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Synthesis

A working paper series for the Media, Communications and Performing Arts Division

Gender, migration and human trafficking: a study of Vancouver

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and
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Working Paper 1

Abstract

This paper focuses on the landscape of human trafficking, paying particular attention to sexual exploitation, within Vancouver, Canada. The purpose of the paper is to: identify the devices used to 'recruit' victims of human trafficking (VHT); assess the relationship between human trafficking for sexual exploitation and sex work; and, examine the types of human trafficking in the locale. This is undertaken by drawing on qualitative research. The key findings of this paper are as follows: first, a range of 'recruiting' devices were employed thereby suggesting different types of deception about the work and recruiters; second, the relationship between sex work and human trafficking for sexual exploitation was contested; finally, both domestic and international trafficking existed, and the identification of VHT could be problematic.

Introduction

Commentators have examined the role of gender within the service sector (Dyer, McDowell & Batnitzky 2010) and highlighted, for example, the aesthetics of labour (Warhurst & Nickson 2009), emotional labour (Erickson & Ritter 2001; Nixon 2009), and the sexualisation of labour (Warhurst & Nickson 2009); the latter of which is particularly apparent in the gendered arena of sex work. Different interpretive approaches have been utilised to examine sexual labour. Abolitionists contend that prostitution is, in essence, a type of oppression and, in this regard, is a form of violence (Jeffreys 1997, 2004; Raymond, 1998). From this perspective, the individual does not choose prostitution (Weitzer 2009). This approach has been subject to criticism on several counts. Insufficient attention has been given to prostitution causes (Outshoorn 2005) and, moreover, categorising prostitution as a type of violence facilitates its prohibition and perceives sex workers as victims and negatively impacts sex workers (Chapkis 2003, p.928). Further, Weitzer (2009, p.214) argues that selective sampling strategies, use of anecdotes, and a disregard for counter-evidence has contributed to limitations in the literature.

The sex work approach contends that sex work is a type of work where the worker's

sexuality is sold (Brewis & Linstead 2000a). Bernstein (1999, p.97-98) argued that 'the 'sex worker' may be seen as a worker like any other (although better paid), or she may come to emblematised not just someone making do under the inevitable constraints of patriarchy, but the subversive strategist par excellence'. However, commentators have criticised such an approach. It has been suggested that such a perspective does not fully identify the nature of prostitution and trafficking and, specifically the exploitative element (Raymond 1998). It can be problematic to make a distinction between sex work as a choice and forced prostitution (Outshoorn 2005). Further, it has been argued that sexual labour constitutes harmful practices, for example, health risks (Jeffreys 2004). Despite these chasms in sexual labour analyses there are common themes. Regardless of their stance, the majority of feminists, oppose the criminalisation of women (Limoncelli 2009a) and all camps would support the contention that the environment in which women undertake sex work '...expose the 'profession' to violations and vulnerabilities' (Sanders 2005, p.321).

Divisions in sex work analyses are exacerbated when trafficking for sexual exploitation is included, especially in the context of migration. Migration is a contributory factor to human trafficking (Lăzăroic & Alexandru 2003). More recently, commentators have argued that migratory theory proffers a viable framework to understanding trafficking (Lepp 2002; Outshoorn, 2005). Outshoorn (2005, p.142) posed the question: 'is all 'trafficking' forced or is it prostitution-related migration?'. A notable contributor to the subject is Agustín (2003; 2005; 2006; 2007). Agustín (2003, p.377) critiques aspects of the trafficking thesis by arguing that 'the obsession with 'trafficking' obliterates not only all the human agency necessary to undertake migrations but the experiences of migrants who do not engage in sex work'. This paper draws on a migratory framework to understand the broader context in which trafficking is situated, the underpinning factors which contribute to migrant journeys for work, and the concomitant issues pertaining to vulnerability to trafficking.

Drawing on qualitative research, this paper examines the landscape of human trafficking, paying particular attention to sexual exploitation, within Vancouver, Canada. The purpose of the paper is to: identify the devices used to 'recruit' victims of human trafficking (VHT); assess the relationship between human trafficking for sexual exploitation and sex work; and, examine the types of human trafficking in the locale. With regard to the latter, this

centres on forms of 'work' and the domestic and international nature of trafficking. The rationale for this paper is three-fold. First, while some studies have centred upon VHT (Andrijasevic, 2003), the 'actual victims of trafficking have remained on the margins' (Jahic & Finckenaer 2005, p.25). Second, Vancouver is a site for human trafficking because it is transit and destination city for these activities (Future Group, 2007). Third, this paper seeks to contribute to the literature on gender by examining 'recruitment' practices, types of trafficking, and the ways in which trafficking is gendered.

