Cooperation, Exploitation, and Trust:
Migration from Edo State, Nigeria into Sex Work in Europe

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Abstract

This thesis aims to understand cooperation and exploitation in human trafficking. The literature on human trafficking tends to regard these concepts as self-evident. This thesis argues that they are not self-evident and builds on sociological theories of trust in the context of criminal networks and the context of migration. The methodology of this thesis is a qualitative content analysis. It looks at the case study of sex trafficking from Edo State, Nigeria to Western Europe. The data consist of the court files of a large-scale law enforcement investigation, 'Operation Koolvis', from 2008. The analysis includes 826 manually extracted intercepted phone conversations between traffickers and migrants. These data are triangulated with life history interviews with 14 trafficked women and 40 anti-trafficking experts and informants, conducted between 2015 and 2017. The arguments are presented in the three core chapters of the thesis: hostage-taking and cooperation; markets and hierarchies; and exploitation, trust, and agency. The first chapter finds that trafficking between two regions starts through the mechanism of chain migration. A hostage-taking mechanism supports cooperation between traffickers and migrants. Hostage-taking is possible due to geographical clustering, social norms, and informal institutions for enforcement (traditional shrines in the case study). The second chapter presents a social network analysis, which shows that the network of the case study is market-oriented rather than hierarchical. The literature has typically argued that trafficking networks are hierarchical. Furthermore, I find that exploiters contract out transportation. The division of labour is such that transporters have no agreement with the migrants and do not monitor them. The third chapter explores why long-term exploitation of migrants is possible. High levels of trust in the migrant community, as well as monitoring, rather than coercion, contribute to exploitation.

For my parents, Pietjan and Nelly

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 The argument and structure of the thesis

It is ten o'clock in the morning. A group of five young women sings a hymn under the guidance of an elderly Catholic sister at the compound of their local church in mainland Lagos. They are standing outside in the shade, protecting them from the hot and humid start of the day. The women are in their early twenties and are a cheerful sight. Their outfits are colourful and stylish. After prayer, they huddle together to giggle over a picture on one of their phones.

These five Nigerian women were deported back to Lagos from Italy, one of them as recently as two months ago. Since the Italian police arrested them as illegal migrants working in prostitution, they have gone through a process that categorised them as 'victims of human trafficking'. This process involves a large number of agencies, starting with an NGO in Italy that is in touch with the NGO run by the Catholic sisters in Lagos, supported by the International Organization of Migration (IOM), European law enforcement agencies, and the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) of Nigeria.

A few hours later, when I give three of the women a lift to a busy marketplace nearby, they are quiet in the back of the car. It is almost as if a dark veil has fallen over the light-hearted way they presented themselves earlier in the day. The women are receiving training to set up a fashion shop similar to the ones we are passing on the side of the road, but they know this will be a hard existence in an environment of mass unemployment and an overcrowded market of independent retail shops. They feel stuck and bored in the small section of mainland Lagos where they move around; the more cosmopolitan part of the city is not accessible to them because of high transportation and living costs.

Each of the young women is dreaming of returning to Europe. They feel like they have 'failed' to make it in Europe before and want to go back to try their luck again. Some of the women are motivated by a strive for financial independence, by finding an alternative to marrying an older man. Others are expected to provide financially for their extended families as the eldest daughter. There is little sympathy for someone coming back from Europe empty-handed, but the sisters running the shelter mediate to try and get them back to their families in Edo State and Delta State, a four-hour drive from Lagos.

With regards to irregular migration, Nigerians are the fifth largest group of asylum seekers in Europe in recent years (Carling, 2005). European states reject a large proportion of the applications for asylum from Nigerians. Courts rule that even when Nigerian asylum seekers are at risk in their home region, Nigerians have the option to move to many other states within Nigeria and West Africa (Carling, 2005). Many asylum seekers end up in illegality after the rejection of their application. It is striking, however, that women from Edo State, in the southwestern part of Nigeria, are overrepresented as irregular migrants working in Europe's sex industry (Ellis, 2006). Edo State only makes up two per cent of Nigeria's overall population. The first observations of sex workers from Edo State in Europe are from the 1980s (Carling, 2005). The stream of women arriving has not decreased since. In the summer of 2018, IOM officials paid a visit to Edo State after 59% of all victims of sex trafficking helped by the IOM in the previous years were from Nigeria, and predominantly from Edo State (International Organization for Migration, 2018).

In this thesis, I study the themes of cooperation, exploitation, and trust in human trafficking. The research problem is that cooperation in this illegal market is not self-evident. We do not understand why traffickers and migrants cooperate, and why traffickers cooperate among themselves. The definition of human trafficking includes that traffickers exploit a victim long-term. Why would they be able to exploit another person long-term? In order to study these research problems, I conduct a case study of a network that trafficked women from Nigeria into sex work in Europe. Within the universe of trafficking cases, I assume that this is a case of a particularly successful network with regards to cooperation and capacity of trafficked people.

The data consist of court files of a large-scale law enforcement investigation 'Operation Koolvis' from 2006 and 2007 into this criminal network. I manually extracted 826 intercepted phone conversations from the court files. I conducted a content analysis on the conversations between traffickers, trafficked women, and their social networks. I used triangulation of methods and added to the insights from the court files with life history interviews I conducted with 14 trafficked women and 40 anti-trafficking experts and informants between 2015 and 2017. The analysis was iterative and led to consultation of anthropological literature to place the court files and interviews into context.

The argument

Cooperation and exploitation in human trafficking are not self-evident, as I will demonstrate in this thesis. The literature on human trafficking mostly disregards the question of trust and cooperation and assumes that trafficked migrants are victims of traffickers who abduct them. However, I argue that such coercion is more costly to traffickers than seeking cooperation. Coercion does not seem necessary when there is a large group of people seeking to migrate with no means to do so legally, such as the women described in the story above. Human trafficking takes place on the nexus of crime and migration. The literature on crime suggests that trust in the underworld is low. The literature on migration suggests that levels of trust in migrant communities, particularly those with many undocumented migrants, are high, however. In this thesis, I want to explore how cooperation between migrants and traffickers and among traffickers is established, and why migrants can be exploited.

Firstly, I argue that hostage-taking is a mechanism that increases cooperation between migrants and traffickers. The traffickers offer the migrants two services: illegal entry into a country and a loan to pay for the journey. The family of the migrant is a willing hostage. They are the guarantee that the migrant will repay the loan in the future. When the migrant shows signs of non-cooperation, for example when they want to report the traffickers to the authorities, the traffickers activate the hostage-taking mechanism. I find that at the first sign of hesitation from the migrant, the traffickers will start advertising their service more. If that does not lead to cooperation, the family of the migrant is asked to put pressure on the migrant. If the agreement is still not upheld by the migrant, the traffickers let a religious community court send a subpoena to the family. Ultimately, if the migrant still defects, the traffickers make threats to the lives of the migrant and their family.

The hostage-taking is possible because the migrants and traffickers are from the same region and have strong ties with this region. In the case study, the motivation of the migrants and their families is to invest remittances resulting from migration back into their lives in the region of origin, rather than to build up a new life abroad. The traffickers also invest their profits in the region of origin. These strong ties to the region mean that information gathering is simple. Even when migrants and traffickers spread over the globe, they can locate each other's families and property. The family is taken hostage willingly because they expect to benefit from the agreement with the traffickers. The hostage-taking mechanism works because no effective legal force prevents it. Moreover, there is an informal justice system available, in the form of traditional shrines, that enforces the agreements between migrants and traffickers.

Secondly, I argue that cooperation among traffickers is market-oriented rather than hierarchically structured. No boss employs others and decides upon the strategy of the trafficking network. Instead, the price mechanism of the market coordinates transactions. In line with this argument, I find that cooperation does not take place within a trusted circle of kin, as is the case in many crime groups, but moves beyond that circle in this network and relies mostly on people from the same migrant community. Even a market-oriented network needs a degree of management. Those in the core network perform management tasks and delegate the riskiest tasks to those in the community who have limited opportunities to earn a legal income. I also argue that a division of labour leads to a higher capacity of trafficked migrants. Some people employ the migrants and sponsor their journeys. They have an agreement with the migrant. They contract out transportation to others. In this way, the employers can stay out of sight during the journey and do not have to specialise in how to cross borders illegally. The transporters specialise in crossing borders and do not have to worry about cooperating with migrants, because it is the employer who hires and pays the transporters.

Thirdly, I find that the long-term exploitation of migrants by traffickers is possible, because of elements of trust and distrust in the relationship. I find three categories of monitoring of the migrant: 1) a kidnapping scenario in which the migrant is locked up by the trafficker and forced to work, 2) a situation in which the trafficker monitors the migrant on a daily basis, and 3) a situation where the migrant brings in money for the trafficker, but the trafficker does not monitor the migrant on a daily basis. I argue that the first scenario is implausible because coercion is no real alternative to cooperation. When hostage-taking is available as a cooperative mechanism, a trafficker can trust the migrant not to run away. However, they may still choose to monitor the migrant's work on a daily basis to make sure that they are not hiding income or avoiding work, which would delay repayment of the loan. In other cases, the trafficker may choose to save monitoring costs and extract repayment of the loan from the migrant without daily monitoring, trusting that the hostage-taking is sufficient.

I find that migrants stay in exploitative situations not only because traffickers take their families hostage, but also because their alternatives are not better, and they view the situation as one of social mobility. Even when the chance of repaying the loan and making a profit before being exhausted from the exploitative labour is low, a degree of wishful thinking makes it so that the migrant stays. When there are social norms that dictate that a migrant should bring back remittances for others, a migrant will keep trying to be successful despite exploitative conditions.

The structure

In section 1.2, I review the literature on human smuggling and human trafficking. I discuss the gaps in the literature and the research problem in 1.3. Chapter 2 introduces the theoretical framework and the research questions. In Chapter 3, I discuss the data and methodology. Chapter 4 looks at the start of trafficking to Europe in Edo state, Nigeria and how migrants and traffickers cooperate. It draws on a content analysis of the 'Koolvis' case as well as interviews with migrants and anthropological literature on Edo State. Chapter 5 discusses how traffickers cooperate. It provides a social network analysis and content analysis of the Koolvis files. Chapter 6 studies how the long-term exploitation of migrants can be explained. The chapter includes material from the Koolvis files and life history interviews with migrants. All chapters include insights from accounts by anti-trafficking experts. Chapter 7 presents the conclusions, areas for future research, and policy recommendations.

1.2 Human smuggling and trafficking literature

Nation states have criminalised human smuggling and human trafficking relatively recently. In 1993, the Netherlands included human smuggling in its criminal code (Van Liempt, 2008). In Italy, human trafficking was prohibited by criminal law

228/2003 in 2003. As part of this trend, the United Nations adopted two protocols against human smuggling (UN, 2000a) and human trafficking (UN, 2000b). The United Nations defines the two concepts as distinct offences, where human smuggling constitutes a crime against the state for helping others cross borders illegally, and human trafficking is a crime against a person by gaining control over their freedom for the goal of exploitation.

In the academic literature, there is disagreement about the conceptual difference between smuggling and trafficking. Some argue that the distinction is an artificial legal invention, whereas others subscribe to the idea that the conceptual distinction is analytically helpful. Most notably, the literature around 'modern slavery' conflates trafficking with various other phenomena, including "movement across borders due to economic despair" (Hughes, 2000; see also Bales, 1999). In his critique on the human trafficking literature, Zhang (2009) argues that explanations such as the modern slavery argument rely mostly on imagination, because the literature suffers from an empirical vacuum (see Gozdziak, 2014). O'Connell Davidson (2015) argues that the opposite of the modern slavery argument is true and defends that if there is any helpful analogy between "trafficking" and slavery, trafficking is more alike escaping slavery. It is people illegally moving away from a condition of stagnancy into mobility, according to O'Connell Davidson (2015). Others have defended the theoretical and conceptual distinction proposed in the UN protocols (see Campana & Varese, 2016; Kleemans & Smit, 2014; Triandafyllidou & Maroukis, 2012). Campana and Varese (2016) argue that only by adopting an empirical and theoretical distinction, can we begin to study how widespread smuggling is, compared to trafficking, and when and how smuggling could turn into trafficking. Kleemans and

Smit (2014) emphasise that by adopting the distinction, we can identify different types of social relationships between migrants and those providing a journey illegally. In smuggling, the relationship between the smuggler and the migrant ends when the migrant arrives at his or her destination. In trafficking, the relationship continues into an exploitative labour situation in which the trafficker has control over the migrant worker. In this thesis, I maintain the distinction between smuggling and trafficking.

What do we know about smuggling and trafficking operations?

Zhang (2009) highlights the organisational attributes of trafficking organisations as one of the gaps in the literature. His review shows that there are many unanswered questions about their social networks and the different roles in business transactions (Zhang, 2009, p. 5). Aronowitz (2001, p. 176) conceptualises a continuum of organisational levels of trafficking networks ranging from individual traffickers to highly structured organisations controlling the entire trafficking process. Salt and Stein (1997, p. 476) hypothesise that the larger the trafficking organisation, the more likely it is to be centrally managed. Shelley (2010, p. 123) agrees with Salt and Stein (2007) and adds that large, centrally managed trafficking organisations are widespread. She argues that traffickers appear to be involved in all stages of the process, including control over victims during the exploitation stage (Shelley, 2010). Furthermore, she concludes that trafficking is a global phenomenon that has recently grown due to globalisation (Shelley, 2003). She states: “Trafficking in women has grown significantly over the past decade. Although this has been a long-standing phenomenon in Asia, it has spread to many more areas in the world” (Shelley, 2003). Siegel (2007) shows that the acquittal of people accused of human trafficking in the high profile Koolvis case fueled the idea of all-powerful networks that could escape the law. Reports by national and international law enforcement agencies tend to deny any division of labour or variation in complicity among those involved in human trafficking: “Human traffickers take advantage of people who are often in a weak position, or they use violence to coerce others to work for them” (Dettmeijer-Vermeulen, 2013). In contrast to the conceptions around trafficking, most findings on human smuggling seem to indicate that the networks are flexible, non-hierarchical, and have high degrees of division of labour (Zhang, 2009).

What do we know about the lives of migrant and trafficked sex workers?

A substantial part of the human trafficking literature focuses on trafficking for sexual exploitation (Baye & Heumann, 2014). Reviews of this literature show that compared to a focus on other forms of labour exploitation, there is disproportionate attention to sex trafficking (Baye & Heumann, 2014; Cockbain et al., 2018; Gozdziak, 2014; Zhang, 2009). This literature mostly relates to the ‘modern slavery’ interpretation mentioned above. At the same time, the literature in the areas of migration and diaspora seems to be largely void of analyses on migrant women who sell sex (Baye & Heumann, 2014, p. 81). This means that accurate descriptions of the lives and behaviour of migrants and facilitators in this industry are largely missing from the social scientific literature. Studies in the field of human trafficking tend to address all migrant women who sell sex as ‘victims’, which diminishes the space to analyse their motivations and decision-making as individuals. Kandathil (2005, p. 91), for example, maintains that victims “provide a flexible, inexpensive, virtually inexhaustible source of labour”. This statement begs the question of how ‘victims’ could potentially resist their exploitation. Why would they be inexpensive and inexhaustible? First, the statement in itself is questionable as trading in human beings seems more labour intensive than in inanimate goods like drugs, because it is less inconspicuous, and the people who are traded need to be controlled, and provided with food and shelter. Second, if sex traffickers do manage to tap into inexpensive and inexhaustible sources of labour, why would this be so? Is it them who have established coercive mechanisms that make it so, or is it economic and gender inequality that leads to such a supply? The literature on trafficking often cites the mechanism of 'debt bondage' (Aronowitz, 2001; Shelley, 2010). This concept refers to loans that migrant women have with their traffickers for facilitating their journey to a new place. It implies that the women enter into a seemingly mutually beneficial agreement until the net closes in on them because the traffickers add fictional costs to their loan. The literature ignores the mechanisms used to enforce this loan. Instead, it implies that debt bondage in itself is a coercive mechanism.

There are notable exceptions that do address these gaps in the literature. They point to social and geographical mobility as a characteristic of the lives of sex workers. Siegel (2012) observes high degrees of geographical mobility among sex workers in European cities. She links these physical movements to social mobility. She argues that other explanations for physical movement than social mobility, like accessing new customers, avoiding law enforcement, and keeping workers from getting involved with their customers, are all unconvincing (Siegel, 2012, p. 256). Instead, Siegel (2012) explains, geographical mobility is the result of sex workers ambition and their employers using a reward system: "when someone was moved to Amsterdam or Antwerp, where the most money could be made, it was because they were promoted above their co-workers." (Van Hout, cited in Siegel, 2012, p. 257).

Vertical mobility does not only become apparent in location but also in moving between market segments and moving up within the hierarchy of a prostitution business.

In Nigerian businesses, Siegel (2012) finds that a standard route is for sex workers to become 'madams' who start running a prostitution business, but may still be active as sex workers at the same time. Hoang (2015) conducted years of fieldwork among sex workers in Vietnam. Similar to what Siegel (2012) describes, Hoang (2015) finds that a characteristic of the lives of these women is both geographical and social mobility. They had all migrated within the country, but although Hoang (2015, p. 17) set out to study sex trafficking, she found that "few of the women were forced, duped, or coerced into the sex trade." She did not find much evidence of exploitation either, in fact, she says, madams in the study follow a strict moral code that prohibits them from taking a cut of their workers' earnings from paid sex (Hoang, 2015, p. 14). Generally, she found the sex industry in Vietnam highly heterogeneous in terms of the different market sectors and motivations of the workers. What the women had in common, however, is that they had worked in service industries and factories before, and found that they were exploited there and found upward mobility by moving into the sex industry. In this, Hoang (2015) departs from the vast literature that assumes that all women in the sex industry are victims forced into the trade (see Aronowitz, 2001; Shelley, 2010), for which little empirical grounding exists. The sort of economic and social mobility the sex workers experience, most importantly by earning enough to send remittances home and build new houses, would be hard to find through a factory job, Hoang (2015) shows. However, the fact that no one individual has forced these women into sex work, and that given the hand of cards they were dealt this is the best option, does not mean that their mobility is not constraint by larger societal structures. For example, a patriarchal society means that the social mobility of these women is linked to how much they can appeal to the desires of their male customers (Hoang, 2015, p. 18).

The idea of social mobility becomes problematic in the case of human trafficking. As opposed to smuggling, this scenario includes situations where women are forced into the sex industry in a way that resembles kidnapping (Campana & Varese, 2016. p. 98-99). Similarly, trafficking victims may have some exit options, but these are too costly to pursue. For example, these exit options would lead to state imprisonment or deportation. Hughes (2000) claims that these cases, so-called 'Natasha' stories, are widespread. However, fieldwork among sex workers shows that while exploitation is rife, trafficking scenarios are not. A report on Britain's migrant sex workers, based on undercover fieldwork by the researcher as a brothel housekeeper, finds only one case that fits the 'Natasha' story (Pai, 2013). Campana and Varese (2016) conclude that while exploitation is highly prevalent among immigrant workers, and particularly in the sex industry, that does not mean that human trafficking scenarios are. Rather than equating 'debt bondage' (Aronowitz, 2001), which was mentioned above, with trafficking, the scenario may be that a smuggled person buys two different goods at the same time: "(a) entry into a country for price X and (b) a loan often equal to X." (Campana and Varese, 2016, p. 100). The loan may have highly unfavourable conditions attached to it, while the exploitative working conditions can be limited to a certain period and then ended according to the agreement. Silverstone (2011) studied Chinese migration and found that most migrants had a reasonably accurate idea of what they were facing upon arrival in the destination country. These expectations may include some degree of labour exploitation, which the migrant incorporates in the decision-making to leave the home country. Silverstone (2011, p. 108) finds that migrant sex workers are no exception to incorporating exploitation into their decision-making. However, this does not mean that degrees of force and deception are always absent in migrant sex work. Decisions to migrate are often made at the household level, which makes migrant sex workers subject to family pressure to continue working under exploitative conditions in order to send remittances home (Paasche, Skilbrei, & Plambech, 2018, p. 41).

Policies regarding victims of human trafficking, however, do not seem to make the distinction between exploitation and trafficking, which leads to tension between the social mobility motivation of many sex workers and policies meant to keep them safe in asylum and rehabilitation centres, often described by the women themselves as places of immobility (Brunovskis & Surtees, 2008; Surtees, 2007; Vanderhurst, 2017). Sullivan (2003) explains that this tension is inherent in the Palermo Protocol definition of trafficking. According to this definition, consent is irrelevant in trafficking as long as a vulnerable position has been abused. This definition is broad enough to include almost anybody in the sex industry as a victim of trafficking. Sullivan (2003) advocates that a definition that makes women's consent irrelevant cannot be favourable for women's equal status in international law. It has removed the category of people that are "migrants who sell sex" (Agustín, 2007). Migrant sex workers may feel like a 'kidnapping' or 'victim' story is what is expected of them to gain help. It leads to problematic situations in asylum centres, where those identified as victims of trafficking feel like their freedom is constraint institutionally, and where telling stories of trauma increases one's rights (Fassin & Rechtman, 2009).

In conclusion, the dominant victim versus agency debate regarding migrant sex workers distracts from thick descriptions of their lives and explanations for certain behaviours. Several ethnographic studies form exceptions. Geographical and social mobility seem to characterise the lives of many sex workers in Europe (Siegel, 2012). Findings on the levels of exploitation present in the sex industry vary but seem to indicate that having an undocumented status in a country leads to higher levels of exploitation (Pai, 2013), versus conditions in the sex industry after migration within a country (Hoang, 2015). The case study of this thesis was labeled as a human trafficking case by law enforcement, international institutions, and the media (European Commission, 2012), but I find elements of smuggling and trafficking in the case, as will be demonstrated throughout the thesis.

Smuggling and trafficking from Nigeria

There is a relatively large literature on sex trafficking from Nigeria to Europe. Many authors have picked up on the observation that Nigerian women tend to dominate the street prostitution industry in Italy in particular. In line with statements by Shelley (2010) among others, that trafficking operations tend to be hierarchically organised and controlled by crime syndicates in the country of origin, Mancuso (2014, p. 68) argues that Nigerian trafficking rings control the entire process due to their ethnic or family ties.

Becucci (2008, p. 32) finds that in the Nigerian case, a small group of people with a low division of labour manages the process. Each person performs several tasks as "traffickers-exploiters". Again, this shows how researchers use different definitions of trafficking, because the term should already imply exploitation according to the UN protocol. Fitzgibbon (2003) claims that Nigerian trafficking networks are at low risk of detection and punishment. Campana (2015), however, finds that the structure is market-oriented, rather than hierarchical, and that trafficking networks face several risks. He bases this distinction on Coase's (1937) work distinguishing between two forms of coordination in economic exchange: a market-orientation means that coordination takes place through the price mechanism in the market. In contrast, a hierarchical form means that coordination takes place through the decisions of an entrepreneur leading a firm.

Much of the literature has looked at a peculiarity in the trafficking of Nigerian women: magic rites as a form of coercion (Iacono, 2014, p. 114). There is disagreement in the literature on the role of these 'voodoo' rituals, are they a form of coercion or, has this been misinterpreted by authorities and used by people to establish their victimhood? (see van Dijk, 2001; van Dijk et al., 2006). Finally, an observation in the literature is that women tend to have entrepreneurial roles in Nigerian trafficking (Siegel & de Blank, 2010). Rather than male pimps, female 'madams' employ the sex workers. These madams are ex-prostitutes. Current sex workers have a chance of moving up in the hierarchy once they have repaid their loan. Studies have emphasised the strong bond between the madams and their workers or victims, but do not explain what the basis of this bond is:

> 'The strength of the pact between the woman and her sponsor is that the women have respected it so strongly and cooperated to live by it. At the same time, it contains an element of fraud, both as it is first presented and how it is then practised in Europe.' (Carling, 2005, p. 50)

The point that 'the strength of a pact is that people adhere to it' is a circular argument: beyond the fact that the women have respected the agreement for a long time, Carling (2005) does not give an explanation as to why this would be the case.

Although the literature on Nigerian trafficking is extensive, many studies rely on the accounts of migrants only, or the accounts of law enforcement only. There are a few journalistic accounts using court files on Nigerian trafficking groups, but not many academic studies. Mancuso (2014) and Campana (2015) are exceptions: they aim to answer questions on cooperation in these gangs with wiretap data, using them for social network analysis to analyse the structure of the groups. Ellis (2016) has written a comprehensive historical account of Nigerian organised crime.

1.3 Gaps in the literature: The aim of this thesis

The case of sex trafficking from Nigeria to Europe poses several questions that remain unresolved in the literature. Many studies claim that trafficking organisations in general, and Nigerian groups in particular, are hierarchically structured. Confusingly, they are claimed to have a low division of labour at the same time and are at low risk of detection. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, (2014) describes the crime of human trafficking as "low risk, high profit", but this categorisation does not seem to take into consideration the risk of non-cooperation by fellow traffickers or trafficked persons. An operation that involves a long journey crossing multiple borders illegally and exploiting people long-term would theoretically seem to involve high risks, many different skills, and various obstacles to cooperation. Despite these obstacles, we observe high numbers of migrant smuggling and trafficking. Moreover, there are observations that high capacity groups that traffic over a hundred women a year do exist. Campana (2015) highlighted this observation and studied one of these high capacity groups and found that their success is based on a market-oriented structure, rather than a hierarchy. His study has opened up this field and points to several unresolved questions. Furthermore, the market-orientation finding of Campana (2015) challenges the conventional wisdom on hierarchical groups. This finding should be explored further, taking into consideration obstacles to cooperation that other studies have overlooked.

This thesis aims to understand and describe the trafficking of women[1] from Edo State, Nigeria, working in the sex industry in Italy. This thesis will study the agreements between three parties: those providing transportation and illegal entry into Europe; those employing the women in the sex industry; and finally the incoming migrants and their families. The research problem is why we observe effective cooperation between those parties in an industry that is illegal, transnational, and that relies on profits from sex work. This thesis will look at the decision-making of migrants and traffickers, using sociological tools to understand cooperation and exploitation in the informal and/or illegal sector.

[1] In this case study, I have not studied male trafficking victims. Of course, they are a part of the universe of trafficking cases.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

This chapter presents the theoretical framework of the thesis. The central themes are cooperation and exploitation. In addressing these themes, this chapter uses rational choice theory to understand human behaviour, as well as additional mechanisms to explore actions that do not seem to serve self-interest directly. In section 2.1, I introduce the notion that trust increases the likelihood of cooperation. I discuss how cooperation in the underworld should be particularly problematic as levels of trust tend to be low. I discuss specific mechanisms that could increase trust even in a market where legal enforcement is not available: sharing kinship and ethnic ties and the mechanism of hostage-taking. Ethnic homogeneity can be a proxy for social norms and religious values that foster cooperation. Finally, I discuss why coercion is not a real alternative to trust. In section 2.2, I discuss the structure that cooperative ties could take. I address the question of why we would observe integration of actors into a firm instead of actors engaging in market-oriented transactions only. Finally, in section 2.3, I discuss trust, cooperation, and exploitation in the context of migration. I discuss levels of trust in migration communities and individual versus household decision-making regarding migration. Chapter 2 as a whole discusses theoretical concepts that can be applied to analyse behaviour in human trafficking and migrant sex work. I identify that in illegal settings, levels of trust tend to be low, while in migrant networks, they tend to be high. Human trafficking takes place in both contexts: this has implications for cooperation and exploitation. While irregular migration does not have to be illegal, it is an environment where legal enforcement is not available.

2.1 Trust and cooperation in the underworld

Exchange between people is the foundation of society (Weber, 1922). An exchange takes place when people value the goods they possess differently. One person might have twenty eggs, but no milk, while the other does not have any eggs and is willing to exchange a pint of milk for an egg. When the milk and egg are exchanged on the spot, trusting the other to adhere to the agreement of the exchange does not require a leap of faith. Similarly, when transactions take place within a community of trusted family members, for example, there may be no need for additional mechanisms to foster cooperation. However, when cooperation takes place beyond a small circle of trusted intimate relations, Weber (1922) argues, in his seminal work *Economy and Society*, we move from the social organisation of a community to that of a society. Cooperation beyond an intimate circle requires more sophisticated mechanisms to foster exchange, such as enforcement by a third party.

In a criminal environment, it is puzzling why we would observe cooperation at all. Information on the reputation of others is not easily traceable; there is no criminal chamber of commerce. By definition, criminals cannot go to court in case of a dispute (see Reuter, 1983). Still, we consistently observe criminal cooperation throughout the world. Why would two criminals work together in a criminal enterprise (Campana & Varese, 2013)? Many criminological studies do not address the problem of cooperation between offenders (Cressey, 1972; Snyder, 2006; Turner & Kelly, 2009 for example). They assume that criminal gangs, for example, emerge because of a specific subculture and the norms within that culture. These accounts consider cooperation to be something that is self-evident, while it is something to be explained. In the absence of law enforcement in the underworld, criminals may steal from each other. They might use violence against each other or enter an agreement with the state and report against others. Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990, p. 157) argue that serious criminals are “unreliable, untrustworthy, selfish, and thoughtless”. According to the logic of Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) criminals are already cheating the law, so why would they not cheat each other? Nonetheless, we do observe cooperation in the underworld in all sorts of forms, all over the world.

Trust

Trust is a candidate explanation for cooperation between co-offenders (Campana & Varese, 2013). Trust is the decision of Actor A to transfer resources to Actor B in the *expectation* that B will later satisfy the terms of the agreement (Campana & Varese, 2013; Coleman, 1990, p. 91; Dasgupta, 1988, p. 51). However, using trust as the explanation then raises the question of how Actor A forms this expectation. In the overworld, several mechanisms can increase Actor A’s expectation that B will comply with the agreement in the future. If this expectation is increased, Actor A has a higher disposition of trusting B. For example, if a student A lends a book to student B, the expectation of B returning it is higher if A knows they can complain about B to the teacher and the teacher will enforce the agreement. The mechanisms in the legal world include legally binding contracts, effective court systems, and easily traceable information about business partners. Even in this context, trust requires a leap of faith (Campana & Varese, 2013). Going to court, for example, is a costly option. Most people only do so once or twice in their lives, if at all. However, the fact that third-party enforcement is in place often prevents actors from defecting from an agreement, even if the chance that the other party will resort to a court procedure is small. In other words, it increases trust.

Ethnicity, kinship, and hostage-taking

There are two mechanisms I want to highlight that increase levels of trust and the likelihood of cooperation in an environment where legal enforcement is not available. First, the continuum of kinship to ethnicity as a means of lowering transaction costs (Landa, 1981). Then, the mechanism of hostage-taking as a credible commitment (Allen, 2006; Schelling, 2006; Williamson, 1983).

In her influential work on the role of ethnicity and kinship as an alternative to contract law, Landa (1981) argues that ethnically homogeneous Mafia groups are a low-cost club for enforcement of contracts in an environment that is uncertain and is, per definition, outside of a legal framework. This transaction cost explanation of ethnicity dispels the notion that the reason that crime groups tend to ethnically homogeneous is that they form a deviant sub-culture. Bovenkerk (2001) shows that cultural explanations are widespread in the criminological literature, but that these studies fall into "the ethnicity trap" by analysing crime as a self-contained cultural phenomenon. Instead, the sociologically relevant question should be whether ethnicity and criminal cooperation do indeed overlap and if it is ethnicity that explains anything, or whether the link is merely spurious (Bovenkerk, 2001).

Landa's (1981, p. 352) theory helps overcome such a trap by analysing behaviour in exchange relations as individuals embedded in social structures, where the rational trader will enter into trade relations with others whom he knows to be trustworthy. A trader will tend to rank trustworthiness on a continuum from them being their family to a complete stranger. Landa (1981) refers to several points on this continuum: close kin, extended kin, ethnic similarity, and finally those outside of one's ethnic group.

The trader does not select a person for cultural reasons, but because these characteristics mean that the costs to gather reliable information on one another, such as whereabouts and weaknesses, are lower (Campana & Varese, 2013).

Selecting trading partners from the most homogeneous group only, the family, will lead to opportunity costs of exclusion (Landa, 1981, p. 354). As long as the opportunity costs of excluding outsiders exceed transactions costs, the trader benefits from moving outside of close kin circles onto more extended family onto people from the same ethnic group or even beyond. Game theory would predict that even though cooperation outside the ethnic group may be beneficial for everyone, this may not happen (Gambetta, 2000, p. 21). Namely, if levels of trust outside the ethnic group are low, when there is no legal framework in place, for example, and people have no means to find out about each other's motives, transaction costs may exceed opportunity costs (Gambetta, 2000, p. 217).

These observations lead to the idea of 'social embeddedness' (Granovetter, 1985). Rather than actors choosing trading partners by purely economic criteria, selecting them on skill for example, they will take into consideration how familiar this person is to them. People enter business transactions with existing social relations because they already have some knowledge of each other and some consideration for each other's wellbeing (Gambetta, 2000, p. 224). Applying this to criminal networks, Kleemans and Van de Bunt (1999; 2003) find that criminals use existing social relationships for their enterprises, mainly because they are operating in a hostile environment, instead of building up new ties for business purposes.

There is support for the hypothesis that kinship increases the likelihood of cooperation in criminal groups (Campana & Varese, 2013). The mechanism behind this is that kin have aligned incentives, they can gather reliable information on one another, and they can predict, i.e. trust, each other's behaviour from years of experience and long time horizons for the future. Moving along Landa's (1981) circles of homogeneity from close kin to extended kin to shared ethnicity, the question arises what exactly it is about shared ethnicity that is a proxy for lower transaction costs.

Ethnicity tends to be a proxy for geographical clustering. Geographical clustering means that criminals can appeal to the cooperative mechanism of hostage-taking. Allen (2006) observes that hostage-taking is a standard mechanism that was used by the Romans. In an insecure trading environment, where people transported goods over long distances, and there was great incentive to cheat, the party receiving the goods would take a hostage from the transporter, who was to be released when the goods had safely arrived. Zaitch (2002) observes the same mechanism among Colombian cocaine traders in the Netherlands. The people in the Netherlands will tell their families back in Colombia to take one of the cousins of their trading partner hostage. The family in Colombia will treat the hostage well, and the hostage will be released when the drugs arrive. However, when things go wrong, and the drugs do not arrive, the family kills the hostage. The death of the hostage is an unlikely outcome because the hostage-taking mechanism ensures that it is not in the interest of either trading partner to defect on the agreement.

Hostage-taking can constitute a credible commitment and therefore support cooperation (Williamson, 1983). However, the literature on credible threats - a unilateral effort to gain an advantage over another party – is much more widespread, because of the assumption that the legal system enforces agreements in a low-cost way (Williamson, 1983, p. 519). Hostage-taking may evoke an image of a stronger party demanding a hostage from the weaker party, who has no choice but to comply. However, Williamson (1983) argues that hostage-taking effectively ensures cooperation and that it is often in the mutual interest to achieve this result. The word 'hostage' has its original meaning in this case, not the popular meaning of 'kidnapping.' A hostage is "a person held as security for the fulfillment of certain terms" (Schelling, 2006, p. 10). Campana and Varese (2011) find, for example, that Mafiosi willingly make themselves a hostage to fellow criminals by committing an incriminatory act of violence, such as murder, together with others or in front of others. The hostage-taking in this form guarantees their silence about the incriminatory information they have on the others.

Social norms, cognitive dissonance, and religious values

The mechanisms fostering cooperation that I have described above are strategic. Fehr and Fischbacher (2004), however, argue that human cooperation beyond those with whom we share substantive genetic relatedness can only exist in the presence of social norms. Elster (2015, p. 363) shows that social norms do not exhibit the best-response logic in actors that characterises strategic games. In particular, sanctioning behaviour does not seem to follow this line of thinking. People will sanction others violating a norm, even when they are unobserved by a third party, and this is not typically the best response. It is costly for the sanctioner.

The dominant view of social norms is that they emerge when individual actions have positive or negative externalities, in other words, they affect other people (Fehr & Fischbacher, 2004, p. 185). However, people often sanction others driven by emotions, even though they would not be affected by any externalities. A common form of punishment is ostracising someone. People will not choose to sanction any norm, however. If norm enforcement is too costly, norms will break down (Fehr & Fischbacher, 2004, p. 189). Harmful social norms can exist for long periods of time, however, because people believe they exist (Mackie, 2018). They can change only when enough people believe that other people are changing (Mackie, 2018). In this thesis I assume methodological individualism, which is not inconsistent with the existence of social norms and the idea of embeddedness. Methodological individualism has no issue with talking about collectivities, but assumes that "in sociological work collectivities must be treated as solely the resultants and modes of organisation of the particular acts of individual persons, since these alone can be treated as agents in a course of subjectively understandable action" (Weber 1922, p. 13). I assume that the social environment influences individual beliefs, those beliefs lead to action, and action in turn shapes the macro environment.

Some norms may emerge to solve a coordination game but will persist because of belief traps. Mackie (1996, p. 1009) illustrates this in the case of genital mutilation. This norm emerged to solve a coordination game in a context where men want to ensure that their children are theirs. Signs of modesty, such as genital mutilation or foot binding, will improve a woman's chances on the marriage market. Over time, this norm changes into a belief trap: it is a common belief, for example, that a baby will die if it touches the clitoris (Mackie, 1996). These beliefs form over time, perhaps because the original strategic reason is too cynical or complex for people to maintain. Over time, any knowledge of a superior coordination equilibrium that would reduce enormous human suffering fades in this case (Mackie, 1996, p. 1009).

The concept of a belief trap constitutes irrational behaviour. Various cognitive mechanisms seem at odds with utility maximising behaviour. The evidence strongly suggests that human beings have a capacity for self-delusion that exceeds rational expectations (Gambetta, 2000, p. 232-233). Indeed, we can make ourselves and others 'believe'. It is those events of misplaced trust that makes the concept of trust relevant: trust cannot exist without betrayal and disappointment (Gambetta, 2000). This mechanism may come into play mainly when blindly trusting others is better than the alternative options (Gambetta, 2000, p. 222). We will trust others not because we do not know or do not want to know how untrustworthy others are, but just because the action is expected to yield higher returns than any alternatives. On a continuum with distrust at value zero, uncertainty at 0.5, and complete trust at one, people may choose to act even when the trust threshold is lower than 0.5: on the verge of distrust (Gambetta, 2000). If the pressure to act is high enough, the tension between action and belief can generate self-deception through wishful thinking and the reduction of cognitive dissonance. Wishful thinking may express itself as distrusting an entire category of people, except for the one member of that group with whom one has a special relationship (Gambetta, 2000).

In other cases, trust in entire groups may increase because people associate the group with certain positive norms and values. Gambetta (2000) finds that the Sicilian Mafia makes extensive use of religious symbols relating to the Italian Catholic Church, both to appeal to related values within the Mafia and to signal a good reputation to the community. The Russian Mafia does the same (Varese, 2001) as do Chinese gangs (Skarbek & Wang, 2015). One reason is that religious norms tend to encourage unselfish behaviour, solidarity and self-sacrifice are virtues promoted by all major world religions, and church members internalise these norms. An appeal to such values can decrease opportunistic behaviour among criminals as well. The side effect of the prevalence of moral and religious beliefs in a society is to foster cooperation for its inherent virtues (Gambetta, 2000, p. 224).

A parallel mechanism to what Gambetta (2000) argues is that church-goers may tend to be better integrated into their social networks than non-religious people in some cases, because of the promotion of solidarity and cooperation, for example as expressed in behaviour like volunteering, according to some empirical evidence (Ruiter & De Graaf, 2010). In other cases, an empirical link between religion and informal mechanisms for cooperation is found in phenomena such as *Hawala* banking. An informal mechanism fostering cooperation can then potentially be misused for a criminal activity (Van de Bunt, 2008). The observation of ethnic homogeneity in many criminal organisations may be a proxy for shared values and shared structures, rather than ethnicity in itself explaining something. Weber (1915, p. 331) argues that the sublimated world religions of salvation seem to be at odds with rationalised economies, whereas "All primeval magical or mystagogic ways of influencing spirits and deities have pursued special interests. They have striven for wealth, as well as long life, health, honor." The sublimated religions of salvation, however, have been increasingly tense in their relationships with rationalised economies. While large parts of the world are subject to secularisation (Bruce, 2010), there are cases of religious revival in various other parts, explained by some as the outcome of a rational cost-benefit analysis of church-goers (Iannaccone, 1995).

Distrust: Coercion, violence, and monitoring

In some situations the issue is not so much that the level of trust is low, but that trust is irrelevant. In a slave society, for example, rulers can restrict their trust in slaves to the belief that the slaves will not commit mass suicide (Gambetta 2000, p. 219). In the underworld, where actors are already cheating on the law, per definition, these same actors would not be afraid to coerce others, rather than cooperate on a bilateral basis. It is not clear how they would achieve a position from which they can coerce others, however. Gambetta (2000, p. 220) theorises that coercion is not an adequate alternative to trust. In order to coerce somebody else, a credible threat has to be made, which is a unilateral effort to gain an advantage (see Schelling, 2006). A threat becomes credible when the actor making the threat is theoretically capable of executing it. They do not need to execute the threat in order to coerce an actor. However, those receiving the threat need to be sufficiently convinced of the ability of the other to execute it. In order to signal this reputation, the coercer needs to show his or her power at times. This is the reason why, for example, the Mafia for sometimes commits a gruesome murder but will avoid it when they can.

However, many studies on the Mafia show that there is a demand for their protection service, rather than them merely extorting others under threat (see Gambetta, 1996). Wanting to avoid visibility, which would increase the risk of detection by law enforcement, Mafias will tend to seek transactions that rely on trust rather than coercion. (Gambetta, 2000, p. 220). Namely, credible threats that make coercion viable will tend to be of a physically violent nature. Schelling's (2006) concepts of credible commitments and credible threats apply to all kinds of transactions in the under- and overworld, not just Mafia businesses.

When coercion is not possible, direct monitoring may be an alternative to trust, although a costly one. Monitoring also leads back to the prevalence of cooperative ties based on kinship and ethnic ties in the underworld: it is easier to monitor those with whom we share an intimate relationship. Section 2.2 will discuss Coase's theorem of hierarchical firms as a means to monitor cooperative partners and as a solution to overcome transaction costs.

