arrival	23
6. More bills to pay	22
7. Better education for children	22
8. More expenses	20
9. Adapting to the weather	20
10. Living with family	18
11. Paying Rent	18
12. Homesick	17
13. Support from New Zealand Government/dole/benefit/Housing New Zealand	16
14. Leaving behind family/friends	12
15. Hard to save	11
16. More expensive	11
17. Less freedom	11
18. Easier life because of New Zealand government support	9
19. Opportunities for children	8
20. Less physical activities	8
21. Budgeting	7
22. Traffic	7
23. Building community spirit	7
24. Better health facilities	6
25. Cook Islands community spirit not the same as Cook Islands	6
26. Locking up/Safety	6
27. Not being employed	5
28. Family/friends help in finding employment	5
29. Achieving goals	5
30. Learning other cultures/ interacting with other cultures	5
31. Having children/more children	4
32. Cost of childcare	4
33. Staying indoors	4
34. Challenging/competitive environment	4
35. Being in debt	4
36. High cost of studying	4
37. Variety of activities to get involved in	4
38. Staying at home to look after children	4
39. Lack of other activities apart from work/ No fishing, planting, etc.	4
40. Homeownership in New Zealand	4
41. Harder to find employment	3
42. Spending more time with children	3
43. Better career opportunities	3
44. More independent	3
45. Struggling to make ends meet	3
46. Strict laws/rules	3
47. Less socializing	3
48. Change in children's attitudes	2
49. Being in New Zealand with children	2

50. Student loans	2
51. Realization of social problems facing Cook Islanders	2
52. Good standard of living	2
53. Not achieving goals	2
54. Pursuing dreams	2
55. Different lifestyle	2
56. Going back to study	2
57. Miss flavour of food in Cook Islands	1
58. More in tune with being a Cook Islander	1
59. Not spending as much time with child	1
60. Putting into practise what you learn	1
61. Opportunity to travel	1
62. Easier life because of not working in the plantation	1
63. Unfit/ Obesity	1

APPENDIX 7

Demographic characteristics of returned migrants to the Cook Islands

(i) Sex:			
Female	17	Male	13
(ii) Place of Birth			
Northern Cook Islands	1	Southern Cook Islands	1
Rarotonga	16	New Zealand	11
Australia	1		
Born overseas but returned to the Cook Islands before the age of 21			4
(iii) Year of return migration			
1996	1	1997	1
1998	5	1999	2
2000	3	2001	5
2002	3	2003	5
2004	5		
(iv) Age at time of return migration			
20-24 years	1	25-29 years	5
30-34 years	8	35-39 years	5
40-44 years	5	45-49 years	3
50-54 years	1	55-59 years	1
60+ years	4		
(v) Age at time of interview			
30-34 years	7	35-39 years	7
40-44 years	7	45-49 years	3
50-54 years	1	55-59 years	1
60+ years	4		
(vi) Family Status of returned migrants			
Moved with partner	12	Partner also Cook Islander	8
Single at time of return migration	18	Partner a non-Cook Islander	4
Children			
Children who moved with parents			
1 child	4	2 children	2
3 children	3	3+ children	4
No children	17		

APPENDIX 8

The effects felt and adjustments made by returned migrants to the Cook Islands

Adjustments and Frequency of Citation
1. High prices/poor shopping opportunities 30
2. Slow pace of life/relaxed way of life 30
3. Freedom 26
4. Contributing to development through the use of skills and knowledge gained overseas 23
5. Generosity of people 17
6. Unhelpful government and its agencies/Inadequate and inefficient public 15
7. Not making comparisons to New Zealand or Australia 15
8. Local work ethic 14
9. Formal education for children not on par with overseas 13
10. Safe environment for children, carefree children 13
11. Politics/Self seeking politicians 12
12. Unreliable government 11
13. Better communication 9
14. Inadequate social sectors 9
15. Limited work resources 7
16. Getting to know family 7
17. Difficulty with the Maori language/ not knowing the Maori language 6
18. Socializing/good social life 5
19. Land claim issues 4
20. Learning cultural values 4
21. Better weather 4
22. Feelings of resentment (you've had it easy or where did you come from) 3
23. Smallness' of the place 3
24. Small labour force/Finding good employees 3

25. Understanding the local way of thinking
2
26. Having to accept things as they are/not being able to change things
2
27. The mentality that people from overseas are made of money
2
28. The heat
2
29. Professionally frustrating
2
30. Helpfulness and assistance of people in the private sector in getting businesses started
2
31. Insects
2
32. Upward social mobility
1
33. Missing the seasons
1
34. Helping children adapt
1
35. Making new friends
1
36. No strict business regulations
1
37. Lack of employment locally for the very highly qualified
1
38. Culture more Westernized
1
39. Difficulty in understanding local women
1
40. Feeling like an outsider/ the feeling of being tagged as a person from 'overseas'
1
41. Family interference
1
42. Partner not finding employment in the Cook Islands/living long distance relationship
1

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