Conceptualising Human Trafficking: A Migratory Framework

The UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children defines trafficking as:

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

There are a variety of conceptualisations of trafficking ranging from a criminal activity which is located within a legal framework (Aronowitz 2001; Bruckert & Parent 2004; Mamelli 2002); a form of slavery which is situated in a human rights framework (Bales 2005; Perrin 2010); and in the context of migration (Brunovskis & Tyldum 2004; Lepp 2002; Outshoorn 2005). For Agustín (2005, p.113) 'migration studies allow consideration of all aspects of people's lives and travels, locate them in periods of personal growth and risk taking, and do not force them to identify as 'sex workers' or 'maids', or be labeled according to what may be a chance or temporary occupation'. Bastia (2006) suggested that trafficking was part of labour migration, which is echoed by Chuang's (2006, p.138) assertion that 'more often than not, trafficking is labour migration gone horribly wrong in our globalised economy'. Migratory theory provides a way to understand trafficking dynamics (Outshoorn 2005). 'Migration is described as caused by the desire to make better money, by loss of land, by recruitment of

employers abroad from violence, persecution and war, by the need to reunite with family, and by the ‘feminisation of poverty’ (Agustín 2007, p.17).

Migration is often examined within the context of push-pull factors (Agustín 2007) including global structural change, poverty and economic conditions, political change and conflict, economic development and opportunities within destination countries, personal agency, and demand for migrant services. ‘Human trafficking reflects the dark side of globalisation’ (Limoncelli 2009b, p.72) and globalisation forms the backdrop to economic structural change. Changes in labour circumstances and economic security have arisen as a result of economic globalisation, its attendant policies and the growth of global capitalism (Limoncelli 2009b). Within the global economy, structural changes have contributed to migratory practices comprising: greater emphasis upon subcontracting by multi-national corporations; shifts to developing areas by the manufacturing sector; and the move to a service based economy within developed countries (Agustín 2005). Detrimental globalisation impacts especially related to structural adjustment programmes (SAP) and international trade agreements have affected national economies, particularly in the South (Lepp 2002). SAP's are, to an extent, beneficial; however, there is a social cost for women and the impoverished (Bastia 2006). For example, cuts to social programmes from SAPs negatively impacted women's employment (Agustín 2005). Sassen (2002, p.273) suggested that economic globalisation contributed to ‘the growing immiseration of governments and economies in the global south is one such condition, insofar as it enables and even promotes the migration and trafficking of women as a strategy for survival’. Thus, women may migrate for employment purposes in what might be unregulated sectors which could thereby make them vulnerable to traffickers (Chuang 2006).

A common theme within migration discourses is poverty and poor economic conditions (Hughes 2000; Lăzăroic & Alexandru 2003; Oxman-Martinez, Lacroix & Hanley 2005; Kligman & Limoncelli 2005). These factors impact women differently in contexts characterised by gender inequalities and barriers within the labour market. Vijayarasa (2012) identified a relationship between barriers to employment in the home country and migrants seeking alternative economic solutions elsewhere; however, information about migrant success elsewhere could also be a contributory factor. Maahmoud and Trebesch (2010,

p.177) argued that 'in deprived areas, migration may be the only strategy available to increase economic opportunities and start a better life'. Hence, under such circumstances it would be logical to assume that it is the most poverty-stricken and those encountering difficulties in the labour market through, for example, low levels of education and skills, that are most likely to be migrants. Limoncelli (2009b) suggests that although VHT are heterogeneous there is one common feature among them, namely that they are either vulnerable or marginalised within their home countries. In a study on Ukrainian trafficking in women, 80% of VHT were unemployed upon departure from the Ukraine (Hughes & Denisova 2001). Yet it is not only economic conditions which engender migratory decisions as there is an element of choice because '...migrations are not only motivated economically. It is clear that choice is involved, even with the poorest migrants, simply because *everyone* does not migrate from places of poverty and violence' (Agustín 2005, p.99). This is illustrated in a study by Rao and Presenti (2012, p.254, 257) which, based on a dataset from the UNODC, found that '...the majority of trafficking victims are not the poorest of the world's women and men...They tend to be women and men who have perhaps already achieved some measure of economic mobility but now feel that those gains are threatened within their own countries'.

Political transition and conflicts within countries can also be a contributory factor in migration and trafficking. Such factors can impact on security and border controls as well as economic and social conditions within nations. For example, changes in border controls in the former Soviet Union were capitalised upon by criminal networks in relation to the trafficking of women for sexual exploitation (Hughes 2000; Hughes & Denisova 2001). Migration can also be prompted by armed conflict and political turmoil within countries (Bales 2005).

The aforesaid structural factors are not enough to induce migration. Individual choice, shaped by structural forces, contributes to the decision-making process. The desire to travel is part of the migratory pull factors (Agustín 2003, 2005). Indeed, '...human character is at work as well. Media images of travel reach everywhere, the desire to see the world is not limited to richer travelers and tourists, and some people seek adventure more than others' (Agustín 2003, p.391). In a globalised world, there are opportunities to acquire information about travel and employment opportunities as well as tales about migrant success. In a

Ukrainian context, Vijayarasa (2012) suggested that information about migrant success can act as a pull factor.