The theory on trust, kinship and ethnicity, hostage-taking, social norms all provide potential mechanisms that could foster cooperation. The theory shows that coercion is unlikely to be an alternative to cooperation. The human trafficking literature, however, has overlooked cooperation between migrants and traffickers, and focuses mostly on coercion. In this thesis, I will apply the theory to the question: How can cooperation between migrants and traffickers be explained?

2.2 Markets versus hierarchies

The previous section discussed cooperative mechanisms in the underworld. This section considers the structure of cooperative ties. Firstly, I treat Coase's theorem on the existence of firms. Then, I discuss predictions of the structure that criminal enterprises may take, including a discussion on organised crime versus other forms of criminal enterprises. I discuss how brokers have unique positions within market-oriented networks. Finally, I discuss the limitations of Coase's transaction cost approach.

Coase (1937) presents the idea that if market economies worked perfectly, we would not observe firms: every transaction would occur between independent actors on the market (Granovetter, 1995). However, we do observe firms, from which Coase (1937) deduces that there must be products that are not efficient to buy on the market. The reason that market transactions are not always the most efficient is that transaction costs come into play when participating in a market. They involve all costs above production costs, such as the costs to gather reliable information, the costs incurred by having to bargain to reach an agreement, and the costs of enforcing an agreement. Coase (1937) theorises how market contracts differ from contracts within a firm. An employment contract within a firm establishes an authority relation; it demands that employees follow the directions of the entrepreneur. Coordination within a firm can reduce the costs that would be involved with bargaining before every agreement on the market.

However, as a firm grows, the organisational costs of monitoring employees and coordinating activities may eventually become higher than the transaction costs of market coordination. The size of a firm is dependent on the costs of monitoring the performance of employees (Reuter, 1983, p. 111). According to Coase (1937), therefore, the equilibrium of external versus internal transactions is not stable; it will change over time. Williamson (1973) has added to Coase's (1937) theory by including the role of uncertainty and opportunism, for example as experienced in a classic prisoner's dilemma. If a firm internalises transactions, Williamson (1973) poses, there is less risk of opportunism, because repercussions can be immediate due to the employment agreement, and the horizon of relationships is long.

The illegality of a product may be an incentive for both internalisation and externalisation, as there are pushes in both directions (Reuter, 1983, p. 117). The organisational form also depends on the kind of criminal market. In any mMrket, there are typically several kinds of criminal enterprises that cooperate. Campana and Varese (2018) categorise activities around an illegal product into three distinct functions: production, trade, and governance of illegal goods. Mafias, for example, operate in the governance realm, cocaine producers naturally in the production segment, and drug traffickers, human smugglers, and human traffickers in the trade arena.

A criminal entrepreneur may choose to keep his employees close in order to monitor them, or choose to segment the business so that no one has enough information to report him to the authorities. Reuter (1983, p. 127) recognises that due to the difficulty for an entrepreneur to remotely monitor agents, illegal firms can be expected to be local in scope. There may be local Mafias protecting parts of the business. For organised crime to extort a criminal firm, it is essential to be able to monitor the victim's activity and earnings (Schelling, 1971, p. 648). It is difficult for organised crime to get a hold of transnational criminal networks, such as drug trafficking, but it may have power over territory at several points of the production line. Alternatively, a network could internalise protection instead of transacting with a specialised criminal firm (Dick, 1995). The statement Schelling makes that many firms let their salesmen work on commission could be true (Schelling, 1971, p. 651). Traditionally, researchers have viewed organised crime involvement as a monopolizing force (Dick, 1995). However, "it may be useful to remind ourselves of how many illegal goods and services are provided competitively rather than by monopoly organisations of the underworld" (Schelling, 1971, p. 646). Dick's (1995) paper develops an analytical framework in which transaction costs, rather than monopoly power, primarily determine the activities of organised criminal firms. He states that as input specificity goes up, economies of scale, scope, and externalities decline in importance, which reduces the organised crime firm's cost advantage over self-supply.

Dick (1995, p. 27) argues that the only effective contract between criminal firms is a self-enforcing one. Downstream firms have the choice between internal self-supply of protection and enforcement of contracts or hiring a specialised firm to do it for them. A short horizon decreases the possibility to monitor, and the uncertainty increases opportunistic behaviour. Dick (1995, p. 33) predicts that in this case it is costly for transacting parties to observe each other's actions and it may not be possible to gather correct information on each other's behaviour at all. Organised crime firms will tend to transact more frequently when monitoring costs are lower (Dick, 1995, p. 38).

Markets and hierarchies in the face of arrest

An acute risk that criminal groups need to cope with, which legal firms do not have to, is detection by law enforcement. A criminal entrepreneur will want to distribute as much of their own risk as possible onto others. Criminals are acutely aware that law enforcement may be willing to lower or discard charges against the agent if they disclose information about the principal (Reuter, 1983). Plea-bargaining is much more prevalent in the United States than elsewhere. However, an entrepreneur will be aware of the risk that others may expose him or her in any country. The entrepreneur will control the risk each employee is exposed to and will disperse employees across time and space. In a hierarchy, the behaviour of agents is easier to monitor, but the downside is that there is a distinct boss whom law enforcement will try to target, often referred to as the 'kingpin.'

A market structure, however, makes it harder to monitor others, but if the structure is horizontal enough, the entrepreneur will not run the same risk as the boss of a hierarchy would. Instead, those most important in the network may be those with brokerage roles: connecting others, rather than controlling them (Morselli, 2010; Morselli & Roy, 2008). Morselli (2010) defines a broker as the person who is positioned between disconnected others in a social network. Burt (2005, p. 7) states that a broker has a competitive edge by controlling information asymmetries between his co-offenders. Brokers trade in information, and others come to rely on them rather than taking the role of traditional criminal boss. Therefore, there are several ways in which criminals may overcome problems of coordination and for the entrepreneur to handle principal-agent problems even in a low trust environment. This paragraph has described the options a criminal network has regarding its structure. Vertical integration is one option to ensure compliance from employees. Segmentation and operating on the market is an alternative option that means that compliance is not necessary: not one actor is indispensable enough or has enough information to do critical damage to the entrepreneur. However, within an effective state, Reuter (1983) emphasises, there is always a limit to how large a criminal organisation can grow before being detected.

Together with section 2.1 on trust and cooperative mechanisms, this section adds theory on the various ways in which a criminal network could structure itself. In order to address the research problem, noth section 2.1 and this section will be applied to the following research questions: How can cooperation between traffickers be explained? Moreover, how can traffickers reach a high capacity of trafficked migrants?

2.3 Chain migration and exploitation

While cooperation in the underworld is relevant to the research problem of human trafficking, it also inherently takes place in a migration context. In contrast to theories on criminal cooperation which highlight low levels of trust, some migration studies point out that certain communities of undocumented migrants are high trust environments (Tilly, 2007). In this thesis, I will analyse where elements of low trust and of high trust appear. In this section, I introduce two seemingly contrasting motivations that may drive migrants. The first is migration for the collective good. Often, migration is a collective decision in which one or a few members of a family are sent abroad with the aim of benefitting the community in the country of origin. Alternatively, individual goals of social mobility motivate migrants. Finally, I will discuss the concept of labour exploitation and set a definition for exploitation maintained throughout this thesis.

The dilemma of community solidarity and individual freedom

Portes and Sensenbrenner (1993, p. 1321) critique Williamson's (1973) transaction cost approach, because of the problem of 'social embeddedness'. They argue that Williamson disregards existing social relationships, such as kin, but also friendship ties, in the way he models the decision-making of entrepreneurs. However, Portes and Sensenbrenner (1993) do concede that ‘embeddedness’ as a concept suffers from theoretical vagueness. They aim to specify how social structures may constrain individual goal-seeking behaviour. In order to do so, they study economic behaviour in immigration settings, arguing that few contexts are more embedded than migrant communities (Portes & Sensenbrenner, 1993, p. 1322). In this thesis, I adopt a theoretical framework that assumes individual rational choice, and I use the transaction cost approach as a helpful analytical tool. However, I do include migration literature to analyse behaviour that does not at first seem like individual goal maximising behaviour. Portes (1981, p. 291) defines an immigrant enclave as:

> ‘an immigrant group which concentrates in a distinct spatial location and organizes a variety of enterprises serving their own ethnic market and/or the general population.’

Portes and Sensenbrenner’s (1993) key point is that we need to take into consideration subjective, rather than formal, rationality in market transactions. Subjective rationality does not mean that individuals are acting altruistically, but rather that members of the group may subordinate their present desires to collective expectations in anticipation of long-term market advantages through the group (Portes & Sensenbrenner, 1993, p. 1325).

A movement towards a ‘new economics of migration’ postulates that migration decisions are often made at the household, rather than the individual level (Massey et al., 1993). Instead of an an individual decision to maximise their income, this new theory regards certain forms of migration as the result of household decisions to minimise risks to the family’s income by spreading activities geographically (Massey et al.,1993, p. 432). In that case, when the local situation is uncertain or deteriorates, the family can rely on remittances from the migrant (Massey et al., 1993). Before this development, migration researchers used economic models based on formal rationality: an individual will migrate if their cost-benefit analysis shows that the sum of probability of employment in the new country, the probability of avoiding deportation (one in the case of legal migration, smaller than one in the case of illegal migration), and earnings if employed are higher than expected income in the community of origin plus the cost of migration itself (Massey et al., 1993, p. 435).

Massey et al. (1993) review the migration literature and observe that the various theories do not necessarily contradict one another, but merely look for explanations at different levels of aggregation. As De Graaf and Wiertz (forthcoming) point out, it is often the interaction between micro and macro that helps us understand a phenomenon. This thesis will mostly be based on individual decision-making while taking into consideration group preferences, such as the household, and other contextual factors that affect individual decisions.

The research topic of human trafficking is of theoretical interest to the study of cooperation because it pertains to both illegal and informal settings. While the literature on cooperation in the underworld has pointed out that levels of trust are low, the migration literature observes that in specific migration networks, the level of trust is high. Tilly (2007) argues that trust tends to be higher among undocumented migrants than documented migrants. In other words, that trust is higher and more critical among migrants operating outside of a legal framework, than those who migrate with formal documents. One of the mechanisms at play, according to Tilly (2007), is that undocumented migrants tend to migrate for more group-oriented reasons than documented migrants, and therefore send more remittances home. It is these remittance flows that reinforce commitments among all participants in the migration stream (Tilly, 2007). Engbersen et al. (2013) argue for a distinction between four types of attachment of migrants to their country of origin and destination country. For example, one form of attachment is migrants with weak ties to the country of origin, because their entire family has migrated with them and remittances are not sent back to the country of origin. What Tilly (2007) describes applies to the kind of migrant with strong ties to the home country.

While the literature on cooperation in the underworld points out that actors move around a lot, which makes it harder to trust, the migration literature tends to agree that migration is very localised (Carling, 2006; Mackie, 1995; Massey et al., 1993; Portes & Haller, 2010; Portes & Sensenbrenner, 1993; Tilly, 2007). The sort of migration that is attached to trust networks (Tilly, 2007, p. 8) tends to take place within particular economic, geographic, and social niches, compared to other kinds of migration, such as that of individual high-skilled workers. Irregular long-distance migration poses serious risks. Relying on existing relationships through chain migration means that there will only be a few origin-destination streams. A common observation is that large numbers of people from the same village migrate to the same neighbourhoods, thousands of kilometres from the original village (Tilly, 2007). When sustained, these chains of migration and their attached remittances will profoundly affect the organisation of the place of origin: its distribution of power and wealth (Tilly, 2007, p. 10). The general hypothesis of chain migration is that migration sustains itself: migration leads to more migration (Massey et al., 1993, p. 461). However, Tilly (2007, p. 16) predicts that these trust networks will eventually erode if they no longer offer any benefits to its members: the chains will need to adapt to economic, political, legal, and social circumstances.

The frequent observation of chain migration raises the question whether the motivation to migrate was always there, but the logistics were not in place and the connections not available, or that people only become motivated to migrate when they see others do so. Connecting this to Tilly's (2007) observation that remittances tend to alter communities profoundly, it may not be a case of either individuals or households wanting to maximise their income, but that they tend to compare their income to others close to them. Mackie (1995, p. 186) sees chain migration not just as a fact, but as a puzzle: Why, given that there is an enormous economic incentive to migrate from poorer to richer countries generally, do so few migrate in some instances, and so many in others? Mackie's (1995) answer to this is that as opportunities increase, frustration increases faster. Mackie (1995) concludes that the migration process itself affects both driving forces: the opportunity for others to migrate and their desire to migrate. Both individuals and households are subject to relative deprivation. The migration process affects social norms and status symbols: the dimension of being able to give expensive gifts or gifts from abroad may start to affect access to certain social spaces, for example. It seems likely that the household or even extended family becomes a more critical factor in decision-making when entire communities are affected by the migration process, rather than individuals going on individual journeys to maximise income.

Considering the theory on migration networks, I ask whether these mechanisms would apply to the context of trafficking as well, and this leads to the following research question: How can the start of trafficking between two regions be explained?

Trust in migrant communities

Ethnic solidarity theory predicts that migrants have more positive outcomes in the migrant enclave than in the open economy (Wilson & Martin, 1982). Fellow migrants will help newcomers settle into the new society (Wilson & Martin, 1982). The literature seems to agree that two conditions are necessary for an enclave to emerge and persist: firstly, the first migrants need to have sufficient capital and entrepreneurial skills, and secondly, there needs to be a continuing inflow of new migrants (Wilson & Portes, 1980, p. 314). Ethnic ties assume such a central role in the adaption of immigrants that this form of social capital is more important than human and financial capital (Nee & Sanders, 2001).

Nee and Sanders (2001) dispute ethnic solidarity theory and predict that more often than not, trust in the migrant community leads to negative consequences for the newcomers. Sanders and Nee (1987, p. 764) observe that dependence on ethnic group assistance tends to lead to patron-client relationships. Paternalism in the workplace makes workers reluctant to demand better working conditions and higher wages (Nee & Sanders 2001, p. 390). Social closure in immigrant enclaves is a result of the outside society appearing to be unfriendly or even hostile to immigrants (Nee & Sanders, 2001, p. 375). Social closure also enhances community-level sanctioning. Nee and Sanders (1987, p. 375) find that, in many immigrant communities, entrapment by way of dependence on the workaday lives of virtual servitude is not uncommon. Enclave entrepreneurs can help lower labour costs for larger firms by the exploitation of the more vulnerable immigrant labour force. Low-wage labour of immigrant workers is what permits survival and expansion of enclave enterprises, which, in turn, open new opportunities for economic advancement (Wilson & Portes, 1980, p. 315).

I propose that an extreme case of a negative consequence of trust in the migrant community is not only that the outcome is sub-optimal compared to finding work in the regular economy, but also that the worker is exploited. Nee and Sanders (2001) do not explicitly discuss undocumented migrants, but I would expect that the risk of exploitation is much higher when migrants do not have the option of moving into the regular economy. Campana and Varese (2015) explain that, often, a smuggling agreement between an incoming migrant and a smuggler may be upheld, but that exploitation is a by-effect of illegality. A competing explanation of exploitation as a by-effect of illegality is the modern slavery argument (see Bales 2012, Hughes 2000). In this argument, the dominant idea is that migrant sex workers and other labourers are exploited because their agency was taken away. This argument describes a kidnapping scenario, rather than an employment relationship.

Furthermore, Portes and Haller (2010) argue that there is a difference between the illegal and informal economy. Portes and Haller (2010) state that an illegal enterprise is always accompanied by enforcing agreements: this is the role of a pimp in prostitution and an enforcer in Sicilian crime families (Gambetta, 1993). In contrast, they say that an informal economy is a "network organisation" that relies on socially monitored transactions that do not need an enforcer. In migrant enclaves, they say, there is a reduction of formal contracts and more flexibility in economic transactions through enforceable trust. Although the illegal nature of a business has implications for its dynamics, I argue that Portes and Haller (2010) make an analytical error by contrasting a "network organisation" with "enforcers". First of all, the word "network" does not have any implications for the structure of that network: it may be a market or a hierarchy and has an infinite number of other features (Campana, 2016a). Secondly, the presence of social norms is not unique to informal networks, and they can be enforced by other means than social control. In a tight-knit community, such as a migrant enclave, social norms may contribute strongly to cooperation. Social control can enforce these norms, but Elster (1999, p. 145) finds that internal control, the emotion of shame, is even more powerful. Feelings of shame sanction behaviour that is not in line with the norm. Elster (1999, p. 284) adds to the literature that argues that emotions, rather than interfering with rational decision-making, actually promote it (Barbalet, 1996; Frank, 1988).

The modern slavery argument

One theory explains the exploitation of sex workers with the modern slavery argument. In his theory of human trafficking as modern slavery, Bales (1999) argues that modern slavery has a few observable implications that are different from traditional slavery. Slaves, he mentions, are now disposable; the relationships are short-term, and ethnic differences (between slaves and slaveholders) are not important (Bales, 1999). Hughes (2000) subscribes to the theory of modern slavery and argues that pimps completely control the behaviour of their victims. She also argues that trafficking in women, which she equates with modern slavery, does not bring financial prosperity to local communities (Hughes, 2000). A key implication of modern slavery theory is that the perpetrators physically confine victims. They imprison people and thereby take away their agency completely (Kara, 2009; Shelley, 2010). In this scenario, trust is not relevant. In a slave society, rulers can restrict their trust in slaves to the belief that slaves will not commit mass suicide (Gambetta, 2000). The slaves themselves cannot take any decisions for themselves. Therefore they do not make any transactions, and trust is irrelevant to them.

The modern slavery argument and the trust in ethnic ties argument are two opposing theories that could explain the exploitation of migrants. This disagreement leads to the following research question: How can the long-term exploitation of migrants be explained?

Defining exploitation

The challenge in choosing a helpful definition of exploitation is that, in many uses of the word, it seems to be "a rhetorical placeholder for expressing disapproval" (Wertheimer, 1996, p. 5). Wilkinson (2004, p. 13) considers two different ways to define exploitation: 'wrongful use' and 'disparity of value'. The wrongful use definition refers to someone being used only as a means, while disparity of value refers to someone being unfairly used: "that their position of vulnerability is taken advantage of in order to under-reward their role within a given transaction" (Wilkinson, 2004). Campana and Varese (2016, p. 93) choose the disparity of value definition over the wrongful use definition in their discussion of exploitation in human smuggling and human trafficking. They argue that the wrongful use view of exploitation leads to all-encompassing definitions that refer to anything that one finds morally objectionable. Munro (2008, p. 88) discusses the issue of applying the 'wrongful use' definition of exploitation in the sex industry. For example, in the UK

Sexual Offences Act (2003) there is no specification of what exploitation means in a sexual context. Remarkably, it seems to imply that simply to work as a prostitute in the sex industry constitutes exploitation (Munro, 2008).

The latter definition, disparity of value, corresponds to Marx's conception of exploitation (Wright, 2002, p. 835). Exploitation is at the core of the Marxist tradition, while Weber makes little direct reference to the phenomenon. However, there are several instances in *Economy and Society* where Weber (1922) describes social problems that would be characterised as exploitation of labour by Marx. In his analysis of modernity, Weber (1922, p. 967-68) argues that status incentives and an assured salary are superior to arbitrary physical coercion, like enslavement, for the success of the system. Weber's view does not take into consideration that exploitation may exist without physical coercion. For the definition maintained in this thesis, exploitation can occur independently from whether the exploited person is physically confined or not. Instead, agency will be part of the discussion as to why exploitation takes place and why it could be sustained over a long period. I will explore whether physical coercion is at play or whether one can be 'voluntarily' exploited. The disparity of value definition does not make assumptions about what has led to the unfair labour relationship. Furthermore, this definition allows for a continuum of levels of exploitation: from gross violations of one's physical integrity to having one's payment postponed.

2.4 Research Questions

This chapter has introduced the theoretical framework of this thesis. I discuss rational choice, emotions, and social norms as tools to understand human behaviour. In particular, I look at trust in the context of the underworld as well as in the context of migration. While the literature on crime suggests that levels of trust tend to be low in the underworld, the literature on irregular migration finds that levels of trust are high. In human trafficking, these two contexts overlap, and it is unclear how cooperation can be explained. Cooperation and exploitation in human trafficking are not self-evident. The puzzle is that we do not yet understand why migrants and traffickers would cooperate and why traffickers can exploit migrants. This puzzle leads to the central research question of this thesis:

How can cooperation and exploitation in human trafficking be explained?

Throughout this chapter, I have identified several subquestions, which will be treated in the core chapters of this thesis:

Chapter 4

- How can the start of trafficking between two regions be explained?
- How can cooperation between migrants and traffickers be explained?

Chapter 5

- How can cooperation between traffickers be explained?
- How can a trafficking network reach a high capacity of transported migrants?

Chapter 6

- How can long-term exploitation of migrants be explained?

Chapter 3: Data and Methods

3.1 Introduction: Researching Migration, Crime, and Sex

This thesis looks at the case study of illegal migration from Nigeria into sex work in Europe to answer the research questions formulated in Section 2.4. Due to observations of gross exploitation, illegal crossing of borders, and signs of coercion of migrants through religious intimidation, this stream of migration is almost always referred to as human trafficking (Campana, 2016b; Carling, 2005; Damon et al., 2018; Mancuso, 2014). The central research question is: How can cooperation and exploitation in human trafficking be explained? This question and the choice of case study pose several challenges for a research design due to the issues around gathering data on the topics of migration, crime, and sex. The actors involved include potentially vulnerable and hard-to-reach migrants, members of criminal organisations, as well as state and civil society parties that seek to impair this market. Previous studies on illegal migrants have looked at either supply side (smugglers and traffickers) or demand side (migrants), or the interaction between demand side and state and civil society. When researchers do study the interaction between supply and demand, they usually base their findings on the accounts of the migrants only, which provides a distorted view of reality (see Campana, 2016b for a critique). On the contrary, the design of this thesis is based on the contention that multiple viewpoints are necessary to address the puzzle of cooperation in this market adequately.

Something to highlight about this chapter is its discussion of using a large-scale police investigation as a case study in academic research. I discuss how to select this case, and how to place such a case into its historical, political, economic, and social context. Another key topic consists of the ethical issues surrounding life history interviews with vulnerable female migrants on very sensitive topics, such as sex, violence, illegal migration, and potentially paradoxical relationships with their families and employers, as well as reflecting critically on the researcher's presence as a Dutch, white, young female. To summarise the research design: this thesis is based on a content analysis of a Dutch police investigation from 2006-2007 and its 826 wiretapped phone conversations in particular; life history interviews I conducted with 14 female Nigerian migrants in the Netherlands and Nigeria; and 40 interviews with stakeholders, such as European and Nigerian law enforcement officials, social workers, and other informants, such as a taxi driver, a Pentecostal priest, and members of civil society in Lagos and Benin City, Nigeria.

As the last part of this introduction to the data and methodology, I will clarify my standpoint regarding the concept of human trafficking and its implications for data gathering and analysis. Like many other researchers, I set out to study the behaviour of human traffickers and their victims. However, similar to a process that, for example, Hoang (2015) experienced, I gradually moved away from this focus to other concepts that proved more analytically helpful for the behaviour I was observing. Over time, I realised that perhaps the phenomenon is not as homogeneous as the numerous international news reports regarding 'Nigerian human trafficking for sexual exploitation to Italy' seem to suggest (see for example Damon et al., 2018; Kelly and Tondo, 2017; Kelly and Tondo, 2016). Several researchers (see Campana and Varese 2015; Kleemans and Smit 2013) have highlighted the conceptual difference between human smuggling and human trafficking. Campana and Varese (2015) argue that while human smuggling comprises trading in illegal entry into a country, human trafficking is trading in human beings. Their empirical findings suggest that cases of human trafficking are rare among migrant sex workers. However, my initial data gathering focused on human trafficking: the case study was labelled as a human trafficking case, even though judges later ruled that most of the offenders should receive lower sentences for smuggling. I conducted my interviews at shelters specifically catering to victims of human trafficking and domestic abuse. However, during the first rounds of analysis, I found that my data did not necessarily always relate to the conceptual definition of human trafficking.

Consequently, I sought to broaden variation in the sample by purposively sampling migrants who were residing outside of Western facilities. I started to take into consideration the state and NGOs as stakeholders; and moved away from categorising data according to law enforcement meaning-giving, such as 'victim'; and took a rational choice approach to understand the behaviour of all actors involved. The idea of a 'victim' does not necessarily fit in this framework. An example is that instead of assuming that a group of migrants was exploited because they are labelled trafficking victims, I explore whether this is actually the case in Chapter 6.

In this chapter, I will first discuss the outline of the research design and provide a justification for this design, including case selection in section 3.2. I discuss validity, reliability, and the limitations of the design. Then, in section 3.3, I discuss my execution of the design: I describe the data and discuss issues around access and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research design and justification

Case study

As is well recognised, the term *case study* is ambiguous, referring to a heterogeneous set of research designs (Gerring, 2004). In this thesis, I use a relatively narrow definition: the intensive analysis of a single unit, where the researcher's goal is to understand a broader class of similar units. Thus, there is an inherent problem of inference from the sample to the population. I assume that law enforcement only detects a small part of illegal entry into Europe. I want to select a case that allows for within-case comparison: a large number of people transported by the same network. Therefore, I will always pick a case that is an outlier in the general population: it is a case of a network that grew so successful and so big that law enforcement detected them. For the interviews with migrants, I use another strategy: selecting diverse cases. I have selected on different sites: in the Netherlands and in Nigeria, on state-run facilities and grassroots organisations. The respondents in my sample vary on the transportation route, age, and motivation to migrate.

Case selection

The thesis includes a content analysis (see Krippendorff, 2004) of the court files on the criminal case 'Operation Koolvis'. Dr Paolo Campana first drew my attention to the case; he has analysed the parallel investigation by the Italian police 'Operation Viola' (Campana, 2015). In order to justify the selection of this case, I will first discuss the strategy that was behind it. Disappearances of Nigerian women from Dutch asylum centres sparked a public outcry in the 1990s (Van Dijk, 2001). Initial investigations found that traffickers brought the women to Europe for street prostitution and that the Netherlands mainly functioned as a transit country. A few suspects were in sight, but the investigations only focused on individual victims, and the authorities did not link cases.

An investigation by the Dutch Royal Marechaussee[2], 'Operation Kluivingsbos,' was the first to connect cases. It found that many of the Nigerian women applying for residence in the Netherlands showed similarities: they applied as minors, but might actually be of age. They told the same story about fleeing war between Christians and Muslims. They carried identical documentation with statements from a Nigerian NGO, with names like 'Saint Cross Foundation,' vouching for their status as refugees from a conflict situation. Police analysis showed that despite mentioning different NGOs, these documents all had the same mobile phone number on them. The Marechaussee could also link cases because the same passports would be used numerous times. The investigation concluded that many of the disappearances were connected. A total of 149 potential victims[3] were identified (European Commission, 2012). This finding led to the start of 'Operation Koolvis,' aiming to target the entire chain of trafficking from Nigeria to Italy as the destination country. While law enforcement could connect 149 potential victims to this case over two years time, Campana (2015) estimates that the network trafficked 200 migrants per year.

In cooperation with the Italian police and the Nigerian Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), the criminal network that was behind the disappearances was put under surveillance for two years over 2006 and 2007. The

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[2] The Dutch Royal Marechaussee is responsible for the 'safety of the state' (https://www.defensie.nl/organisatie/marechaussee). It is a division of the army, rather than law enforcement. Among its tasks are controlling entry into the Netherlands via Schiphol Airport.

[3] This list of potential victims included everyone that traveled with documents that the Marechaussee had linked to the same network. This list includes 15 men and 134 women. However, not all of these people were trafficked and ended up in prostitution. Of course, men can be trafficked, and can work in prostitution. In this case study, however, I have not found evidence that men were trafficked into prostitution.

police intercepted phone calls the migrants made from the asylum centres, and from there, wiretaps could be placed on the phones of main suspects in Europe. Initially, migrants were unwilling to talk. The police found out that fear of a 'voodoo oath' might be behind the silence. They hired an expert witness and a Pentecostal priest to talk to the migrants with the hope of getting them to open up. The involvement of a priest was a controversial move and was partially effective. Migrants did start to open up, but the court rejected migrant statements as evidence because the priest influenced them unduly. The statements are included in the court files. The Dutch, Italian, and Nigerian police agreed on a particular date to arrest all suspects simultaneously after two years of surveillance. There were other points of intervention, namely when the police experimented with measures to keep the women in the asylum centres, but this did not forewarn the suspects about the police mapping their entire modus operandi. The strategy behind the case means that the court files include a large amount of rich wiretapped conversations that shine a light on the social reality of the actors. While the actors take measures to circumvent potential police intervention by changing phone numbers frequently and using simple code language, the content of their conversations shows that they are not aware of the on-going investigation. They speak freely of their business plans, and observations prove that what the actors talk about on the phone is actually carried out, increasing the validity of the phone conversations (Campana & Varese, 2012).

The network under investigation is an exemplary case of successful cooperation. The research question requires a case of successful cooperation rather than a failed attempt at cooperation. The network was ultimately caught not because the actors were unable to overcome problems of cooperation, but because the network became *too* successful in terms of the capacity of migrants trafficked per year and therefore became too visible. None of the co-offenders betrayed others to the authorities. Six of the suspects in the Netherlands received prison sentences. “Some of the suspects had remarkable police records, which showed that some of them had repeatedly been arrested over the years for practices related to human trafficking” (European Commission, 2012). They were convicted for human smuggling in association with others, and for leading a criminal organisation or participating in one. The sentences were much lower than the public prosecutor’s office had aimed for, and all suspects were acquitted for the crime of human trafficking. The court did not find conclusive evidence that the suspects knew about what had happened to the women in Nigeria and what would happen to them in Italy, including forced prostitution (European Commission, 2012).

The nature of a case study raises questions about generalisability, which I will address here. The case is human trafficking from Nigeria to Europe. Specifically, the disappearance of hundreds of Nigerian women from Dutch asylum centres forms the basis of the case. The aim of the Koolvis investigation was to address these disappearances. The investigation followed the chain from Nigeria to the destination country. The aim of targeting the entire network was unprecedented in Dutch human trafficking cases. It identified 149 potential victims and performed long-term surveillance on their traffickers. Although there were more cases of trafficking through the Netherlands as a transit country during the years of the investigation, 2006 and 2007, this network was responsible for the majority of disappearances, the police and social organisations believe. The investigation was successful not in the sense of high prison sentences, but in limiting the use of Dutch asylum centres as a transit route. However, the fact that this network became ‘too successful’ in terms of its high capacity of migrants and therefore too visible means that other traffickers might choose for a simpler organisational form with a lower capacity and a lower chance of detection. I have looked at other Dutch human trafficking cases concerning Nigerian actors from 2016 back to 2002 via the court case database of the Dutch judicial system (uitspraken.rechtspraak.nl). In general, they concern smaller cases of one or two individuals exploiting a victim within the Netherlands. One investigation used quite extensive surveillance, the ‘Krokodilvis’ case in 2012. However, these investigations have not targeted the entire chain, and missing data makes them less appropriate for answering the research question.

Comparing the case to other Dutch human trafficking cases, I estimate that the level of organisation is higher than in many other cases of trafficking from Nigeria to Europe. It is a case where cooperation has succeeded. However, the same mechanisms of cooperation apply to smaller networks, and even though they might not succeed in spreading risk in the way the Koolvis actors do, the actors presumably have similar motives and face similar decisions. If more data becomes available on entire human trafficking chains, for example by gaining access to court files from different European law enforcement agencies, future research should be comparative.

Content analysis of court files

Various scholars have used court files for academic research (see Campana & Varese, 2011; Fijnaut et al., 1998; Natajaran, 2000; Soudijn & Kleemans, 2009; Varese, 2012). Soudijn and Kleemans (2009) argue, however, that data from police investigations are still underutilised in academic studies. They believe that the relatively low number of studies that use police investigations is mainly due to limitations in access and the ability to publish independently on the results. A high proportion of studies using police investigations are conducted in the Netherlands. Likely, this is due to increased access as well as the quality of the court files in the Netherlands (Soudijn & Kleemans, 2009). It is possible for researchers to gain access to 'raw data': police files that are unedited and used to send to the public prosecutor's office. In terms of academic research, the quality of the court files is high, because wiretaps underlie most findings. Arguably, wiretaps provide more objective evidence on offender behaviour than more indirect data, such as police reports. Finally, Soudijn and Kleemans (2009) argue that plea bargaining is not used in the Netherlands, which is a much more selective tool of providing evidence than wiretapping.

Soudijn and Kleemans (2009) take a qualitative approach to analysing court files. Their findings look at within-case variation, describe mechanisms, and identify underexposed phenomena. Studies of court files vary from qualitative approaches to a combination of qualitative and quantitative content analysis and social network analysis. In each approach, the rules of content analysis (see Krippendorff, 2004) are relevant. Content analysis concerns the study of texts that were not originally intended for academic research. They are not surveys, where the researcher can control the variables the respondents respond to. They are not randomised. I will further discuss how to mitigate these limitations below.

Court files are particularly relevant where researchers want to study the structure of criminal networks. They can reveal who talks to whom and who executes which tasks. De Bie and De Poot (2016) take a grounded theory approach to explore the functioning of Jihadi networks. They elicit the mechanisms that foster cooperation in these groups. Similarly, Soudijn and Kleemans (2009) conduct a qualitative content analysis of court files to explore mechanisms behind criminal cooperation. Various other studies use social network analysis and quantitative content analysis to approach the topic of structure and division of labour (see Campana, 2011; Natajaran, 2000; Varese, 2012). Various studies combine quantitative and qualitative methods to analyse court files (see Kleemans & de Poot, 2008). This thesis combines these methodologies but has a mostly exploratory qualitative approach, which I discuss below.

Qualitative analysis

This thesis has a qualitative approach. Throughout the thesis, however, I maintain the position that the logic behind qualitative and quantitative investigation is the same (see King et al., 1994). Although this work is exploratory and descriptive - I aim to understand a phenomenon that is not well understood - the findings are formulated as mechanisms, and hypotheses emerge. The core themes are cooperation and exploitation, which I have defined beforehand. The underlying mechanisms explaining cooperation and exploitation have emerged from the thematic analysis of the data. For example, the presence of hostage-taking in Chapter 4, the structure of the organisation in Chapter 5, and levels of trust in Chapter 6. The analysis was iterative, which is why the theoretical framework corresponds to the empirical findings.

In this sense, I roughly follow the logic behind the ‘analytic narrative project’ introduced by Bates et al. (1998). The analytic narrative approach means engaging in in-depth cases studies, using a historical and anthropological understanding of the particular, for testing theories that apply more generally. However, this approach relies heavily on confirming its implications with the same data on which the model was based in the first place. Elster (2007) criticises this approach for disregarding independent evidence for intentions and beliefs. Elster (2007) generally promotes qualitative social science to uncover mechanisms that were obscured in forms of formal rational choice approaches (including analytic narratives) and approaches that are only narrative and use obfuscatory language that limits its explanatory power. This thesis aims to come to an understanding of the behaviour of people in the case study, paying close attention to their beliefs, and encourages the goal of generalisation promoted by King et al. (1994), and therefore formulates hypotheses that can be tested in more cases within the universe of trafficking rings.

I triangulate the court file data with life history interviews with migrants. They can validate what is said in the wiretapped conversations and also complement missing data: the Koolvis case did not focus on the lives of the migrants once they have arrived in Europe. It focuses on their recruitment and transportation. However, their lives in Europe are crucial to the research question. In addition, interviews with knowledgeable people, law enforcement, social workers, members of civil society greatly helped to validate findings and complement missing data.

Validity and reliability

Controlling the internal validity of wiretapped phone conversations can be done by looking at their contents (Campana & Varese, 2011, p. 15). There should be no evidence of self-censorship. In other words, the criminals under investigation should not be aware of the fact that the police intercept their conversations. A sign that they are unaware of surveillance is when they speak of incriminating acts over the phone. In the Koolvis files, the actors do seem unaware of anyone listening in: threats are made, specific locations and times are communicated, and simple code language is used to describe illegal entry into the country and sex work. Furthermore, I increase validity by adopting broad categories of coding (Campana & Varese, 2011, p. 16).

I control external validity through in-depth interviews with prosecutors and police investigators. These interviews play a key role because experts on the case can validate whether the content of the conversations led to action according to their observations (Campana & Varese, 2011). Furthermore, my interviews with Nigerian migrants who ended up in sex work in similar ways are crucial. These migrants were completely independent of the Koolvis network. For issues around ethics and access, I could not trace those migrants who were trafficked by this network. However, talking to migrants who are from the same city in Nigeria, who had similar agreements with their traffickers, and similar outcomes - they were brought into exploitative sex work in Europe – improved the interpretation of the court files. For example, when a trafficker makes a threat, how is that interpreted by the migrants, what significance do culturally specific references have for them? Finally, I use anthropological studies to interpret the wiretapped conversations correctly.

A 'large' dataset increases reliability. Campana and Varese (2015) argue that reasonably large means several hundreds of wiretapped conversations for quantitative analysis. A dozen would not suffice for techniques such as a correspondence analysis. For a qualitative approach, a smaller number of conversations might suffice. However, I need to compare multiple instances of cooperation throughout the conversations in order to detect a pattern. I manually extracted 826 conversations from the Koolvis files. There are several procedures available to code textual data reliably. I use Holsti's (1969) suggestion of thematic analysis where the basic unit of coding is the theme of a text (in this case the segment of a conversation). The drawback is that thematic content analysis is more time-consuming than other methods, such as when the unit is a word or a sentence. I describe the procedure in detail in section 3.3.1. My coding schemes (see Appendices E, F, G) use a mix of a bottom-up and a top-down approach: I merge themes that I had identified in advance with those that emerge from the data (see Campana & Varese, p. 18). Mixing a bottom-up and top-down approach to coding increases reliability. I continually reviewed the coding by looking at a piece of coding again during a different time of day and after having coded more material. Due to financial and time constraints, I coded the data alone instead of with multiple researchers.

Ethical considerations

This thesis concerns a sensitive research topic and sensitive data. Court files are an appropriate way of studying offender behaviour without putting oneself in danger. However, there is the risk of sensitive information leaking about offenders and their social contacts. I have a confidentiality agreement with the Dutch Ministry of Justice and Security, which outlines the ways to prevent a breach of confidentiality of anyone involved. I do not make copies of the original files and I conduct the analysis from an anonymous version. With regards to the main suspects, their full names have been mentioned in the media, but I abstain from doing so nonetheless. It is a closed case, and there is no risk of the research influencing court decisions. There are strict laws in the Netherlands about wiretapping, and the court files do not contain surveillance on actors not directly linked to solving the crime. When migrants speak to their families, the transcripts of social conversations concern the coercion of the migrants, not the private details of their lives in other respects.

In extensive consultation with the Central University Research Ethics Committee (CUREC), I designed a strategy to conduct interviews with vulnerable migrants while minimising harm and formulating how the research could benefit them. Interview recordings were carried on an encrypted USB stick. In Nigeria, I only recorded interviews with law enforcement and social workers, not with migrants. I discuss further details about the details of the approach to ethical issues in section 3.3. This project as a whole has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the University of Oxford Central University Research Ethics Committee (CUREC).

Limitations

The research design inherently leads to limitations regarding the inferences that can be drawn. This thesis is a case study. Therefore, it is not possible to compare human trafficking networks. I can logically infer that this case study is an outlier in the population of trafficking cases regarding its high capacity, but due to its criminal nature, much is unknown about the universe of cases in which this study lies. However, it is possible to look at within-case variation. The data include different activities of the criminal group, instead of focusing on just one aspect. Surveillance is extensive enough to detect various roles within the criminal group. I chose the case study for its long-term surveillance: over two years and triangulation of evidence. Wiretapped conversations are combined with observations, cooperation with Nigerian, British, and Italian police forces, and interviews with suspects and potential victims.

In addition to the research design constituting a case study, there are drawbacks to using police files for academic research. The police did not collect surveillance with the purpose of the research project in mind. The law enforcement strategy determines what is included and what is not. The boundaries of the network are determined by which communication the police decided to intercept. There is not much a researcher can change about this fact (Campana & Varese, 2015). However, the bias in the data can be made explicit by in-depth interviews with law enforcement and reading the context of the court files to determine the strategy. Case selection should include whether the strategy fits the research aims sufficiently.

In this case, the strategy is to map the network that was responsible for misusing the Dutch asylum system for illegal migration from Nigeria into sex work in Italy. In order to do so, the investigation team decided to investigate the entire network before interfering. Their strategy was to understand the modus operandi and connect cases instead of prosecuting people for individual instances of trafficking. Moreover, the Dutch investigation team did not limit themselves to finding evidence on actors in the Netherlands only. They cooperated internationally to collect surveillance on the entire chain from Nigeria, the Netherlands, to Italy. However, a limitation is that the majority of data focus on activities within the Netherlands. The data is much richer on the transportation phase of the phenomenon than recruitment in Nigeria and work in Italy. Therefore, in Chapter 4 on recruitment, I analyse data collected during transportation that reveals information about recruitment. There is data on migrants while they are in the Netherlands speaking about agreements made before the journey, but I do not have direct data about their motivations and beliefs before they arrived in the Netherlands. I complement these data with life history interviews with migrants and interviews with other knowledgeable people, such as social workers in Nigeria.

The transcripts of the phone conversations are translations in Dutch from Pidgin English and Nigerian dialects. For this thesis, I translated the quotes into English again. This means that some meaning has been lost in translation. However, many of the conversations contain detailed notes by interpreters on tone and meaning of a specifically Nigerian word. Some conversations were interpreted twice, which facilitates checking inter-translator reliability. The police have decided which parts of the conversations were relevant to transcribe literally and which parts not to transcribe. Therefore, content analysis is the appropriate method of analysis, appropriate to texts that were not designed with the purpose of scientific analysis in mind. Certain inferences cannot be drawn, for example, this person or this topic is the most important in the network, because he appears in the conversations most frequently.

Regarding interpretation more broadly, I should note the inherent bias that comes with a Western police force investigating a West African phenomenon and my own bias as a Dutch, white, female researcher. As I mentioned before, I initially set out to study human trafficking, and the investigation team wanted to interfere in a human trafficking network. However, the actors may interpret their own behavior in terms of human trafficking. The court rulings sentenced the people under surveillance for human smuggling, not trafficking. Over time, I realised that the case study sits at the line between trafficking and smuggling. In some cases, the parents of a woman have sold her to a pimp in Italy, which constitutes trafficking. In other cases, the woman has more agency. I am not a lawyer and in this thesis I describe the behaviour of all those involved, without concluding whether a particular case constitutes trafficking or not. I have tried my best to place the decision of migrants and traffickers/smugglers into context, but I come from a very different world than the people I study. Consulting anthropological literature, surrounding myself with Nigerian journalists and researchers, interviewing migrants, and travelling to Nigeria mitigated this problem. Coding of the data was iterative. I continually moved back and forth between the data and the literature, minimising interpretation bias.

3.3 Data and analysis

3.3.1 Court files

Access

Before I became aware of this particular case, I was interested in the use of court files for academic research. My supervisor recommended me to speak to professor Edward Kleemans of VU University Amsterdam who has thorough experience working with Dutch case files. I told him about my research interests and the possibility of using Dutch police cases. Our cooperation started there and has since evolved into co-supervision by Professor Kleemans for this thesis. When I became aware of the Koolvis case, Professor Kleemans introduced my plan to the national public prosecutor on human trafficking, Mr Warner ten Kate LLM, who had led the investigation. We discussed the plan and agreed that I could pursue access to the case for my MSc thesis as long as the intention was to evolve the research into a doctoral project; master's students do not typically gain approval. After informally negotiating access, formal application to the Dutch Ministry of Security and Justice was required. I applied together with Dr Paolo Campana both to strengthen the application and to ensure that future comparison of the Dutch and Italian court files between our respective studies would be a possibility. Permission for access is given on the basis of article 15 jo. 39g of the Dutch Judicial information and Criminal Records Act. This article states that researchers have the right to access closed criminal cases for scientific purposes and on this basis, permission was granted in June 2014 for the duration of this DPhil project. Access is conditional on a confidentiality agreement that dictates that I will not copy the raw data before making it anonymous and will send each intended publication for review to the public prosecutor's office. They will not review the content substantially, but only whether the text is made anonymous and does not include on-going investigations. In consultation with the public prosecutor's office, other members of the research team may access the anonymous raw data, such as supervisors and examiners.

Description of the content

The court files of 'Operation Koolvis' are the final police files sent to the prosecutor's office, who used them as the material to conduct the court case. In hard copy, they comprise 65 files of 500 pages each, totalling 32,500 pages. I read through the entirety of the files in order to become thoroughly familiar with the case. From this massive amount of data, I prioritised the intercepted phone conversations for analysis. I used the digital version of the files on an encrypted CD, which made organisation of the material easier through structured folders and a linked table of contents. Text searches should theoretically be possible because the software on the CD automates the transfer of scanned documents in PDF format into text. However, this proved to be very unreliable. Only a fraction of the text would be picked up, and most would be distorted, due to the low quality of the scans. I chose to transcribe all intercepted phone conversations, which was a significant time investment but was useful in several ways in addition to making the text more suited to analysis in terms of text searches and word frequencies. Firstly, transcription meant I could read each conversation in depth, make my copy anonymous, do the first round of coding, and write memos at the same time. Secondly, the conversations were added as attachments to separate cases within the broader case and were often included multiple times; during transcription, I removed duplicates and cleaned my dataset. I checked the distribution of the conversations over the years of surveillance by coding the date and time for each conversation during transcription. The manual extraction led to 826 unique conversation transcripts.

After the initial round of building the 826 data points, I started the coding process with the characteristics of the offenders. I counted all offenders appearing in the court files and added information from their criminal files on their characteristics.

The 826 intercepted conversations took place between April 2006 and August 2007. Figure 3.1 shows the distribution of conversations over interlocutors. The majority of the conversations are between the managing transporter in Amsterdam and his agents: transporters, providers of forged documents, and providers of safe houses. Nineteen per cent of the conversations is held between the managing transporter in Amsterdam and one in the United Kingdom. They discuss the daily management of the agents and the details concerning the journeys of migrants. Another proportion of the conversations concerns migrants talking to their families and offenders through a wiretapped phone at the asylum centre.

Finally, there is a category of conversations where the managing transporters in Europe talk to other offenders in the chain: transporters in Nigeria and the madams in Italy.

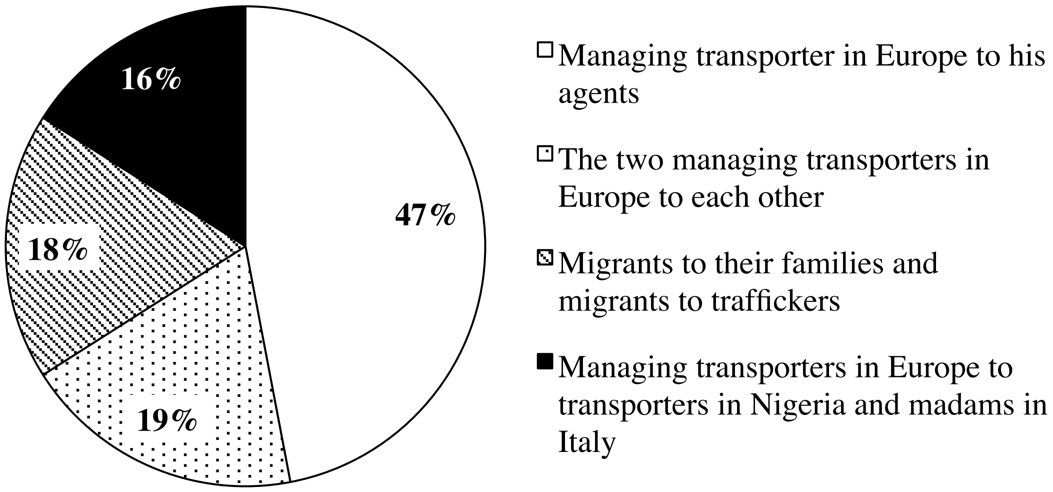

Figure 3.1 Distribution of conversations

A word frequency query confirms that offenders discuss the topics that are relevant to the research problem over the phone. The query is attached in Appendix F. It excludes definite articles and pronouns. The first four words are artefacts of the surveillance strategy: the name of the offender who was the main suspect and put under the most intensive surveillance, and words like ‘calling’ and ‘number’, which are trivial findings connected to the means of communication. However, the sixth most frequent word has substantial meaning, namely the word ‘problem’. The word ‘problem’ was recorded 505 times in 826 conversations. The frequent mention of ‘problem’ is a clear indication that indeed, the data are relevant for studying problems occurring in criminal cooperation. ‘Women/girls’ are mentioned 412/263 times referring to the female migrants. ‘Money’ is mentioned 393 times, which is also consistent with data relating to cooperation and therefore transactions.

After a round of basic coding as described above, I coded all data in depth. I had first considered sampling from the phone conversations due to the high quantity of data. However, any random or purposive sampling might mean that something is left out that is only mentioned once or twice but is essential. My supervisor made the argument that in the legal economy people might only go to court once in their lives, but this one event is very significant. If this event is left out by randomization, the findings do not reflect reality fully. I use a rough predetermined coding framework on the data applying the theoretical framework and research questions.

My coding scheme is that of a thematic analysis, based on categories designed to capture the dominant themes in a text (Fielding, 1993). The coding was an iterative process, where I went back and forth between theory and data. I created separate coding schemes for the court file data (Appendix E), interviews with migrants (Appendix F), and interviews with experts (Appendix G).

In addition to thematic analysis of the data, I conducted a social network analysis. I coded which actors were involved in which trafficking event. I used UCINET 6 (Borgatti et al., 2002) and its extension Netdraw (Borgatti, 2002) to visualise the network.

3.3.2 Interviews

Expert interviews with professionals working on anti-trafficking

Interviews with experts provide background to the court file data and ensure triangulation. I recruited respondents through snowballing. I sampled from a few different groups of experts purposefully: law enforcement officials involved in the Koolvis case, other law enforcement officials, social workers, and a group of 'other' perspectives of a community leader, a documentary filmmaker, and a researcher at an NGO (see Appendix D). Within these groups, I tried to approach those experts who work on the case study of Nigerian trafficking in order to avoid conversation about human trafficking that is too general. For example, I interviewed members of a human trafficking task force in the Nigerian police, a lawyer who represented victims in the Koolvis case, and a priest and community leader who revoked 'voodoo' oaths. A Nigerian founder of a shelter in Benin City could not only provide information about her work there but had also visited women in the streets of Italy talking to them about their options. The team leader of the police in the Koolvis case had interviewed the suspects himself in several European countries as well as in Nigeria.

To facilitate natural conversation and to be able to respond to spontaneous opportunities for an interview, I gained oral rather than written consent. I kept a researcher's record of the details regarding the consent each subject granted, such as whether direct quotes would be allowed. In some cases, I recorded the interview; in other situations, I could not do it or judged that the conversation would be more open if I did not. I followed an interview guide (Appendix C) to ensure equal coverage of topics across interviewees but would specify questions to the interviewee's area of expertise. In addition to formal interviews, I held many more informal and group conversations, most notably I was fortunate enough to attend an invitation-only meeting of Etutu (a Yoruba word for 'sacrifice'), a cooperative project between European and Nigerian law enforcement agencies on human trafficking. Here, European and Nigerian law enforcement experts gathered to discuss the response to human trafficking from Nigeria to Western Europe specifically. Informal interviews would be merged with normal conversation, forming a mixture of conversation and embedded interview questions (Fielding, 1993). Informality was beneficial to the research process; it allowed me to enter into topics that came up naturally in group conversations. Such conversations became data through coding my field notes and including these codes in the analysis, which I incorporated in the coding schemes of the expert interviews (Appendix G).

Life history interviews with Nigerian migrant women

Life history interviews with Nigerian migrant women who worked in the sex industry in Europe are the third data source of this thesis. Interviews with people who have direct knowledge are particularly important to account for reasons as to why individuals are motivated to act (Wright & Decker, 1994). The approach of life history interviews enables respondents to talk about their experiences in their own words, while not being reduced to victims of human trafficking because we go through their lives in a chronological order. Beyond the contribution of actors who are directly involved in the phenomenon, the interviews give information on parts of the process where the court files are limited: what happens in Nigeria before the journey and what happens in Italy after the journey. The women I interviewed were independent of the investigation: different networks trafficked them.

Recruiting participants was a challenge due to the delicate nature of working with vulnerable populations, possible stigmatization of participants resulting from affiliation with the study, the high mobility of participants, participants' concerns about confidentiality, and informing participants correctly about the study in order to take away concerns (Mack et al., 2005, p. 33). Early on, in consultation with CUREC, I decided to only interview migrants in shelters that specialised in care for human trafficking victims. As opposed to a snowballing approach, this would guarantee immediate vicinity to care for respondents as well as safety, anonymity by only approaching them through gatekeepers, and debriefing by their caretakers. I chose to interview women residing in the Netherlands. The Netherlands is a transit country for Nigerian human trafficking as well as a destination country. Its asylum centres played a central role in the Koolvis files, and I wanted to observe these sites more closely. It also is my country of origin, where I can navigate local institutions more readily than elsewhere.

Access

I first explored the field by consulting experts working on human trafficking that I had also identified as candidates for expert interviews. A lawyer directed me to a shelter in Amsterdam. I do not mention the names of specific shelters here to secure anonymity for the respondents. After permission from the shelter, I could file my ethics application with CUREC. When I received approval, the two Nigerian women who were at the shelter had just moved, and no new clients were coming in. I was referred to another shelter in Rotterdam. Here, the process of gaining access started again. I gained access to a third shelter, which is managed by a grassroots West African community organisation in Amsterdam. Again, the gatekeeper was also an expert respondent with whom I had already built some rapport. I decided to pursue interviews at this shelter as well, because I could gain access to the social world of the West African community in the Netherlands here, and could interview women who had not been in touch with official institutions of care, increasing the representativeness of the sample.

This decision led to additional ethical issues and for which I got additional approval from CUREC. The fourth site is a shelter for deported migrants in Lagos, Nigeria. I interviewed four women here, and talked to many more, who were recently deported back from Italy. Access was gained through one of my expert respondents who runs the shelter.

Recruitment and consent process

The caretakers in the shelters identified the Nigerian women who were staying with them and approached them about the research project. We approached all Nigerian victims without further selection criteria. A caretaker asked me if we should include men who were trafficked for sexual exploitation if she came across them. I communicated to all caretakers that, in principle, yes, but there were none in the shelters during my fieldwork period. Future research could include the study of men being trafficked.

Recruitment was a slow process. The number of potential respondents was much lower than the actual number of Nigerian women in the shelter because we had agreed to only approach women who had finished reporting to the police, who were in a stable situation, and who had not just moved to the shelter or were about to move out. Caretakers had hectic jobs and could not always fit a talk with potential respondents into their day. Response rates were also low at first due to the formality of my initial approach, respondents having moved before I could meet them, and fears about the research that I could not assuage in person because the caretaker had already received a firm 'no'.

I changed my approach. The information sheet I gave to caretakers to distribute was formal, complex, and had the feel of another authority wanting to speak to the women. They have usually already been through many interviews: with border security, with police, with shelters, with psychological caretakers. I tried to take away this association by making more informal flyers with a personal and friendly touch. This much improved the response rate. By explaining how I would ensure confidentiality, a tentative 'no' usually turned into a 'yes'. The respondents had seen my face several times at the shelter. We would talk about day-to-day topics and then move to an explanation of the research project. We went through the consent form together, talking about each issue individually. Throughout the interview, I would gain continuous consent. Often, the respondent would become emotional while talking vividly, and in these occasions, I would not interrupt but tried to get non-verbal cues that the interviewee wanted to keep going. Other times, when the conversation fell silent, I would ask whether the interviewee still wanted to proceed and say that stopping the interview would in no way be received negatively. I would also ask whether the respondent wanted to get a break depending on the cues I was receiving.

Interview procedure

Life history interviews are semi-structured and based on the principles of empathy and sensitivity (Cole & Knowles, 2001). Agustín (2007, p. 11) argues that the association with sex affects how migrants are treated, leading many people to only view them as objects without any agency, forced to travel and work in ways they never wanted. Agustín (2007, p. 33) warns against researchers entering the field with these preconceived notions, which can cause interviewees to tell them what they expect to hear: 'sad stories.' Therefore, I made sure not to ask questions that contained assumptions about the nature of relationships with people, their motivations, and decisions.

I would start asking about the first childhood memory and move on from there. Often, the women would quickly bring the conversation to the moment of deciding to go to Europe. I felt like this happened both because they thought that was what I wanted to hear about, based on earlier interviews they had, and because it was their most significant life-changing experience. I would try to gently delay the moment we got to the topic of Europe, talking about childhood, activities during youth, and the family situation. It was also fruitful going back to these topics after having heard the trafficking story, being able to identify decision points and motivations. The trafficking story would often sound rehearsed and superficial at first. Probes like: 'What did this mean to you?' would allow us to go deeper.

Closing the interview with a cheerful topic was a challenge. The future for many of these women is insecure, and the idea of not knowing whether they can stay in the country would be a particularly distressing topic. The topic of their children could also bring up painful memories that I had not anticipated. I learned to move the interview to day-to-day topics again towards the end, such as clothes or in some cases lighthearted issues the respondents had with romantic interests. For some women, their church attendance was a hopeful topic. The interview guide is attached in Appendix A. I interviewed 14 women at four different sites. I talked to more women informally and made field notes on my observations at the shelters as well as during interviews. The formal interviews lasted for about an hour and a half on average.

Field trip to Nigeria

In September 2017, I travelled to Nigeria for a ten-day field trip. I discuss this activity separately, because of its importance for contextualising findings, and because matters of access and ethics were different from the fieldwork in the Netherlands. This field trip was my last data collection activity. Therefore, I could add a personal impression of Lagos and Benin City to what respondents had described to me. I conducted additional interviews to validate previous findings. Because the research trip was my last data collection activity, I could build on a fast network of researchers and journalists who could help with matters of access and ethics. CUREC voiced their concerns about a woman travelling to Nigeria on her own. I could take these concerns away by demonstrating that I had a social network to rely on. At the same time, this network helped me to gain access to law enforcement and NGOs. Months of advance preparation meant that I could be very productive during the short research trip. In particular, I prepared the interviews with migrants and law enforcement very carefully. I had spoken extensively to the director of the shelter, and through her, I could inform my future respondents about the research beforehand. In order to gain access to Nigerian law enforcement, I received help from the Dutch national public prosecutor on human trafficking.

Furthermore, it is not possible to visit law enforcement agencies without approval from the head office of, in this case, NAPTIP, the Nigerian Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons. I conducted 16 interviews: four with migrants and twelve with social workers, law enforcement, and members of civil society in Lagos and Benin City. In addition, I had many informal conversations with migrants, the journalists I was staying with, taxi drivers, and entrepreneurs. Similarly to my previous interviews, I only interviewed migrants who had access to help from a shelter. In Lagos, I visited a shelter run by Nigerian nuns. Gaining the perspective of migrant sex workers who were deported back from Italy to Nigeria added a new dimension to my research. I talked to the staff of the Salvation Army, the Women's Consortium, and NAPTIP. I decided to travel from Lagos to Benin City not by air, but by car. In the interviews, this journey had been described to me. It allowed me to experience corruption first hand: during the four-hour journey, the local police stopped us for bribes about thirty times. We stopped for lunch in a small village where one of my migrant respondents had grown up. It helped me to place into context the differences between Lagos and Benin City, as well as their similarities. In Benin City, I visited the University of Benin where I spoke to two respondents who are a part of civil society, the Benin Zonal Commander of NAPTIP, and the director of Edo State's main anti-trafficking NGO. I saw the streetscapes of Benin City and the impact of migration: the Western Union banking offices dominating the streets. The fierce competition between traditional religion and Christian churches was also immediately visible. Advertisements for various Pentecostal ministries alternated with signs for native doctors and shrines.

Reference to the data sources

In this chapter, I have introduced various data sources: the court files of the Koolvis case, interviews with migrants, and interviews with other knowledgeable people. Throughout the thesis, I will use the following codes to refer to the data sources: KP for Koolvis Phone conversations, M for the interviews I conducted with migrants, LD for interviews with Dutch law enforcement, LN for interviews with Nigerian law enforcement, LO for other law enforcement, SD for Dutch social workers, SN for Nigerian social workers, and finally OI for other informants. These codes are linked to the descriptive information on respondents in Appendix B and D. For texts that are part of the Koolvis court files but are not wiretaps, such as observations or interviews, I refer to the bibliography where I cite the Koolvis files under 'Dienst Nationale Recherche, 2008' [National Investigation Service].

Chapter 4: Hostage-taking and cooperation

4.1 Introduction

The story of Nigerian women working in the sex industry in Europe starts in Edo State, Nigeria. This small state, which makes up just two per cent of the total population of Nigeria, is overrepresented in the sex industry in Europe, and particularly in Italy. Between 1999 and 2001 Italy deported 800 female illegal migrants in total; 86% came from Edo State (Carling, 2006, p. 25). People from Edo State dominate a market 4000 kilometres away. Consistently, sex trafficking from Nigeria to Italy, and increasingly to other European countries, makes the news ever since the 1980s (Carling, 2006; Siegel, 2007; Van Dijk, 2001). When unpacking this phenomenon, the origin almost always traces back to Benin City, the capital of Edo state.

This chapter addresses two research questions: How can the start of trafficking between two regions be explained? Moreover, how can cooperation between migrant and traffickers be explained? In order to address the first question, I look at the history of Edo State to find clues about the origin of its involvement in Europe's sex industry. Then, I look at the context in which migrants and traffickers from Edo State make decisions: I discuss the meaning they assign to traditional religion, which will turn out to play a crucial role in cooperation, and at social norms relating to migration. Finally, I analyse the court file data and interviews to address cooperation. Of the court file data, 256 phone conversations, 31%, are relevant to the research question on cooperation between migrants and traffickers. In addition, all 14 interviews with migrants and 40 with anti-trafficking experts are included in the analysis.

I find that Nigerian ‘madams,’ female pimps, recruit young women from the madam’s state of origin, Edo State. These madams either do the recruitment themselves or contract this out. Alternatively, a sponsor of the journey will recruit the women and then introduce them to a madam. I observe that the demand for illegal travel to Europe is high among young women. I identify them as the type of migrants who maintain close ties to the home country (Engbersen et al., 2013). Typically, the women’s motivation is to invest any income back in Nigeria and share it with their family that stays behind, in contrast to other types of migration where ties with the home country are weak (Carling, 2005). The demand is large and options to migrate are limited. Therefore, prices in the illegal market are high. The main argument of this chapter is that cooperation is successful because the migrant’s family is taken hostage, willingly. Hostage-taking is only possible because Edo State is the shared place of origin between migrants and traffickers, and families send one member abroad, instead of migrating as a family unit. Social norms dictate that older daughters are to sacrifice themselves for the rest of the family. Furthermore, the religious context in which agreements are closed provides extra enforcement, because of belief in traditional religious spirits. Information asymmetry between migrant and sponsor varies, but even a well-informed migrant cannot break the commitment due to the hostage-taking.

In section 4.2, I address the historical roots of Edo State’s connection to the sex industry in Europe. In section 4.3, I address how beliefs and norms shape the decision-making of migrants and traffickers. Finally, I discuss the mechanism of hostage-taking in section 4.4.

4.2 Geographical clustering

Ever since the 1980s, people from Edo State, Nigeria have dominated a thriving sex trade to Italy (Ellis, 2016). Nigeria has an immense population, estimated at 190 million in 2017 (World Bank, 2018b), making up a quarter of the population of the African continent. Edo State only accounts for two per cent of Nigeria's overall population. Figure 4.1 shows its location in the country. It is a Southern state, a four-hour drive away from Lagos to the West, and surrounded by Ondo State to the North and Delta State to the South. The South of Nigeria is generally more urban than the North, and it is predominantly Christian, while the North has a majority Muslim population.

Figure 4.1 Location of Edo State in Nigeria

Derivative work by Charlotte Baarda. © User: Profoss. Original work: Uwe Dedering / Wikimedia Commons / CC-BY-SA-3.0.

Edo involvement in Italian prostitution began to draw attention at the start of the 1980s. Initial observations of Edo people migrating to Italy coincided with a dramatic change in the economy of Nigeria as a whole. From a booming economy after the end of the Biafran civil war in 1967, the country experienced a dramatic economic crisis at the start of the 1980s (Van de Walle, 2001). The boom of the 1970s was primarily based on an expansion of the petroleum industry, while other industries, such as rubber, palm oil, and agriculture, declined (Williams, 1984). Whereas the country was self-sufficient regarding food supply in the 1960s, this was no longer the case during the next decade. After years of a large share of the petroleum revenue going towards private offshore bank accounts, rather than towards reinvestment in the country, a crisis hit. At first, an increase in state debt meant that the average Nigerian did not notice much change in living standards. To alleviate the state debt, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank introduced the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) (Ihonvbere, 1993). The same program was applied in other sub-Saharan African countries in debt.

As part of the program, the government had to make drastic reductions in its services. As the remaining governmental services moved from Lagos to the future capital Abuja, many government officials lost their jobs over a short period of time. In order to sustain themselves, they often moved back to their region of origin to work in agriculture. Then, as a consequence of a measure to eliminate the fixed exchange rate between the national currency, the Naira, and the US Dollar, inflation rose dramatically (Lewis, 1996). With the collapse of industries, mass unemployment, and a dramatic decrease in living standards, the country experienced a brain drain. While the U.K, U.S., and South Africa had consistently attracted highly educated Nigerians, continental Europe increasingly did in the 1980s, with Italy, Spain, and Ireland as popular destinations (Black et al., 2004). At the same time, countries in southern Europe, Italy and Spain, which had been sending migrants to wealthier countries in the north, began to import workers from Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, and the Middle East (Massey et al., 1993, p. 431).

In addition to voluntary migration, around two million undocumented migrants from other West African countries, such as Ghana, were deported from Nigeria (Arthur, 1991). So, in addition to both educated and non-educated people trying to leave on their own, the government also turned its attention to undocumented residents, therefore exacerbating the population loss in Nigeria during this time. However, as the Ghanaian economy picked up and stabilised, Nigerians started moving there as well. The contrast between the 1980s and the booming 70s and 60s was hard to grasp for many Nigerians. During the boom years of the 1970s, GDP rose from 5 billion US Dollars in 1968 to 35 billion in 1976 and 64 billion in 1980 (World Bank, 2018a). The GDP fell by 33% in the 1980s, to 20 billion US Dollars in 1986 (World Bank, 2018a).

The economic crisis of the 1980s was a stark contrast with the past for the citizens of Benin City. In the 1970s, it was a vibrant city with vast oil and rubber industries. In the 1980s, most Edo-speaking people lived in Bendel State. In 1991, this state was split in two, and its two parts were respectively renamed Edo State and Delta State. The former capital of Bendel State, and the current capital of Edo State, is Benin City. The ethnic composition of the region is complex, which is why referring to Edo-speaking people may be more accurate than saying that the state is made up of

Bini or Edo people (two names for the same group), because this group, in turn, contains a few different ethnic sub-groups (Bradbury, 2017 [1957]). The state was named Edo State after advocates for self-determination of the Edo people campaigned for this (Momoh, 1996).

The present-day city was built on the site of the medieval Benin City that was one of the most well-planned cities in the world in the eleventh century (Bradbury, 2017 [1957]; Darling, 1984, p. 9). An account by Portuguese maritime captain Lourenco Pinto in 1691 describes:

> 'Great Benin, where the king resides, is larger than Lisbon; all the streets run straight and as far as the eye can see. The houses are large, especially that of the king, which is richly decorated and has fine columns. The city is wealthy and industrious. It is so well governed that theft is unknown and the people live in such security that they have no doors to their houses.' (Ryder, 1970, p. 114)

The walls around Benin City were the most extensive fortification in southern Nigeria (Ryder, 1970). The fortification was an expression of the power of the Oba, the king of Benin. His image was further enhanced with the introduction of coral beads and ivory (Ryder, 1970, p. 11). Different parts of the city were modelled after the courtyards of the Oba palace, and loyalty to the royal family was high. The city was known for its bronze art, now preserved in British museums, and the Edo people widely traded with the colonial powers (Falola & Heaton, 2008; Rodney, 1975). Even so, the decline of the city started as early as the 1500s, due to internal conflicts and colonial interference. Benin was burned to the ground by the British as retaliation for losing a full legion of men in 1897 to the Oba's army (Gore & Pratten, 2003). However, the Oba retained his independence despite the control of the British, the Dutch, and the Portuguese over the region (Gore & Pratten, 2003). The Benin

Kingdom remains one of the oldest monarchies in the world, and the Oba still has political influence over its people.

The industrial city that was built on the site of the old city flourished in the 1960s and 1970s (Okojie, 1984). There were palm oil and rubber industries and people from all over Bendel State migrated to Benin City (Okojie, 1984). However, these industries collapsed when the economic crisis hit Nigeria in the 1980s. Benin City suffered from mass unemployment. Initially, armed gangs took over amidst the chaos (Van Dijk et al., 2006). Over time, even these disappeared as the city became poorer and poorer (Gore & Pratten, 2003). Compared to other Nigerian states, the Edo-speaking people had a cosmopolitan reputation because of their history of entrepreneurship and trading with various countries around the world (Carling, 2006). However, there was no tradition among Edo-speaking people of moving abroad to be educated in the West, as ethnic groups such as the Yoruba would do. This left the residents of Edo with limited options. Van Dijk et al. (2006) note that Edo State was hit particularly hard not only by the loss of work but also by the state's loss of status within Nigeria. Edo society had always been competitive and entrepreneurial and economic status largely overlapped with social status. Agbontaen-Eghafon (2011) argues along the same lines: Benin City became incredibly poor and people moved into the sex trade, mainly because Edo people had been successful in business ever since the Benin kingdom of the Middle Ages traded with European forces.

I discuss the medieval kingdom of Benin, the boom in the 1970s, and the depression of the 1980s, because the scholars above argue that this history explains Edo State's involvement in Europe's sex trade (see Agbontaen-Eghafon, 2011; Carling, 2006; Gore & Pratten, 2003; Van Dijk, 2006). The argument is that a proud kingdom was hit harder than other Nigerian states in the crisis, collapsed, became incredibly poor, and therefore the only way Edo people saw to gain status within Nigeria again was to tap into a new source of wealth from Europe. The kingdom of Benin will turn out to be relevant to the trafficking in terms of the Oba's negative response as well as the Oba's connection to religious government, which I address in section 4.3. However, as far as I can assess, it has little to do with the origin of the trade, nor can I find evidence that Edo State was hit harder by the crisis than other parts of Nigeria. It is not among the poorest states in Nigeria and never was. In 2016, it ranks fifth highest of the 32 Nigerian states regarding internally generated revenue (Nigerian National Bureau of Statistics, 2017).

Instead, I argue that when the economic crisis hit, it happened to be people from Edo State who had existing contacts and experience in Italy, which could be turned into a migration route. Very often, migration is localised on both ends, due to the 'chain migration' effect where new migrants will build on the knowledge and resources of those who went before them (Tilly, 2007). Chain migration helps explain why so many Edo people migrate to Italy rather than elsewhere, and why Edo traffickers have not branched into other criminal industries. The Nigerians who are involved in drug trafficking in Europe are mostly from the Igbo ethnic group (Ellis, 2009). Crimes such as advance fee fraud show much less ethnic clustering: several West African ethnic groups are involved. The latter does not need as much organisation and could be successfully executed as a solitary activity from any Internet shop. One, therefore, does not have to rely on inter-ethnic trust for cooperation. Nigerian crime groups do have in common that they are all from the South of the country. Ellis (2016, p. 29) notes that:

> 'It is striking that no known reports of such misrepresentation on an international scale concern people from Northern Nigeria. All come from or relate to Southern Nigeria, concerning people socialised in communities characterised by a relative lack of central authority and codified religion, but, under colonial rule, influenced by new structures of political authority, Christian religion and missionary education.'

Before the crisis hit, people in Edo-speaking Nigeria were already involved in the trade of clothes and beads with Italy (Ellis, 2016, p. 134). They would buy clothes in bulk in Italy, take them back to Edo State and selling them for a good profit (Ellis, 2016). When mass unemployment struck, and the Edo had few opportunities for education abroad, many people used their existing connections in Italy to start working as unskilled labourers in their pursuit to leave the country. Women would start jobs in domestic work, and men would work in agricultural jobs, mostly in Southern Italy. With a high demand for unskilled labour, Italy was tolerant of migrants coming in (Iacono, 2014, p. 118). When migrants from Edo State were establishing this migration route, there was another market in Italy with unfulfilled demand: prostitution (Cardechi, 2000).

Most likely, pioneering Nigerian businesspeople arriving in Italy discovered a demand for prostitution and entered this market when times got harder. Ellis (2016, p. 135) gives a plausible account of the sequence of events that gave rise to human trafficking from Nigeria to Europe. Until 1991, Nigerians could easily access Italian tourist visas and therefore could legally travel directly from Lagos to Rome. Until this time, the issue for aspiring migrants was merely to raise funds for a flight ticket. Migrants looking for funds to finance their flight created a business opportunity for the first generation of sex workers in Italy. The first entrepreneurs were most likely women, ‘madams’ who had found prostitution work in Italy and who would now sponsor the journey of new migrants in return for a loan with usurious interest. This loan agreement meant the madams could introduce these women to the prostitution business and live on their proceeds. Madams would acquire social status back home due to their financial investments: they would often invest in fashion shops and build property for their extended families while living in Italy and occasionally travelling back and forth. Their investments solidified their high-status position in the community and allowed them to recruit more women over time. They would stay in Italy, for example, and have extended family recruit new women for them. Since the 1990s, the Italian and other European authorities have expanded immigration controls. More restricted immigration policies pushed up the price for illegal travel from Nigeria and increased the hold that existing Nigerian entrepreneurs had over the market in Italy. They had the capital and the knowledge to facilitate the migration of newcomers and to run the prostitution business.

There may also have been existing expertise about the business model. Before the trade from Edo State to Europe, there are accounts of a sex business by people from Warri Province migrating to work in prostitution in the Gold Coast (a British colony on the Gulf of Guinea) in the 1930s (Ellis, 2016, p. 37). As shown on the map of Figure 4.1, Warri Province (the current Delta State with Warri as its capital), borders Edo State. This example has striking similarities with the trade that flourishes in Europe currently. In 1939, the government received complaints about the number of Nigerian women working as prostitutes in the Gold Coast. One observer concluded that older women were taking money from younger women under their authority (Ellis, 2016). He found a profitable and well-organised trade for which many people in Warri had an interest. At one point, it seemed as though almost all families in the Cross River area of Warri were involved to some extent. While a complaint from a Prince Eikineh to the government included that he suspected the women were being kidnapped, later police investigations found that the women were emigrating from Nigeria voluntarily. Before they left home, the women would visit a herbalist or healer who gave them medicine to make them immune to sexually transmitted diseases (Ellis, 2016, p. 38). Protection by medicine men is typical of the trade today as well, as I will explore in section 4.3.

The Warri case is striking because law enforcement regards the present-day sex trade from Nigeria to Europe to be unique (LD1-8; LN1-6). The regional specialisation in this case, as in in the case of the present trade from Edo State, can be explained by a type of chain migration where information on the business is passed on to others. Chain migration would result in patron-client type networks, similar to the madam-worker relationships in Europe. People from all over the country live in Warri, a large number of Igbos, and a majority of Itsekiri ethnicity (Okoh, 2016, p. 230). Here, like in the Edo State case, it is not ethnic membership as such that explains anything (see Bovenkerk, 2001), instead it is the fact that people have their family homes based close to one another: facilitating cooperation through easy access to knowledge and social control. I will expand on this argument in section 4.4.

Since the 1980s, the business only kept expanding as more migrants wanted to travel to Europe. Since the economic crisis, the primary opportunity for making money was to do so abroad. A successful migrant would maintain tight relationships with their lives back in Nigeria (see Engbersen et al., 2013), travel back from time to time, and display their wealth through a car or a large house built for their families. As other routes of migration became increasingly limited, many parents would send more than one of their daughters to Europe for prostitution in order to increase income and status. Negative reports about this practice soon reached Nigerian newspapers and the Oba. Popular opinion is split among the population of Edo State: women's action groups are active in lobbying with the king and with families for putting the prostitution trade to a halt. On the other hand, people are in favour of sending daughters abroad for prostitution because they invest in the community back home (Van Dijk et al., 2006, p. 25). A professor at the University of Benin highlights how drastically the pressure to send children abroad has affected life in Edo State:

> "In the early 1990s, many Benin indigenes sold off family houses to pay sponsors to take their children abroad. Some houses were sold off without the knowledge of the head of the families. Because of this, the sign "this house is not for sale" was put on many buildings." (Agbontaen-Eghafon, 2011, p. 51)

A study among some 1,500 randomly selected women aged 15 to 20 in Benin City in 2002 showed that one in 20 had been abroad. More so, one-third of all females in the survey said that someone had approached them with the offer to help them migrate to Europe (Women's Health and Action Research Centre, 2002).

When I visited Benin City in September 2017, I drove the route that many people from Edo State take to go into Lagos. The A121 Sagamu-Benin Expressway connects the cities across many steep hills. During the day, it is a safe journey to undertake. At night, it is hazardous: the road has more potholes than asphalt, and the roads are unlit. The city also has an airport serving internal flights, but with prices at 400 dollars, many choose to take a 'luxury bus' for around 10 dollars. Due to mass unemployment and limited opportunities to move abroad, many people seek to move to Lagos, or will regularly make the journey back and forth in search for opportunities.

There is still evidence of the palm oil and rubber industries when we drive into the city. However, walking around the campus of the University of Benin, just outside the city centre, students complain of unemployment and dreams of going to Europe. University staff is on strike because they have not been paid for months. The streets of Benin City are colourful, lined with retail shops selling clothes. Advertisements for churches, with pictures of priests who look like talk show hosts, dominate the streets. I come across hundreds of different names of Pentecostal ministries. The market for religious services is highly competitive.

Overall, I argue that during the economic crisis of the 1980s, emigration increased in Nigeria generally, and it was the Edo people who happened to have connections in Italy. Some ethnic groups in Nigeria migrated to Ghana, others had the means to move into high-skilled jobs in the West, and the Edo people built on their trade connections in Italy. Before the 1980s, people from Edo State had already travelled back and forth to Italy to trade fabric and beads. Italy had a high demand for low-skilled labour at the time, and migration policies were tolerant. Women from Edo State discovered another market at this time: prostitution. Here, more money could be made than in agriculture or domestic work. The mechanisms of chain migration and relative deprivation meant that migration led to more migration. Migration policies became less tolerant in the 1990s, opening up an illegal market where established 'madams' from Edo State start bringing a new generation of women into Europe. The price went up, and the loan was repaid through work in prostitution.

Over time, people from other regions got involved too, and migration spread to other European countries, but the local clusters in Edo State and Italy are still there. The argument is that trafficking is a localised activity, even though many authors argue that it is the result of globalisation and can therefore only be addressed through international cooperation (Bales, 1999; Hughes, 2000; Shelley, 2010).

4.3 Religious beliefs and social norms

4.3.1 Religious beliefs

In this section, I show that many Nigerians experience the spirit world with great seriousness. Understanding this context is necessary to make sense of the decision-making of the migrants in the data. In the court files of the Koolvis case, there are many references to 'voodoo' (see Baarda, 2016). I argue that 'voodoo' refers to a wide range of different behaviours that have to do with traditional religion. In the context of human trafficking, I show that religious arrangements can be part of 1) closing the deal, 2) enforcing the deal, and 3) negotiating conflicts. At the end of this section, I consider how interaction with Western authorities has led to a simplification of these mechanisms under the term 'voodoo.' In this interpretation, 'voodoo' is one uniform behaviour where traffickers coerce migrants.

Religion in Nigeria

When framing religion in terms of supply and demand (see Bruce 2000), the supply-side of religion is unusually large and varied in the South of Nigeria. Complex sets of spiritual services are offered, and while most people choose one Christian church to belong to, they will still practice spiritual rituals of traditional African belief at the same time. On the demand-side, Ellis (2016, p. 4) argues that the role of religion is so vital for the daily lives of many Nigerians, as well as linked to politics and power, that a prerequisite for understanding crime in Nigeria is to understand the spirit world. He finds that many Nigerians today will believe that one's wealth and well-being is dependent on securing blessings from the spirit world. In order to be successful in politics, in any profession, or indeed in crime, one needs to build up a good relationship with the spirits.

Even though traditional religion seems at odds with Christianity at first, I observe that the meaning given to Pentecostal churches is quite similar. Both traditional religion and Pentecostalism are practical approaches to religion focused on daily life; they are decentralised and unregulated. Contrary to what the term 'traditional' implies, the world of religious rituals and shrines in Nigeria is highly dynamic (Van Dijk et al., 2006, p. 34). Change happens quickly, and it is impossible to identify all existing shrines at any one time. Traditional religion does not mean that there are unchangeable century-old traditions in Benin City or anywhere in Southern Nigeria, but rather the opposite. Religious specialists are entrepreneurs because the market for spiritual gifts and powers is very competitive (Van Dijk et al., 2006, p. 33). This idea corresponds to the attitude where one's power and ability is expressly at the front of the way one sees the world. There is hardly any space for failure: in the first place, this would mean that there are spiritual powers in one's life that should be defeated. Religious specialists fill a demand in a society where competition and rivalry are central (Van Dijk et al., 2006). Christian churches, in turn, compete with traditional religion and will mockingly call this varied set of religious services 'voodoo' or 'juju'. Christian churches advocate the view of voodoo as something that someone can be 'freed' from as if possessed by an evil spirit. However, in the minds of most

Nigerians, this only confirms the power of the traditional spirits. Pentecostal churches, in particular, are popular in Southern Nigerian as well as other parts of West Africa. These churches, too, have no central authority, and there are over 700 different denominations within the Pentecostal variety of Christianity. This number is not surprising because one person alone could start a new denomination in this deregulated religious market.

Traditional religion in Edo State

Traditional religion in Edo State, Gore (2007, p. 5) explains, varies between different social networks of kin and other relations and disparate contexts of practice. Practices that had their origin in Benin City have spread to villages within Edo-speaking areas, other villages and cities in Nigeria, as well as other countries. Gore's research took place over several decades, and throughout his studies, the decline in the economy led to an increasingly high number of people seeking migration to Europe and North America in particular. Most practices still revolve around historical, spiritual agencies, such as specific spirits for health, for prosperity, and for justice. Most of these spirits are defined through different kinds of shrines, which are central spaces to traditional religion in the Edo-speaking world (Gore, 2007, p. 31). These shrines are a material expression of a link to the spirit world, but they are also a meeting place. This concerns relationships between priests (*ohens*) and their customers, but many other relationships are enabled as well (Gore, 2007, p. 31).

Gore (2007, p. 4) explores the differences and commonalities of practices at particular shrines and how they depend on social networks within the urban environment of Benin City. These social networks include the individuals and their relationships to different shrines as well as with other institutions in the city. People often have overlapping roles, strategies, and options within this spiritual environment. Gore (2007) identifies three different types of shrines. There are domestic shrines, communal shrines, and urban contemporary cult shrines (Gore, 2009, p. 37). Whereas the first two categories of shrines only relate to the family and the level of a communal village, the latter category extends beyond that. Charismatic individuals create these particular shrines, and they extend beyond the context of a communal village or a domestic shrine. These shrines fulfil various demands and relate to different deities. Some manage to attract large numbers of followers.