Certainly, the quest to attain better economic opportunities is a key driver in migrating, whether that is to improve the individual economic position or as Pio (2007) notes to send money home. Agustín (2005) suggests that over-arching structural push factors culminate in a demand for female workers in new areas and can contribute to women looking for opportunities elsewhere and, consequently, migration becomes a viable response. In global cities, globalisation has led to greater demand for low-wage workers (Sassen 2002) and within a European setting; migrant women find demand for their services in three key areas: 'caring', domestic work and sexual services (Agustín 2005). In relation to sexual services and migrants, a number of studies have captured the motivations of migrants, the nature of the work, and the relationship to trafficking (Gülçür & İlkaracan 2002; Monzini 2005; Vocks & Nijober 2000). However, there can be connotations between migrant sex workers and VHT (Brennan 2010; Busza 2004). Busza's (2004) study of Vietnamese migrant sex workers in Cambodia illustrates this issue. She suggested that the majority of migrants were aware of both the type of work in which they would be engaged in as well as the debt. Nevertheless, some women had been deceived into working in the sex trade, which corresponds to conventional constructions of VHT. Busza (2004) also argued that due to trafficking concerns raids on brothels were undertaken which then adversely affected sex workers, for example, at an economic level. Similarly, Agustín (2007) argued that there are different types of experiences ranging from migrants that had some knowledge about the nature of the work to women that had been deceived into the sex trade and, as such, reflects a continuum of experiences.

Commentators also refer to other contributory factors to migration and trafficking. Limoncelli (2009b) argued that racial and ethnic inequalities influence the supply and demand for trafficking. Anderson and O'Connell Davidson (2003, p.42) suggested that 'as far as trafficking is concerned, it is also important to recognise that racism, xenophobia and prejudice against ethnic minority groups make it much easier for sex workers' clients...(and indeed employers in the sex industry...) to convince themselves that such practices are justified'.

At this juncture, it may be suggested that these combined push-pull factors contribute to migratory practices. In many respects, these migratory discourses are gendered (Lepp 2002; Mahdavi & Sargent 2011) because of the ways in which women can be disproportionately affected by structural change, social conditions and unrest. Indeed, Mahdavi and Sargent (2011) highlight that poverty increases and feminised migration and labour have arisen as a result of SAP's and a globalised political economy. Such gendered discourses are compounded in relation to sex work and human trafficking for sexual exploitation. There is a veritable plethora of studies on female sex work (Brewis & Linstead 2000a&b; Sanders 2004a&b, 2005; West & Austrin 2002) and although greater attention has begun to be paid to male sex workers, transvestite and transsexual sex workers (Vanwesenbeeck 2001), there are still disparities. Human trafficking for sexual exploitation is gendered as it is primarily associated with women and girls. Indeed, gendered structural and social relations have contributed to this situation. Bastia (2006, p.27) argued that 'gender relations shape the conditions that give rise to trafficking such as gender-based discrimination in local labour markets, gender-based violence, household division of labour or macro-level policies that are supposed to be gender-neutral but have different effects on women and men'. Thus, discourses about migration, trafficking, prostitution/sex work invariably impinge on narratives about gender and work, particularly in the way that women's search for alternative economic opportunities brings into focus the selling of sexuality, both voluntary and involuntary, and the ways in which labour practices can be distorted.

While migration explains some of the underpinning issues about trafficking, its propagation can be contentious. There are political efforts to separate 'trafficking' from migration and, moreover, for 'smuggling' and 'trafficking' to be examined on a distinct basis; however, as Anderson and O'Connell Davidson (2003 p.7) note '...there is no moral or analytical reason to distinguish between forced labour involving 'illegal immigrants', 'smuggled persons' or 'victims of trafficking''. Jeffrey (2009, p.316) proposed that the sex work stance has evolved into the 'migration for labour' argument and that this 'new approach to trafficking....draws a veil over the human rights issues involved and carefully removes the issue of the destination of the vast majority of trafficking in women, prostitution, from view'. Jeffrey (2006 p.205) argued that trafficking terminology can be subject to change depending on the perspective of the commentator, for instance, 'trafficking' becomes 'migration for labour' and trafficked women are 'migrant sex workers'. There is a multiplicity of lived

experiences within migration and trafficking as there are both VHT and migrant sex workers and, furthermore, migrants may become trafficked along the migratory process. Undoubtedly there are difficulties in the terminology employed in the migration framework. Agustín's (2006, p.36) elaboration of migrant sex workers and their arrival within destination countries illustrates this issue. She suggests that 'some entrepreneurs take tremendous advantage of these situations, withhold personal documents and threaten migrants and their families at home. Others use less obvious tactics, counting on the psychological dependency recently-arrived and disoriented migrants may feel. In a minority of cases, there can be total deceit' (Agustín 2006, p.36). Agustín (2006) uses the terminology of 'entrepreneurs' while others could use the term trafficker and, furthermore, the tactics employed are akin to those documented in studies about VHT and the accompanying levels of control and coercion. Additional issues with the migration thesis relate to the complexity of the trafficking process and the inherent nuances within trafficking terminology. Nevertheless, the migration thesis provides an explanation for the movement of migrants and their vulnerability to trafficking and an insight into migrant sex work. A critical challenge is that while there are distinct boundaries between migrants and VHT there are also blurred boundaries.