Closing the deal

In the context of illegal migration, several Pentecostal churches and traditional shrines in Edo State are known to be meeting places for traffickers and future migrants. Migrants and their traffickers also go to traditional shrines to receive protection for the journey. They acquire specific charms that they will carry with them:

> 'Yes, we went to the voodoo man, we met other people there who came from Europe, and who were trying to protect themselves.' (M4)

Notably, this informant uses 'voodoo' as a term that I would understand, but her references describe very different types of behaviour, and the protection use is just one aspect. This is distinct from the oath-taking behaviour, which she mentions later on. These behaviours relate to different kinds of spaces and different kinds of interactions. The protection seeking does not involve an agreement as such with anyone. It is merely an exchange with a priest: goods, such as a bottle of rum, in exchange for the blessing of the spirits for a particular undertaking. This behaviour is not at all limited to travelling to Europe. McCall (2004, p. 52) describes that in an insecure environment, rituals to protect during travel are very common:

> 'I was traveling across Southern Nigeria from Enugu to Lagos […] It would be a full day of travel and as usual, a salesman provided entertainment for part of the journey. Before peddling his wares, he led the passengers in a few hymns and then gave a sermon in which he petitioned Jesus to protect the bus from violent attack. The bus sermons provide a modicum of comfort to Nigerians who seek security in a perilous environment.'

For the women moving to Europe for sex work, one of the biggest health risks would be sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Therefore, it may well be that in their case the rituals are adjusted for that aim. In a broader understanding of seeking protection or spiritual blessing, migrant sex workers and their families would also attend medicine men to attract better or more wealthy customers (Agbontaen-Eghafon, 2011).

Shrines are used to take oaths, and these are binding. Asking women who enter the European sex trade what kind of oath-taking they participated in, all respondents mentioned that their initiation or oath-taking was part of a 'trado-legal'[4] agreement. (Agbontaen-Eghafon, 2011). Migrants view the oath-taking as a regular part of closing an employment contract, similar to the kind of agreement one enters into when an apprentice wants to learn a skill or acquire informal training. Oath-taking of this kind is not obscure or mystical; instead, it is practical and a part of mainstream society (Van Dijk et al., 2006). Studies have pointed out the legal force of such oaths in Nigeria: they play a role in customary law arbitration and have legal validity in state courts (Oba, 2008; Triandafyllidou & Maroukis, 2012, p. 183).

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[4] In her research report, Agbontaen-Eghafon (2011) explains that a trado-legal agreement is a common term in Nigeria for a contract between apprentice and employer about an apprenticeship in a trade or profession.

In the context of human trafficking, shrines in Edo State have started specialising in oath-taking between madam and migrant. Joy[5], one of the respondents, describes the oath-taking process:

> 'And they do: "Saaay if you go to Europe." And then I had to repeat: "If I go to Europe!" "Saaay [yelling] if you go to Europe, if you don't pay this money that they tell you to pay, then let this juju kill you." If the juju name is Ongu, then you say that, if the name is Shago, they say Shago will locate you and strike you, so you will swear what they want you to swear. And they say: "If you go to Europe and you run away, let this juju locate you, let it look for you and kill you silently. Nobody, even doctors do not know what kills you. And let this juju, this juju will not stop, it will find your mother, it would attack your mother, attack your father, kill your brother, kill…" You have to swear, whatever they want you to swear. Just to say, oh now I can go to Europe you know. Because they know, when you are desperate for something, you will do whatever they want you to do. And it is not only me, all the girls came, they all start swearing, if we deny paying our madam, any amount she charges us, let this thing come and strike us. And of course, this is a demon, it is evil.' (M4)

I interpret this quote as an oath-taking ritual where intimidating effects mean that the deal can be closed quickly. In the accounts of respondents, the oath-taking occurred quickly after meeting their madam. After such a ritual, the migrants will have less incentive to start negotiating the price and other conditions of the agreement. Oath-taking is seen as binding.

Joy then shares that she decided to end the contract with her madam during the journey (M4):

> 'Just like church, and you people know church, but we know church and we also know voodoo. Before there was church, there was just voodoo. And if you tell voodoo for happy, it will make happy, but if you tell destroy, it will go and destroy. That is what the voodoo knows, it knows nothing else, if you say: "Go and destroy this person", it will go and destroy that person. If you say: "Go and help that person", it will help that person. Because, like they say in the Bible it is just God, but this is like people made this spirit... They make the spirit to manifest in this bottle [pointing to a bottle in the room] for example, and it's going, this bottle became powerful. That is it, that is like what the voodoo is. Because of that, we attach to stay, we stay with the man, whatever N., he did to

[5] All names, those from interviews held by the respondent, and all those from the Koolvis case are replaced by fictional names.

> us, to me, I could not fight back, because I have already sworn that if I run away, let that thing kill me. And already swore, that if I go to Europe and I did not pay, let this thing locate me and kill me. I already swore many bad things. And put my tongue in that, um, rotting water, it was very dirty, they cut my hair in my private parts. Tie it in the paper, give it to them…' (M4)

She travelled by land and found herself in Mauritania. The agreement was that she would work for her madam in Europe. During the journey, she found out from fellow victims that this work would entail prostitution. This revelation fueled her distrust in the madam, whom she had initially seen as a protector who could help her out of poverty. Furthermore, the journey turned out to be an abhorrent experience. The transporters had attempted sexual assault on her, and she did not have access to sanitary provisions. Her madam would call her weekly. Ultimately, Joy told her madam during a phone conversation:

> 'You know what? I am not coming to work for you. This is too much. It is too hard. I don't care what you can do to me.' (M4)

She left the transporters and sought help from fellow migrants. She contacted family in the Gambia and stayed there. Much later, she was trafficked to Europe again, by another party, and this time, she arrived. There, she heard that her madam had been arrested. Joy explains that as afraid as she was of the voodoo, she was willing to risk it harming her. She tested the belief.

Enforcing the deal

The hostage-taking mechanism, which I will identify empirically in section 4.4, is amplified by appealing to religious values and beliefs. A traditional shrine subpoenas to the family of the migrants, enforcing the agreement between madam and migrant. Many organisations in the underworld seek religious affiliation. An appeal to religious values, Gambetta (2000, p. 224) argues, could decrease opportunistic behaviour: "a side effect of moral and religious belief in a society is to foster cooperation for its inherent values." However, in this case, there is a distinction between religion that is seen as legitimate and embedded in the community and perversions that are used opportunistically. Because the state is so ineffective, the wealthiest or most influential party to an agreement can steer matters in their own way.

Negotiating disputes

Contemporary cult shrines are connected to agreements closed in the context of migration. Shrines devoted to the 'Ayelala' deity are an example of this. This deity is related to a particular type of traditional religious behaviour that concerns 'justice-seeking spirits' (see Ojo, 2014). However, 'Ayelala' has also been connected to human trafficking (Larr, 2013). This deity is meant to administer justice. In a country where the state is weak and law enforcement ineffective, many people seek to attend shrines in order to solve their disputes. A priest in such a shrine is thought to gain his authority from the deity that is able to reveal the truth and to administer justice. A priest will have a material link to this spiritual world by using charms: spiritual objects used in rituals. In popular culture, movies often depict these "truth-seeking charms" (McCall, 2004, p. 58). Vigilantes and priests alike use them to identify those guilty of crimes (McCall, 2004, p. 58). The acceptance by the public of the efficacy of these charms or jujus is critical to the perceived legitimacy of vigilantes when they administer justice without recourse to due process of law (McCall, 2004). In some cases, these shrines grow into full-fledged informal courts that write out subpoenas to those who need to appear in front of the court. These shrines may well be connected to vigilante groups or local 'thugs' or even more historically embedded secret societies. Enforcement of oaths taken in these shrines may take a less spiritual form in some cases and be connected to these organised crime groups.

Historians have largely ignored the role of secret societies with traditional or more contemporary origins in Nigeria (Ellis, 2016, p. 50). There are many variations and forms of administrative shrines, but the general function is to replace the dispute settlement service that the government cannot deliver. Individuals do have a lot of different strategies and options in this regard (Gore, 2009), because of the deregulated nature of the religious market. However, the large amount of variation does not mean that some shrines are more potent than others within specific communities. Even those who oppose traditional religion believe that these practices will remain powerful as long as the Nigerian state cannot fulfil this demand (Ellis, 2008, p. 464). Ellis (2008) describes that even at the highest level of politics such shrines are used (see also Ellis & Ter Haar, 2004). The most famous example is that of the Okija shrine, where national politicians used[6] the rituals to close deals with each other (Ellis, 2008, p. 445). This highlights how much legitimacy is awarded to traditional religion. It is not the case that naïve young women from the countryside are trapped into believing that spirits can harm them, the Nigerian elite also seeks the blessing of the spirits for political decisions.

Traffickers believe in the spirit world as well. A madam may try and approach a new priest and tell them about old outstanding debts some migrants have with her and try and get this new third-party enforcer to handle it (KP4). In some cases these parties may be like 'thugs' who opportunistically cater to traffickers only to make quick

[6] The Okija shrine has been brought into disrepute, but the Nigerian political elite still uses a meriad of shrines devoted to different deities to close deals.

money, in other cases, it concerns priests who are seen as legitimate figures of authority. I observe little negotiation between migrants and madams, although in one case that I discuss more elaborately in section 4.4, a migrant asks her father to put her in touch with the priest. The dispute settlement function of these priests becomes more apparent in relations between traffickers. I discuss this in Chapter 5, section 5.4.

Interaction with Western authorities

When European police forces first started to investigate the illegal employment and smuggling of young Nigerian women from Edo State, references to religious rituals soon became a focus of their intelligence gathering, including their interviews with pimps, smugglers, and sex workers (Van Dijk, 2001). Indeed, news about a combination of sexual exploitation and a connection to 'voodoo' led to a moral panic of sorts in Dutch society (Van Dijk, 2001). The authorities and the public interpreted the religious practices as exotic and sinister. The practices would be an inexplicable form of fear and intimidation. The traders and pimps and potentially also the sex workers would be aware of the ideas around 'voodoo' that exist in Europe (Van Dijk et al., 2006, p. 9).

In the minds of European authorities, what is 'voodoo'? In interviews by a shelter with Nigerian women applying for 'victim of human trafficking' status in the Netherlands, there are several references to 'voodoo'. The registers of a particular shelter in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, show that out of 73 applications from Nigerian women, 30 referred to 'voodoo' when interviewed by social workers. There was little variation in what this would refer to. In most applications, it is documented as a ritual before the journey where the woman had taken an oath and had gone through an intimidating ritual where a 'voodoo' package of hair, fingernails, and menstrual blood was made in order to coerce her into prostitution. Physical evidence of these packages is also found: law enforcement agencies find them during house searches of residences of madams, sponsors, and priests in Europe and Nigeria. Even though the Western interpretation of 'voodoo' is a simplification and it may be the case that migrants know this and use it in asylum stories, these packages do indeed hold meaning. The person who holds the package is believed to be able to release evil spirits over someone who breaks the agreement that the package enforces. The rituals related to trafficking are a perverted form of traditional religion, a simplification, but can instil real fear in migrants (Van Dijk et al., 2006).

The findings above indicate that in contrast to the understanding of 'voodoo' in the context of a human trafficking discourse, it is not one uniform kind of behaviour. Moreover, none of the behaviours that relate to traditional religion seem to have the obscure character of the 'voodoo' as reported by Western authorities and Nigerian migrants. Should this concept of 'voodoo' that is interpreted as primitive, intimidating, and obscure (Van Dijk et al., 2006) and which does not exist as part of traditional religious practice in Nigeria, then be seen as a culture clash in which Nigerian migrants are trying to convince Western authorities of a story that makes them more likely to grant asylum on the basis of victimhood? This strategy, to adopt an identity based on suffering and victimhood, is a well-documented strategy for obtaining aid in anthropological studies (Vanderhurst, 2017). Other accounts from European trafficking cases show the use of similar narratives of victimhood in which immigration rights are tied to experiences of trauma (Fassin & Rechtman, 2009). It seems as though the idea of ‘voodoo’ is brought forward by social workers and law enforcement as proof of lack of agency. However, the alternative understanding based on descriptions of actual behaviour above is that traditional rituals do not have to be obscure and mystifying and intimidating. Comaroff and Comaroff (1993, p. xxix) describe that the relationship between modernity and ritual is historically wrought. Men and women who want to make their worlds manageable and meaningful use rituals, giving vent to their thoughts on the past, present, and future. In the Western human trafficking discourse, it seems as though there is no space for the idea that the migrants themselves use rituals to give meaning to their lives, rather than having them forced upon them by others. Perhaps, for women who have chosen a path that is stigmatised both in Europe and in Nigeria, that of doing sex work, referring to ‘voodoo’ is a way for them to explain their situation to themselves as well as to aid workers.

In ten out of fourteen accounts of my respondents, ‘voodoo’ is mentioned, and five of these respondents emphasise that the journey was at their initiative. Two respondents do seem to link ‘voodoo’ specifically to victimhood. There are several mentions in the Koolvis case as well where ‘voodoo’ is used as a way to play into the naivety of Western authorities. One male migrant delivers an account of him living in the palace of the Oba where “scary voodoo things” happened to him (Dienst Nationale Recherche, 2008). This story seems highly implausible and can be interpreted as making use of conceptions of victimhood rather than telling an authentic story.

In the context of human trafficking, madams may perform rituals in a way that would be seen as entirely illegitimate in Nigeria (Van Dijk et al., 2006, p. 54). However, these are perverted practices that have a very different meaning and intention than traditional priests would have. They are a cynical use of tradition purely for own gain and manipulation of others (see Baarda, 2016). However, in a situation where the migrant is vulnerable, they may attribute the same meaning to perverted rituals as authentic ones.

In the Koolvis case, one of the women reports an individual, Peter, for human trafficking. Grace describes that he brought her in front of a communal shrine that is part of the Oba of Benin's domain (Van Dijk et al., 2006). There, he made her go through an intimidating ritual including eating a raw chicken's heart. Peter must have realised he could intimidate Grace and that she would not complain. Formally, she could appeal to the Oba for the fact that Peter is trying to link his shrines to an illegitimate witchcraft-like practice that is meant just to intimidate. However, her chances as a young woman against him as a prominent member of society would have been small.

At the same time, traditional religion is such a big part of Nigerian society, that those transporting or employing migrants are not outside of this belief system either. Both migrants and those organising journeys give meaning to their lives by referring to spiritual influence. The competitive religious market offers many options there. Evidence from the Koolvis case, as well as interviews with informants outside of that case, show that, after Western authorities have told migrants that 'voodoo' is a bad thing and is not real, the migrants will start to explain their lives through other religious ideas.

4.3.2 Norms around the responsibility of migrants

In addition to religious beliefs, social norms and beliefs affect the behaviour of the migrants and their families. Family back in Edo State hopes to financially benefit from the remittances that the migrant will send home. The money brought in from sex work in Europe over the past decades has changed social norms regarding the practice. One of my respondents tells me that two nightclubs in Benin City are called 'Italy' and 'Spain' respectively (SN1), depending on which route traffickers offer to aspiring migrants. Respondents indicate that several people in their networks had connections in Europe who could put them in touch with traffickers: boyfriends, classmates, and current employers:

> 'Yes, my classmate, she got the connection, and she told me about it. I was so happy, I said yeah I am going. We left from school (in Ore) to Benin City to meet the lady from Italy [a two-hour drive].' (M6)

The wealth of the madams is visible through the houses they build back in Benin City and the legitimate businesses they run. A respondent describes how she would come past the shop of a madam from time to time. Once she showed interest in travelling, the organisation of the documents was done quickly:

> 'Sometimes they even bring things for me from abroad. Like all this make-ups, something nice. Of course, I appreciate that. They did everything before: showed me the passport, the visa. From the first moment I started talking to them, everything was organised within six months.' (M9)

Another respondent describes how she met her sponsor at a traditional shrine while looking for medicine for her friend's mother:

> 'Yes, we meet this guy. He came here to bring girls to Europe, he was putting bling-bling around his neck, doing like this big guy… I was like, who is this guy? They were like: Oh, he just came from Spain.' (M4)

Often, migrants did not need anyone to connect them, as information about who was working in Italy was widespread:

> 'The older sister of my friend's father came to visit our village sometimes. Everyone knew she was from Europe. She was spreading around wealth.' (M7)

Beliefs about Europe are such that most young women think that it is their best option to increase their independence, their social mobility, and their acceptance within the family. Their beliefs do not usually include specifics about what life in Europe is like and may be prone to the cognitive mechanism of wishful thinking (see Gambetta, 2000) in order to come to terms with the fact that their best option is also an incredibly risky one and will most likely mean working as a sex worker for several years. The destination did not seem to matter:

> 'I didn't care if it was Europe, Asia, US, UK...' (M7)

Several respondents gave me accounts that sounded like wishful thinking, considering that they could have reasonably gathered much more information:

> 'Europe… before I went you know, don't laugh, I had imagined that all people in Europe would float you know? That they don't just walk on the streets, but are floating like fairies or something. I just thought it would be paradise.' (M4)

The belief leads to the norm that if you are able to go to Europe, it is your responsibility to bring back money; otherwise, you will be ostracised:

> 'We just thought… everybody thinks that money grows on trees in Europe. And there's shame… you only send the good things back home. I once made a picture next to an expensive car parked on the street, pretending it was mine. If you are offered the chance to go to Europe, you have to be a success. You cannot come home empty-handed. You can't be a failure. Your family will not accept you.' (M12)

In the Koolvis case, the expectation that remittances will soon follow is often expressed. A boyfriend calls one of the migrants and asks her if she will be able to send money soon. He also knows one of the other migrants at the centre and tells her to say hello, indicating how normalised the practice is:

> Boyfriend: 'I'm getting in the car now, we're going to Benin City! Ok bye, say hi to everyone.' (KP368)

A migrant complains to her family that she wishes she could already send money back home:

> Migrant: 'If I was at work now, I could send you guys some money. Even if it was only 1 Naira.' (KP788)

The Koolvis conversations shed light on norms among peers as well. At one point, there are 11 women brought by the same network in the same centre:

> Woman: Are you there alone?
> Migrant: No, we're with a lot of people. With eleven of us. We were twelve actually, but they transferred one to another house. That's why there are eleven left here.
> Woman: Can you not go away from the place you're at now?
> Migrant: No, not at all auntie, I tried a couple of times, but I did not succeed.
> Woman: You need to keep praying. Keep praying. God will manage it all. Do you hear me, keep praying. (KP57)

Of this group of eleven people, one woman particularly advocates for the route of cooperating with the authorities. Other migrants ostracised her as well as punished her through other means, such as physical intimidation. She was referred to as an informant and a spy. She was moved to another centre, because the arguments got out of hand. In one phone conversation, a migrant mentions that Imo "has chosen the side of the Dutch people" (KP771). That she wants to stay there and get an education. The conversation is about how the other women in the centre are not happy with her behaviour and have arguments with her. When the family of the madam of one of the women calls, she asks whether another migrant is influencing her not to leave the centre:

> Father: Grace, I want to make something clear to you, listen: The woman who is there, Imo, does not want to leave the camp where you are, don't listen to her.
> Daughter: No one is telling me not to leave. Where I am now is worse than where we were before. I only just arrived, no one here is telling me not to leave, it is just hard, it's hard from here. If someone would tell me not to leave, I'd use my own brain. Please sister, no one told me to stay, I just haven't been able to leave yet.
> Father: But the boy who came at the same time as you, he asked you whether you wanted to leave, but you didn't want to.
> Daughter: That's not right, when did he ask me that? He's lying. Please sister, trust me!
> Father: Listen, you're there, if you had been at your destination already you would be making money. Do you know how much Happy has left to pay? She only has to pay a little. You haven't even started repaying your loan. You're staying there and you don't want to leave. My sister [Grace's madam] isn't giving me any peace. (KP475).

Grace's family repeats that the family of the madam says someone is influencing her not to go outside. They're saying that a transporter has been at the centre multiple times to try and pick her up and go to the madam. Grace's family is going to Benin City on Sunday to call her together with the madam's family. Her father tells her:

> Father: That Imo… you need to let her go. You shouldn't look at her.
> Daughter: She's [the family of the madam] lying, she doesn't even believe it herself. I will call her to explain it herself. (KP467)

Joy's story (M4) about her father's return from abroad leads this narrative to an aspect of recruitment that shows that voodoo is not the only reason migrants comply with their madams. Namely, many of the respondents share that they were strongly motivated to migrate. Three of the respondents describe their independent desire to move abroad. They had seen examples of others who had gone before them. These respondents did not come from particularly poor backgrounds. Joy shares how a sequence of events in her life had built her motivation to seek help from traffickers to migrate. She had made friends in school who were earning money from so-called ‘sugar daddies’ in Lagos. She then became disillusioned at school, because her new group of friends was skipping class; she followed their example and failed the year. Then, her estranged father came back from the United States and was an inspiration for her to migrate. Later, her first serious boyfriend had lived in Spain for a long time, after he cheated on her, she decides that she wants to do the same and be independent.

She was already in contact with potential traffickers, whom she and her best friend had met at a shrine when picking up medicine for her friend’s mother (M4). She had already decided to go but wanted to wait for her best friend to come with her. Finally, her best friend nearly died in hospital while giving birth. Her friend decided she was not strong enough to go, but encouraged Joy to seek a more secure future for herself. Joy explains that she saw no other means of migrating than to close an agreement with traffickers. A theory of relative deprivation (Boudon, 1977; Mackie, 1995; Stark & Taylor, 1991) might fit this group of migrants who come from backgrounds that are not from the poorest layer of Nigerian society but are stuck between traditional norms and new materialistic norms. Edo State, in particular, is known for its materialist culture. Here, those who come back from abroad with the means to wear expensive clothes have status, while, as Joy explains, the source of the status might be quite superficial. She describes how her father was always pretending he had been way more successful abroad than was the case.

Once a daughter ‘goes abroad’, a standard way to invest is for the family to build four flats from the remittances. They will live in one and rent out the others:

> ‘Even if they know it is going to be prostitution, their mother will say: see what the neighbour’s daughter has done. Usually, they build four flats. They stay in

> one and rent the rest out and income starts coming. And down my area, we decided to live in the rural community, my husband and myself: just after we left campus. Moving to the rural community, in that place, people who had built houses along the road were all girls who were trafficked to Italy. Because that area is bordering on the rural community, so traffickers can come and take them away. When I first moved in, so many houses, they say: this girl is in Italy, this girl is in Italy. But many of them have died in Europe.' (OI4)

In this section, I have discussed the social norms around migration to Europe for sex work in the social networks of the migrants. Sending the oldest daughter to Europe is a normalised practice in Benin City.

4.4 Hostage-taking

In this section, I address the second research question of this chapter: how can cooperation between migrants and traffickers be explained? The findings of this section build on the previous findings on the context of Edo State. Namely, in order to understand the findings that I will present now, it is necessary to understand the meaning migrant and traffickers assign to religion and to migration. This chapter argues that the mechanism of hostage-taking leads to cooperation. This mechanism works even when outside authorities test the migrants' loyalty to the traffickers. Here, I use the Koolvis conversations that were intercepted while the migrants reside in Dutch asylum centres. I will first introduce the situation and then report results on the behaviour of the migrants and traffickers.

Koolvis case

Within the population of Nigerian trafficking networks, I assume the Koolvis network to be an exceptionally sophisticated one. They were ultimately caught not because cooperation failed, but because they became too successful; the high numbers of women trafficked led to their detection. They had a high capacity of 200 women a year (see Campana, 2016b), which is remarkable for air rather than land travel; the former is much harder to facilitate. Figure 4.1 shows the modus operandi of the network. Women were recruited from Benin City and brought to the sponsor who owned a travel agency in Lagos. The migrants received forged passports but were asked to apply for asylum as unaccompanied minors without documents. The passport was returned to the organisation by a member accompanying the flight. Upon arrival at Amsterdam airport, the women showed the authorities a document with the name of a fake NGO or church stating that they had lost their parents in a war and had fled the country:

> Migrant to family: 'I have destroyed everything they gave me, and they asked me to say here that I don't have parents anymore, and I had to throw away the passport they gave me, I had to flush it through the toilet on the airplane.' (KP368)

The application as unaccompanied minors was used so that migrants were placed in open asylum centres across the Netherlands, instead of closed detention facilities. At the bottom of the document with the asylum story was the number of the sponsor in Nigeria.

Figure 4.2 Asylum centres in modus operandi

Once the migrant had been placed in an asylum centre, she would call the number on the document of her asylum story and inform the trafficking network where she was placed. They could not predict in which centre they would be placed. From there, the migrants would be picked up and placed in private houses, before they were accompanied on their journey to the madam in Italy by bus, train, or car. Presumably, the network had chosen the Netherlands for the direct flights between Lagos and Amsterdam with KLM, its asylum procedure for minors, and it being a small country with good infrastructure, so that the migrants would not be too spread out. Figure 4.3 is a map of the Netherlands where I have indicated the approximate (but not actual) location of the asylum centres in which Koolvis migrants were placed. Notably, quite a few of the centres are in rural areas. The one on an island in the north was only used later on as the Koolvis investigative team increased efforts to prevent the migrants from disappearing with the traffickers.

Figure 4.3 Approximate locations of asylum centres

The Dutch Royal Marechaussee started connecting cases of Nigerian women disappearing from asylum centres by comparing the passports registered on the flight and the asylum story document that was used. The initial investigation by the Marechaussee, called 'Operation Kluivingsbos' is where 'Operation Koolvis' started. The team identified 149 potential victims by comparing documents and started surveillance actions as well as efforts to prevent women from leaving the centres. Only after the arrest of the suspects did eighth of those 149 people report as victims of human trafficking. Before this time, some women contemplated cooperating with the police, as I will show below, but eventually left with the traffickers.

Information asymmetry

The following analysis is based on the Koolvis intercepted phone conversations at times when the migrants are using phones within the asylum centre. They speak to their traffickers, families, and friends. When nothing goes wrong, the women stay at an asylum centre for an average of five days. In the data, 20 women show up who stay in the centres longer than planned: because law enforcement is actively preventing them from leaving and for others because there have been problems in the organisation. It is these 20 women who are wiretapped. The data indicate that the migrants and their networks are concerned with getting a residence permit as soon as possible in order to start making an income in Europe. At this point, both the traffickers and the Dutch authorities are offering them this option. A first indication of the credible commitment (Williamson, 1983) between migrant and trafficker is that the migrants evaluate the offer by the Dutch authorities as the best one, but refuse it. On the phone with a family friend, they are advised to go to their madam, because it is the best way to repay their sponsor. If they do not have an outstanding loan, they are advised to stay at the centre:

> 'If a sponsor did not bring you, it would be better for you to stay there. Maybe you would get asylum after a while… But the madam who brought you will be angry, she will start saying you do not want to pay her and things like that… do you understand me?' (KP368)

The migrants consider whether accepting the offer or trying to remain in the Netherlands and get a Dutch boyfriend in order to repay the madam are good options. They conclude that the madam will not accept this:

> Woman: Is this person [madam] still calling you?
> Migrant: Yes, she calls me, she won't wait until I get my papers, and she wants me to join her.
> Woman: Hm, this seems like war.
> Migrant: This person won't be prepared to wait, because I was thinking to just wait, until I am released, because once I am released I will get monthly payment as well, including money for food, and from that money I can pay the person who brought me here, do you understand?
> Woman: That won't be enough.
> Migrant: The person won't accept that either, she won't accept it. A lot of people here do not want to leave the country, as soon as they are paid and maybe get a white boyfriend they will send money from here to that person, that is what a lot of girls have said, but where I'm concerned I will join her [madam]. (KP4)

The traffickers negotiate high prices with the migrants because the migrants have never been to Europe before and are here illegally. The traffickers are on the positive side of information asymmetry: they have the knowledge and the connections. Several phone conversations mention the contrast between 'newcomers' and older generation migrants from Edo State. In the following quote, a migrant in a Dutch asylum centre talks to a female contact of hers:

> Woman: Is she arrested? Oh that women business.
> Migrant: When I visit, we can talk about it. When you hear how much she had

> to pay, you'll get a headache.
> Woman: Oh yeah? Why is she not reporting against the people who brought her here and say she has to pay?
> Migrant: She's new and doesn't know how things work in Europe.
> Woman: Too bad.
> Migrant: She says the person who brought her here is a nice person and she is talking well about them. I pretended not to know any better.
> Woman: This is her chance. I pity her.
> Migrant: I can't convince her. (KP342)

There is variation in how much information the migrants have. Some are in contact with family members in Europe, who advise them. One of the women ultimately reports as a victim of human trafficking. She receives advice from her aunt to stay at the centre to get a residence permit and to find alternative work to repay her sponsor:

> Aunt: I hope you are not thinking of going with them.
> Migrant: No, they [social workers at the centre] caught me when I was trying to leave before.
> Aunt: Okay. You don't have to worry about paying your madam. Because all Europe countries are united. When you run away you won't get a residence permit in other countries. Do you understand, so just be calm and don't think about the madam. You don't have to think. Don't listen to the other people.
> Migrant: Okay, T. also said I should not think about the debt.
> Aunt: Don't think about the debt. What's important is a residence permit. Then you can travel freely.
> Migrant: But I am scared to death.
> Aunt: Why are you scared? Are you planning not to pay? They will get their money. Once you're free and come and join me, you don't have to think about that. I don't want you to work in prostitution. (KP767)

Another migrant receives a call from Spain. She is telling her contact that she does not want to work in prostitution, but that she does want to work to repay the person who brought her here. She says she is scared. Her contact tells her:

> 'Stay calm. You don't have to pay the debt to that woman, we are going to pay it for you okay. Do you hear me? She still has to lower the agreed price. Otherwise, they will not get their money. So don't worry about madam right now.' (KP768)

When the sponsors realise that the Dutch authorities are offering migrants a viable alternative, they start to appeal to the migrants that their offer is better. Apparently, they do feel uncertain that the commitment will hold. The sponsors still feel like their offer has to be as (or close to as) appealing as that of the Dutch authorities. Arguably, this is the riskiest part of the modus operandi: the women are physically removed from the traffickers and communicate with the authorities all day. The sponsors are not only competing with the Dutch authorities but also have to make sure that the migrants will not report them. Those actors who are in Nigeria may feel quite safe, as there is only limited precedent of effective European and Nigerian cooperation in prosecuting within this market. The appeals to the migrants by the traffickers look like this:

> Trafficker: As soon as you arrive, as soon as you arrive at madam, you will give her some passport photographs and documents will be arranged for you with a different name. A passport will be made for you and then you can apply for a residence permit and you will get the permit. Do you hear me?
> Migrant: I hear you.
> Trafficker: You shouldn't listen to them [the Dutch authorities], they are useless people, they are only threatening you.
> Migrant: I hear you. (KP5)

The appeals look quite similar; another sponsor makes a similar argument to another migrant. A residence permit is an important part of the offer, and they have to convince the migrant that they are able to provide this:

> Trafficker: 'No listen, listen sister, I beg you, this is not about something bad, listen, listen, we will take care of your permit for the country of the white people, as soon as you are there, the madam will let you apply for asylum and will organise a document that you can work with. The fact that they arrested you, did not have any consequences for us, for us, it is about you getting away from there, do you understand me?' (KP5)

The tone in these negotiations seems to be that of begging, of negotiating, of convincing, rather than threatening as such. The sponsors seem to talk in fairly intimate tones to the women. They often make sexual remarks to the women as if their relationship was of a sexual nature during the recruitment process. At this point, the migrants are also complaining that the traffickers are not doing their job properly. A migrant is telling the friend of her sponsor:

> Migrant: If I become a madam in the future, and I want to bring someone from Nigeria to Europe, I won't do it via Ade.
> Friend: Listen, his money is now on hold [from the madam], that's what he is worried about. And he's bringing you to the sister of my wife [the madam], I'm actually afraid to tell her what's going on. (KP481)

The sponsor explains to the migrant that the madam will pay the transporter in Nigeria money for the journey, but that she cannot do so until the migrant has started work. Until she can pay, she is paying interest over the amount. Of course, it would be in the interest of the traffickers to exaggerate the amount of money to the migrant:

> 'You have gambled with more than seven or eight months of Grace's mother [the madam] money. She has borrowed the money. She's paying interest. She's paying 300 euros in interest a month.' (KP478)

Hostage-taking

A group of women notices that they are being watched more carefully than before and inform the traffickers that they should wait with the pickup. The women try to meet a transporter at night in the village next to the centre, but there is miscommunication, and the women have to go back. They have spent a few weeks at the centre at this point and are attending school. It is after these few weeks when the mechanism of hostage-taking, instead of offering the women a better deal, becomes apparent. Apart from calls from the traffickers, the women start receiving phone calls from their families. The families are telling them to leave the centre, because the madam is getting angry. A father tells his daughter:

> 'She said that you did not come out [of the centre] so that they can bring you to madam. So she is very angry. She's asked me to come to Benin City on Sunday so that we can call you together. She says that she's called you as well, but that you've switched off your phone. Madam is furious. Furious at me. She says that we should call you on Sunday, the 20th, at 11.' (KP467)

The daughter then calls a friend and says:

> 'And then my father begged me to walk out because that woman is all angry. He begged me to walk out. I told him that I have not had the chance yet. He begged me.' (KP470)

These quotes show that the family of the migrant is involved in the agreement and the decision-making. They are willing hostages of the madam, who will secure the family with additional income. Reflecting on the literature on migration and household decisions versus individual ones (see Massey et al., 1993), I argue that indeed, in this case, the migrants are not just acting from their individual economic goals: their preferences are affected by the norm that they should help their families. The traffickers have aligned their incentives with those of the family (Campana, 2016b). There is no case in the Koolvis investigation where the traffickers do not know the approximate whereabouts of the family. They have not physically taken them hostage, but effectively they are hostages because the family has their roots in Edo State and are in a close-knitted community with the trafficker. The family's property is in Edo State, and they are unlikely to disappear. I ask my informants whether the madam knows where their families are:

> *So the madam knows where your mother lives?*
> 'Yes, of course. Because if you want to travel, they must know your house and they must know your parents before you... Africa is not like here that if you are making noise, then come police, oh no! Everybody will just be in their house listening what is happening. They can abuse you any day, when you have a little problem with them.' (M8)

Even when a migrant travels independently and only meets their madam later on, the latter would seek to gather information on the family:

> *If a madam only meets a woman in Italy, how does it work in that case?*
> 'The madams, they are smart eh. Some would ask the girl: 'Oh let's send some gifts, some money to your parents. A bag for your mother? Where would we send it?' And then she knows. And also… in our culture… everyone Edo State, you would always ask: 'Oh! You are from Edo State? Where? Me too! Where in Edo State? A town close to Benin City. Oh oh! This and this street?' And then she knows also.' (OI2)

There is variation in how formal these agreements are. Having the information on the family may be enough of a commitment. However, notably, there is evidence that the agreements are formalised. Because Nigeria is a weak state, there is space for illegal agreements to be formed through elaborate institutions. Regular lawyers may bear witness to the agreement:

> 'Because now what they do, when you want them to bring you to Europe, you have to give something for, what do you call... like, if I don't pay you, you can seize this property, maybe like land or like house, and they will bring somebody who is going to stand for you.
> *Like a guarantee?*
> Guarantee, yeah! They do it now, they try this for years back. When you don't pay or when you run away. Because now there is a lot of network, they brought a lot of people and they run away, when they get to Europe they run. Just to... take a train, you just go. So for that, you have to bring a guarantee.
> *So maybe your family would be the guarantor?*
> Your family will have to bring something, because you as a young lady don't have nothing, your family will bring land or house, you know, or lawyer will come and you will sign.
> *Ah, do you know what kind of lawyers, like priests, or?*
> No a real lawyer! They will pay the lawyer.' (M6)

In the Koolvis case, however, the hostage-taking is enforced not by lawyers, but by another institution: religious shrines devoted to the deity 'Ayelala'. When something goes wrong, the madam can appeal to a priest at the Ayelala court who will send out a subpoena for the family of the migrant to appear in order to solve the dispute.

The families of the women in the Koolvis case start telling the women that not only is the madam angry, but she is also appealing to an Ayelala priest to mediate the dispute between her and the migrant who has still not left the centre, via the migrant's family. A father tells his daughter that the madam has asked for the exact location of the house, probably because she wants to provide this to the priest. The daughter remarks that the father of another migrant has already received a subpoena to appear in front of Ayelala:

> Father: She asked Sanmi to point out our house. Sanmi didn't do that because we told him not to. Well, now he wants to tell her anyway, he's giving you one week.
> Daughter: Ok, ok. Ade also gave someone else's father a subpoena for Ayelala. (KP475)

When there is a possibility of the migrant defecting, the enforcement will come into play. In Beauty's case, her father has received a subpoena to come to the Ayelala shrine.

> Father:'There is a big problem here because of you. A large problem, a very large problem. Do you know how many times your father has been dragged in front of the voodoo priest?'[7] (KP474)

The migrants do negotiate and want to get involved in the conversation between the priest, her family, and the madam:

> Daughter: 'If she drags you in front of Ayelala again, flash me from there [call and hang up], then I'll call you, so that I can talk to the priest myself.' (KP786)

The Koolvis files do not show what and how the priests decide on these matters. However, I can draw the conclusion that the family is effectively taken hostage as a guarantee for the compliance of the migrant. Finally, I see evidence that when the situation becomes very dire from the sponsor's perspective, the tone becomes outright threatening. In the following situation, Faith, a 19-year-old woman, has been at an asylum centre for more than a month. She has considered accepting the offer by the Dutch authorities and is convincing other migrants in her group to do the same. Her father has called her multiple times, as have the sponsors in Nigeria, and her madam. Her sponsor in Nigeria tells her:

> 'I curse you. You will never have a good life. Nor your father and your mother. They will smear the blood of your father over you. Only then will you leave the centre. Do you know how many people have died who did not pay their debts from abroad? You know that right?' (KP480)

[7] Some nuance may have been lost in translation; "dragged in front of the voodoo priest" implies something quite sinister, whereas this may be a regular procedure where a priest decides which party is right and what the consequences are - for example, losing the land that was put in as a guarantee.

Faith has left the asylum centre a few days later, and there is no further surveillance on her; presumably, she was picked up according to plan and brought to her madam. Considering the information the traffickers have on her family and the context of Nigeria as a weak state, the threat that was made to her was credible (see Williamson, 1983). Even though the migrant cannot physically be touched, because she is in a sheltered centre and could ask the Dutch authorities for more protection, her family can be harmed. The traffickers know where they live and using violence is not as costly in an environment where law enforcement is not effective. The Koolvis data show that they would rather avoid using violence, however. Over the course of a migrant's stay at an asylum centre, the tone keeps changing. First, the traffickers try to sell their product: they will offer the migrant an existence in Europe as promised, they will arrange a residence permit for them, and they will have an income. Then, the families are asked to appeal to their daughters. If there is still no progress, the families are asked to meet the traffickers at the Ayelala shrine, and a priest gets involved. From what I can infer, a subpoena to a shrine is not a threat to one's life. The families are concerned at this point, but not scared, and the migrants are worried but feel like they are in a position to negotiate with the Ayelala priest. It may be that the priest rules that the trafficker can have the house of the family if the migrant does not comply (LN4-5). In extreme cases, the traffickers can use violence. A direct threat was made against Faith, and there is a consensus among the experts I have interviewed that traffickers have the means to use violence against families, either through hiring local gangs or through a similar gang directly affiliated to a traditional shrine (LD1; LD3; LN1-6).

Summarizing the above, I find that the following categories and sequence of responses by the traffickers to the migrant staying in the asylum centre is therefore as follows in Figure 4.4:

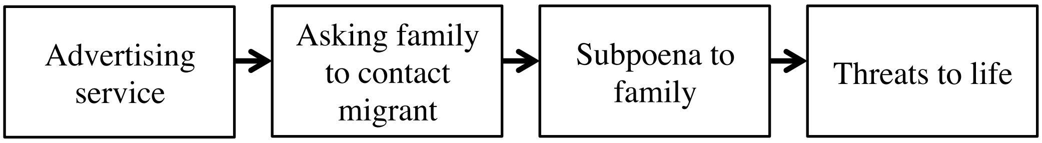

Figure 4.4 Response to non-cooperation

A counterfactual to hostage-taking of the family would be that the migrants themselves remain under the physical control of the trafficking network. Having to physically coerce the migrants would mean that the asylum route cannot be used and the risk of detection would be higher. As will become clear in the next chapter on transportation, there is a high degree of division of labour and transporters are not involved in controlling the behaviour of the migrants. The people who are in charge of the asylum pick-ups and further transport in Europe simply wait for the migrants to come out. These transporters tell each other:

> 'We can send someone to pick them up ten times, if these people are not ready to leave, nothing can happen…' (KP754)

The network, therefore, does not hire people who are geographically closest to the migrant to enforce the commitment between migrant and madam. Instead, all enforcement takes place back in Edo State.

It is not possible to quantify the number of women in the Koolvis case where hostage taking does not apply, because of missing data. However, because the network used such a routinised procedure, I assume that all women closed an agreement in the context of a religious shrine or court and that for all women their families could be traced by the traffickers. There is variation in whether the commitment holds. Firstly, there is variation in how much effort law enforcement puts into breaking the commitment: for a group of 11 women there is increased surveillance and much more time spent convincing them of the benefits of cooperating with the police. The women are moved around and are even briefly placed in an asylum centre on a Dutch island to make it even harder for them to join their traffickers (LD1). All of these women do decide to leave the asylum centre, a testament to the strength of the commitment, even when tested.

Then, there is variation in the outcome as well. Ultimately eight women (two of whom were among the 11 for whom efforts were increased), out of the 200 women estimated to have been trafficked per year by this network, report to the police after they had initially decided to cooperate with the traffickers and had already left the asylum centre. Towards the end of the Koolvis investigation, only 20 women could be retraced. Some were still in the Netherlands, others were found in Italy and Norway. These women were brought in for interviews. They were mostly reluctant to talk. The police then hired a former Nigerian sex worker and a Pentecostal priest who was meant to take away their fear of traditional religion. Some of the women started talking after these conversations. At this point, the suspects in the Netherlands were arrested and some of the madams in Italy as well. The suspects in Nigeria were briefly arrested and brought in for questioning, but then released. Eight women out of the 20 who were brought back in for questioning reported their traffickers. There are indications that the hostage-taking was broken for these women because the Dutch police and the Nigerian police cooperated and approached priests to break the contract.