Distinctions can be made between migration and trafficking. Jeffreys (2009 p.318) argued that there is a fundamental difference between VHT and migrants as '...women trafficked into prostitution are held in debt bondage, as voluntary migrants are not, usually under coercive control, and subjected to sexual penetration with attendant harms'. However, women can migrate through choice and then become trafficked. Bastia (2006 p.28-29) also noted distinctions by arguing that '...trafficking involves elements of *coercion*, violence or deceit not generally present in most economic migration, making trafficking an involuntary movement while migration continues to be seen as voluntary'. Such is the strength of this distinction that economic migrants can be portrayed as 'guilty' within social policy discourses, especially in the context of legal/illegal migration, and the VHT is innocent. Drawing upon the Trafficking Victims' Protection Act (2000) (US), Chapkis (2003) highlights that a distinction is engendered between 'guilty migrants' and 'innocent victims'. Dichotomies of guilty/innocent, legal/illegal do not fully convey the complexities and ambiguities of the lived experience. Legal transactions occur in trafficking and illegal ones in migration. Andrijasevic (2003) suggested that legal visas could be acquired in trafficking processes and that migration could have illegal aspects, for example, illegal payments, therefore, blurring the boundary between

legal and illegal migration.

Boundaries between migration and trafficking are blurred on multi-faceted levels. Migrants can voluntarily leave their home country but become trafficked through coercion and deception (Aronowitz, 2001; Mahmoud & Trebesch, 2010) thereby illustrating the blurring between migration, smuggling and trafficking. In the context of the smuggling and trafficking protocols, O'Connell Davidson (2006 p.9) argued that together they '...assume a neat line of demarcation between oppositional categories of migration – voluntary and consensual versus involuntary and non-consensual migration' and the situation is not as clear-cut. Anderson and O'Connell Davidson (2003) highlight a continuum of experience: at one end, an individual is subject to extreme coercion and control and engaged in forced labour and; at the other end, the individual pays excessive rates to recruiters but is not deceived about the work and their individual rights are safeguarded. Indeed, identifying trafficking can be difficult as 'the precise point along this continuum at which tolerable forms of labour migration end and trafficking begins will vary according to our political and moral values' (Anderson & O'Connell Davidson 2003 p.9).

Boundaries are blurred further when migrant agency and the role of the trafficker is brought to the fore as migrants may seek assistance from traffickers to cross borders. Andrijasevic (2003) documented the experiences of migrant women in Italy and that have reached the destination through trafficking and were now engaged in sex work. Arguing that 'contrary to the idea that women are always forced or coerced by traffickers into illegal migration, some respondents tell of how they were only able to realise their plans to leave for Italy with the help of the traffickers' (Andrijasevic 2003, p.258). Similarly, Ghosh (1998) documented how migrants resorted to traffickers to evade migration laws and capitalise on economic opportunities; however, these were situations when migrants turned to traffickers out of necessity and which thereby raises issues about choice. These difficulties are compounded in the midst of conceptual conflation between migration and trafficking (Kapur 2005; Sanghera 2005). Sanghera (2005) noted that connecting migration with trafficking has contributed to problematic solutions, such as, preventing migration to halt trafficking. Indeed, this issue can be illustrated by Andrijasevic's (2007, p.42) analysis of several IOM counter-trafficking campaigns which '...discourage women's (labour) migration and aim at

controlling women's mobility and sexuality by depicting (movement) abroad in terms of a threat and by extension, encouraging the perception of home as safe'. Theoretical insights are blurred by conceptual confluences between migrant sex workers and VHT (Agustín 2003; Busza 2004) and sex trafficking and all types of trafficking, and sex work and sex trafficking (Brennan 2010; Kapur 2005; Mahdavi & Sargent 2011). Such conceptual confluences extend to policy and campaigning discourses. For example, O'Connell Davidson (2006) referred to an abolitionist organisation connecting all migrant sex workers and sex workers to VHT because consent cannot be given to sell sexual services. Such situations may occur because there are a variety of perspectives on sex work ranging from abolitionist, decriminalisation and legalisation. Consequently, these divergent perspectives have implications for analyses of trafficking and migration, as illustrated by Weitzer (2007, p.452) who argued that '...anti-prostitution activists have consistently tried to erase the distinction between coercive trafficking and voluntary migration, and insist that victimisation is the hallmark of all trafficking and prostitution'.

Research Methods

This paper is part of a wider study exploring the perceptions of sex trafficking in relation to the 2010 Vancouver Olympic Games amid concerns that the event could contribute to human trafficking for sexual exploitation (Bowen & Shannon Frontline Consulting 2009; Future Group, 2007). This aspect of the project concentrates specifically on documenting the landscape of human trafficking, paying particular attention to sexual exploitation. A qualitative approach was employed comprising twenty-three semi-structured in-depth interviews with key stakeholders. Qualitative approaches have often been adopted in studies pertaining to human trafficking for sexual exploitation (Brennan 2010) and sex work (Brewis & Linstead 2000a; Gülçür & İlkaracan 2002; Sanders 2004a&b, 2005). A qualitative methodology provides an opportunity to acquire an insight into the character of the contextual situation (Bryman 2012).

Interviews were adopted as the research method because they '...are often said to 'reach the parts which other methods cannot reach'' (Wellington & Szczerbinski 2007, p.81) Purposeful and snowball sampling strategies were employed (Bryman 2012). The basis of the

sampling selection criteria was two-fold: first, stakeholders were chosen according to their expertise about the sex trade, human trafficking, social policy and the development of the Vancouver 2010 Games and associated security measures; second, in order to limit the possibility of a biased or unrepresentative sample (Tyldum & Brunovkis 2005) the chosen stakeholders held a range of perspectives (Gobo 2004), for example, pertaining to sex work and human trafficking for sexual exploitation. In summary, stakeholders included those with human trafficking expertise, law enforcement and city officials, and a range of NGOs, for instance, sex worker groups, VHT support and frontline support organisations, social services agencies, national and international organisations focusing on sexual violence and human trafficking, and women's groups, as well as activists and academics.

In 2010, data collection was undertaken and interviews were between one to three hours in length. All interviews were recorded and transcribed and notes were taken for supplementary purposes. For coding and organisational purposes, NVivo was utilised. A thematic analysis approach was used to analyse and identify themes within the dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It is acknowledged that there are certain limitations. First, this paper documents the landscape from the perspective of stakeholders with expertise in the area, and there is a gap in detailing the lived experience of the VHT; second, given the nature of human trafficking, it cannot be suggested that this provides a comprehensive overview of the subject, as it is a 'hidden' activity.

Types of Human Trafficking and the 'Recruitment' of VHT

The different types of human trafficking were identified: 'We know that human trafficking comes in three forms generally: industrial labour, domestic servitude and sexual exploitation, both domestic and international' (R18). This reflects trafficking forms articulated by the UNODC (2004). Although VHT were both male and female, in some types of trafficking there was a higher proportion of women:

'We have all sorts of victims from men to women. I haven't seen many cases of minors...Most are adults or young adults. It depends if we're talking about enforced slavery or trafficking. I also see as many women as men, but in domestic servitude I'll see more of women and in sexual exploitation obviously more women as well' (R19).

In general, human trafficking is gendered as the UNODC (2009) noted that the available data

suggests that women and children are the most identified VHT (see US Department of State 2010). Also, as noted by the UNODC (2009) sexual exploitation is the most prevalent form of human trafficking.

Multi-faceted recruitment methods have been identified in the literature ranging from newspaper advertisements for employment; recruitment and employment agencies; personal contacts and relationships, acquaintances and friends; travel, model, marriage and match-making agencies; group recruitment of women; and VHT may return to their home country for recruiting purposes (Hughes 2000; Oxman-Martinez, Lacroix, & Hanley 2005; Richard 1999). Similarly, a range of recruiting devices were employed which illustrated varying forms of deception about the work and recruiters. Individuals could be deceived about the nature of the work they would be undertaking: 'They can be brought in anywhere with a work permit as visitors. They're told to say they're visiting, but in fact they think they're coming to do some facials for a few months... Then they end up having to do the sex trade instead of only facials' (R19). There could be complete deception: 'Poor women from developing countries. They come here either [through] outright trickery or they think they're going to do a certain job and it turns out to be something else' (R3). Deception is certainly part of recruitment but it is not the sole factor as there are multiple factors at play not only in Vancouver but within the broader locale of Canada:

'Basically with Canadian victims what we have found is that some of the primary methods that have been used are to identify at risk and vulnerable individuals through things like foster care homes and group homes.... Another method being used is to lure them over social networking websites... With respect to foreign cases, we've seen some cases where we have had in Canada people who are existing victims of human trafficking, so they're long term victims in well known source countries... We've had very rarely, but we have documented, some cases of outright abduction.... And we've seen some cases involving deception where there was a job or in one case a visit to a friend, so there has been deception used. And we've also seen quite a few cases of people who are brought to Canada knowing that they will either, at the low end be involved in a massage parlour... basically they would not have thought they would engaged in sexual intercourse...' (R12).