I have anecdotal evidence from my interviews with migrants trafficked by other networks that the commitment does indeed not hold without hostage-taking. A respondent told me that her madam did not know where her family lived, but she had intimidated her with religious rituals. She was travelling by land, and the situation was abhorrent. Her transporters were assaulting her, and they were stuck in the desert. She was afraid that the spirits could harm her, as a traditional priest enforced the contract to repay the madam a 50,000-euro loan. However, she tested her belief and told the madam over the phone:

> 'You know what? I am not coming to work for you. This is too much. It is too hard. I don't care what you can do to me.' (M4)

The findings lead to the following hypothesis, which could be tested in future research on cases where there is variation in hostage-taking:

The mechanism of hostage-taking increases the likelihood of cooperation between migrant and trafficker.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter aimed to explore what commitments are made between migrant and traffickers before the journey starts that can explain cooperation later on when the migrant is not geographically close to those who financed the journey. The answer lies in the fact that Nigerian madams who live in Europe will only recruit women from their own region of origin. In Edo State, migration has led to more migration: the demand exists because the first generation of madams came back successfully. They can recruit other women because they have advertised their wealth back in Edo State. They invest in real estate, legitimate businesses, and the community. The demand to go to Europe is high, and the means for people from Edo State to go through other networks than that of the madam is limited. However, the puzzling aspect is how a madam or another sponsor of a journey can trust that the migrant will repay them, and that the migrant trusts that they will not be cheated either.

I find that the madam or sponsor aligns their incentives with the family of the migrant and effectively takes the family hostage. Far from the popular use of the word 'hostage' in kidnapping acts of terrorism, the hostage commits to the agreement willingly. Hostage taking is used to support exchange, rather than as pure coercion (see Williamson, 1983). This mechanism was used to allow for trade over long distances by the Romans (Allen, 2006), and observed among contemporary criminals, such as Colombian cocaine networks (Zaitch, 2002). In the Colombian case, the hostage, a cousin of the boss, for example, is placed in the house of the family of the trading partner, treated very well, and is released once the product is delivered. However, if the other party cheats on the agreement, the hostage is killed. In this case, the madam or sponsor does not physically confine the hostage, because they are assured that the family of the migrant cannot disappear. Namely, the family is deeply embedded in the community in Edo State and has their house and land there. Third parties are involved in enforcing the agreement. Once the migrant seems to defect on the agreement, the family receives a subpoena to appear in front of a traditional religious court. This court may rule that the sponsor gets ownership of the family's house if this was put in as a guarantee. Alternatively, the family will start receiving physical threats, and the threat of them being killed is credible due to weak and corrupt law enforcement.

However, the findings show that the traffickers will avoid using violence if they can.

When the migrants receive offers from the Dutch authorities to cooperate with them instead of their traffickers, the traffickers first respond by advertising their services more to the migrants. They highlight their knowledge of migration routes, their ability to provide them with a residence permit, and how unreliable European authorities are. When the migrant is still hesitant, the traffickers start to appeal to the families. The families contact the migrants and convince them to cooperate with the traffickers. If that still does not work, the family will receive a subpoena to the Ayelala court. Finally, threats to the lives of the migrants and families are made only as the last resort.

The hostage-taking mechanism works, because this seems to be a case where migrants tend to maintain strong ties to the country of origin and travel with a motivation to invest some income back into their lives and families back home, rather than the type of migration where migrants maintain weak ties to the country of origin (see Engbersen et al., 2013). The incentive is not for entire families to migrate or for migrants to never return. They remain embedded in the community. Looking at a simple model of formal rationality, the individual choice for migration through this route does not always add up. Calculating the probability of avoiding deportation, the probability of employment, and earnings higher than employment in the country of origin, plus the cost of migration, the migrant may come to a negative conclusion (Massey et al., 1993). The market is such that traffickers ask for prices as high as 50,000 to 60,000 euros. Many Nigerian women are deported before they have repaid this sum. However, the behaviour is rational if the model is elaborated upon with household decisions, social norms, and beliefs (see Elster, 2007). Sending one daughter to Europe with a high risk of failure, but some chance of high returns, is a strategy that the families can adopt as insurance when other family activities do not work out. Social norms are such that the responsibility of success lies with the migrant, there is the belief that making money in Europe is easy. The following hypothesis emerges from the data, which can be tested in more cases in future research:

The mechanism of hostage-taking increases the likelihood of cooperation between migrant and trafficker.

Finally, the connection between sex trafficking and traditional religion and Pentecostal churches appeals to beliefs deeply ingrained in Edo society. I find that traditional religion is used to 1) close the deal between migrant and trafficker, 2) to enforce this deal and 3) to negotiate disputes. The counterfactual, if trafficking had no connection to religious beliefs, means that the reputation of traffickers would be worse, that they could not rely on religious institutions as meeting places and enforcement of contracts, and cannot amplify threats by showing that the spirits are on their side and will harm those who break an agreement.

Chapter 5: Markets and Hierarchies

5.1 Introduction

This chapter addresses the following research questions: How can cooperation between traffickers be explained? Also, how can a trafficking network reach a high capacity of transported migrants? This chapter is an analysis of all 826 wiretapped conversations in the Koolvis court files.

Firstly, in section 5.2, I assess whether the network of the sex traffickers is market-oriented or hierarchically structured. Theoretically, there are several ways in which this industry could be organised. The price mechanism of the market may coordinate it. Alternatively, a hierarchical firm could execute the trafficking of migrants. I find that transportation is externalised, in other words, market-oriented, rather than internalised in a firm. I will argue that the network is a market rather than a hierarchy, even though there are some elements of vertical integration (Williamson, 1973). Related to this idea, in 5.3, I look at the division of labour that has led to the market-oriented structure. In 5.4, I explore the mechanisms fostering cooperation, keeping in mind that distrust in the underworld is widespread. I explore whether kinship is an explanatory factor. Building on Chapter 4, I find that geographical clustering of the region of origin of the traffickers; as well as between migrants and traffickers is an explanatory factor, rather than kinship. Having this shared background opens up the possibility for several cooperative mechanisms: gangs in Edo State, under the guise of spiritual advice, can provide third-party enforcement. I argue that brokerage, rather than hierarchical power, is critical for the functioning of the network.

One potential problem that can arise is that one party has sponsored the journey of a migrant and has an enforceable contract with the migrant stating that the migrant will repay their loan on specific terms (often highly unfavourable terms due to prices in the illegal market), but then the migrant defects and starts working for someone else. A transporter, for example, may want to earn more profit from the migrant and therefore tells them to work for him rather than for their original employer. In these cases, third-party enforcement comes in to threaten both the migrant and the new employer. Another risk is that co-offenders or migrants report to the police. The fact that most actors are undocumented migrants minimises the risk. A counter-factual would be for transportation to be conducted by Italian criminals, for example. However, the evidence shows that, because the supply side of the trade relies entirely on Nigerian migrants, Italian crime groups do not have the connections to enter this business (Varese, 2017).

5.2 Market-oriented structure

This section reports the results of a social network analysis based on the Koolvis investigation of one network that during a two-year period was successful in recruiting, transporting, and bringing into employment a high number of Nigerian migrants in Europe. The rest of the chapter will compare these results to a content analysis of the division of labour within this group, the distribution of risk, and mechanisms fostering the cooperation.

During the investigative period of the Koolvis case, law enforcement detected 94 journeys of 149 women and linked them to the same network. These numbers mean that on average, the network transported 1.6 women per journey. One to three women was typical; there were no outliers where the network transported a large group of women at once. For 21 of the 94 journeys, rich information is available in the court files on which actors participate in which journeys, which women the network transported, which agreements parties closed, and what routes the network followed. There is less missing data for these 21 journeys than others due to an increased level of monitoring by the police during a part of the investigation. I use these 21 journeys for a two-mode network[8] analysis. A total of 52 people are involved in facilitating these journeys. In this number I have included all people who appear to do practical facilitation of the journey, and not the migrants themselves, their families, or other social contacts that show up in the files. The resulting network of affiliation is shown in Figure 5.1.

Each white square represents one journey and each grey symbol represents one individual. The different symbols signify the roles that came up during the content analysis: circles for the transporters and triangles for the madams. Transporters are all those involved in the journey of migrants: people who organize the journey from Nigeria, people who drive migrants from an asylum centre in Europe to a safe house, those who provide safe houses, and those who bring the migrants to the madam. I have divided the people involved into just two groups of actors, madams and transporters, to see whether those who put the migrants to work in the sex industry or those who are involved in getting them there are more central in the network. The higher the degree centrality of an individual,, the larger the size of the symbol is. This means that the large symbols are involved in a large number of journeys, while those with small symbols are involved in a low number of journeys of migrants. For

[8] Some scholars would prefer to display the network as a transformed one-mode diagram, but Borgatti and Halgin (2011) argue that displaying the events, or the journeys, in this case, makes the diagram more transparent. Those who participated in the same journey might not have met one another. A one-mode network diagram might imply that they did.

example, a madam who receives two migrants has a smaller symbol than a transporter who is involved in the journey of five migrants. The graph was generated using an algorithm based on the principle that nodes that are connected should be drawn near to each other (Kamada & Kawai, 1989).

The graph shows that there is a clear distinction between actors with a high degree of centrality and those with a low degree of centrality. The four large symbols in the middle can be interpreted as the core network. The four most central actors are all transporters, located in different countries: the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and Nigeria. These actors co-offend during multiple journeys, while the small symbols make an appearance only once or twice and are therefore in the periphery of this network. All madams are in the periphery: they receive one or two migrants, but do not act as coordinators for other journeys. There are also many transporters who only show up in one or two journeys.

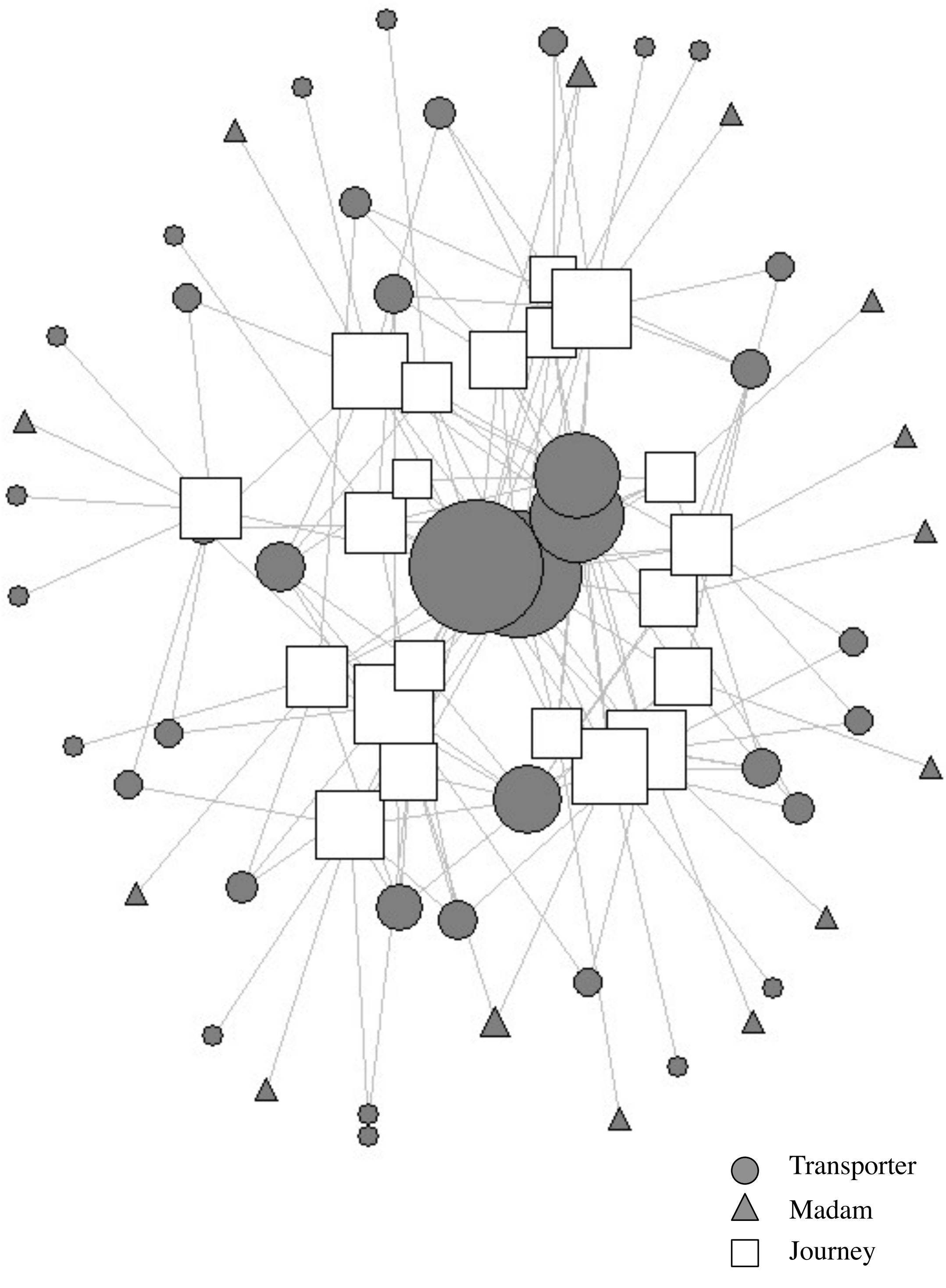

Figure 5.1 Two-mode network: Journeys and Actors

The social network analysis shows that the criminal group is flexible and externalised, rather than internalised (Williamson, 1973). Figure 5.2[9] visualises the repeated co-offending of the actors. While 52 offenders participate in at least one journey out of 21, this number almost halves when looking at offenders who participate in at least two journeys. The high number of people leaving the network corresponds to a market-oriented structure of transacting, rather than a hierarchical integration of services (Williamson, 1973). Most actors dynamically enter and leave the network.

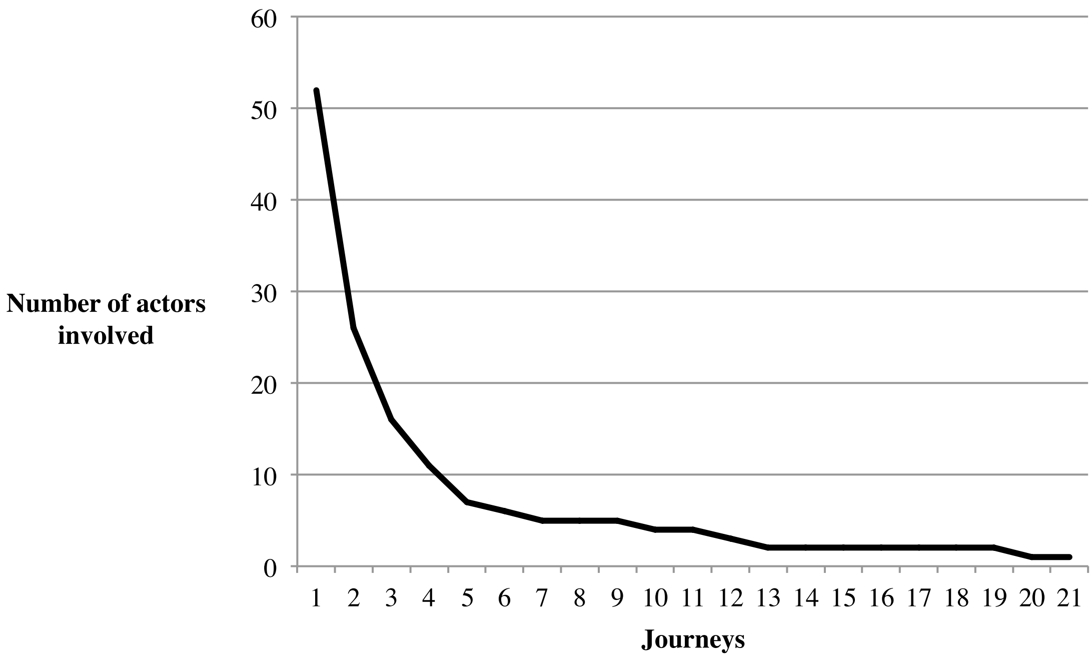

Figure 5.2 Repeated involvement in journeys

If the network was a hierarchy, there would not be as many actors leaving after just a few events. If the madam had vertically integrated recruitment and transportation in a firm, the madam would be central. Instead, the flexibility of the network, measured

9 The idea to visualize the degree of externalization in such a graph is derived from Campana's (2015) article on the same network. The data for that article are based on the Italian court files of a parallel investigation to the Dutch court files used here. Using complementary data, this graph provides additional reliability to Campana's (2015) findings.

by the number of actors entering and leaving the network, indicates a market structure. Actors choose to buy services on the market from independent entrepreneurs rather than integrating others into their firm. I have estimated this case study to be an outlier in the population of all human trafficking cases (see Chapter 3). It is an outlier in the sense that the network has a higher capacity of trafficked migrants per year than most networks. Therefore, these findings lead me to believe that a market-oriented structure leads to a higher capacity in comparison to a hierarchical structure. This idea corresponds to the idea that trafficking networks need to be flexible to circumvent law enforcement. If the network was highly centralised and the decisions of an entrepreneur determine coordination, it would not be possible to adapt trafficking routes as easily. In an internalised structure, the same set of traffickers would participate in all journeys. In particular, small hierarchical firms would maximise the labour of their workforce in this way (Campana, 2015, p. 14). However, this would mean that the traffickers have to either travel long distances or use the same trafficking route. The risk of detection would become higher per individual.

Furthermore, monitoring costs would be very high and potentially insurmountable. Namely, the nature of the business means that migrants travel through various countries and between the African and the European continent. In a hierarchical firm, the entrepreneur has to monitor their agents. Monitoring is feasible if all employees work in the same location. In a market, however, monitoring is not necessary: if one is unhappy with a business partner, they abstain from future transactions.

There is a core group, not because the network is a hierarchy, but because even market-oriented structures need managers to coordinate transactions. The content analysis shows that the four most central actors do not give orders to others. Instead, the madams contract out transportation to the central actors, who coordinate the journey. Going back to Coase's (1937) distinction between two forms of coordination in economic exchange - coordination through the price mechanism in the market and coordination through the decisions of an entrepreneur leading a firm – there is no evidence that anyone in the network is in the position to give orders to others.

The Koolvis investigation team, as well as their law enforcement partners in the Nigerian Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), however, explored the possibility that one of the core members of the network was indeed the 'kingpin' leading the criminal organisation (LD1-LD4; LN1). A 'kingpin' would be in line with a hierarchical structure, instead of the market-oriented structure for which this chapter has found evidence so far. Their observations show that one of the core members of the group, Riverwater, owns a large house in Lagos and surrounds himself with bodyguards. This image of Riverwater as a powerful man is reinforced when there is a leak during the investigation. Riverwater bribed the right-hand man of the Head of Intelligence at NAPTIP and successfully made him pass on information to him (LD1). This corruption comes to light towards the end of the investigation. The wiretaps suddenly show that Riverwater is aware of the surveillance efforts. Apparently, Riverwater is in the position to avoid disruption of his work by law enforcement through the corruption of officials. Pictures of many of the migrants are found at this house when NAPTIP searches it, providing further indication that he is a crucial actor in the network. In interviews, migrants confirm that they stayed at his residence for several weeks before departure to the Netherlands (Dienst Nationale Recherche, 2008). For many of the Koolvis migrants, his phone number is on the documents with asylum stories. It is Riverwater they call in order to get picked up from the asylum centre.

Eventually, the Dutch police only hear Riverwater as a witness in the Koolvis case, and not as a suspect. The Dutch public prosecutors request his extradition for trial in the Netherlands. They charge him with counts of human trafficking and human smuggling. Corresponding to the evidence I have found, they do not charge him for leading a criminal organisation, but rather for specific acts of smuggling, for example: "Providing accommodation to the women in anticipation for their trip to Europe." (Hon. Justice Mohammed, 2014). However, interviews with law enforcement state that they regarded him as the 'boss' (LD1; LD2; LN1). The extradition does not take place, because the High Court of Nigeria rules that the circumstances are not in line with the Extradition Act (Hon. Justice Mohammed, 2014).

I argue that Riverwater had a powerful bargaining position in the network, but does not correspond to an entrepreneur who employs others and takes decisions to direct the network (see Coase, 1937). For example, the content analysis of the Koolvis files shows that he does not give orders to other members of the network. He instructs migrants, but not other traffickers on what to do. What is more, he does not know most other members of the core network, which would certainly be a requirement if they were his employees:

> Efosa: No, I am talking about Riverwater, did you tell him that I am the one organising this business?
> John: No, no, I do not think so. I have only told him I do this business with a friend and that he should send the money to you, but he does not know who you are. Tell me whether you want him to know? (KP178)

Instead of being the employer of the rest of the network, Riverwater is a leading supplier of the journey from Nigeria to Europe. Several madams in Europe contract out the journey to Riverwater (in 60% of the cases in Koolvis), the other main supplier is Ade (40%). In turn, Riverwater contracts out the journey within Europe to several different parties, rather than him directing a fixed group of employers, as would be the case in a hierarchy:

> John to Efosa: 'So about that worthless Riverwater. I do not know what's going on with him? I suspect he is moving people via other sources now.' (KP367)

In sum, I have found evidence that this network is market-oriented rather than a hierarchy. As the last step, I have evaluated whether the person whom law enforcement thought could potentially be the 'boss' is not indeed the head of a hierarchy. I found evidence to the contrary: this person does not give out orders to others. Riverwater may pay the same people over and over again to organise the journey within Europe (Efosa and John), but they are not his employees.

These findings lead to the following hypothesis that can be tested in more cases:

In the transportation phase of human trafficking, a market-oriented structure leads to a higher capacity than a hierarchical structure.

The content analysis in the next sections will expand on these results regarding cooperation between traffickers in this case study.

5.3 Kinship, communities, and ethnicity

Ethnic versus kin-based cooperation

Candidate explanations for cooperation in the underworld include kinship and ethnicity (Campana & Varese, 2013). Kin is more likely to have their incentives aligned and can monitor one another more easily than business partners who are not family. Landa's (1981) model shows that the closer one selects their business partners on a continuum from kin to the same ethnic group to outsiders, the lower the transaction costs will be. However, there are opportunity costs involved in only selecting trading partners from the closest circle of trust. In a criminal network, where there is no legal system in place to settle disputes, the expectation is that kinship plays a more prominent role in cooperation. Campana and Varese (2013) find that kinship is a credible commitment as well as using violence together. For example, Mafiosi will commit a murder together, where everyone in the group is obliged to shoot the victim once, in order to hold incriminating information over one another, and cut off opportunities for a group member to defect and report the others to the authorities.

Kinship is a similar mechanism. Because incentives of family members are aligned, trust is high. Within the family, the likelihood is low that someone reports others to the authorities because this will affect their own lives. Similarly, stealing from other family members is not a strategic choice, because family tends to share resources. In this case study, kin may take up both a more flexible and at the same time a more important role than it does in most Western societies[10]. In other words, in Nigeria, kin can mean both more and less than in the Western understanding of family. The words ‘aunt’ or ‘uncle’ can refer to any older person who is respected, rather than the sibling of one’s parents. In this way, ‘kin’ means less. At the same time, however, obligations to the extended family are more substantial than in many Western societies, where obligations such as redistributing wealth are usually limited to the core family of parents and their children. Extended family obligations are an insurance mechanism. In an insecure environment with an ineffective government, extended family redistribution makes sure that some members can lose their source of income and will still be supported (see Massey et al., 1993). For example, in many families in Southern Nigeria, the expectation is that more affluent members of the family pay the school fees of their cousins.

Considering that kinship is a candidate explanation for cooperation in criminal networks and the fact that responsibilities among extended family in Nigeria are substantial, I would expect that kinship is a key explanation for cooperation among traffickers in this case study. On the other hand, because this network has a market-orientation rather than a hierarchical structure, there is an indication that the ties within this network tend to be weak rather than strong (Granovetter, 1983). Weak ties indicate that the network has moved beyond kinship ties and that selection of business partners takes place in the more extended group of shared ethnicity, or even outsiders may be selected (see Landa, 1981).

[10] I owe this point to Dr Heather Hamill, my confirmation examiner, who has done extensive fieldwork on signaling and trust to explain cooperation in informal sectors in Africa, such as how herbalists signal trustworthiness to their customers.

The analysis shows that indeed, the latter is correct: the network has mostly moved beyond kinship. Table 5.1 presents the demographic information[11]. Kinship does not explain the majority of cooperative ties. Only five actors out of 50 have a kinship tie. Regarding the point made above, traffickers often refer to each other as 'brother' or 'uncle', even though they do not have a blood connection. From the context of the conversations and whether the reference to family corresponds with the demographic information, I have counted kinship. The only exception to a blood connection is where I count husband and wife as kin, as well as boyfriend and girlfriend who have a child together.

Ade, the supplier of the journey to Europe, and a transporter in Spain who brings women to their madams, are siblings. Efosa, the managing transporter in Amsterdam, cooperates with his wife and a girlfriend with whom he has a child. Efosa also cooperates with a third romantic relationship, which I have not counted as kin because he did not seem to interpret this relationship in a similar way. In both the core and the peripheral network, however, the majority of cooperative ties cannot be explained by kinship.

[11] N = 50 in this analysis. Two actors who were included in the social network analysis (where N = 52) are not included here, because there is no demographic data available on them.

Table 5.1 Summary of offender characteristics

Variable		Frequency	Percentage
Offenders		50	100
Gender	Male	37	74
	Female	13	26
Age	Average	35	n/a
Place of Residence	The Netherlands	18	36
	Italy	12	24
	Spain	5	10
	Nigeria	4	8
	Other EU country	11	22
Nationality	Nigerian	44	88
	Ghanaian	4	8
	Liberian	1	2
	Surinamese	1	2
Kinship	Yes	5	10
	No	45	90
Stage	Transportation	41	82
	Sex work	9	18

Furthermore, the network is not exclusively Nigerian. Of course, when 88% of the cooperative ties are between Nigerians, the implication is that ethnicity or at least nationality explains cooperation. However, the fact that the network can reach cooperation with 'outsiders' at all is remarkable. Namely, the further a network moves on the continuum from kinship to outsiders, the lower their opportunity costs are, and therefore the more successful the criminal network can become. There is cooperation with a Surinamese supplier of forged documents. Furthermore, there are four Ghanaian transporters and one from Liberia.

Having established that kinship is not a prominent cooperative tie in the network, I unpack whether shared ethnicity is behind most cooperation in the network. Out of the 88% of actors that are Nigerian, I have more detailed information for 15 people. For nine transporters and three madams, I can verify that they are from Edo State. Two transporters are from Lagos State, and one is from Delta State. In particular, I observe that all actors in the core network are from Edo State originally.

Riverwater was born in Benin City in 1964. He moves between his residence in Lagos and that in Benin City. At the time of the investigation, he is 44 years old, ten years older than the average of the group. Efosa has the same age and is originally from Benin City as well. Even though he lives in Amsterdam, his ties to Edo State are strong. He invests in property in Benin City and travels back to Edo State regularly.

Efosa and John are the two people in the network who cooperate most closely. They call each other daily to manage affairs, and both participate in every journey. They met back in Benin City. Efosa is older than John and migrated to Europe before he did. Tellingly, Efosa and John are members of a club called the Edo Top Men Group (Ellis, 2016, p. 181), a network of Edo businessmen. Presumably, Efosa helped John to migrate to Europe because they became neighbours in the United Kingdom. It could be a coincidence that they met in Benin City and then lived in the same village 4000 kilometres away in the United Kingdom, but that seems unlikely. At the time of the investigation, Efosa has citizenship in the Netherlands, but John's status is undocumented. Efosa helps him by sharing his social security number and other personal details, such as his wife and son's full names, when John needs these for his nighttime job at a security firm. They are engaged in long-term generalised exchange. Trust between them means that account keeping can be suspended. Irregularly, they calculate what Efosa still owes John. Payment does not happen after each job. Other people who participate in multiple journeys that are from Benin City are Efosa's wife, Ade, Ade's brother in Spain, a transporter in Belgium, and a transporter in the Netherlands. Efosa's girlfriend is from Lagos State. Next to pidgin English, many of the phone conversations are conducted in the Edo dialect, and nowhere do I see evidence that anyone from Northern Nigeria is involved in the network.

Reflecting on the backgrounds of the actors, I conclude that the network can be characterised as non-kinship based. Instead, it relies on cooperation between those from the same ethnic group. Ethnicity is a spurious variable (Bovenkerk, 2001): in this case, it is a proxy for those who have a similar background: they are originally from a similar area in Nigeria and share similar norms, and speak the same language. Ethnicity is spurious, because it is not the Nigerian ethnicity itself that explains the behaviour. The mechanism is that those from the same region of origin can gather reliable information on one another easily, rather than the network forming a subculture and keeping outsiders away.

The actors in the network indicate that they prefer skill-based hiring over kinship-based. Skill-based hiring demonstrates that they can lower opportunity costs by moving away from kin cooperation only (Landa, 1981). The ethnicity mechanism still means that monitoring options are increased and that incentives are aligned to some degree. Communication is easier because specific cultural cues are picked up.

When there is kin-based cooperation, the actors perceive advantages and disadvantages. When Efosa cooperates with a girlfriend in Amsterdam who provides safe houses for migrants, he congratulates her on her business skills and frames the relationship in this way. However, the fact that they have a romantic relationship also means that it is easier for him to monitor his co-offender and to create a sense of dependency:

> Efosa: No, you did well, because you know… you are an expert in these kinds of things.
> Mary: Yes, yes, I am a businesswoman; I am doing business with you right? (KP2)

Another relationship within the core network is between Efosa and his wife, Miriam. She transports migrants from Amsterdam to Italy when other transporters are unavailable and organises the collection of money transfers from Western Union. She is involved in a large proportion of the journeys and shows up as one of the four core members of the network in Figure 5.1. When Efosa is out of the country, Miriam takes over his responsibilities. However, towards the end of the investigation, he tells John he does not want her to be too involved in transportation, but only in the money transfers:

> Efosa: Because… Like I told you I want to keep this woman [his wife] far away from what I am doing.
> John: Ok, should I not approach her with regard to the W level [Western Union money transfers]?
> Efosa: Hm, just, no, the W level is okay, but not for the kpakpa [transporting migrants], I do not want this woman to get us into trouble. She is not suited for these kinds of things.
> John: Ok, I understand.
> Efosa: Even when you transferred money she acted like everyone is against her, that you did not make a good impression on her. I made it clear to her that I have known you for a very long time and that you are very strict and if you say something is so, it is so. She reacted by saying I'm accusing her of being a liar. Stupid things like that. (KP7)

On the one hand, Efosa and his wife's incentives are aligned, and he can monitor her closely. On the other hand, if he perceives her not to have the skills required for a job, he prefers a non-kinship tie to do the work. Another intimate connection he uses shows that using kin does lower his costs. Efosa's girlfriend Rita regularly transports victims from Paris to Italy for him. They have a child together. They have known each other for years and know each other's families in Nigeria. In the following citation, Efosa explains why it is in his interest to hire kin.

> Efosa: Yes certainly because ultimately it is more lucrative for me to use you. If it would be Kelvin, I probably had to do 50-50… you are making life easier for me, don't you know that?
> Rita: I don't know…
> Efosa: Yes, especially, I feel comfortable when you are organizing it, as if you have been doing it your entire life.
> Rita: [Laughs] Isn't it just what you're asking me to do?
> Efosa: Have you worked as a travel agent in the past?
> Rita: [Laughs] Where?
> Efosa: I even told Tom [another transporter] today that you are doing it all perfectly. He was very impressed that you even come to Belgium to pick up… He even said you must have been a madam of these girls in a past life. [They laugh]. (KP100)

In this exchange, Efosa says that if he has to use another transporter, Kelvin, he would have to split the costs 50-50, implying that he pays his girlfriend Rita less than that. Then, he emphasises that she has the skills required for the business. He compliments her: "You must have been a madam in a past life." For Rita, the relationship is beneficial as well. The following texts illustrate that this is a mutually beneficial relationship, but confirm that the structure of the network is market-oriented. Even though Efosa hires his girlfriend multiple times, she is not his employee:

> Rita to Efosa: Baby thanks so much for the business it was really nice doing business wit you, I don't ve to think much on how to pay my lawyer, think of me when another comes ur way. (KP146)

> Efosa to Rita: I am glad de lawyer thing is out of de way, u know dat u are my favourite biz partner, u come first honey, thanks 4all u did today, it was really cool of u. (KP147)

Even though I find intimate relationships between those in the core network, it cannot be characterised as a family business in any way. Ethnicity explains cooperation rather than kin, and recruiting happens on the basis of skill, which is more sophisticated than the typical criminal enterprise based on family ties.

Brokerage

In order to explore the research question of this chapter - how can cooperation between traffickers be explained? – beyond the kinship or ethnicity factor, I look at how transactions between actors are enforced. In a network that is market-oriented, there is still need for enforcement of transactions. The fact that the members in the core network are all from Edo State does not mean that cooperation is unproblematic either. Two core actors, Efosa and Riverwater, do not want to cooperate directly. John mediates this relationship as a broker:

> Efosa to John: But I know you are a very patient person, who can get along with anyone. You know that that guy [Riverwater] and I can't even do something together for a week. I met him once back home and even then I told you I don't want anything to do with the guy. (KP652)
>
> Efosa to John [text message]: Pls try to call Ade in nig, he is looking for my nr to discuss deaconess [migrant] matter, he needs to be reminded that I have no direct business with him. (KP757)

Morselli (2009) formulates the role of a broker as one who is positioned between disconnected others within a network. He quotes Burt (2005, p. 7) who explains that the broker can convince co-offenders of his added value because he maintains a competitive edge by controlling the information asymmetries that make up entrepreneurial networks. His co-offenders come to rely on him. Morselli (2008) states that brokers sometimes play a more important role than the mythological 'Mr

Bigs' or 'kingpins', which is undoubtedly the case in this network. John's role means that the information asymmetry between Europe and Nigeria does not stand in the way of cooperation in this network. If Riverwater, John, and Efosa had not come from the same region, it would be harder for John to provide brokerage. He understands the intricacies of their respective positions in Edo society and the power dynamics. He can gather information on both sides easily. John would be able to find out if Riverwater was lying about the costs he makes.

Violence and third-party enforcement

Chapter 4 discussed hostage-taking concerning agreements between migrants and traffickers as well as religious shrines that enforce these agreements. These institutions are available as third-party governance between traffickers as well. The geographical clustering of traffickers makes it possible for them to use informal institutions of governance in Edo State as well. The involvement of priests raises the question of why traffickers would not self-supply dispute settlement services (see Dick, 1995) or why the market does not solve cooperation problems. Apparently, there is a product cost advantage to contracting out dispute settlement to priests. Furthermore, there are problems that the market mechanism cannot solve. For example, in some cases, it is not enough to refuse to cooperate with someone in the future after they have cheated or made a mistake.

Certain priests have an existing reputation for enforcement and violence and specialise in catering to traffickers. The NAPTIP confirms that shrines administer threats and violence by "visiting houses with machetes to threaten people, they occasionally beat people up." (LN6). Some shrines function as fully-fledged ‘people’s courts’. Where the Nigerian government is inefficient in solving some disputes, shrines are the preferred local court of choice for many Nigerians.

In the Koolvis files, a particular shrine is mentioned frequently, the ‘Ayelala’ shrine. To recap the findings of Chapter 4: There are many branches of Ayelala shrines. (Larr, 2013). Priesthood usually transfers within families. Administering alternative governance where the government is not efficient, Ayelala shrines solve fights between neighbours and punish local thieves. They summon local people to the shrine with subpoenas when they have received an accusation from a neighbour. There is a hierarchy of chief priests, assistant priests, and female assistants working at the shrine. The Koolvis case shows that the traffickers deeply internalise the belief in traditional religion. For example, a transporter interprets his recent misfortune as the result of spirits that have been turned against him:

> Transporter 1: I am convinced that this is the voodoo. My Italian residence permit has been revoked, I cannot enter Italy anymore, my father passed away, and my wife’s Mercedes was stolen.
> Transporter 2: You are still under the influence of voodoo. I think what it means is… that you are to survive here, in Europe first. Your problems started since you travelled back home [to Nigeria]. (KP54)

The fact that third-party governance is costly predicts that offenders will turn to another mechanism if available. Indeed, while in each case the monitoring of a migrant is enabled through a priest, third-party governance among offenders is not as frequent. While each migrant swears an oath and closes a specific contract through the mediation of the priest, offenders do not enter into a formal contract enforced by a priest before cooperation. The involvement of a priest seems to happen in the event of severe disputes, such as the ‘theft’ of a sex worker by another trafficker, rather than in disputes over smaller amounts of money or confirming whose story is the accurate account of the events.

In the following excerpt a transporter, Gary, who has a dispute with a fellow transporter in Italy, Joshua, calls Efosa. This fragment shows that in a similar way to the subpoenas sent to migrant's families in case of non-cooperation (see Section 4.4), traffickers settle disputes in front of a shrine. The use of shrines for dispute settlement among traffickers confirms, as argued in Chapter 4, that 'voodoo' is not merely a trick invented by traffickers to intimidate migrants, but a system of informal governance (see also Baarda, 2016):

> Efosa receives a call from Gary. Gary tells Efosa that he has dragged Joshua's father in front of a voodoo priest. The shrine is called 'Ayelala'. Joshua's father refused to accept the invitation of the priest because he is a Christian. A social conversation about voodoo follows. (KP647)[12]

In another case, a madam has lost control over a migrant, and she suspects that the migrant is now working for somebody else. The madam, Theresa, accuses the transporter Gabriel of 'stealing' her future employee, Mercy. The madam then contacts a priest to resolve the situation through third-party enforcement:

> Priest: Do you want to stop fighting spiritually or should I continue?
> Madam: Yes, yes. Since I got out of prison, Mercy [the victim] has not earned a cent on my behalf to start new business with. So the money she made she made for Gabriel. Gabriel's father called me, but that doesn't change a thing.
> Priest: I will do my best to bring the girl back to you. (KP6)

Then, it appears that transporter Gabriel has consulted a priest of his own. Theresa remarks that she is not happy about this and seems to imply with "I will go phisica" that she is not afraid to physically threaten Gabriel:

> 'I hv been taking things lightly with u and don't like that since u said u are strong and u know all the native doctors in ngi [Nigeria], go ahead I will go

[12] The interpreter summarized this conversation instead of presenting it literally in the transcript.

phisica.' (KP9)

This section has added to the findings of Chapter 4 on 'voodoo' that traffickers use this informal justice system among each other, but not in the way they do with migrants. Where it concerns the agreement between trafficker and migrant, 'voodoo' is used for closing the deal, negotiating the deal, and enforcing the deal. I cannot find evidence, however, that traffickers use 'voodoo' among each other, for example, to enforce a contract between employer and employee. Namely, this chapter finds that the network is market-oriented. Therefore, transactions are flexible, and no one employs others, they merely re-hire people on an ad hoc basis. Only in extreme cases will a priest be hired to mediate a dispute. Even market-oriented networks require coordination, however, and I find that a broker connects those that do not know each other.

In addition to the involvement of traditional shrines, which could be categorised as a form of organised crime, because they provide governance in the underworld, I do not find evidence of the involvement of gangs in the Koolvis case. It is likely that the transportation market is more difficult for organised crime to protect than the prostitution market. In drug trafficking, for example, traditional organised crime groups, such as the Italian Mafia, have always struggled to gain power in these markets because there is no physical territory to control (Reuter, 1983; Varese, 2011; Zaitch, 2002). It is likely that the same holds for human trafficking. However, law enforcement has become aware of the activities of Nigerian gangs in the drugs, prostitution, and migration markets in Italy and Spain (Ellis, 2016). Italian and Spanish police have completed investigations that make mention of the 'Air Lords' and 'Black Axe' gangs operating in Italy and Spain (LO1; LO2; Piranty, 2016). These gangs are historically rooted in confraternities that emerged at Nigerian universities, particularly in the South, in the 1970s (Ellis, 2016). These confraternities were trained to use violence against other political groups within the university and within the region. Its members, therefore, are historically trained in using violence, a requirement for an organised crime group (Varese, 2011).

Whereas the group in the Koolvis case does not show any signs of membership to a particular group, they refer to “our people in Italy” who are more violent than them and involved in drugs, rather than human trafficking (KP754). I interpret “our people” to mean that they know other Nigerians in Italy, but not “our people” in the sense that they are members of the same business. The traffickers in the case study are aware that violence puts them at much more risk of law enforcement and is bad for their business:

> Efosa to John: He is a dangerous idiot. He is involved in drugs. Perhaps he has been arrested already because I know that when it concerns a murder case, it does not take long for most European police forces to arrest the person who needs to be arrested. (KP754)

I find that the case study is an example of disorganised crime (Reuter, 1983). There is no evidence that any party has a monopoly on violence and governs the market. Cooperation among traffickers cannot be explained by third-party enforcement. However, there are priests available for dispute settlement. Furthermore, there are candidate groups that could govern local ends of the chain, such as the Nigerian confraternities that have existing resources to do so and are present in Europe.

Disorganised crime is common for businesses that do not have physical territories to control, such as transportation, prostitution, however, is localised. The case study provides limited data on how the madams maintain their position in the prostitution market. The demographic data of Table 5.1 show that women have a role both as madams and as transporters. The findings of this thesis confirm earlier observations that women have prominent roles in Nigerian trafficking rings (see Siegel & de Blank, 2010), which is surprising because many criminal networks exclude women. The common understanding is that women are excluded because criminal networks need to have a reputation for violence, which women do not have as much as men. In Chapter 6, I discuss how madams do pay protection money for their brothels or place on the street.