Traffickers could, in some cases, pose as boyfriends to potential victims: 'What we've also seen though is a totally different method of control being used by some domestic victims,

which is the deceptive tactic of manipulating particularly under-age girls into believing the trafficker is in fact her boyfriend' (R12).

These 'recruitment' practices range from a minority of abduction cases, to those deceived about the work and those who had some knowledge of the work but were nevertheless deceived about what was expected of them. It also encompasses the targeting and manipulation of vulnerable individuals. Deception in the trafficking process has been identified by various commentators (Hughes 2000; Jahic & Finckenauer 2005; Limoncelli 2009b) and it is evident that deception underpins many of the recruitment practices within the contextual situation. Andrijasevic's (2003, p.261) study on migrant women who had been trafficked into Italy revealed a range of experiences in that 'within the larger group of respondents, disparities of the modes of entry into trafficking surfaced between those women who were deceived about the type of labour that they were expected to perform and those who were informed that they were expected to work as prostitutes'. Hughes and Denisova's (2001) study on the trafficking of women from the Ukraine identified that the majority of women had been subject to deception. Hence, these multi-faceted recruitment practices, as identified by the Vancouver stakeholders, highlight the significance of deception which echoes trafficking accounts from other commentators.

Generally, existing work suggest that human trafficking and sexual labour is gendered. Women and girls are argued to constitute the largest component of forced labour (ILO 2012). Further, much of the work about sexual labour concentrates on females (Brewis & Linstead 2000a&b; Farley, Lynne & Cotton 2005; Gülçür & İlkaracan 2002; Sanders 2004a&b, 2005) as male and trans sex workers lack visibility within policy discourses (Hubbard & Whowell 2008). 'Recruitment' devices in trafficking are quite different from the conventional practices in the world of work; although legalised forms of work can also contain elements of deception about the actual nature of the work. In the context of trafficking, 'recruitment' practices illustrate the varying types of deception that occur regarding the precise nature of the work.

Relationships and Conflations between Sex Work and Human Trafficking

As noted earlier, there are a range of migratory push-pull factors and the destination requires attention. It has been suggested that destinations which have established sex

industries or where sex work is accepted or legalised can become sites of trafficking for sexual exploitation (Hughes 2000; Hughes & Denisova 2001). Farley (2009, p.313) argues, 'evidence supports the theory that legal prostitution is associated with increased trafficking. Traffickers and pimps can easily operate with impunity when prostitution is legal'. However, the purported relationship between sex work, the regulatory framework, and sex trafficking is a contentious one. Weitzer (2007 p.455) suggests that 'there is no evidence that 'most' of even the majority of prostitutes have been trafficked. Moreover, prostitution and trafficking differ substantively; the former is a type of work, and the latter is a means of accessing a new market'. At the time of research, within the contextual situation, "...communicating for the purpose of prostitution, procuring and keeping a bawdy house (brothel) are federal offences" (Bowen & Shannon Frontline Consulting, 2009 p.i). Within the city, it has been suggested that there is a recognisable sex work industry (Future Group 2007). Tensions about the purported relationship were reflected in the contextual situation.

In general, there was not a consensus about the link between sex work and human trafficking for sexual exploitation as there were nuances to the relationship and, moreover, it was suggested that, in some quarters, there was a degree of conflation between sex workers and VHT. Some stakeholders argued that the relationship was quite clear: 'when there's an increase in prostitution, that's why you're trafficking' (R6). As such, this echoes arguments propagated by Hughes (2000) and Hughes and Denisova (2001). It was suggested that within the local sex trade there was some evidence of VHT: 'not all of the sex trade workers are trafficked, but some definitely are. As long as someone is controlled by their pimp and... is transferred from one bar to the other or one location to the other and have no control over their money, their income, they are trafficked' (R19). From a different perspective, stakeholders suggested that there were nuances to the relationship between sex work and human trafficking on the basis of what constituted sex work and the nature of the sex industry. With regard to the constitution of sex work, it was suggested that: 'there's a link between survival sex and trafficking, absolutely, because that's how they get the bodies in, right. But that's not what we would call sex work' (R8). In this regard, it was not considered to constitute sexual labour as there was a lack of choice. Blanket generalisations about the relationship between sex work and human trafficking were suggested to provide a partial picture of the realities of the situation: 'There's going to be a link to the sex industry and of course there's going to be a link to [human trafficking]. There's always going to be individuals and processes and groups in society that are going to exploit, that are going to coerce and manipulate,

absolutely, and the sex industry is a part of that. But it's not the whole picture, it's a piece of the puzzle, sure, but it's not the whole picture' (R15). Certainly, a more holistic perspective of the picture would encompass the stratification of the sex worker (Bernstein 1999), as there are different types of sex workers (Vanwesenbeeck, 2001) as well as VHT.