Overall, I conclude that violence is not characteristic of cooperation among traffickers in this network. I want to highlight this to indicate that it is important to consider not only what is in the data, but also what the data does not show. There is one reference of violence among traffickers when a madam wants to retaliate against a trafficker whom she believes has 'stolen' her sex worker. There are no threats of violence among transporters. The only reference to violence among transporters in the Koolvis case refers to gossip about someone outside of the group who is involved in drugs.

Positive rewards for incoming migrants

Reuter (1983) predicts that in disorganised crime groups, positive rewards, rather than violence, foster cooperation. In addition to informal taxi drivers, a large section of the peripheral network consists of migrants from Edo State who have recently arrived in Dutch asylum centres. The core network recruits them ad hoc. For example, a migrant answers the phone in order to schedule a time for pick-up from a centre. She does not understand the instructions about the meeting place and hands over the phone to another asylum seeker who might understand. Instead of sending a transporter, the core network asks the fellow asylum seeker to get the migrants out of the asylum centre unnoticed and to accompany them to a larger city. In return, the incoming asylum seeker who contributed to the transportation will be helped with their integration in the migrant community. The core network remains in contact with the recruit, asking how his new stay in Europe is, and whether they can help by providing information on residence permits, for example. They share information about potential housing, routes to take, and potential employment. As Nee and Sanders (2001) argue, ethnic ties take up a central role in the incorporation of immigrants that this form of social capital is often more important than human and financial capital in shaping the trajectory of adaptation for many immigrants. In this case study, an asylum seeker who is asked to accompany migrant once may not be contacted again for another task for months. Meanwhile, the social relationship remains active through the exchange of information on residence permits and other resources, invitations to social gatherings, and even financial help. Later on, when the network requires a migrant to be transported close to the new place of residence of the mgirant, the managing transporter will call upon them again.

A level of trust within the migrant community might explain why ad hoc recruitment is possible (Nee & Sanders, 2001). The core network does not know the reputation of every person they hire, but they expect them to cooperate rather than report to the authorities. They are acutely aware that new migrants, particularly those with illegal status, have few alternative sources of social capital. Within this community, there is little sense of secrecy about the activities of the transporters. A liaison officer for the Netherlands in Italy confirms that the irregular migrants from Nigeria have increasingly fewer options for legal employment (LD6). Most European countries do not regard Nigeria as a country of origin that has priority for asylum, and many Nigerians who travelled without a visa disappear into illegality (LD6). The core network does not require costly signals of trustworthiness (Bacharach & Gambetta, 2001) from co-offenders. Being West African and a part of the same migrant community is a sign that cannot be faked and this appears to be sufficient. In a close-knit community, where Pentecostal churches are a central meeting place, there is a high level of social control.

In the Koolvis case, there is no evidence of rules of secrecy that other organised crime groups have maintained (Varese, 2013). This is similar to the findings of Kleemans and Van de Bunt (2003) who conclude that in the networks of human traffickers the activities are normalised: smuggling is viewed as a service to fellow countrymen and openly discussed. When a transporter is arrested, he talks to several contacts about his predicament and the details of his arrest (KP23). Another transporter tells his girlfriend the exact time and place of an asylum pick-up (KP52). There are multiple mentions of time spent in jail as a regular occurrence. Social contacts are not particularly surprised or concerned by arrests but instead offer advice and guidance. Many disclose that they have participated in irregular or illegal activities in the past.

This section has explored whether kinship or ethnic homogeneity underlie cooperation among traffickers. The network has moved beyond kinship affiliation. Adding to the findings on the market-orientation of the network, I find that violence plays a limited role in cooperation, while positive rewards for those from the same community do foster cooperation.

5.4 Division of Labour

The previous sections have explored parts of the research question on cooperation between traffickers. I find that cooperation is market-oriented rather than hierarchical and based on ethnic homogeneity rather than kinship. In this section, I explore the second, related, research question of this chapter: How can a trafficking network reach a high capacity of transported migrants?

Division of labour characterises modernity: people devote themselves to increasingly specific tasks (Weber, 1922). Division of labour leads to higher productivity. In the underworld, however, such a degree of sophistication is more challenging to achieve. Namely, with division of labour, more people are needed to complete a production process. The involvement of multiple people leads to issues of cooperation that are harder to solve in the underworld due to lack of trust as well as a higher risk of detection by law enforcement. When the first entrepreneurs tapped into the demand for prostitution and the demand for illegal entry into Europe, they would complete the entire chain of production of services alone. There would be zero division of labour. The following quote shows that a division of labour did not emerge initially:

> 'Previously, a madam might come back to Benin City to do the recruitment herself, in the beginning, she would even transport the girl to the airport herself, but that got too risky. This was in the 1990s. Now, the madam may remain out of sight during the entire process.' (LN1)

In this case, the entrepreneur does not have to choose whether to contract out on the market or to integrate services in a hierarchy. They will do all the tasks themselves. This limits the enterprise because there is only so much work one person can complete. Such enterprises probably still exist in the trafficking market. The illegal nature of the business means that a firm can only grow to a certain extent until being detected. However, if an entrepreneur is looking to increase capacity, division of labour needs to be achieved.

As I discuss in the review on the literature on human trafficking in Chapter 1, various authors have highlighted the distinction between human smuggling and human trafficking (Campana 2015; Campana & Varese 2015; Kleemans & Smit 2014; Zhang 2009). Division of labour between traffickers is almost never studied. The literature expects all traffickers to control the behaviour of the migrants they transport (Brunovskis & Skilbrei, 2016; Kempadoo et al., 2015; Salt & Stein, 1997). . In the Koolvis case, the actors were prosecuted for human trafficking. However, the court sentences were much lower than expected by the public prosecutors and mostly concerned human smuggling charges (European Commission, 2012). This is because only the transporters and not the exploiters were brought in front of the court. It seems logical that during the journey, when the transporters are with the migrants in person, they would be the ones to monitor the migrants. Instead, they specialise in providing illegal entry into a country only. Even when the madams (the exploiters) are not close to the migrants, they monitor them from afar. Whenever there is a problem of non-cooperation from the migrants' side, the transporters refer the problem to the madam. I argue that this division of labour makes the trafficking network more successful.

Transporters do not monitor migrants

Employers specialise in extracting as much profit from incoming migrants as possible, and therefore bind them to an agreement and monitor their behaviour; transporters specialise in the logistics of the journey. One would expect that when a madam either contracts out transportation to another party or hires a transporter in her firm, the transporter is responsible for a safe journey during which the migrant does not defect from the agreement and does not disappear after entering Europe. However, this section will show that during the transportation phase, when the migrant has not yet reached their future employer, the transporters do not control the behaviour of the migrants in the sense that the transporters will make sure the migrants stay in their presence. The transporters do not see this as their responsibility, and neither does the employer or sponsor.

In the Koolvis case, a madam in Europe wants to employ Precious, a young Nigerian woman, as a sex worker (KP509). The madam has contracted out Precious's journey to Europe to Riverwater, the travel agent in Nigeria. Riverwater has organised forged documents and a plane ticket for Precious to first travel to Amsterdam. In turn, he has contracted out further transportation within Europe to Efosa and John. Efosa hires Kevin to help with transport. Efosa asks Kevin if he can take over from another transporter once Precious reaches France. Efosa instructs Kevin to take Precious on a train from France to Italy and to get a bus from there to the madam. Kevin and Precious travel a few days later. Directly after departing the train, Kevin calls Efosa to tell him that he has lost Precious (KP405). She ran away, saying that she left her passport on the train. He looked for her on the platform when he realised she was not there with him, but he could not find her.

Even though Efosa loses his temper on phone calls frequently, using many curse words, he does not react strongly to Kevin losing Precious. He does not state that he will ruin Kevin's reputation, does not threaten with violence, and does not say he will never do business with Kevin again. Instead, Efosa asks Kevin to look around for Precious one more time, but not for too long: “otherwise you will miss the bus” (K405). Kevin does not seem to think losing Precious has many consequences either. The only disadvantage he mentions is that he was planning to stay for the night at the house of the madam, but does not think he can ask her for that favour in this case. It is more important for him to catch the bus on his way to another pick-up point for a new migrant than to find Precious.

Efosa is worried about his property, a forged passport, which is with Precious. He needs it back for future use. Later that day, Efosa receives a phone call from the madam (KP408). She has contacted Precious’ family in Nigeria, and the family has tracked her down. The madam says she then talked to Precious herself, who said she could not find Kevin once she was back on the platform. Furthermore, Precious accuses Kevin of trying to sexually assault her while they were on route. All Efosa says is that he is glad she found Precious, and he asks whether she can send the forged passport back in the mail. Efosa then asks Kevin what happened; Kevin denies the assault (KP409). Efosa leaves the matter at that and tells Kevin he will be in touch if he has any future jobs for him. Indeed, Kevin shows up again in another journey in the Koolvis investigation.

What this case illustrates is the role of transporters. They do not monitor the migrants. They do not control their movements. Instead, they facilitate the journey and specialise in that task. Efosa is concerned about the forged passport that he reuses in his transportation business. He does not want that to disappear with the migrant and makes an effort to get it back. Apart from this concern, he is not worried about the disappearance of the migrant. When he cannot locate Precious, he merely tells the madam. She tells him she will ask her family where Precious is, invoking the hostage-taking mechanism that I discuss in Chapter 4. The managing transporter is not concerned that the migrant accuses the person he has hired of sexual assault. Apparently, this is not something that costs him business. In the situation discussed in Chapter 4, where some migrants cannot or do not want to leave an asylum centre, the transporters merely wait until they get new instructions to pick them up. They do not try to solve the situation, even though they are in the same country as the migrants, and the madams are not. I conclude, therefore, that the network has a division of labour in which madams monitor migrants and transporters do not.

Transporters specialise in illegal entry into a country

Although the difference between employers and transporters means that transporters do not have long-term agreements with migrants, transporters do enter contracts with migrants directly. In the Koolvis case, the majority of jobs that Efosa receives are through employers who want him to transport their future workers to them. However, a portion of his jobs also comes from migrants who approach him directly. He charges the same price to employers and migrants who want to travel within Europe: 1500 euros. Newly arrived undocumented migrants have a demand for this service, because non-Schengen citizens require a document to travel within Europe and may be subject to ad hoc passport controls on public transport, for example. The migrants require someone to organise an inconspicuous route for them as well as a forged document.

Data outside of the Koolvis case indicate that transporters may employ a migrant for a short amount of time, instead of having them pay in cash, for example. One respondent had travelled from Nigeria to Libya independently, and wanted to enter an agreement with a transporter to cross the Mediterranean Sea to Europe:

> 'I was cooking… for the passengers. Cleaning the house, anything. I work for free. Because for a job like this he is supposed to pay me like 600 dinars, 700 dinars. But because I am leaving for Europe anyway, and I am also eating, sometimes his wife buys me some clothes. I just pray for the day he will put me on a boat. And he did, and I thank God that I made the journey, that I did not die on the sea.' (M5)

In this case, the transporter has not specialised in employing others in a particular industry. The transporter hires the migrant on an ad hoc basis to help with this transportation business: cooking for other passengers and cleaning his boat. The respondent describes that there was no agreement regarding a loan or employment in Europe. Once she got to Europe, the relationship with the transporter ended, and she had to find work on her own. Only then did she come into contact with a madam and started working in the sex industry in Italy.

Rather than investing in long-term relationships with migrants and having them enter a particular industry, transporters invest in gaining knowledge of illegal migration routes, forged documents, trucks, boats, cars, and people who can flexibly accompany migrants from A to B on different routes. Changing policies mean that routes also change continuously in order to keep the journey as cheap as possible and to avoid law enforcement detection. Transporters specialise in knowledge and resources concerning the logistics of the journey, while madams do not:

> 'The madam does not know anything about passports. She hires someone for these things.' (OI2)

For the journey from Nigeria to Europe, Riverwater, one of the suppliers of transportation for this route in the Koolvis case, has invested in relationships that facilitate illegal movement over this route. He owns a legal travel agency and uses the same contacts to transport migrants illegally. He knows local law enforcement and bribes them. He knows how to give out plane tickets on the same forged passport over and over again. He employs people who can accompany migrants to Europe and come back on the same route. He specialises in immigration procedures. He knows how to prepare migrants for the stories they need to tell in order not to end up in detention camps or be deported back directly.

Similarly, Efosa, who transports people within Europe, invests in acquiring forged documents. He has a stack of forged passports that he has bought from a Surinamese supplier in Amsterdam. He re-uses each passport up to forty times (KP202). Like Riverwater, he has been active in this business for over twenty years and has managed to adapt to continuously changing landscapes of regulations and border control. He fills his days with phone calls to the various people he hires to accompany migrants and with finding out whether a particular route still works. He does so many cases each week that he will know whenever the situation changes. The counterfactual, an employer transporting migrants themselves, would only do one or two cases a year and would not specialise in illegal border crossing. Transporters have to be adaptable and do not need to invest in long-term employment relationships in order to be successful. I expect this to be an explanation for the high capacity of trafficked migrants in the Koolvis case.

When the transporters enter an agreement with an employer, rather than with a migrant directly, they will await instructions from the employer regarding the arrangements:

> ‘*You never saw her [the madam]?*
> No, but I was seeing her money. Whenever she sent money, I see. Whenever she says: you will leave to Valencia in one week time or three months time, I say okay. And she calls me, all the time, to advise me.’ (M4)

During the journey, Efosa offers accommodation to migrants en route. Sometimes they have to stay in a house in Amsterdam or Paris for a few days until someone is available to accompany them to the madam. In these scenarios, Efosa will instruct the people who offer the safe houses to avoid unwanted attention by not inviting guests over while the migrants are staying with them. He does not instruct them to make sure the migrants do not leave. Illustratively, when two migrants on their way to a madam in Italy stay with Efosa’s girlfriend in Paris, he invites them to the christening party of his child and asks them to help with the cooking (Dienst Nationale Recherche, 2008). However, observations at this party show that they are welcome to socialise with others and are not hidden away inside.

The content analysis of the Koolvis files shows transportation is easy to contract out. The skills and resources necessary for an entrepreneur in the transportation business are 1) knowledge on crossing borders illegally without being detected, 2) a flexible network of people who can cover different routes, and 3) access to forged documents. Chapter 4 shows that the madam puts effort into binding a migrant to her. She recruits her, knows the family intimately and effectively takes them hostage; she closes an agreement enforced by a priest. She runs a prostitution business in which she will extract money from the migrant. Creating this employment relationship is labour intensive. The madam is not afraid that a transporter will ‘steal’ a migrant from her, because they do not have a business in which they could employ the migrant, and because the migrant already has a credible commitment with the madam. Therefore, transportation can be contracted out.

Simultaneous transactions

The division of labour explains why a high capacity of migrants can be reached, but does raise the question of how madams and transporters cooperate. Payment happens simultaneously with the hand-over of the migrant. Therefore, trust between madam and transporter is not necessary. The managing transporter will keep a migrant in a safe house near the madam until she has released the code for collecting the money from Western Union to him. Sometimes, when a madam distrusts a particular transporter suggested by the managing transporter, she may supply a transporter herself:

> Madam: it is not right that you leave her [the migrant] there.
> Efosa: She is not left behind, she is transferred to our colleague there, who will call you and make an appointment with you.
> Madam: Listen, you know why I say that, I know those guys in Italy, do you know what I mean? Do you get me? I don't trust that boy in Italy. I will reimburse the ticket for him to go back to Brescia. I think that is better, I don't want her to fall in the hands of… you understand? I live here and I know all the things that happen.
> Efosa: You talk about people in Italy, but you don't even know with whom she will stay. Do you know all the people who live there?
> Madam: No I don't know anyone there.
> Efosa: You don't know this person either, he could be very trustworthy, so you don't have to worry, if my friend in Brescia is not available you have to send someone to get her there. Or do you have someone in Turin? Because she will go past Turin.
> Madam: Ehh Turin, Turin, okay, I know someone in Turin. (KP179)

Because of the system of simultaneous payment, the transporter has an incentive for the migrant to arrive at the madam. In turn, the madam does not receive the migrant until she has paid the transporters.

In conclusion, the illegal transportation and illegal employment of migrants are two conceptually and empirically distinct activities. They are often confused in the literature on human trafficking. The evidence shows that even during the transportation phase, the transporters do not control the behaviour of migrants. Transportation is easy to contract out and tends to a market-oriented structure. Transportation businesses can have agreements with migrants directly or with employers who want them to help their future workers cross borders illegally. Entrepreneurs in this business specialise in knowledge on how to cross borders illegally without being detected and invest in the resources to do so. Madams, in contrast, specialise in employing new migrants in the prostitution business.

5.5 Distribution of risk

The previous sections have added various aspects to exploring the research question of cooperation between traffickers and reaching a high capacity of transported migrants. I find a market-oriented structure, cooperation based on ethnic homogeneity, and division of labour between transporters and madams. Madams can contract out transportation to others. The transportation business is highly segmented: it spreads over a large number of people. One particular person getting caught will not cause the network to unravel. Similarly, one person reporting to the authorities will have minor consequences, because individual knowledge on future business ventures is limited. The last aspect of cooperation among traffickers, which I explore in this section, is how members of the core transportation network (see Figure 5.1) manage to distribute their risk to others in the peripheral network. The core network has managed to amortise their own risk over a large number of other people.

The fact that the core members of the network can redistribute risk to co-offenders in Europe is not self-evident. Efosa receives 1500 euros per migrant but has to share this income with John, who mediates his relationship with Nigeria. He also has to pay for bus and train tickets, for gas. He only has a limited amount of money left to pay the transporters who pick up the migrants.

Riverwater and Ade are not a part of the migrant community, and are safely in Nigeria, running little risk of arrest if anything goes wrong in Europe. Riverwater is not careful in preventing transporters in Europe from being arrested. In one instance, a transporter in Italy and frequent co-offender, Paul, calls Efosa and tells him he is distraught that Riverwater has given Paul's private phone number to a migrant. Paul is afraid he will get caught if the police happen to gather intelligence on future migrants. He asks Efosa to call Riverwater and to ask him never to do this again. Efosa later reports to Paul what he communicated to Riverwater:

> 'No, I called that fool at home and cursed him. I called under your name. I told him I don't do business with him and that he should never call my number again or give my number to someone. My man [John] also called him and warned him.' (KP571)

Within Efosa's business, risk is again redistributed to a large group of people. Somehow the core network manages to make the most profit, while giving the most high-risk tasks to the peripheral network. The question is why people would take this risk. Why would they not demand higher rewards, stop offering their services, cheat, or report the core offenders to the police when caught? I argue that activities are not seen as criminal undertakings but as a service. Contracting out to other people increases the profit of the core network, the tasks are simple and can be contracted out easily. The people in the peripheral network do not have high legal incomes and are willing to do tasks for low amounts of money.

The collection of migrants from asylum centres is a particularly high-risk part of the Koolvis modus operandi. The migrants, in this phase, reside in facilities led by the Dutch authorities. These centres vary regarding surveillance and regarding how convenient the location is for the transporters to collect the women. In all cases, the transporters perceive the risk of this task to be high. Perceived risk heightens further when local police, unrelated to the Koolvis team, arrests a few transporters in the network, which is not interfering at this stage. The transporters also consider the risk of detection to be higher when a centre is located in a remote area, rather than in a larger city. Efosa spends a lot of his time hiring people ad hoc and will pay them extra if they have to go into a remote village to pick up migrants:

> John: I am convinced he will handle the case well. He has experience with what we are doing, and he also goes into the actual villages. I think that is an extra task.
> Efosa: He should also be satisfied with the amount [a 100 euros] because it is quite a large sum! (KP6)

When possible, the transporters will avoid travelling into the vicinity of asylum centres. When they are transporting people who are more experienced migrants, they will instruct them to travel to a larger city on their own. With 'newcomers,' the transporters decide that the women will get lost or attract too much attention when travelling on their own. The core network never approaches asylum centres. They perceive the risk to be too high, and so they delegate to others:

> Transporter: No, I just wanted to tell you. If you've got people, you should give them my number. They can call me, and I will pick them up and bring them to you.
> Efosa: Exactly. We'll do it in the usual way. It sounds like you are familiar

> with this work already.
> Transporter: [Laughs]
> Efosa: I can never, even if I'd get paid a million dollars, go to that place. Okay, you'll do the job; I will discuss it with John and get back to you. (KP353)

Reuter (1983) predicts that the entrepreneur will control the risk each employee is exposed to and will disperse employees across time and space. This is indeed what happens in the Koolvis study. The transportation stage is highly segmented. While there is a small core network, most people act in the periphery: they occasionally enter the group and leave again. This is the case not only because the core network wants to segment the group strategically, but also because no one is willing to perform the high-risk tasks too often:

> Efosa: I said it would be a crawler level [an informal taxi driver] again.
> John: A what? Crawler?
> Efosa: Crawler, crawler level.
> John: Ok.
> Efosa: But I know it is not a setup, because I hate bringing innocent people into trouble.
> John: Yes I understand. Is it the same guy we used before?
> Efosa: No it will be a different one. He [the previous one] said he does not feel like it and does not want to do it anymore. (KP502)

The supply of potential transporters is large enough for the core network to terminate business with those asking too high a price:

> John: I told you I think he is too expensive and that I cannot cooperate with him [transporter] anymore.
> Efosa: Ok, ok, if you like three [three migrants transported at the same time], I also don't have a problem. I'll come outside to call with you. I will beg the man to accept the amount for three if you agree with the price.
> John: Yes, yes, but I will not work with the man professionally anymore.
> Efosa: That is true, we haven't signed a contract. (KP16)

Efosa mentions that he wants to prevent another transporter getting arrested and that the person they used before is not willing to participate anymore. Because of this segmentation, the information available to people in the peripheral network about future business transactions and personal information about the core network is limited. In addition to segmentation, the entrepreneurs tend to let those closest to them do lower risk tasks. Efosa mentions that hiring kin for the riskiest tasks is not a good idea:

> Efosa: I told him it's not good to use a girlfriend for something like that. It's better to look for someone else and pay for that service. (KP765)

I test the hypothesis that whether an agent is assigned to approach an asylum centre or work in the rest of the journey is related to whether they have a superficial or an intimate relationship to Efosa. Table 6.2 shows the cross-tabulation. The chi-square value is significant ($p < 0.05$) at 5.54 rejecting the null hypothesis that there is no relationship between the degree of attachment to Efosa and role in transportation. The effect size of phi 0.42 is considerably high, which indicates that there is not only a significant relationship but that it is a strong relationship.

Table 5.2 Cross-tabulation of task and tie

	Task in transportation		
	Asylum centre	Rest of journey	Row total
Tie to Efosa			
Strong	2 (*5.16*)	13 (*9.84*)	15
Weak	9 (*5.84*)	8 (*11.16*)	17
Column total	11	21	32

$X^2\ (1{,}32) = 5.54$, $p < 0.05$ Phi = 0.42

While the core network perceives the asylum pick-up task to be high-risk, their behaviour in the rest of the journey is less cautious. Efosa will house migrants in his place of residence, but often seeks others because his wife Miriam started to object. He will visit the other safe houses in person. When migrants stay at other houses, he does not monitor the process closely. In one instance, he notices that Mary has visitors while she is accommodating a migrant. He tells her:

'Personally, I wouldn't be comfortable with that, but it is up to you.' (KP411)

He seems to be instructing her to be more secretive, but the situation is not something that is discussed as a matter of urgency.

The agents are usually illegal migrants who risk deportation if they were to be arrested, but who have few alternative sources of income. This fact means that the entrepreneur can feel secure that they will cooperate rather than report to the authorities. Many offenders receive small amounts of money in return for their services. The fact that many transporters receive small returns adds nuance to the characterisation by the UNOCD (2008) that human trafficking is a "low risk, high profit" crime. Low risk and high profit might be the case for the core offenders and especially those who reside in Nigeria, outside of the reach of European law enforcement. However, to give the crime of human trafficking as a whole as "low risk, high profit" would lack the nuance of the division of labour I describe in Section 5.4. During police interviews, offenders play into this stereotype of human trafficking as a glamorous job. Transporters in the periphery would state:

> 'Why would I be poor if I am actually involved in human trafficking? Why would I live off social benefits?' (Dienst Nationale Recherche, 2008)

I conclude that for entrepreneurs in the human trafficking business it is easy to contract out transportation to weak ties. The conditions are that there should be a supply of people who have limited options for legal employment and that the entrepreneur's commitment to the migrant is credible. Contracting out means that detection by law enforcement is less likely and that the network can maintain flexible routes for transportation. This strategy also means that there are no employees who have to be monitored. If someone is unreliable, he or she is simply not hired again.

The traffickers assess some parts of the journey to be higher risk than others. There have been several arrests around asylum centres, and the traffickers regard approaching centres to pick up migrants as riskier than crossing European borders. This task is never carried out by the core network or contracted out to strong ties of the network. The risk is spread over a large number of people with weak ties to the core network.

5.6 Conclusion

The success of a network in this market could be measured as the capacity of migrants it can transport and employ. The Koolvis network is an example of success: they were intercepted by law enforcement not because cooperation failed and someone betrayed them, but because the capacity became so high that cases started to be detected and linked to the same actors. The network transports over 200 migrants a year (Campana, 2015). Many other indictments find evidence for one madam transporting a relative and employing them. So the question is, what makes this network more successful?

The analysis presented in this chapter has offered insight into how the Koolvis network worked, and in doing so reveals what made that network so successful. A key argument is that transportation and employment of migrants in this market are separated into different firms. This division of labour means that transporters can specialise in illegal border crossing alone and can, therefore, increase their capacity. The analysis shows that the transportation business is dependent on a large number of flexible contacts that can be activated once in a while. This flexibility corresponds to a market-oriented structure of transacting, rather than a hierarchical integration of services (Williamson, 1973). These findings lead to the following hypothesis that can be tested in more cases:

In the transportation phase of human trafficking, a market-oriented structure leads to a higher capacity than a hierarchical structure.

Employers specialise in the prostitution industry and having future employees commit to the contract. They spend their time building long-term relationships with employees and putting enforcement mechanisms in place. Transporters specialise in crossing borders illegally: they spend their time gathering up to date knowledge on asylum procedures, how to forge documents, and what routes to take without being detected.

I argue that ethnicity plays a more important role in this network than kinship does in explaining cooperative ties. Only five out of 50 actors have kinship ties. Enforcement mechanisms rely on coming from the same region in Nigeria: Edo State. Actors express a preference for not hiring kin. From migrants from Edo State, they select on the basis of skill, rather than family ties.

Finally, I argue that the success of the core network also depends on them being able to distribute the risk of the criminal activity to others in the peripheral network. Both employers and managing transporters remain out of sight and will send others to the most visible parts of the journey: picking up migrants directly from asylum centres.

Chapter 6: Exploitation, trust, and agency

6.1 Introduction

This chapter looks at the working lives of the Edo women once they enter the sex industry in Europe. The research question of this chapter is: How can the long-term exploitation of migrants be explained? In this chapter, I use several different sources of data. Of the Koolvis files, 10%, 84 conversations apply to the research question of this chapter. From the files, I also analyse interviews the Koolvis team held with eight women who could be traced after they had already joined their madam. I include the 14 life history interviews I held with migrants and 40 interviews with experts. I conduct a thematic analysis of the data. Four themes emerge: I explore the theme of exploitation in section 6.2, monitoring in 6.3, trust in 6.4, and social mobility in 6.5. Finally, in 6.6 I conclude that it is less costly for a madam to exploit a migrant long-term by building high levels of trust than to effectively kidnap the person like the modern slavery argument states (Bales, 1999; Hughes, 2000)

I find that the migrants do indeed work under exploitative conditions, using the 'disparity of value' definition of exploitation. The working conditions lead to severe health risks, and migrants are highly underpaid. I argue that the madam can exploit the migrant not because of the theory of 'modern slavery,' encompassing a situation of kidnapping, which is dominant in human trafficking literature and policy. Instead, the madam can exploit the migrant because of the structure of the migrant community: levels of trust are high due to the hostage-taking mechanism (see Chapter 4) and distrust in the outside world. The market is competitive, and the undocumented newcomers can be exploited by the older generation of migrants who offer them a chance of upwards social mobility.

Ethnic solidarity theory predicts that incoming migrants have more favourable outcomes within migrant enclaves than in the open economy and that fellow migrants will help newcomers establish themselves in the new society (Wilson & Martin, 1982). Nee and Sanders (2001), however, question this and predict that those who rely on trust in the migrant community may experience negative consequences of doing so in their economic lives. Exploitation, I argue, is an extreme example of these negative consequences, which becomes more likely when the migrant travels illegally and is vulnerable because of the limited options available to them. Campana and Varese (2015) explain that often, a smuggling agreement between an incoming migrant and a smuggler may be upheld, but that exploitation is a by-product of illegality. A competing explanation is the human trafficking and modern slavery discourse (see Bales, 2012, Hughes, 2000). The case of women from Edo State is often referred to in these terms by law enforcement, social workers, and journalists. This theory states that migrant sex workers and other labourers are exploited because their agency is taken away completely. Absence of any agency is a kidnapping scenario, rather than an employment relationship. Bales (2012, p. 6) defines modern slavery as total control of one person by another for economic exploitation.

From my analysis, elements of trust and distrust within the employment relationship emerge. The combination of both explains why long-term exploitation is possible while relying on the embeddedness of the worker in the migrant community, who has few alternative options and is stuck in a web of obligations. The migrants are motivated by the chance of upward social mobility. If they are successful in the industry, they can start their own business. However, analysis of the Koolvis files and respondents' accounts shows that in line with Nee and Sander's (2001) definition of a migrant enclave, the Nigerian sex trade in Europe takes place in small closed informal economies, with space for only so many entrepreneurs. Incoming unskilled migrants with few resources are at high risk of exploitation by the older and more established generation of migrants. There is limited space for new entrepreneurs. The market is extremely competitive, and many women return to Nigeria long before they have repaid their sponsor.

6.2 Exploitation

This section compares the working conditions of the Edo women in Europe's sex industry against the disparity of value definition of exploitation. Firstly, this section describes what a working day is like, what the workspace looks like, what health and safety provisions are made, and how payment is arranged.

Labour laws in the sex industry

Clearly defined labour laws state what unfair treatment of an employee is and what is not and these can be used to assess whether a worker is being exploited (Campana & Varese, 2016). However, while labour laws are clearly defined for many industries, this is not always the case for the sex industry. In many countries, sex work is unregulated. Where the industry is regulated, some standard labour laws do not work, because they would be in conflict with universal human rights. For example, if an employer has the right to tell the employee to work at a given moment in a given place, this would interfere with the physical integrity of the sex worker.

In Italy, for example, prostitution is legal. Until 1958, brothels were regulated under the *regolamentazione*. This regulation was revoked and organised prostitution was banned. Italy has had multiple waves of migrant sex workers coming in: Nigerians belong to the second and third wave. In response to large numbers of migrant sex workers, a 2008 proposal tried to ban street prostitution but failed (Crowhurst et al., 2017). Migrants with work or resident permits can work in prostitution and cannot be deported, although police forces have attempted to do so in the past (Cardechi, 2000). Although the industry is not regulated, a 2010 court decision ruled that clients who do not pay are guilty of rape, which was considered a breakthrough in the rights of sex workers in Italy (Crowhurst et al., 2017).

As an indication of what exploitation could constitute in the sex industry according to labour laws, I will use Dutch law. Dutch labour law concerning the sex industry is more specific than most other legislation because prostitution is regulated in the Netherlands. I will refer to some specific standards in the Netherlands, such as the minimum wage. However, minimum wage varies widely across European countries. In Italy, there is no minimum wage although some unions have negotiated one for particular industries (Schulten, 2006). Due to the considerable variation, the disparity of value definition is necessary when applying a definition of exploitation across countries, rather than merely looking at specific labour laws.

The Dutch Employment Inspectorate (ISZW, 2012) defines the rights and obligations of employed sex workers. It states that the employer is obliged to make a written agreement including the salary, the place of work, and the hours to be worked per day or per week (ISZW, 2012). The employer has to document and pay for any additional hours. The employer needs to pay the minimum wage. In the Netherlands, this is set at €70.95 per day for employees older than 23 years old. Every payment slip needs to include exactly what was paid. If the employer provides housing, they can withhold a maximum of 20% of the minimum wage in return. It is prohibited for the employer to withhold any more than that percentage. The employer must keep paying salary while the employee is ill. The employee also has a right to paid holidays of at least four weeks a year. If a employee has a casual contract and is called into work, the employer is obliged to give at least three hours of work. When pregnant, the employee has the right to 16 weeks of maternity leave. The employee has the right to work in a safe and healthy environment. The employer needs to conduct a safe sex policy: they cannot advertise unsafe sex, and protection must be sufficiently available. The workspace must be clean: there has to be a facility to wash oneself, and there have to be sufficient clean towels. The employer has to provide protection from risks from customers: one has to be able to call for help from the workspace, which will then arrive immediately. Finally, the employee has the right to 1.5 days of free time every week, sufficient breaks, and a maximum of 12 hours of work per day.

Locations

Building on the findings of Chapter 4, chain migration explains why the largest clusters of Nigerian sex workers are in Italy, where women from Edo State started their prostitution businesses in the 1980s. However, Nigerian madams are also present in other large European cities predominantly in Spain, France, Belgium, the UK, and the Netherlands. Major news agencies refer to an increase of Nigerian women arriving for sex work in 2015 to 2018 amidst the refugee crisis (Damon et al., 2018; Esslemont, 2016; Kelly, 2016; Pianigiani & Hauser, 2017). In Europe, Italy is a country that has difficulty to control incoming migrants, because of its massive coastline (De Graaf, 2016, p. 10). It is clear that most attempts to sufficiently control the borders or close them hermetically run into difficulties (De Graaf, 2016).

Table 6.1 presents the characteristics of the migrants I interviewed. Most women came from Edo or Lagos state, and all of them came from Southern states. The women who had been trafficked to Europe a few years ago usually came by plane, while more recent stories gave accounts of travel by land. The respondents had usually been exploited in multiple countries in Europe. This is why the total number of countries of exploitation is higher than the total number of respondents.

Table 6.1 Migrant respondent characteristics

N=14

Variable		Number
Gender	Female	14
	Male	0
State of origin	Edo State	7
	Delta State	3
	Lagos State	3
	Ondo State	1
Education	Some secondary schooling	11
	No secondary schooling	3
Children	Yes	7
	No	7
Mode of transportation	Land	8
	Air	6
Age entering Europe	Average	25
Place of work	Italy	9
	Germany	4
	Netherlands	7
	Spain	1
	Belgium	1

The majority of women in the Koolvis network went to madams in Italy, although the madams sent some of them to Germany, Norway, and the UK later on. There are large Nigerian communities in cities like Turin, Milan, and Palermo. Many Nigerian women do sex work in Russia, Asia, and the U.S.A., and increasingly in the Middle East as well. Conditions vary across countries in terms of their markets and laws. The respondents who had worked in various countries stated that conditions were best in the Netherlands, while Italy was a harder existence, and Libya was the worst. For this chapter, I use Italy as the main focus, but I compare it to conditions in other countries.

Working conditions

In Italy, the market for prostitution works is that Nigerian women tend to end up in the lowest segments of the industry. Reportedly, they earn less than Eastern European women and work in street prostitution mostly, rather than in hotels, bars, and brothels. The women attract customers on the side of the main roads on the outskirts of large cities (LD6). They wear tight-fitting clothes, short skirts, and high heels (Interview SN1). The customers drive past and stop for the women. The sex worker guides the customer to a parking space and walks into the bushes to her place of work:

> *Did you work inside in a house or on the street?*
> 'No, you… a bush path. Off the road. Mostly I work at daytime, in morning and evening. In Italy they have a lot of bush paths. So when they come, they will take you in the car and you go to inside the bush. Already there is a place where you can stay, a mattress or even inside the car.' (M13)

The space consists of a mattress in the grass[13]. There may be a plastic bag that serves as a bin, but often the space itself is also cluttered with used condoms and toilet

[13] Paolo Patrizi is an Italian photographer who was won awards for his photo series 'A Disquieting Intimacy' on the work spaces of Nigerian women in Italy. I have received his permission to use his pictures when I introduce my findings in presentations as well as for this thesis. The series is published on his website: http://www.paolopatrizi.com/index.php?/projects/migration/.

paper. The workers carry a few belongings with them: water, make-up, and condoms. There is no inside area. Typically, the women walk for about an hour to work and back every day. A typical workday is twelve hours, usually from early evening to early morning, seven days a week.

The market is competitive, and the workers are responsible for finding customers on a daily basis instead of the employer. Even though the employer would determine what the best place on the street or even the best country to work in is, it is up to the worker to bring in enough customers per day. One of the respondents describes her days working on a stationary bus off the side of the road in Germany:

> 'If it is juice you want to take to work in the bus, during the winter period tea, bread, cheese, maybe like salami, sardines, all this little stuff you can eat, because it is from 9 to 9 o'clock you have to be there. And when you do not have a client, you must struggle to have a client. You must make sure you have somebody to come to sleep with you, to make money that day. If you do not, you are in trouble.' (M9)

On average, the respondents report that the customer would pay twenty euros for intercourse (M4-M7, M9, M11-M14). Sexual acts that do not involve intercourse would be priced at ten euros. The workers are required to bring all of their income to the madam who does the accounting. Hardly ever, would the calculations amount to any disposable income for the workers. A fixed amount per month goes towards repaying their sponsor for the journey. With amounts as high as 50.000 euros, repayment takes years to complete. Furthermore, the madam pays local organised crime groups for the place on the street, which is detracted from the income. The madam then withholds payment for providing housing and food. Building on the findings of Chapter 4, the worker is expected to send part of the income to her family back home, and the madam may do this for her. Seven of my respondents referred to the fact that the madam would cheat them with her account keeping:

> ‘And sometimes when you give them like five euros, for example, they will write down two euros. That is what you give to them. And after three months, four months, they will want to make the calculation, you see that this, what I thought I paid is not what is really in this book. That is how they will be menacing, menacing, menacing. To make you spend a lot of years with them.’ (M6)

To reiterate my definition of exploitation in section 2.3, I chose to use the ‘disparity of value’ definition rather than that of ‘wrongful use.’ In the latter case, wrongful use means that you use someone solely as a means. This definition is extensive and is often used to equate all prostitution with exploitation. I use the ‘disparity of value’ definition, which refers to someone being unfairly used. In other words: “that their position of vulnerability is taken advantage of to under-reward their role within a given transaction” (Wilkinson, 2004, p. 13). In this scenario, I argue that both the madam and the client exploit the sex worker. The worker’s undocumented status in Europe results in a vulnerable position, of which the madam takes advantage. Exploitation can exist even though the agreement between the smuggler and the smuggled person is upheld (Campana & Varese, 2016). The repayment of the loan is part of the agreement that was closed before the journey (see Chapter 4). However, the price of the journey is set at a much higher level than a reasonable profit margin would require, taking advantage of the vulnerability of someone who desperately wants to migrate but has few alternative options. Finally, miscalculating the salary of the sex worker is both exploitation and means that the madam is cheating on the original agreement.

Health and safety risks

The disparity of value definition of exploitation is similar to Marx's (1867) view of exploitation. Weber, however, only has few mentions of direct exploitation in his work, but seems to equate it with physical coercion (Wright, 2002). Here, I maintain that unlike the modern slavery account of human trafficking, Nigerian women were not locked up and forced to serve any customer. Instead, they could refuse clients or a particular service but explained that there was a high incentive not to do so 1) because they were expected to bring home a set amount of money each day and 2) because they were afraid of incurring violence from customers:

> 'Along this two years plus, a lot of things happen. Sex sometimes without a condom. Some people… is a client, you have to please him because if you do not please him, you are not going back home, they are going to beat the hell out of you. They are so brutal. If any client tells them you misbehave, you are finished. They are going to hit you.' (M9)

All of my respondents felt unsafe during their work. Customers would be from outside their social network and unaccountable:

> 'Sometimes people drive me far away in the bush, I don't know where: Please take me back, please take me back, I don't know this place. He says: If we finish quickly, you go. Finish, you go. Some people use a condom; some people say they do not use a condom. I do not know. Maybe if they have a knife, they can kill you.' (M5)

All respondents emphasise that none of their customers would be Nigerians: they would be Italians or of Middle Eastern descent. Sometimes, the sex workers wait for customers in small groups of two or three, but they are alone in the actual workspace. If they feel threatened, they can call their madam, but it is highly unpredictable whether someone will show up to help them. Throughout the day, an acquaintance of the madam or the madam herself may check in, but for monitoring purposes and not for safety. All of the respondents had experienced violence from customers. For none of them were there organised health and safety measures in place. Only when a health issue would prevent them from working would they be allowed time off to go to a hospital. They would not receive regular holidays. The respondents explained that they did not have set rules on when time off would be exactly; it would be entirely arbitrary, depending on the schedule of their employer and the market.

The workers who reported the Netherlands as having more favourable conditions would work in hotels rather than on the street. They reported better health and safety provisions, but not better payment. The income would be higher, but the expenses, such as the hotel room, would also be substantially higher. Even though there is variation between the accounts of the sex workers, there is unfair treatment of the employee present in each one. Pay is too low and unpredictable; the working environment is unsafe and unhealthy. The hours as such may not be unfair - a maximum of twelve hours per day is allowed - but the pressure to find enough customers and earn enough money, creating the incentive for unsafe sex, is. None of the workers would be paid per hour. They were paid per customer.

Failure to protect a sex worker from violence and health risks during their work constitutes exploitation. All 14 respondents report having experienced severe implications on their mental and physical health. All respondents report having been raped during their work. Protection from the employer is completely inefficient. There is no one nearby to call for help, and in addition, there is the incentive to accept any behaviour from customers in order to bring in enough money:

> "Sometimes they [the customers] get angry. Then you try to act also: I don't want, I don't want, go look for someone else. Sometimes they make problem with you, then after finishing, they will lie to collect their money back. And if you refuse they will beat you inside the bush. I am so much afraid of them." (M6)

Generally, respondents state that they had little faith that anyone could protect them from their customers. They talk about peers who disappeared or whom they knew had been murdered, where the investigation did not lead to anything:

> 'Yeah, if someone dies in prostitution, they will say: Ah it is prostitution, who told her to come and prostitute. Nobody cares.' (M5)

There is some variation in how workers experienced safety in different countries. One of my respondents worked in Italy, the Netherlands, and Germany, and states:

> 'Italy was very different from the Netherlands. Italy is a bush. Your life is very dangerous. They can kill you, they can do anything.' (M10)

She worked in street prostitution in Italy, but in a brothel in the Netherlands, which provided more security.