For some stakeholders, it was suggested that there was a degree of conflation in what was occurring: 'this conflation between trafficking and sex work, I think also what happens is the conflation between trafficking and non Canadian, trafficking and immigrants' (R13). Discourses about immigration and border controls in relation to trafficking can be utilised for political reasons (Schaeffer-Grabel 2010). Commentators have noted the occurrence of conflations between sex workers and VHT in discourses (Brennan, 2010; Busza 2004). For some commentators, there are fundamental issues with the concept of sexual labour. The level of harm and inequality associated with sexual labour are problematic within a labour paradigm, as illustrated by Farley (2009). She argues that 'this view that prostitution is labor skirts recognition of the fact that the institution of prostitution promotes and cements sex and race inequality. Trafficking expands and markets women's sexual exploitation and their subordination to men' (Farley 2009, p.311). For some organisations, support was gained by engaging with contemporary discourses about trafficking: 'we made a strategic decision to take the fact that the public was sympathetic to the imaginary trafficked victim and used that in support of our well known prostitution victim, and so we whenever possible got ourselves inserted into the anti trafficking dialogues and the hype that was going on' (R4). While such a strategy is a vehicle to attain support, it has certain limitations in that such conflations hamper a comprehensive and holistic understanding of the nature of trafficking.

Domestic and International VHT

The RCMP (2010 p.8) define domestic trafficking as: 'the phenomenon in which all stages of trafficking occur within Canada regardless of the victim's legal status. Vulnerable, economically challenged and socially dislocated sectors of the Canadian population represent a potential pool of domestic trafficking victims'. The phenomenon of domestic trafficking was identified as an issue, particularly give the geographical scale of the country: 'We've considered now there's a lot of internal trafficking in Canada. Moving people from one part of the country to the other because the country is so big' (R1). Domestic trafficking occurs within various cities and provinces, such as, British Columbia and Vancouver: 'This issue of domestic trafficking in the province of British Columbia has also been one that's been

documented, and we have additional cases that we found in neighbouring cities.... and so this is definitely a city [Vancouver] which is involved in a domestic trafficking set of operations' (R12). RCMP (2010) noted that underage girls constituted a proportion of domestic trafficking cases, as illustrated earlier in the context of traffickers posing as 'boyfriends' to victims.

These are not the only forms of domestic trafficking as it also comprises the trafficking of First Nation women and girls which has been linked to multi-faceted economic and social conditions: 'Where a lot of aboriginal people who are trafficked start from are their reserves - their particular geographic areas, which are quite isolated and they're up north. They're in the interior, they're in the Prairies and they don't have particularly good economic opportunities' (R11). Historical and current factors have led to the contemporary marginalisation of First Nations people. Sethi (2007) argued that root causes can impact the safety and welfare of First Nations girls which can then make them vulnerable to sex trafficking. This includes: first, the historical situation pertaining to the legacy of colonisation and residential schools; second, social policy issues relating to limitations in service provision as well as discriminatory policies and legislation; finally, a complex range of socio-economic factors (Sethi 2007).

Domestic trafficking alters the foundations of trafficking constructs built upon cross-border issues of illegal and legal migration, as much work concentrates on international trafficking and migratory flows (Hughes 2000; Monzini 2005; Vocks & Nijober 2000). Contemporary academic discourses reveal a research gap pertaining to analyses of domestic trafficking. Further, Sikka (2009) argued that the trafficking of First Nations women and girls does not generally 'fit' with media constructions of who the victim is. Sikka (2009, p.6) suggested that 'this quintessential victim of trafficking is seen as someone entirely under the control of their captor, of 'organised crime', and completely devoid of choice or agency.... The 'victim' must be foreign, meek, subdued, usually bruised and beaten, constantly looking over her shoulder, and thrilled to be saved from her captor'.

Stakeholders noted that international VHT were broadly from Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe and Central and South American countries. These geographical regions generally reflect those identified by the RCMP's (2010) analysis of trafficking in Canada whereby international VHT were from Eastern Europe, Asia and Africa. In many respects, this corresponds to trafficking patterns. Limoncelli (2009b) argued that trafficking flows are generally considered to consist of the movement of people from developing countries,

particularly from poorer areas of these countries, to destinations that are more economically developed and which comprise international and regional trafficking. Nevertheless, although attention has been accorded to trafficking flows and destination countries (Hughes & Denisova 2001; Limoncelli 2009b), as noted by Tyldum, Tveit and Brunovskis (2005, p.58) 'there are still few systematic attempts to analyse and present the flows and numbers of victims from countries of origin and destination'. They note (ibid), it is the annual Trafficking in Persons reports (see US Department of State, 2012, 2010) which documents these flows on an annual basis. It was noted that there were differences in the geographical origins of VHT and the destination cities for VHT, thereby reflecting issues of geographic proximity. For example, the 'eastern European victims, they are more in Montreal...Ukraine - they would be transferred or trafficked to Ontario and Toronto'(R19).