The broader health implications of their working lives were also severe. The respondents report conditions relating to unsafe and aggressive sex as well as consequences from the work environment and the pressure to have high numbers of customers. Workers are encouraged to block their menstruations to work during their periods, which is extremely dangerous. Five respondents experienced lasting consequences from STIs, and one respondent was tested positive for HIV. There would be no regular health check-ups during their working lives: STI tests were only performed after they had left the profession. All respondents were illegal migrants during their working time and therefore had no insurance against conditions that are not an emergency. In some countries, such as the Netherlands, sex workers have additional access to health services free of charge, but the respondents had limited knowledge of such services and were discouraged by their employers to attend health professionals if the condition was not preventing them from continuing work.

Violence between organised crime groups also affects the workers. The madam is responsible for making agreements about the working location, but the workers suffer the consequences when there is rivalry over territory. In the following quote, a social worker in Lagos who travels to Italy to help Edo women in the sex industry tells me about the violence of gangs:

> 'And it was when she was on the streets when someone came and attacked her. Where she normally had to pay for the spot or the stand. So she pays for the stand, and then another boy from Morocco came to claim that place, and she told the boy: ' but look I am already paying someone for this'. *For the place on the street?* He beat her on the street, and she almost bled to death. But fortunately, some people doing the type of work we do came across her and rushed her to the hospital.' (SN1)

In the literature, policy, and news reports, Edo women in the sex industry tend to be automatically equated with 'victims of human trafficking' (Damon et al., 2018; Kelly, 2016; Okonofua et al., 2004; Pianigiani & Hauser, 2017). The Koolvis case was brought forward as a human trafficking case by the public prosecutors on the basis that migrants were coerced into sex work through intimidation by 'voodoo', high debts, and threats to their families. Their classification as trafficking victims then meant that exploitation was assumed. However, these all refer to coercive mechanisms rather than the work itself. I argue that agency versus coercion should be a separate issue from whether exploitation is present or not. I conclude that in this industry, madams do indeed exploit their workers. They make use of the vulnerability of new migrants to underpay them for their work and do not offer sufficient protection against severe health and safety risks.

6.3 Monitoring

I have concluded that exploitation is typically present in the relationship between migrant sex worker and madam. The rest of this chapter will explore why the madam can exploit her workers. This chapter builds on the findings on ethnic clustering, hostage taking, and social norms from Chapter 4.

Bales (1999) and Hughes (2000) argue for a modern slavery explanation of the exploitation of sex workers (see Section 2.3). Aronowitz (2009, p. 76), too, classifies trafficking out of Nigeria as the ‘Traditional Slavery with Modern Technology Model’ of trafficking as opposed to the Eastern European ‘Violent Entrepreneur Model’. The traffickers use ‘voodoo’ to force victims into compliance and combine this with using modern transport links (Aronowitz, 2009). She states that the trade resembles traditional slavery that has been modernised to meet the needs and challenges of the global age (Aronowitz, 2009). Policymakers typically equate human trafficking with modern slavery (Cooper et al., 2017). Zhang (2009) points out that the UNODC, which has launched UN.GIFT (the UN’s global initiative to fight human trafficking) in 2007, promotes the view of human trafficking as modern slavery. The United Kingdom has implemented the ‘Modern Slavery Act’ in 2015, which is applied to Nigerian sex workers from Edo State (Marsh, 2018; Patel, 2017). In sum, the modern slavery approach explains exploitation of trafficked Nigerian sex workers as the result of the traffickers taking away all agency of the trafficked women. In this scenario, trust is not relevant.

An alternative theory argues that trust in ethnic ties explains the exploitation of migrants by older generations (Nee & Sanders, 2001). This theory has not been applied to the case of Edo sex workers in Italy before. However, several studies emphasise the agency of the Nigerian women in Europe’s sex industry (Carling, 2005; de Haas, 2008; Iacono, 2014; Mancuso, 2014). Ethnic solidarity theory predicts that migrants have more positive outcomes in the migrant enclave than in the open economy (Wilson & Martin, 1982). Fellow migrants will help newcomers settling into the new society (Wilson & Martin, 1982). Nee and Sanders (2001) dispute ethnic solidarity theory. Ethnic ties assume such a central role in the adaption of immigrants that this form of social capital is more important than human and financial capital (Nee & Sanders, 2001). Trust in ethnic ties, Nee and Sanders (1987) argue, is not entirely separate from distrust, because of opportunists who will take advantage of ethnic ties in ways that would not be possible in the open economy. Given the entrepreneur's interest in cheap and pliable labour (Nee & Sanders, 1987, p. 376), employment within the immigrant enclave does not predict a trustworthy relationship. The entrepreneur risks transgressing norms within the community, but they can protect themselves against negative consequences by investing in the community in other ways.

From the perspective of the employer, it is difficult to find workers in the open economy that they can exploit long-term. Recruiting workers from the same ethnic group is to their advantage (Nee & Sanders, 1987, p. 380). For the worker, the immigrant community, the sense of security, and the ease of communication and assistance in the early stages may compensate for lower wages in the ethnic economy (Nee & Sanders, 1987, p. 390). However, Nee and Sanders (1987, p. 375) find that, in many immigrant communities, entrapment by way of dependence in workaday lives of virtual servitude is not uncommon. This information feeds back to incoming workers and fosters distrust next to trust in ethnic ties. Nee and Sanders (1987, p. 375) interview Chinese workers who give very similar accounts to what Nigerian sex workers share:

> 'My relatives and friends all told me, try not to work in Chinese circles anymore. Once you plunge yourself into it, you cannot free yourself. And Chinese people, if they are boss, they are more likely to squeeze all your labour. And people share this feeling.'

In this section and the next, I will explore whether the Nigerian sex workers are exploited, because their freedom is wholly confined, which is the implication of the modern slavery argument (Bales, 1999; Hughes, 2000). I will compare this to the implications of Nee and Sanders' (2001) theory: exploitation happens because of elements of trust and distrust in the relationship between madam and migrant. First, I will explore aspects of monitoring and distrust. In Section 6.4, I will look at elements of trust.

Table 6.2 shows the degree of monitoring for each of the respondents.

Number of respondents	Degree of monitoring
3	Kidnapping
6	Daily monitoring
5	Non-regular monitoring

Table 6.2 Degree of monitoring

Three out of 14 respondents report round the clock monitoring and control to the point that they had no agency in their relationship with their madam, in how they conduct their work, and their physical movements. Their accounts constitute human trafficking or modern slavery as described in that argument (see Hughes 2000, Bales 2012). Their descriptions are similar in the sense that they would live and work in the same house, where their employer would lock them up:

> 'She locked me up. When I go to work, she brings me to work, she brings me back. Takes me there, brings me back.' (M1)

> 'I can't remember where the place was. Because she just brings men to the room, I never get out.' (M3)

I interviewed the respondents in NGOs that rehabilitate victims of human trafficking. How they ended up at the NGOs is also similar in these three stories. The madam was careless, and they could escape:

> 'She was going out to a party and dropped the key. I picked up the key and opened the corridor door, leave the key at the door and run to the police. That is how I escaped.' (M2)

This kidnapping scenario cannot be taken at face value. In a report by researchers at the Department of Criminology at the University of Leiden, several signals can indicate that a trafficking story is implausible (Klaver et al., 2013). Firstly, the story about escaping the traffickers is not unique. Secondly, there is no consistency in the story. Thirdly, there is hardly any information about the place of residence. These signals do not indicate that this person is not truly a victim of trafficking (Dettmeijer-Vermeulen, 2014). In fact, the report concludes that many reports of trafficking are rejected because they lack sufficient detail to convict the traffickers, but that it may well be that real victims of trafficking are instructed to tell fabricated stories to receive a temporary residence permit and then disappear with their traffickers. As discussed in Chapter 4, this was a key component of the modus operandi of the Koolvis network as well.

It is not relevant to the research question whether the migrants are victims of human trafficking according to a particular law at any one time. Instead, I ask how long-term exploitation can be maintained, and therefore it is sufficient to demonstrate that the migrants were truly exploited. I have shown that is very likely to be the case. However, to answer the research question, I look at degrees of monitoring that the migrants report. For this purpose, I regard the three kidnapping accounts to be implausible. They contradict the argument that I make throughout this chapter: that it is not physical coercion, but varying levels of trust and monitoring that explain long-term exploitation. For this reason, I should carefully discuss why I think the accounts that refute this argument can be disregarded.

The kidnapping accounts correspond to the indicators of a fake trafficking story as mentioned in the report by Klaver et al. (2013). The interviews I held with these three migrants were shorter than other conversations. First, the stories about escaping the traffickers are not unique. They are very similar to many of the stories I have read in the files of a shelter in Rotterdam (which I mentioned in Section 4.3.1). The sequence is as follows: the migrant is locked up in the madam's house 24/7, the madam leaves or gets drunk and accidentally leaves the key in the door, the migrant finds the key and goes outside, they run into a stranger on the street who helps them and brings them to the police. When I tried to ask for more details, they would tell me they cannot remember in what kind of environment they were, and that they had never left the house before the escape.

There are many reasons why these interviewees would not tell me the truth, despite efforts to build up rapport. From their perspective, if they have told the authorities one story, it is very risky to tell someone another story later on, despite assurances that this is independent research and that the data will be entirely confidential. The reason that they tell a fabricated story may be because someone has instructed them to do so or because they believe that this story has the highest chance of success in gaining the status of a victim of trafficking. Perhaps, they did not want to go into painful details and found this story easier to tell. Because the three interviews that included kidnapping accounts were so much shorter, less detailed, and less internally and externally consistent than the other eleven interviews, I had the sense at the time, and I have the sense now, that they are implausible stories. I do include them as a category of monitoring that shows up in my data. However, the principal argument of this chapter is that this scenario is unlikely, because other mechanisms to exploit a person long-term, that are cheaper to the trafficker, are available. Future research can confirm whether the kidnapping scenario is as unlikely as I expect it to be.

Six respondents told me that they were monitored daily, but not confined physically. This category applies to the Koolvis migrants too. The Italian police found several of them were found in the house of their madams, indicating daily monitoring, while there was no evidence they were locked up (Dienst Nationale Recherche, 2008). Within this category, there is variation: over time, the workers would be granted more liberties, or if an event, like getting caught with hidden income, sparked distrust in the employer, monitoring would increase. All of the workers in this category had their passports taken away and could not manage their income completely. The employer would send additional income back to the family of the worker instead of giving it to them directly. Housing, food, and clothes would be paid for in consultation with the employer. Theoretically, the workers can save money from additional income, but with all other costs retracted, they usually do not have any disposable income. The workers travelled from home to their workspace independently.

> *And the madam would not be there, but she would check how much money you bring back?*
> 'Yes, but sometimes they just pass with car to see if you are there, or maybe if you have a boyfriend somewhere. Maybe you went to your boyfriend's house.' (M5)

The sex workers are typically discouraged from entering romantic relationships. From the employer's perspective, romantic relationships form a risk of workers leaving the business supported by their romantic partner or the business being exposed to the authorities. A strategy that frequently appears in the respondents' accounts, however, is finding regular customers who are willing to pay a premium and to pay for more extended periods of time, so that the income is higher and the work less demanding (M4; M8; M9; M10-14). Sometimes, these customers provide a way out or become romantic relationships. The daily monitoring would prohibit this. For example, if the madam notices her employee is not at the place of work, but at the private residence of a customer, she will try to prevent this.

In this category, where there is daily monitoring, and the workers live in the same house of madam, the madam also influences the way in which the work is done and how the workers live. It seems as though having the workers comply with the rules set by the employer is quite labour intensive. The respondents report that the madam would pay attention to how they are dressed, how they do their hair, and to whom they talk. As opposed to the kidnapping scenario, the workers in this category are not monitored to such a degree that they are prevented from talking to others or from having a social life. The madam would have an idea of their daily habits, and be informed enough to start becoming suspicious if the worker was planning to leave or trying to hide income or relationships. The primary contacts of the workers would typically be family:

> 'Yes, I would send money back home, one way or the other I used to get some money to help them, and things started getting better than when we were growing up. I talk to them on Facebook, two of my brothers, my sister also. She is a graduate! Two of them are graduates, one at the University of Akoma and one in Abuja.' (M12)

The workers have social lives and attend parties, but the employer would be aware. The madam will keep an eye on everything that is going on and will adjust punishments depending on the reason of a worker not complying with her. As one respondent describes:

> 'You will be punished for turning up late to work, for sure, but it may be less severe if the reason is a death in the family rather than having been out partying.' (M14)

Monitoring is geared towards two goals: preventing the workers to keep income, and keeping others from convincing them to leave the employer and work for them or to leave the sex industry altogether:

> 'They will give you a condom and they count it. Each condom have maybe, any man who sleeps with you will give you like maybe 20 euros, so if she gives you five condoms, that means you have to bring a hundred euros home. You understand? So that is the thing. You can't use two condoms on one person just to protect yourself, when you use two condoms, your madam will say you used it for two people. So you have hidden money somewhere. That is what they do, they count the condom for you, and they give it to you. If you didn't finish it, you bring them home, and they will count it to see how many people you…' (M6)

The third category of monitoring is of a lower intensity than daily involvement in the lives of the sex workers. Five out of 14 respondents describe such a scenario. In this case, the employer would not see their workers on a daily basis, but would still expect the income. There are different variations of this scenario. One respondent describes that her madam would not mind how she would structure her days, as long as the normal amount of money would still come in:

> 'Yes so instead of going to work, he gives me money, then later, my madam knows about him. I never introduced her as a madam to my boyfriend. I told him a friend who is helping me out with a house and everything. And he has a connection to my madam, so what we do is that, he never allow me to go to work, I will be with him at home, he will take me out or whatever, at the end of the day he will give me money to show her.' (M9)

Some respondents are sent away to work in another country or another city. Reasons for doing so may be because the demand is higher in other regions, but also to circumvent law enforcement by moving around. Their madam will not be physically close to them. However, she will still keep track of the income. In the excerpt below, a worker is paying two Dutch men for working in a hotel. The costs of doing so are so high that she could not keep repaying her madam at the same time. The madam would be in touch weekly to check on her worker, even though she was not physically nearby:

> 'I am still, no, I have not been able to for her. Because I am paying every day 130 euro. And she was like calling me, pressing me. She called me every week! Where is the money, this is two months now, I haven't seen my money. I will come and I get there I will do this to you! Threatening me and…' (M9)

Respondents in the second and third category refer to the hostage-taking that is described in Chapter 4. They are afraid of their families' safety if they do not keep repaying the debt to their sponsors in fixed amounts per month. The religious context in which the agreement with their madam was closed means that their beliefs in the legitimacy of the enforcement of the contract are amplified. The women tend to describe the influence of their madam in spiritual terms:

> 'Shams [religious items to influence others], yes. Each time I want to like… even think something against her, there is something coming: Don't do this, don't do… those things. She used shams to bring our attention to her. So like, I don't know if you understand. Like uh, maybe any time you want to have a decision, of how to live. She would like do the sham, we leave every decision, you understand? So that is how she was like controlling us.' (M7)

An alternative interpretation of this quote is that the respondent is trying to reduce cognitive dissonance (see Elster, 1999). If the pressure to act is high enough the tension between action and belief generates self-deception, is this case it could be is that there is high pressure to remain working in the sex industry to make an income and send money home. However, at the same time, their belief may be that there should be better options available, I discuss norms and beliefs around transactional sex more elaborately in section 6.5. To reduce the cognitive dissonance, the women could explain the situation in terms of the madam influencing them. At the same time, the findings of Chapter 4 show that it is ubiquitous for Nigerians of all walks of life to explain situations in terms of having the spirits on their side or not.

In another variation of monitoring, the madam has lost sight of her workers, due to her own circumstances. A transcript in the Koolvis case shows that a madam was monitoring her employees daily, but could not continue to do so because she was sentenced to time in prison. She is talking to a priest on the phone and telling the priest that her employee has stolen money and documents from her in the time she has been away and is now working for someone else. From prison, she is trying to contact the worker as well as the man for whom she suspects the worker is now working. The employer seems to be unsure whether the worker is still working for this man, or has been deported back to Nigeria. In any case, she is determined to punish the worker for stealing once she is released from jail and demand her to start bringing in money again.

Violence

One of the monitoring mechanisms is to punish workers with violent acts. The madam as the employer does not usually perpetrate violence against her workers herself, but would hire men in her network to "give beatings" (M1, M2, M7) to non-compliant workers instead. There is a sufficient supply of men in the community who are used to operating in the lower segments of the underworld and who are trained in intimidating others:

> 'So when the madam finds out you are planning something, they start beating. They will beat the hell out of you. Not she, she will call some people, some men, maybe her boyfriend. They will beat the hell out of you. They will tell you when you cry, when the police come they will send you home. Because you don't have paper. You see. So you can't even cry out, you will be bearing the pains.' (M8)

The madam herself would not be specialised in physical violence, but the respondents still report severe harm from her hands directly. A method that comes up frequently in conversations with former sex workers, as well as experts, is that a madam would put hot pepper to put on workers' eyes and genitals (M2, M4, M9, OI2, SN2). This method inflicts severe pain.

In conclusion, as Table 6.1 shows, degrees of monitoring can be placed into three broad categories: 1) constant monitoring in a kidnapping scenario 2) daily monitoring of how the work takes place and 3) non-regular monitoring: monitoring of the income, but no involvement in the daily work. I conclude that the likelihood of the first category occurring is low, while categories two and three are likely variations of monitoring to reach long-term exploitation. Linking this finding to the conclusions of Chapter 4, the madam monitors the migrant sex workers closely, to varying degrees, despite the hostage-taking agreement. All of the respondents refer to visiting a traditional shrine before their journey to close the agreement with their traffickers. This is a proxy for hostage-taking as the intimidation with 'voodoo' in itself can be seen as hostage-taking of the migrant. Eight out of 14 respondents refer to their families' involvement in the same way as in the Koolvis case. Some may have left this out of their stories, because it is a very sensitive topic, that they may not have reconciled with themselves. In any case, this chapter finds that even when hostage taking is in place, monitoring is necessary to make as much money from the migrant sex worker as possible. They are monitored to prevent migrants hiding the money they earn. Also, over time, migrants may gain more knowledge and connections and have more options available to them. As time progresses, an intimate relationship with a client may mean that the client will report the exploitation to the authorities, for example. Traffickers would rather avoid enforcing the hostage-taking by calling upon the family, threatening them, or trying to gain possession over their property. In addition, the madam monitors the behaviour of the migrants. In the next section, I will explore whether elements of trust between madam and migrant may explain long-term exploitation, next to monitoring.

6.4 Trust and distrust

This section will identify the elements of trust and distrust in the working relationships of the migrant women. The incoming migrants place trust in the migrant community. The employer trusts the sex workers to comply and not report to the authorities. The sex worker trusts the employer to help them sustain themselves in Europe. The data reveal that trust in the migrant community and the employment relationship is linked to distrust in the outside world.

Distrust

Adding to the previous section, the knowledge migrants have is likely to increase over time. They will know more about the madam and the price of a journey to Europe. They will become aware that the trust they have placed in the migrant community could be betrayed. In the Koolvis case, an aunt warns her niece about choosing this way to migrate to Europe:

> 'Listen, I still have to send a lot of money home to my family. I am 25 years old now and I still have nothing. No husband, no house, no children. Those who brought you to Europe had to pay 10,000 for the trip maximum. And now you have to pay hem 50,000. If I did not have to send money to my family, I would help you repay your debt, so you can start working for yourself. I am still angry at you for coming to Europe this way.' (KP25)

The lesson learned from relatives is this: 'Beware – those who appear trustworthy may entrap you in a sub-optimal outcome, which you may apprehend only when it is too late to escape.' (Nee & Sanders, 1987, p. 375).

Not only family members and friends, but also people the workers meet on their way to Europe, may be sources of information that discredit the employer. Over time, workers may realise that the terms of the loan for their journey to Europe were more unfavourable than they expected, or that the employer is setting conditions that are harsher than what the employers themselves went through as newcomers in Europe:

> 'Yes, she [the madam] came here as a prostitute too. She came to pay her sister then she did not stay longer than six months, she met a white man who got married to her. They pay her money, so she started bringing girls. And she came through plane. And she started bringing girls from floor, from the ground [over land]. To waste their lives [makes a disapproving sound]. That is wickedness. And the money she used for bringing us from Nigeria to Europe is not more than 1,599. But she will take like 80,000 euro, 85, big amounts.
> *You think that is what she paid to have you brought here?*
> Yes, we ask the men, we ask how much are you people getting paid. And they said… to the money to come to Europe is one thousand something.' (M9)

Trust in the migrant community as a whole

Despite elements of distrust in their madam, I find that the migrants place their trust in the migrant community as a whole, and distrust outsiders. Portes (1981, p. 291) defines an immigrant enclave as consisting of "an immigrant group which concentrates in a distinct spatial location and organises a variety of enterprises serving their own ethnic market and/or the general population."

The largest Nigerian communities in Italy are in Rome, Turin, and Padua. Pentecostal migrant churches are a central point in social life. Christmas and Easter are elaborately celebrated in the migrant Pentecostal churches as a community. It is where friends attend the christenings of each other's children, where weddings are held, and where the Sunday services are a highlight in the week. A Pentecostal priest, Victor, shows me around the Nigerian community in a large Dutch city (OI1). There are no sufficient funds for a permanent church building, which is why he hosts meetings at his house and organises the services in an empty parking garage nearby. Migrant sex workers attend his church and ask for help, madams are ministers in the church and donate to build it up. This, Victor tells me, helps them maintain their status in the community. The madams are known for their generosity: their investments in the church as well as in the community back home in Edo State. The community is informally organised and roles conflate. Victor sees himself as a community leader and performs tasks as a broker renting out housing to incoming migrants and helping them with paperwork, as a priest, and as a caregiver. People walk into his house regularly, and from time to time I see him put a few Euro notes into the hands of two women: 'just to help them get through the week'. He sends out a young man to run an errand for him and tells him to keep the change. The relationships seem paternalistic: priests and madams are older generation migrants who give out advice and financial support. In turn, they maintain a position of power. As one respondent describes it, the madams are viewed as saviours.

Except for the 'kidnapping' accounts, most evidence seems to suggest that sex workers are fully included in social life. This does not merely seem to be a case of paternalism with a long-term strategic goal. There is a form of ethnic solidarity, which means that a fellow Edo will be invited to gatherings. Even short-term relationships seem to be of a paternalistic nature. The older generation migrant will introduce the newcomers to their world; the newcomers are expected to be obedient.

When transporter Efosa is driving two women from Amsterdam to Padua, they have a two-night stop over at his girlfriend Rita's in Paris. The christening of the couple's child is planned for that weekend. The two women are invited and put in charge of cooking and serving throughout the festivities.

Nee and Sanders (1987, p. 764-65) observe this in immigrant enclaves generally. The mechanism that leads to the patron-client relationship is that incoming migrants will depend on kinship or ethnic group assistance while they are adapting to the new host society. Meanwhile, they will become entangled in a web of obligations. The "embeddedness" of economic activity in networks of ethnic relations can trap immigrant-workers in patron-client relationships that bind them to low-wage jobs. For this reason, they argue, researchers should be sensitive to the interaction between economic behaviour and interpersonal relationships (e.g. bosses and employees) in line with Granovetter's (1985) discussion of embeddedness. An enclave community can only support so many entrepreneurs. The success of small businesses, such as the madam's prostitution business depends on maintaining a large pool of low-wage workers (Nee & Sanders 1987, p. 764). In the same way that those running a transportation business need a large pool of new migrants who are willing to do the high-risk tasks for low wages, the madams need a pool of women who are willing to do the sex work while giving up a large share of their income to the 'matron.'

The experience and resources of the older generation migrants are further expanded because they have had the time and space to organise their peer groups. Madams have built up 'insurance groups' common to many migrant communities, with names such as the 'Noble Sisters' (LN5). Within these groups, the madams put in monthly payments, and when one of the women requires money urgently, for example, to pay for a lawyer, the group will discuss this and pay out the insurance money. Newly arrived sex workers never get the chance to build up peer groups and are actively discouraged from doing so, and therefore place their trust in the madam rather than their peers. In this way, they will continue to be in a vulnerable position in relation to the madam and other paternalistic relationships.

Paternalism in the workplace may make workers reluctant to demand better working conditions and higher wages (Nee & Sanders 2001, p. 390). The madam is seen as a saviour and as a role model. As one respondent describes, the trade means that communities back home are helped, and the madam facilitates this:

> 'Actually, I can say that this Europe really, I know most of us came here to do something that we were not supposed to do, but at the end of the day, one or two families got help. What I am trying to say is at least, if you go to any family, at least one member is in Europe. So it is not like before. So in one way or the other, the families are getting a little bit better.' (M8)

The madam is often a family connection or is at least embedded in the same community back home. This kind of ethnic solidarity - both the sex worker and madam wanting to send income back to Edo State, for example - facilitates trust. Furthermore, the woman-to-woman interaction and the madam being a former sex worker means that the incoming sex workers are more inclined to trust her in the sense of providing them with a way to sustain themselves in Europe, as she has. A female Nigerian interpreter who works with the police and both translates and explains cultural cues in the statements of sex workers phrases it like this:

> 'What they are [the sex workers] thinking is: I do not mind what I will have to go through; I want to be like you [the madam]. The sex worker will trust the madam for she gave her work.' (OI5)

The relationship between madam and worker is intensive. In the category of daily monitoring in 6.3, the sex workers will live in the madam's house, eat with her, and go to the same social gatherings as the madam. Beyond providing them with work, the madam provides them with a social life. Even though the employee may have sense that the madam is earning more than a fair share of their income and that their working lives are physically much too demanding, they will feel solidarity for the madam as she did the same work in the past, worked her way up, and provided them with the same opportunity. Respondents describe that they would not report her to the authorities not only out of fear but also out of loyalty:

> "No, I never considered going to the police, to be honest with you. Some people did it. Yeah. But I never thought of that. I do not have the heart… to put her in trouble. Because if I go to the police I will put her in trouble. I never have the heart to do it." (M10)

When the Koolvis team interviewed migrants and asked them to report their madams, many were reluctant to. This is a summary of her interview:

> 'Happy asks what will happen to the people who are arrested. The interviewers explain that they will go to court and if the judge rules them guilty they will be punished with a prison sentence. Happy says that she thinks people should be forgiven, like the bible says. She says her life in Europe was better than in Nigeria. She did not like doing the sex work, but she did it to make money. Her suffering in Nigeria was her reason to go to Europe and if the people who brought her here should suffer for her, she won't feel at peace with herself. She does not want that.' (Dienst Nationale Recherche, 2008)

If they comply with the madam's demands, the sex workers would expect her to fulfil her part of the obligation: to keep providing them with work and not punish them unfairly:

> 'Yes… she is not really so wicked. Like the one I have, is not really wicked, when you go to her. When you are giving her what she wants, you are okay with her, she is okay with you. But when she feels like you are cheating her, then, oh, it would be another kind of human being.' (M6)

If a sex worker remains in the madam's good books, there will be positive rewards. Respondents describe that, over time, the madam would allow a few of them to work in the prime spots at a bar or hotel, instead of on the streets. The other way around, when a respondent stayed out too late and did not make it into work on time, the madam refused to let her work at her regular place on the street. This reinforced the sense that the madam is the one with the resources to provide them with work. The madam would maintain contact with both Italian and Nigerian organised crime groups who decide who can work where. The sex workers would not be able to sustain these connections independently. The madam's connections with organised crime groups would also provide a means of protection. She would know men in the lower ranks who would have spare time to keep an eye on her workers and to keep customers in check if necessary.

The incentive to stay on good terms with the madam would prevent the sex workers from building up peer groups:

> 'Ya… We build friendship, but sometimes they betray. Maybe try to plan something with them, they will go and tell your madam. They try to be the good one. To be the good girl. Maybe you are the bad girl, I am the good girl. They try to play good, you know.' (M5)

From the perspective of the madam, she also takes a leap of faith. The recruitment mechanisms mean that she has selected quiet women who will listen, who are a family connection, who will like her from the start of the relationship: the madam will invest in the relationship and buy her clothes, or candy for her child (OI1). The madam has a unique and intensive relationship with her employees, which makes it less likely for them to cheat her or to be "stolen" by another party who wants her workers to work for them. The madam spends a lot of time and resources on building the relationship and in getting the workers into a web of obligations. A respondent describes that after two years of working closely to the madam, the madam trusted her enough to start work in a different country:

> 'So I was the only girl who she picked out to go to Germany. Just imagine that. So I was lucky. That she picked me to Germany to start hotel work. There I would be able to pay her more money. That is how God brought me out from her. Haha. So when she brought me to Germany, I was in [large German city] in a hotel.' (M5)

I conclude in this section that trust between trafficker, madam in this case, and migrant plays a part in the long-term exploitation of the migrant. In the eyes of the migrant, the madam can offer social mobility. The migrant trusts the madam to fulfil her part of the agreement: she brought her to Europe and provides her with a way to repay the loan and to survive in Europe. The madam trust s the migrant to keep repaying the loan.

Distrust in the outside world

Social closure in immigrant enclaves is a result of the outside society appearing to be unfriendly or even hostile to immigrants (Nee & Sanders, 2001, p. 375). Social closure also enhances community-level sanctioning. The employers undertake active steps to increase distrust in the outside world. A Nigerian novelist, Chika Unigwe, has collected the stories of many immigrant sex workers in the West African community in Belgium. She found time and time again that madams would tell their employees to go to the immigration office and to try and get a residence permit:

> 'Tell them that your father was a local chief and soldiers loyal to Taylor came at night and killed your entire family. Look sad. Cry. White people enjoy sob stories. They love to hear about us killing each other, about us hacking each other's heads off in senseless ethnic conflicts'. (Unigwe, 2009)

The employee would go and have their residence permit rejected. The madam would already know that this would happen. Subsequently, she would provide the employee with a forged residence permit, reinforcing the idea that she is the one to be trusted and not the authorities:

> 'I would get temporary residence permits from madam, up to one year, and then we had to renew.' (M10)

The respondents share that the madam would be able to bribe police officers and had included them in her network; in this way, she 'protected' her employees from the outside world.

Social life takes place within the immigrant community: there may be interaction with other migrant groups, and parties would not be exclusively Nigerian, but there is no interaction with open society. When there needs to be interaction with the regular economy, employees' time in this setting will be limited. One respondent reports that she was suffering from severe health issues due to blocking her periods with cotton wool to work during this time:

> "I went to the hospital and she said: Don't mention any name. If you mention any name you are in trouble. Just do what you want to do, let them take care of you, and we'll come and pick you up again." (M8)

Reflecting on their time in Europe, respondents who were deported back to Nigeria, describe the psychological cost of always having to lie about their stories to the outside world. Their names, passports, even the story of the lives they lead that they tell their families back home are a lie (M11-M1, DS2, DS3, DS5, DS7, NS1). They describe that, over time, this would fuel their distrust in the outside world even more. They felt like lying to the authorities, to their families, and to customer about what their lives were really like gained them more benefits than being honest. They did not feel able to trust any of these parties outside of the migrant community. Often, they would distrust their families for having helped them into this job and benefiting from the income, without having tried to secure other opportunities. A repeated phrase in many interviews was:

> 'Where would I go? I had nowhere else to go.' (M7)

The central role of the church is of particular interest. The status of priests seems to invite trust, but according to law enforcement (LN3, LN4), priests will work in the benefit of the wealthiest entrepreneurs in the community. It is often not clear if priests have the role of churchmen or are 'thugs' in the sense that they are deeply embedded in Nigerian gangs. They do not seem to be an authority to which incoming migrants could report an exploitative work situation.

I conclude that migrant sex workers may feel like a 'kidnapping' or 'victim' framing is what is expected of them to gain help, or may use it to avoid other painful explanations that involve family pressure to provide income and workers' conflicting attitudes towards their employers. The evidence I find does not correspond to Hughes' (2000) and Bales' (1999) modern slavery argument, where a worker is completely controlled by another person, the duration is short-term, and local communities do not benefit (Hughes, 2000). Physically imprisoning another person is a costly option if hostage-taking is available instead, such as in the Koolvis case. Of course, this thesis is a case study, and the conclusion that modern slavery does not apply to this case does not mean that there are no excesses where people imprison others.

Modern slavery accounts of Nigerian trafficking in particular do not refer to a clustering of people from Edo State (Aronowitz, 2009). Aronowitz (2009) argues that Nigerians engaged in 'traditional slavery' are also involved in many other criminal activities. However, I find, that the sex work she refers to as slavery is highly clustered in Edo State. Connecting the findings of Chapter 4, 5, and 6 I conclude that the modern slavery account seems implausible compared to a theory where a close-knitted migrant community with high levels of trust can exploit the youngest and most vulnerable members of the community. The following hypothesis has emerged from the data, which can be tested in more cases:

High levels of trust in migrant communities increase the likelihood of exploitation.

6.5 Social mobility

The last section of this thesis will explore the theme of social mobility that arose in the interviews with migrants. This theme is relevant to the question how long-term exploitation can be explained, because the belief that despite exploitative conditions, the sex work leads to upward social mobility, could explain why women stay with their madams, and again, increases trust in their madam.

Due to the chain migration mechanism identified in Chapter 4, the success of madams has instilled a desire to earn money in Europe in families of Edo State. Young women hope to fulfil the expectations of their families as well as gain independence and a higher social status for themselves by engaging in an agreement with a madam. However, Ellis (2016) notes that many Edo women only last for two to three years in the conditions they work in: they fall ill or are deported back to Nigeria, long before they have repaid their loan. In this section, I will look at social mobility throughout the migrants' time in Europe, their interaction with NGOs and authorities, and finally in relation to their position back in Nigeria. I will look at social norms around transactional sex to see how women are received back in Edo State after having worked in the sex industry.

At the time of interviewing, all respondents were receiving support from social services. Therefore, this sample is biased in terms of what usually happens as the relationships of workers progress or end throughout their time in Europe. However, the respondents have taken different routes to where they are now, and this tells us something about the paths after the employment agreement. Their stories about their peers, as well as literature and expert accounts, reveal more about the women who remain embedded in the network of their madams after they have repaid the loan, although these peers are not part of my interview sample. One of my respondents had fully repaid their debt, but 13 others had not. Five respondents were still being actively approached by their sponsors to continue repaying. After they had stopped repaying their original madam, three respondents worked in prostitution independently, two were housed in centres for victims of human trafficking, four stayed with boyfriends, and four were deported back to Nigeria. Seven respondents had children at this time. All respondents wanted to stay in, or return to, Europe.

Upward social mobility

The relationship with the madam changes over time. Some sex workers are promoted to be controllers (LO1; LO2) even before they have repaid their loan. If the business of a madam grows, she will pick out sex workers to start monitoring other workers. This is an example of vertical integration (see Coase, 1937; Williamson, 1973).

Rather than contracting out the monitoring once the task becomes too big for the madam herself, she will upgrade sex workers and grow the business by bringing in new sex workers at a lower level (LN1, LO1, LO2, OI1, OI4). Sometimes, the sex workers who are now ‘controllers’ will also be able to start bringing their own new workers in, in cooperation with sponsors. They will use the additional income from their new employees to repay their own loan faster. Those who are successful will become madams themselves. However, as Nee and Sanders (1987) state, there is a limit to the number of entrepreneurs that can be successful in the market.

Those who repay their loan will be celebrated with a ceremony, organised by their madam (OI1; OI2; OI4; OI5). The term is ‘to graduate’. In this scenario, the madam and sponsor had a long-term strategy. With a short-term horizon, the madam and sponsor may never have had the intention to get the full loan repaid, but want to extract as much money from a worker as possible. If working too hard or noticing that they cannot save any money, the worker may cheat on the agreement or become too ill to work. For some respondents, the latter was the case. Their work conditions were too hard for them to sustain over time. Their madam would then try to get them to do other tasks to get money, such as trafficking drugs for her boyfriend’s group (M5). This is not a strategy towards long-term exploitation. In the case of one of my respondents, she was not skilled in drug trafficking and got arrested, which seemed to be a likely outcome in the first place.

When the employer does have a long-term horizon for their relationship with the worker, the relationship does not necessarily end after the ‘graduation’ of the worker from their loan. By now, the worker will have had the role of ‘controller’ for a while.

Informants predict that the sex workers who can be exploited most are incoming migrants who have little knowledge (SN7; SN8). More knowledgeable migrants may need to be upgraded to controller because they will defect otherwise and find enough resources to seek an alternative. At this time, workers may have romantic partners within the same community as their employer. They may have children with men who cooperate with the employer. They will continue to go to the same church, and the community mechanisms described in the 'Trust' section above (Section 6.4) remain in place. Workers' embeddedness will only increase over time. Those who become successful entrepreneurs themselves are likely to be the best connected. An informant (OI1) argues that a madam needs a strong husband to maintain her position of power. In territories where organised crime groups control activities, she needs connections in order to know who to pay protection money. She needs to bribe police officers in order to prevent herself and her workers from being arrested for illegal work or illegal residence in the country. An informant in Benin City describes that successful madams are those women who are particularly skilled in attracting more affluent customers and increasing their prices (OI4). They can use the extra savings to set up their business. Women who are still working as sex workers but are looking to become madams will ask their families to send them items for attracting more customers:

> 'So I talk to their mothers and they will pay a lot of money to medicine men for special olive oil, sacred water, etcetera, for their daughters to attract better customers. Some will have gotten their freedom [from the loan] already, but they will stay on the street they were before. Parents tell me these things at the post office. They are parcelling soap, olive oil, and these things, I checked the addresses, they were all being sent to Europe'. (OI4)

Often it was the family of the sex worker who suggested the work in Europe in the first place, and over time they will keep motivating their family member to continue working to help out the family. Aid workers at the Salvation Army in Lagos who go out to the local prostitutes to help give them access to HIV tests explain that in Nigerian society, the most successful person in the family will be expected to financially support the extended family.

> "There is this saying: 'One rich person among the poor, is also poor.' I think that is really the case in Nigeria. The girls will be expected to keep sending money back. Also, if their extended family is the madam, it will be normal to obey her. The most successful person in the family has to share their money with everyone, but this also gives them a lot of power. And no one will care how the money was made. Money is money." (SN3-SN6).

Similarly, those sex workers who have built up some financial resources may choose to leave the profession and establish themselves as another kind of entrepreneur within the community (OI4; OI5). They can start a hairdressing business, for example, building on connections they have previously established and their savings or connections that can finance the new business. In other cases, the romantic partners are the entrepreneurs, and the sex worker becomes a madam employed by the entrepreneur. She will control incoming sex workers, but not run a business. New madams often start their business by employing their family members. Successful madams will continue promoting their businesses back in Nigeria. They invest in the communities and build houses. During holidays, they will come home and do more recruitment, showing off expensive jewellery and other signals of their business success (NS1).

Apart from moving up in the hierarchy by becoming a madam themselves, the migrants would consider going to higher market segments than street prostitution as mobility. In the Koolvis case, a migrant, Precious, talks to a friend who works as a sex worker herself and who gives recommendations about different countries:

> Friend: The Netherlands is much better than Germany. I know someone who was working there, but it was horrible, and she left for Spain to get married there.
> Precious: Was this person done repaying the debt yet?
> Friend: No, she still had to pay 10.000 euros
> Precious: Did she pay it later?
> Friend: No, she got married and had a baby. It's a problem, but you have to be strong. You have to pray. It is up to God. It's not easy to make money in Europe. It's suffering. One has to suffer before money can be made. You'll start now. You'll have to see for yourself.
> Precious: I know, I know, you have to suffer before…
> Friend: Hmhm. (KP399)

Considering that a loan of 50.000 euros is much higher than what the madam has paid for bringing a migrant to Europe, it may well be the case that there is a point where it is too costly to enforce the agreement. Her strategy may be to make some profit, but if the migrant leaves after repaying a significant amount, she will let it go. In this quote, the migrant is checking whether people can stop working before the loan is repaid.

Sexual norms

This section looks at how the migrants are received back in Edo society as ex-sex workers. Although some migrants may remain in Europe as described above: as madams, controllers, as independent sex workers, or as asylum seekers, their connection to Nigeria remains strong (as found in Chapter 4). In this section, I wonder whether the sexual norms in Edo State mean that women can be sexually exploited in Europe and still received back as if they have moved up on the social ladder.

I argue that the norms are so that a migrant who comes back empty-handed will be regarded as a failure, while someone who has made a good living in Europe is seen as a success, and will not be ostracised no matter what work they did. The sex work is an open secret. The anthropological literature on this subject shows that it is often the case that people will work in prostitution away from the region of origin. The distance limits the stigma when the women come home because the sex work was not visible to their social contacts in the region of origin. Edo women are not involved in prostitution at home in the same way they are in the sex trade in Europe. Commercial sex workers in Edo State are predominantly from other states (Asowa-Omorodion, 2000). This is often the case and sex workers within Europe, of Dutch ethnicity for example, also tend to work in areas that are not their own, to prevent stigmatisation.

For the Binis of Edo State, the line of primogeniture means that daughters can never inherit, and the oldest son always receives the property when his father dies (Ikuomola, 2015). Furthermore, in contrast with most African societies the extended family plays a small role in Edo society. Uncles and cousins do not have a say over their nieces, which leads to lower social control and the possibility of more liberal sexual behaviour (Ikuomola, 2015). This gives women more freedom, but it is also means that the extended family does not offer protection when things go badly. Women tend to marry at a much older age than in the past; uncertain economic circumstances mean that a young husband may not be able to provide for his wife (Agbontaen-Eghafon, 2011). For young women then, a route to independent income is to engage in various relationship of a sexual nature with a transactional component.