Although Vancouver stakeholders recognised both domestic and international trafficking, the identification of VHT was impeded by issues of self-identification. A key challenge was that individuals may not self-identify as VHT: 'Because women who are trafficked don't necessarily declare – I'm a trafficked woman because it's stigmatised and so of course it's been covert' (R20). In some respects, this was due to the contextual situation and a lack of awareness about their human rights:

'The majority of the times they don't know that they are being trafficked. Often, especially in the international victims, they're from countries where their conditions are they think it's quite normal to be slaves in their country. They come here and they don't realise their rights in our country. So they often just don't know they are victims...Well I would say for the international cases, they know that something is wrong, but they don't perceive themselves as – hey, I'm a human trafficking victim here' (R19).

Certainly, the clandestine conditions under which trafficking operates (Hughes 2000; Jahic & Finckenauer 2005) makes it difficult to identify VHT. VHT can be stigmatised (Zimmerman, Hossain & Watts 2011) and this may be compounded for victims trafficked for sexual exploitation, as there are continuing issues about the stigmatisation of sexual labour (Vanwesenbeeck 2001). In a broader sense, this highlights the differences between work and trafficking in that the latter is a covert activity and individuals may not recognise or acknowledge themselves to be VHT which is in contrast to conventional constructions about work.

Yet this is not the only identification issue as there are other multi-faceted factors at play. Given that trafficking is a criminal activity, then this impedes identification. Monzini (2005) suggests that traffickers can operate a carousel system which can make it difficult to identify VHT as they are moved regularly. Hooper (2004) argues that there are several reasons which explain the under-identification of VHT in the US which comprise dimensions of human trafficking, for example, the nature of human trafficking, the control of VHT, the identification of VHT, and policy related issues. Brennan (2010) argued that it has been problematic to identify trafficked people in the US because there has been an emphasis upon those in sexual exploitation at the expense of other forms of trafficking and, simultaneously, undocumented workers do not report labour abuses due to concerns about deportation. Further, with regard to domestic trafficking the UNODC (2009) suggested that there was a possibility of under-detection as a result of definitional issues and greater visibility of international VHT.

Conclusion

The key findings of this paper are as follows: first, a range of 'recruiting' devices were employed suggesting different types of deception about the work and the recruiters; second, the relationship between sex work and human trafficking for sexual exploitation was contested; finally, both domestic and international trafficking existed, and the identification of VHT could be problematic. Thus, this paper makes a contribution to understanding the nature of trafficking within the contextual situation. Since the re-emergence of human trafficking on the global stage, there has been a veritable explosion in the literature seeking to trace the causes, dynamics of the trade, consequences and policy implications of the issue. Such work has charted, for example, the causes and drivers of demand (Anderson & O'Connell Davidson 2003; Bales 2005), the nature of the activity and its relationship to organised crime (Aronowitz 2001; Bruckert & Parent 2004; Monzini 2005), modes of recruiting and controlling VHT (Hughes 2000), the characteristics of VHT (Oxman-Martinez, Lacroix & Hanley, 2005) and methods and policies to address trafficking (Mamelli 2002; Raymond 2002; Monzini 2005; Oxman-Martinez, Hanley & Gomez 2005). Further attention is required regarding the VHT (Jahic & Finckenauer 2005), particularly within specific geographic locations. The nature of human trafficking is heterogeneous across geographic regions and generalisations about trafficking from one area to another may not necessarily apply. Hence, this paper has sought to identify key features of trafficking within the contextual situation, although this is not without

limitations, as noted earlier.

This paper brings to the fore multi-faceted implications. First, it is evident that features of migration and trafficking are gendered. Inter-related structural factors, primarily within the social, political and economic domain, have contributed to migratory practices; and aspects of these structural factors have had adverse and disproportionate effects on women. These structural factors have coalesced to create an environment in which migration has become a viable option for individuals, particularly women, to potentially attain material and physical security. Further, it is also a milieu which has contributed to the development of human trafficking. This has occurred not only because of migrants' vulnerability to traffickers during the migratory process, but also because trafficking and migration are linked, as noted by Bastia (2006) and Chuang (2006). Thus, dimensions of both migration and human trafficking are gendered. The latter of which is especially evident in the context of sexual exploitation. Second, there are conceptual conflation, for example, between sex work and VHT, and migrant workers and VHT. As a consequence, dimensions of work, particularly sexual labour and migrant work, are subject to critique and, in some quarters, condemnation given the attendant political and social issues. The difficulty with such conflation is that they hinder an understanding of migrant work and sexual work and, most specifically, its nature and characteristics. Third, the breadth of recruiting devices in the human trafficking arena illustrates the ways in which deception about work takes a number of forms and that conventional recruitment practices are corrupted in such a context.

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