All societies have norms regulating sexual behaviour. Norms vary widely across regions in Nigeria. The most clear-cut distinction is between the mostly Muslim North and the Christian South of the country. Strict regulation of women's sexual behaviour in the Muslim North may explain why there are no observations of Northern Nigerians being active in the sex trade in Europe at all. Whereas transactional sex is more normalised in West Africa than in Europe (Smith, 2000), for example, this is not the case for the Muslim regions. Variation in social perceptions of sexuality within the Christian South of Nigeria, on the other hand, depends on tribe and region.

Anthropologist Daniel Jordan Smith (2000, 2010) conducted extensive fieldwork among women in south-eastern Nigeria, belonging to the Igbo tribe, regarding their views on sexual behaviour. There is no in-depth ethnography of the same nature among the Bini or Edo people in the Southwest, but observations in terms of transactional sex appear to be relatively similar across these regions. Smith's (2010) analysis of studies across several area shows that - even though young single women experience certain constraints in life, socially and economically, that may pressure them into sexual relationships of a transactional nature - these women view their sexuality first and foremost as a positive resource that they can control (Smith, 2010, p. 2).

Smith (2010) further observes that among new generations of women, the ideal marriage is based on love and equal partnership. Both this idea and the persistent marked respect for marriage across modern generations seem to conflict with the behaviour women engage in before they get married. Often, the same women, once married, will condemn the behaviour they themselves engaged in when they were young and single (Smith, 2010, p. 17). He notes that this change in perception may not be as sudden as it appears: even when they were young and engaged in transactional sexual encounters with older married men, these women respected the institution of marriage. In city life, relative anonymity would protect the married men and their typically unmarried younger partners against social ostracism.

The women see their sexuality as something they could use in an environment where conventional marriage at a young age would not offer economic stability or independence. Across Southern Nigeria, adulthood is reached when a woman has her first period, rather than at a fixed age. The age of consent is 18, but this legal definition is not how most people see adulthood. Increasingly, marriage is only pursued later in life, when a woman enters her thirties. As a result, during a large part of a woman's life she is sexually mature, but not married. Polygynous marriages have become less common (Osezua, 2018), but "cheating husbands" (Smith, 2010) still provide a large demand for sexual companionship from unmarried women. Behaviour within these transactional relationships widely varies. It could be limited to one encounter in exchange for a gift, or it could be a long-term relationship with structured payments to the woman. Although typically the relationship is between an older man and a younger woman, transactional relationships between peers are common as well. In material from my data collection, a respondent from Benin City explained to me that from the moment she was seen as an adult (M4), when she started to develop breasts at fourteen years old, her friends at school started making fun of her for not being involved with boys and receiving gifts or money in return. Her female friends had started seeing transactional relationships as a more stable investment of their time than their secondary school education, which provided little security in an environment of mass unemployment, particularly for women:

> 'So my girlfriend was laughing: "Oh, you are a fool." As big as you are, you don't even know what it is when a man touches you. I was like "You are a slut, because you don't come to class, and you are running with them...". Then she chased me around laughing, but, like that. And then I don't go to guys, all my

> girlfriends, in my group there were six or eight girls eh? So only two of us was not doing those things. Going with boys, just going to school. The rest of them was like oh I have boyfriend, haha, you know?' (M4)

Eventually, the respondent started engaging in romantic relationships of a transactional nature as well. She explained that most women in this phase of their lives have a cynical rather than a romantic view on sexual relationships. They will use their agency to find a man they benefit from most in material terms. She was first engaged in such a relationship with a peer of the same age group who had been in Europe. Later, she would go to clubs with her friends where they had the highest likelihood of meeting rich men. This corresponds to Smith's (2010, p. 7) finding that women feel that they have to be savvy and strategic in their relationships with men and will signal this attitude to their peers. The transactional nature, according to three of my respondents from Edo State (M4; M9; M10), would be a public secret. One respondent describes that she hid the money she received from boyfriends from her mother and would ask a friend's mother with a more liberal attitude to save the income for her (M4). The 'public secret' behaviour explains the seemingly conflicting values of transactional sex and being a "good wife" (Smith, 2010). The practice of transactional sex is so widespread that being associated with this practice will not necessarily devalue a woman as a future wife, but it is not something that is openly talked about either.

For some women, becoming pregnant during a relationship with a married man is not necessarily viewed as a negative consequence. The man will be understood to have obligations towards this second family. In other cases, the man will end the transactional relationship, and this is where women do start to view the outcome as overwhelmingly negative. Two respondents describe that supporting their child from such a relationship as a single mother encouraged them to start sex work in Europe; they did not see another way to provide for their upbringing:

> ‘So when I was sixteen, haha that is crazy, I met someone... That wanted to assist, because things wasn't okay, things were so rough. I accept the offer, but we started, haha, things, doing some things, haha [sex], so it leads to... I was pregnant yes. He said he is not interested in the baby. So my mom says she is a Christian, she can't remove the baby... I have to have it. So then I... I was seventeen then. I have to have the baby of the age of going to eighteen. Things were not okay, life was... I have to work to drop down from school and things were not okay, because to take care of my baby and to take care of myself. So I have to start working in a filling station. So...’ (M8)

Commercial sex work within Nigeria, however, is regarded as a completely different category of behaviour from the normalised form of transactional sex. Working in prostitution as a profession is stigmatised across Southern Nigeria.

Similar to the findings of ethnographic work in other areas of the world, such as Hoang's (2015) work ‘Dealing in Desire’ on Vietnamese sex workers, these South Nigerian women make entrepreneurial choices in how to use their sexuality as a resource. A taxi driver in Lagos talks about the various kinds of sexual behaviours that come with their own benefits and risks (OI3). He points to a group of women standing outside a gas station in mainland Lagos. ‘These are Edo women’ he says. ‘Maybe they tried to make it in Europe.’ He explains that those waiting outside on the street will attract less wealthy customers than those who can get into clubs. They are also signalling visibly to the outside world that they are engaged in sex work: ‘They would not do the same thing back in Edo State,’ he says. If it does not work in Europe, they will try Lagos.

Another strategy would be to rent an apartment from a kind of pimp in Lagos. These women would pay around 20,000 Naira (40 Euros) a week for an apartment. If you don’t pay on that Monday at the end of the week, you are out. This arrangement means that you are more comfortable than on the streets, and there will be peers in the building who can look out for you. From that position, you can try and enter higher sectors, but you need some money first: to spend on drinks, on clothes, for the clubs to let you in.

Even though prostitution in Nigeria is illegal, public venues would openly cater to sex workers and their clients. Nightclubs that have rooms upstairs may charge double when they suspect someone is a sex worker, but would not refuse service. Driving around the city at night, I witnessed various hubs where women are waiting outside to meet men. Transactional sex in Nigeria, therefore, comprises a set of different behaviours and is both covert and public at the same time. The tactic of the women is to engage in those relationships that will result in the highest financial benefit. The public secret regarding this behaviour is also widely documented in literary accounts. In Unigwe's (2009) novel, for example, she explains in fictional terms how a woman can increase her social status through the gains of transactional romantic relationships:

> ‘She would be a senior chick, one of the big girls Lagos had in abundance: young women who had money enough to burn; theirs or somebody else’s. Maybe she could convince Titus to teach her to drive and eventually buy her a car. Why not? She could be a car owner too, a small car with a teddy bear hanging behind the windscreen like in Titus’ car.’ (Unigwe 2009, p. 51).

Views on prostitution in Europe

Local studies have focused on attitudes towards prostitution and the position of women. A senior researcher who is embedded in the community of Benin City, and therefore does not want to be named, provides me with an edition of the ‘Benin Studies Newsletter’ from 1999, which argues for fighting local prostitution in preventing the international sex trade. The newsletter refers to the stigmatisation of Benin City as the “Sex capital of Nigeria” by a Nigerian journalist, Adisa Taiwo. It describes that the wife of the state’s governor, Mrs Eki Igbinedion, started a crusade against the sex trade to Europe in the early nineties, but that the general argument is that:

> “local prostitutes in our state and our city do it voluntarily, nobody forces them to go to the streets, and therefore it is personally an easier problem to deal with because you only need to appeal to the young girls” (Eki Igbinedion in *The Guardian,* 1999).

The article suggests that the local prevalence of prostitution is as harmful and has fueled the international sex trade. The same newsletter contains a text on ‘Colonialism and the origin of female prostitution among the Binis of Edo State.’ It argues that prostitution did not exist in the region before colonialism. Namely, women in precolonial Benin were under strict control and were kept in check by various taboos and regulations. Nigerian authors date the origin of prostitution among Benin women back to colonialism and the rise of capitalism (Usuanlele, 1999). They note that there is no indigenous term for prostitution in Benin, the terms used, *ashewo* or *osuka*, are borrowed Yoruba and Ibo words for prostitute. However, it seems unlikely that there was no prostitution at all; it seems more likely that, due to the traditional family system, prostitution was very uncommon. Moreover, because a man was able to marry multiple wives, ample access to sex was provided. A woman’s infidelity was actively sanctioned and stigmatised by the belief that the woman’s male children would become ill if she cheated on her husband.

Aderinto (2015) considers Nigerian anti-trafficking efforts to be a promotional tool towards other governments only. He argues that it is not beneficial for Nigeria’s international reputation to keep appearing in the news with its citizens as the most dominant group in street prostitution in Italy. Setting up anti-trafficking offices, according to Aderinto, signals commitment to fighting this, but he finds it ironic that Nigerian policy regarding trafficking is in such stark contrast to that towards local prostitution and internal trafficking. Prostitution is illegal in Nigeria, but enforcement, mainly due to corruption, is low.

A migrant describes her perception that the income from sex work in Europe has been a primary resource in improving communities back home:

> 'You know, in the end, because of this Europe, one or two families got help. It got better, it is better at home than it was before.' (M8)

These attitudes are similar to observations by Hoang (2015) in the Vietnamese sex industry: 'Workers I interviewed sent remittances home and built new houses that fundamentally altered the physical landscape of their hometowns and local perceptions of their work.' (Hoang 2015, p. 25).

Even though information commonly seeps back into the community, the information is biased. Rather than the victim/criminal paradigm of human trafficking, in the minds of these women, the dichotomy is between being a success and a failure. In the community, the dominant belief is that once one makes it to Europe, one can achieve success through hard work. With an overcrowded market and the extremely harsh reality of street prostitution, however, chances of 'success' are increasingly slim.

Interaction with authorities and NGOs

Law enforcement and NGOs devote a lot of attention to identifying and rescuing victims of human trafficking. Their activities influence the preferences and opportunities of this group of sex workers. There are many Christian aid organisations active in Italy. They will try and intervene while the women are at work:

> 'And um, I know some of the priests, there is a particular priest we work with, with whom we go there. And one of the things that priest does is that, sometimes he goes to the streets and approaches a girl as if he is a client and will take the girl away, talk to her, you know, encourage her, give her contacts, and then bring her back to the street where she was standing. And he will give her money.' (NS1)

> 'Very often we stay there from ten pm till about two am on the streets with the girls. And more or less the same thing, first of all we talk with them, ask them whether they like what they are doing, and many of them will tell you that they are not happy doing what they are doing, that it is not by choice as such. So, and we give them out our cards and our flyers, and tell them that we are there to help them if they want to come out and… Then we share, very often, we share some materials, there we are working with the sisters in Italy, who go out to those girls, and sometimes they go out with bibles, with some religious materials, with cookies and tea, things to keep them warm on the streets. We help to distribute most things, and then we talk to them and we come back.' (NS1)

Increasingly, these NGOs encourage women to return to Nigeria and offer rehabilitation funds in cooperation with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) if they return voluntarily. They will be offered shelter in basic accommodation in Lagos or Benin City and will be encouraged to start their own business with the rehabilitation funds. However, there is mass unemployment in Nigeria, and the market for small independent businesses, like a clothing shop, is particularly overcrowded. Often, the NGOs find that the women have disappeared when the funds run out, and NGO workers think that many of the women will try and find ways to go back to Europe as soon as they have returned to Nigeria. A respondent tells me that she was encouraged by an NGO to return to her family in Delta State in order to take care of her six younger siblings (M11). However, she is determined to go back to Europe, because she believes that is the best way to bring in money for her family.

Transactional sex has a different meaning in the context of West African society than it has among Western NGOs and governments, particularly where it concerns young women and minors. Anthropological work and documentaries show that the norm is that romantic relationships have a monetary aspect. In 'Sexy Money' (Junger, 2014), a documentary on the return of women from sex work in Europe, one of the returnees asks her daughter: 'How much money has the boy given you since you have started dating? How much money?' She warns her daughter not to engage in relationships that do not get her anything. They are living in a Lagos slum. The mother takes into consideration the insecure environment and the risk of pregnancy, and concludes that a relationship without financial benefit is not in the best interest of her daughter. In the same documentary, women are retrained as mechanics, but this turns out to be another exploitative situation. When asked how the women get by whilst training and not having a steady income, the answer is that there are men who support them. When complaining about lack of payment, the woman running the training would laugh and ask if they do not have a boyfriend. This woman, who runs the training, poses with foreign aid benefactors, highlighting women's emancipation, whilst the story beneath the surface is that gender norms are reinforced and that the women are exposed to a similar form of exploitation to that of their 'madams' in Europe. This project is ultimately perceived by the women as more unfavourable than attempting another journey to Europe. Many of these projects are funded with foreign subsidies without due diligence on the actual execution of the project. Those leading the project earn the most money and function similarly to madams; they train the women whilst underpaying them and paying unpredictably. The documentary shows that none of the women in the mechanic training program could find employment when the training ended after two years.

An informant in Benin City explains that the women who are deported back to Nigeria perceive themselves as having 'failed' and believe that if they try harder next time, they can be as successful as the madams who have trained them:

> 'So the girls I talked to were... 90% of them believed that if they can get their act together, they can go back to Italy and manage and control their trade. Especially the girls who got their freedom, they are not under anybody, they know what to do, they know the best cases to get the men who are not going to report them. They do it again. Some confided in me that NAPTIP will train them, someone will come and say: take a 100,000 to start a shop, use it to go back to Europe.' (OI4)

For those who are deported, those who stop paying and move in with a boyfriend, or those who are in NGOs, the agreement with the sponsor and madam may end quite abruptly. The respondents who were deported or in the asylum system were often still approached about repaying their debt, however. Two respondents had decided to report their employer to the authorities when they became pregnant. Their employer had threatened to terminate the pregnancy so that they could continue work. At this point, the respondents favoured the risk of deportation if they would report over the risks for their and their child's lives if they would continue staying in the employment agreement. Five respondents were in the asylum system at the time of interviewing, but were likely to eventually be deported. Three respondents were living illegally, therefore, experienced strong social exclusion in mainstream society. Their children would not be able to leave the country and go on school trips. They received emergency health care and care provided by doctors working for illegal residents, but they experienced extreme forms of relative deprivation. Increasingly, most asylum requests are dropped.

A Nigerian interpreter (OI2) explains that a successful report of trafficking needs to include the details of the perpetrator, so that they can be prosecuted and trafficking can be proven. However, the European police cannot guarantee the safety of the family back in Nigeria. Even though there is cooperation with Nigerian law enforcement, the state is so weak and corrupt that “You can bribe the police for 50 euros: for 100 euros you can have someone killed.” (OI2). An informant in Benin City says:

> ‘When I first moved in, so many houses, they say: this girl is in Italy, this girl is in Italy. Ten years after, they are all dead. They are all dead. Some, there are mothers and daughters and siblings fighting for the property. All of them. Not one remaining. One was shot, one died through illness, one was deported and died here or something, but they had built all these houses.’ (OI4)

The scenario where the sex worker ends the employment and leaves the community is most likely through a client. An alternative life in Europe outside the migrant community would be possible through a relationship with a client. All respondents report that they never had fellow Nigerians as their clients, only one later had West African clients when she started as a self-employed sex worker. If a regular customer becomes a romantic relationship, they may help the sex worker to leave the profession. They may get married, and this is a way to build up a stable life in Europe. Furthermore, clients are actors from outside who have lower costs than the sex worker to report an exploitative situation, if buying sex is not made illegal, such as in Sweden. However, as the sex workers are illegal residents, they are in a vulnerable position relative to the customer, and such romantic relationships may lead to domestic abuse or exploitative pimping within the relationship. Three respondents were receiving support from NGOs when they reported their boyfriends, who were former customers, for domestic abuse or pimping.

Firstly, the ‘safety’ motivation may be a Western interpretation of behaviour of the ‘ideal migrant’ who behaves like a refugee and is seeking a more secure and orderly existence in Europe. However, the women themselves describe the phase of staying at these centres more as a standstill. The introductory story of this thesis aims to give a sense of the idea of boredom and immobility that the women experience after deportation back to Nigeria in a ‘safe’ centre where they are protected against their traffickers as part of a campaign in Nigeria to improve public image by discouraging the international sex trade (Vanderhurst, 2017). Similarly, in the accounts I collected references to life in asylum centres, centres for victims of human trafficking, waiting for the outcome of asylum procedures, would be limited. When asking for more detail about social life or goals, the answer would be that it was all about the waiting for the outcome of the procedure, but my respondents did not reflect on the experience as a meaningful phase as such. “We were waiting for months and months, nothing happening” (M9) would be a phrase that was repeated a lot. The accounts would be similar to the description of their motivation to migrate in the first place: “nothing was happening”. In other words, the motivation was to escape total immobility, rather than to escape an unsafe situation. Even though most of the women lived in insecure economic and social environments and ran into many health risks, they themselves did not refer to their initial situation in these terms or as a motivation in itself to move abroad. Rather than insecurity or unsafety, it would be the identification of their situation as a lack of opportunities, of movement, of hope, of independence. Two of my respondents did indicate that time at an asylum centre had given them time to feel more psychologically stable, to rest, and to start figuring out their lives (M2; M8). These two women had children, and they expressed gratitude for the ability to put their kids into school and give them a stable life, at least for a while. However, even though the social workers would emphasise the benefits of counselling for traumatic experiences, the respondents themselves mostly indicated that they were occupied by the stress of uncertainty over their residence status. They mostly reflected on the stress caused by this process, rather than the experience as such. Notably, those migrants receiving more intense treatment for trauma than casual counselling were left out of my sample in order not to retraumatise them through the interview process. Most likely, but not necessarily, they would have different reflections on their time in asylum centres, such as emphasising the benefits of treatment for mental health issues.

I conclude from this section on social mobility that the sexual norms in Edo State are not such that women who work in the sex industry in Europe will have a lower social status. Engaging in transactional sex is normalised behaviour. Working in prostitution, however, is not. However, I argue that because the prostitution happens so far away and the returns are so high due to the strong European currency versus the Nigerian Naira, that people pretend it is the same as the transactional sex that they know. Instead, their social status depends on whether they were successful in making money in Europe or not. This finding contributes to an explanation of long-term exploitation in human trafficking. All of my respondents wanted to keep finding ways to earn money in Europe. The traffickers can depend on a large supply of women who will work for them despite exploitative conditions.

6.6 Conclusion

I find evidence to support my expectation that the sex workers in my sample and in the Koolvis case are being exploited. However, this is not a consequence of kidnapping, but instead of the dynamics of trust and distrust among the newcomers in the migrant enclave. Specific mechanisms to keep the incoming migrants to stick to the loan agreement, such as hostage taking of their families limit their options to defect. However, other phenomena that have typically been explained as the employer gaining complete control over the worker may, in fact, be an attempt by various stakeholders to make sense of a more complex reality of embeddedness. The following hypothesis has emerged from the data, which can be tested in more cases:

High levels of trust in migrant communities increase the likelihood of exploitation.

Rather than human trafficking or modern slavery being an accurate description of this phenomenon, it may be that a category of 'migrants who sell sex' (Agustín, 2007) seems to have disappeared, because various stakeholders pick up on this discourse, and stories are framed in that way to avoid having to explain a conflicting reality. Migrant sex workers may feel like a 'kidnapping' or 'victim' framing is what is expected of them to gain help, or may use it to avoid other painful explanations that involve family pressure to provide income and workers' own conflicting attitudes towards their employers. The evidence I find does not correspond to Hughes (2000) and Bales (2012) modern slavery idea, where a worker is completely controlled by another person, the duration is short-term, and local communities do not benefit.

Illegality profoundly limits the options of the workers. This is why the data do not show sex work that is not exploitative. Compared to the study of Hoang (2015) into Vietnamese sex workers catering to international businesspeople, Nigerian women tend to work in much lower segments of the sex industry, particularly in street prostitution. However, limited options do not mean that the women should not be seen as rational actors. In line with Hoang, it is possible to identify various ways in which they influence their own situation. Many women have consciously chosen to come to Europe and do the sex work whilst repaying a loan for the journey on unfavourable terms. Compared to the alternatives – such as other employment in Nigeria that would be exploitative or marrying a much older man - this option provides independence and status in the community back home. The madams are their role models. Whilst working, they can try to start their own business, to attract wealthy clients, and they have their own strategies to earn as much as possible. Sometimes, they may become skilled in stealing from their customers, for example, to improve their position.

At the same time, customers can provide a way out of the exploitative situation completely. Sometimes they become romantic partners. Customers will never be a part of the migrant community and may be better placed than the workers themselves to report exploitative situations. As illegal migrants, reporting unfair working conditions is extremely costly. As Campana and Varese (2015) point out, issues arising in the prostitution market relate to exploitation and not to trafficking. Therefore, states should consider policies that create better working conditions, such as lowering the cost for undocumented workers to report inhumane working conditions (Campana & Varese, 2015). States, they argue, should be aware of the tension between state centred and individual centred approaches (Campana & Varese, 2015). Those that aim to protect the state, such as deporting illegal migrants, are in conflict with those protecting individuals, for example from exploitation.

Targeting human traffickers may be more in line with protection of the state than protecting individuals. Many of the women, who were 'rescued' from their employers and subsequently deported, are planning to go back to Europe through a similar route.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

The investments of madams shape daily life in Benin City. When the madams retire, they come back to the city and spread their wealth. They start legitimate businesses: from modest *kanopee* shops selling water bottles on the side of the street, to industrial factories (OI4). They build houses. People happily associate with the madams. They can help when someone gets into trouble with the police. They donate generously to one of the many Pentecostal churches. These same churches become a meeting place for people who want to 'travel', the emic term in Edo State for going abroad for a shorter or longer time, but never for tourism or a holiday (Ratia & Notermans, 2012). The madams wear beautiful clothes. The community perceives them as strong independent women, they become role models. Their expertise, connections, and positive feedback lead to chain migration (Tilly, 2007). In an environment of economic and social uncertainty, parents send their daughters to them as insurance for the well-being of the family. Once a daughter 'goes abroad', a standard way to invest is for the family to build four flats from the remittances. They will live in one and rent out the others (OI4). An informant looked at the mail that goes out of the Benin City post office: many of the packages go to Europe (OI4). Mothers parcel soap and olive oil as good omens to their daughters, in order to attract more customers.

About 4000 kilometres north of Benin City: In Turin, Naples, Rome, Madrid, Paris, Antwerp, and Amsterdam migrants make the money that is invested back in Edo State. Since the 1980s, the market has become increasingly crowded, and migration controls stricter than before. Prices for travel went up, routes became riskier, most recently through the desert via Libya as part of the refugee crisis (see Kelly, 2016;

Politzer & Kassie, 2016). Some women never got the chance to sent money home. They died during the journey: in the desert or at sea. Others became ill and passed away, leaving the remaining family in disarray and arguing over the property that has been left behind (OI4). Even though information about the risks is now widespread, the business remains attractive. Young women are motivated to gain independence and escape a life of immobility in Edo state, and families want to secure a steady income. The distance, shame, a degree of wishful thinking, and the recruitment method make the positive information more potent than the negative. Madams increasingly look for women from rural areas, who may still believe that they will end up in hairdressing or babysitting once in Europe. They are made to sign a contract to repay a debt of between 30,000 and 60,000 euros, enforced by a contract at a traditional shrine or a lawyer.

This thesis aimed to understand cooperation and exploitation in human trafficking, exploring the case study of sex trafficking from Edo State, Nigeria to Western Europe. The thesis contributes to an understanding of the phenomenon and the sociological literature by assuming that cooperation is not self-evident. It is puzzling that the networks involved are successful, despite European law enforcement viewing human trafficking as a top priority. Per definition, those involved cannot use the state to enforce agreements. This thesis follows the journey of the female migrants from recruitment in Edo State, to the crossing of borders, to sex work in Europe. This journey was followed by using 826 intercepted phone conversations between madams, migrants, their families, and transporters from the court files of 'Operation Koolvis,' a criminal investigation conducted in 2006 and 2007. Unique about this investigation is that it focuses on a moment in the journey of the migrants where they stay in Dutch asylum centres, and several barriers to cooperation emerge. Authorities are trying to convince migrants to report their traffickers, transporters have to pick them up without being detected, and migrants are physically away from the trafficking network and spread out through different centres in the Netherlands and moved around frequently. In addition, in 2016 and 2017, I conducted interviews with 14 female Nigerian migrants who had made the journey to Europe into sex work, as well as 40 interviews with law enforcement, social workers, and community leaders.

I present the conclusions on the research questions in 7.1. I provide recommendations for future research in 7.2. Three hypotheses have emerged from mechanisms observed in the data. These hypotheses can be tested in more cases of human trafficking and are not limited to the Nigerian context. Finally, I provide recommendations for policy in 7.3.

7.1 Concluding remarks

The central research question of this thesis was: *How can cooperation and exploitation in human trafficking be explained?*

I treat the central research question by discussing subquestions in each chapter of this thesis. In Chapter 4, I first discuss: How can the start of trafficking between two regions be explained? I argue that chain migration is an explanation for the start of trafficking between two regions. Traffickers build on existing connections between two regions that originally had nothing to do with the trafficking business. In the case study, sex trafficking takes place between Edo State and Italy, which were originally connected because of trade in beads and fashion. Trafficking then continues and may spread to neighbouring areas and countries, but is still clustered around knowledge and connections in local communities. Over time, communities can become dependent on the profits of trafficking, and norms and beliefs change in order to justify it, helping the trafficking to persist. The counterfactual, a trafficking business building on new connections, entering markets where no existing social contacts exist, seems unlikely. I find support for the argument that the same mechanism of chain migration that has been found in migration studies (see Tilly, 2007) applies to trafficking networks. Instead, the trafficking literature overlooks what mechanisms could lie behind the origin of trafficking networks. For example, Shelley (2003) argues for the 'business model approach' to explain the origin of trafficking, and states: "Trafficking in women has grown significantly over the past decade. Although this has been a long-standing phenomenon in Asia, it has spread to many more areas in the world." Shelley (2003) implies that trafficking as a business originated in Asia and the model then spread to other parts of the world. The findings on the origins of trafficking from Edo State do not correspond to this, nor does the observation that a similarly organised sex trade existed in the 1930s in the Gold Coast (Ellis, 2016). Namely, Shelley's (2003) argument that the trafficking business model spread from Asia to other regions over time implies that knowledge spread globally. Shelley (2003) would interpret this case study as human trafficking, it fits her definition[14] of trafficking, and she acknowledges that trafficking often occurs within "large-scale migration." I agree, but argue that trafficking builds on existing local connections and knowledge, not a global business model.

[14] Shelley (2003) defines trafficking according to the UN protocol as: 'The trafficker, through deception, threats of violence, forces the individual to work in debt bondage."

Then, I explore the research question: How can cooperation between migrants and traffickers be explained? The answer builds on the start of trafficking between two regions. When trafficking is embedded in a particular region or community, migrants and traffickers can easily collect information on one another and pick up on each other's cultural nuances. I argue that cooperation between migrants and traffickers from the same community, region, or ethnic group, is more likely than cooperation between migrants and traffickers who are from different groups, for this reason. Specifically, I argue that the mechanism of hostage-taking fosters cooperation between migrants and traffickers. Hostage-taking links ethnic homogeneity and cooperation. Namely, ethnic homogeneity increases the likelihood between migrants and traffickers, because those from the same ethnic group can take each other's families hostage.

When norms and beliefs in a region change due to the profits from trafficking, families of migrants can be taken hostage to guarantee that the migrant will cooperate with the trafficker. Migrants may trust traffickers due to their good reputation but may also engage with them initially due to a degree of 'wishful thinking' (see Gambetta, 2000). Even though the trafficker makes a deceptive promise of a good price for travel to Europe and a good way to repay the amount, and the migrant can check the deception, the migrant may still go along with it because the alternative options are worse. Norms include that people do not report to the police and that the eldest daughter should support her family by cooperating with traffickers.

For all migrants in the Koolvis case, families were taken hostage to enforce the agreement. In this case, agreements are enforced in the context of traditional religion. The belief in traditional religion had a deterring effect on the migrants to varying extents. Some migrants were fearful at first but later tested their belief. Others felt a sense of agency in negotiating with the priest. In the case of non-cooperation by the migrant, the traffickers would activate the hostage-taking mechanism, but taking it to its extreme - threatening the lives of the family of the migrant - would be a last resort. At first sign of non-cooperation, the traffickers advertise their service to the migrants to remind them of the mutual benefit. Then, the traffickers ask the family of the migrant to contact the migrant and appeal to them to cooperate. If that did not work, the family would be subpoenaed to a shrine. Finally, threats to life would be made.

In Chapter 5, I treat the question: How can cooperation between traffickers be explained? Rather than a traditional boss, a broker is key to cooperation in the network. John, who is a resident of the UK, which is not part of the route of trafficking, facilitates communication between transporters in Nigeria and those in Europe. He is the bridge between people who would otherwise not be able to cooperate due to being unaware of each other's activities or due to distrust. Furthermore, I find that the high-risk jobs: approaching asylum centres to pick up migrants are distributed to those at the periphery of the network. These people enter and leave the network ad hoc. They will only do a small part of the journey and are selected because of their location close to an asylum centre. The people who are hired are recent migrants who are undocumented and are prepared to take risks to earn small amounts of money. The segmentation of transportation lowers the risk of detection for the core network.

I then ask: How can a trafficking network reach a high capacity of transported migrants? I find that trafficking is organised as a market, not a hierarchy. I observe a high degree of division of labour. A high degree of division of labour makes the network of this case study successful in terms of capacity and circumventing law enforcement. Those who employ women in exploitative conditions in the sex industry do not organise the illegal crossing of borders. Those organising transportation are not involved in the prostitution business. Exploiters have a long-term relationship with the migrant, whereas the relationship between migrant and transporter ends when the journey is completed. This division of labour means that during the transportation phase the madam has contracted out the crossing of borders, but not the control over another person. When a migrant defects, it is the madam (exploiter) who activates the hostage-taking mechanism and contacts her family to trace the migrant and makes her comply with the agreement. Transporters are not responsible for monitoring the migrant. The chain also starts with the madam, who contracts out transportation. This division of labour means that the transportation phase can have a market-orientation, where transporters are hired on an ad hoc basis for short parts of the journey. Within the work phase, however, a hierarchy is logical: a madam can hire sex workers, who then become controllers of other workers, and eventually madams. These local businesses are also prone to organised crime involvement, which should be explored in future research.

Finally, in Chapter 6, I ask: How can long-term exploitation of migrants be explained? I first describe what constitutes exploitation in my case study. The migrants end up in exploitative conditions in the sex industry in Europe. Their employers control their income: a part goes to their debt, a part goes to the family of the migrant in Nigeria, and a negligible amount may be spent freely. The employers provide work to the migrants: they coordinate where the best market is and organise legal or forged residence and work permits for the migrants. The accounts of the migrants indicate that there is little or no protection from potential violence from customers and health risks provided by the employer. The degree of monitoring varies: some migrants indicate that they were in a kidnapping situation where they were locked up, some say they were monitored daily, and others less than daily. The accounts of kidnapping seem implausible, because of high levels of trust beween madams and migrants, and because it would be costly for the madam to maintain, and unnecessary with other cooperative mechanisms in place. Another theme that emerged was that of social mobility. In addition to the pressures from their family and madam, the migrants were motivated to stay in Europe to pursue social mobility. They regarded their time in asylum centres as unproductive and saw their earnings in Europe as a way to eventually be independent. For many of them, the alternative was an even more exploitative working arrangement back in Nigeria or being dependent on a husband who would likely be much older. They dream of being business women.

7.2 Future research

7.2.1 Hypotheses that have emerged

Three hypotheses have emerged from the case study. These can be tested in future on multiple cases in future studies.

1. The mechanism of hostage-taking increases the likelihood of cooperation between migrant and trafficker.

2. In the transportation phase of human trafficking, a market-oriented structure leads to a higher capacity than a hierarchical structure.

3. High trust in migrant communities increases the likelihood of exploitation.

In order to test the hypotheses, studies would need to include cases that vary across the independent variables. In order to test for the effect of hostage-taking, other variables should be held constant as much as possible. Therefore, sampling from the same migration network would be preferable. The study needs to include cases where hostage-taking is present and cases where hostage-taking is absent. I would also recommend studies to explore to which extent hostage-taking explains the link between ethnic homogeneity and cooperation. Then, in order to compare the effect of market-oriented versus hierarchical structures on the capacity of a trafficking network, cases should be selected across networks. Finally, I recommend a study testing the effect of varying levels of trust in a community on exploitation. For many of these tests, there may not be enough cases available for statistical analysis. However, a comparative historical analysis (Skocpol & Somers, 1980) is appropriate.

7.2.2 Other dimensions to explore

Gender

This thesis has not explored the gender dimension of the topic. No male migrants were studied. I recommend for future studies to explore the differences and similarities between female and male migrants by including men into studies on trafficking. Furthermore, in the case study, I find the prominence of female pimps, the madams. Several studies have pointed to the fact that the Nigerian case, in particular, is special, because of the role of women in its criminal networks (Siegel, 2007; Siegel & de Blank, 2010). Traditionally, women do not have a visible position in criminal networks, because their reputation for violence tends to be much lower than that of men (Gambetta, 1996). Throughout the research, I came across several different answers to this puzzle. Some sources would argue that the madams do not hold a position of power. They are either under the control of local organised crime groups or their husbands. Other sources argue that it is indeed the madams who run the business. They can maintain this position, because of their expertise and connections in the business as they are all ex-prostitutes who settled in Europe a long time ago. They have male associates who can carry out violent tasks for them if necessary. Conducting ethnographic research among madams should be possible. I also came across various journalistic sources who had safely interviewed madams who had returned to Nigeria, which indicates that gaining access, even though challenging, should be possible.

Organised Crime

Another topic that this thesis touches upon, but does not take as its central focus, is the role of organised crime groups that govern the market. From the Koolvis files, it seems as though the market is largely disorganised. However, there may be a bias in law enforcement reach there. The investigation did not consider the difference between governance and trade in this market as such. It assumed that those who looked the most like mobsters, two suppliers located in Nigeria, were in charge of the entire network. However, my analysis shows that they were involved in trade and offered the service of transportation to Europe, but did not engage in governance, or were part of a hierarchical organisation. Instead, traditional priests supplied governance. They enforce agreements and mediate disputes. However, they seemed to be hired as an external supplier (see Dick, 1995). Future research can address to which extent this market is organised. More data is required on the role of traditional courts, like the 'Ayelala' shrines, and the behaviour of priests. Furthermore, my interviews with the human trafficking unit of Catalonia indicated that at the local ends in Spain, organised crime groups govern. They decide who can have a prostitution business in which territory and businesses pay them protection money. These groups stem from fraternities that had political power in the Nigeria of the 1970s, with names like the 'Air Lords' and the 'Supreme Eiye Confraternity.' These historical roots indicate that there is a supply of people available who are specialised in using violence and in governing, and it seems likely for them to have control over prostitution and migration markets in which they have connections. The Italians do not have the connections (see also Varese, 2017).

With little evidence that the traditional Sicilian Mafia has control over the prostitution and migration markets, it seems as though Nigerian gangs are taking over territory amidst the refugee crisis with thousands of migrants crossing the Mediterranean from Libya to Italy (Piranty, 2016). Among those refugees, many are Nigerian. Nigerian gangs, therefore, are well-placed to take control over the market: they have the connections back in West Africa, the language skills, the training in violence, and the supply of men as more illegal migrants arrive from Nigeria. There are local gangs as well who are more involved in the prostitution business (LO1; LO2). They think that Air Lords are mostly extorters, while local gangs provide protection for madams. Often, madams are married to a gang member, or sex workers have relationships with them. For the transportation business, it is mostly the confraternities that are effective, as well as gangs under cover of spiritual courts.

Land versus air travel

This case study was, what I estimate to be, a successful and sophisticated human trafficking network. The network used air travel rather than travel over land. Among the interviews I held with migrants were four women who travelled to Europe via land through Libya. For these women, the journey was as harrowing as the exploitative sex work once they arrived in Europe. The route does have implications for cooperation and exploitation. For land travel, the risk is much higher that the migrant never arrives. The product offered to the migrant is of a much lower quality in land travel than in air travel. Future studies could look at the difference between air and land travel in human trafficking by investigating, for example, which demographic of migrants can afford one over the other, whether the quality of the travel has implications for the strength of the relationship between trafficker and migrant, and whether transporters play a different role in land travel (over long periods of time) than in air travel (over short periods of time).

Strategies of sex workers

A third topic that deserves further attention is the strategies sex workers employ to survive in a market that is overcrowded and exploitative. This thesis has highlighted that women tend to try to move from street prostitution into higher market segments. At the same time, decisions are made for them and madams may try to move them around different locations and even different countries in order to attract more customers. Geographical and social mobility are themes that need further exploration and should be linked to strategies for sex workers to remain safe as well. If you move between different areas a lot, how do you know if a customer's signal of trustworthiness is valid? Furthermore, interviews seemed to indicate that engaging in a long-term relationship with a (former) customer was a way out of the industry for some women. A madam has the incentive to prevent this because customers are in a position to report exploitative working conditions. How do sex workers try to engage in stable relationships and how does a madam prevent these strategies?

Awareness campaigns

Finally, and this is linked to the policy implications, the effect of awareness campaigns should be studied further. Throughout the research, there seemed to be a conflict between what aid organisations try to accomplish and the interests of the women they are trying to help. As Mackie (1996) highlights, it is possible to break belief traps, such as genital mutilation, through awareness campaigns. Social norms can change when people realise they are serving a suboptimal equilibrium. However, in this case, some beliefs, such as in the efficacy of 'voodoo contracts' when closing an exploitative migration agreement, may be false, but the effects of the beliefs are real. Of course, the norm in Edo State that material goods no matter their origin lead to higher status could change. However, the idea that this industry leads to huge investments back in the society of Edo State is not a belief, but a fact. Therefore, awareness campaigns that only highlight the dangers of human trafficking, and show the stereotypical image of a woman in chains, do not represent reality. Future studies could compare different campaigns, where I would expect that those highlighting alternative employment options are more effective than those (over)emphasising the horrors of human trafficking.

7.3 Policy recommendations

This last area of future research, the efficacy of awareness campaigns, relates to an entirely different field of study than this thesis. I should emphasise here that the main contribution of this thesis is sociological. Human trafficking policies are often of a very political and ideological nature, whereas this thesis has steered away from these debates. I am acutely aware that my words may be misinterpreted in these debates on a particularly sensitive issue. Therefore, I hope that the following recommendations show how I think the research can be interpreted appropriately to inform policies and to debunk some prevalent myths in the public discourse. I will first make a recommendation relating to awareness campaigns and social work generally, followed by several recommendations for law enforcement strategies.

I argue that awareness campaigns can only be effective if they take seriously the full extent of experiences of those people they try to reach. Throughout this research project, it struck me how uniform and one-dimensional anti-human trafficking campaigns are. Posters with 'modern slavery' statements and pictures of women in chains are used to target a wide variety of people. Those exact posters are used to address Eastern European women, Nigerian women, and Asian women. Some of these women may experience what these posters are depicting: they were tricked into a kidnapping situation in which they have no agency whatsoever. However, there is a wide spectrum of experiences that these campaigns try to target that does not correspond to this stereotypical image. Many women are aware of the terms of the agreements they enter into, they know the risks and do not need to be made aware of them, they have realistically assessed trafficking proposals as their best option. Realising and showing positive alternatives is more likely to be effective. When it is not the women themselves, but their families, who negotiate agreements on their behalf, the motivations of the families should be addressed. Offering alternative insurance may convince them to take another path. It seems as though awareness campaigns are trying to address the information asymmetry between trafficker and migrant, which is helpful but does so unrealistically. Informing people that traffickers will try to lock their daughter up and give you nothing in return, is simply misinforming people. Instead, I would argue for providing information about the terms of the agreements that are unfair and allowing migrants to report exploitative situations by taking away the risk of deportation and providing protection.

Addressing the law enforcement perspective, I firstly recommend clear labelling of the division of labour in trafficking networks. By analysing who is governing, who is transporting, and who is exploiting, specific roles can be targeted (see Campana & Varese, 2018). It may well be that the Koolvis case has looked only at those who are transporting and that there are local gangs involved who are governing prostitution businesses. If the role of 'human trafficker' is seen as a uniform thing, prosecution is challenging. For example, in the Koolvis case, those accused of human trafficking got much lower sentences than the prosecution expected. The judges ruled that the suspects had committed smuggling, but not trafficking. Indeed, those suspects were only involved in transportation within Europe. None of the suspects had engaged in the recruitment or the exploitation of women. They specialised in letting undocumented migrants cross borders within Europe.

Related to the point of division of labour is the recommendation to not regard cooperation as self-evident in human trafficking rings. The popular conception that human trafficking networks are all-powerful may have helped to create public attention, but does not help to break them down. Cooperative mechanisms have to be identified and then targeted. Currently, law enforcement addresses the hostage-taking mechanism to a certain extent, but seems to forget that families are often willing hostages instead of kidnapping victims. Furthermore, there is the conception that merely getting the voodoo priest to undo the agreement will end the agreement. However, if the traffickers can still enforce the hostage-taking with violence, undoing the spiritual part of the agreement is not enough. Finally, the understanding that the networks, especially the transportation part, are largely disorganised, means that searching for traditional 'bosses' is fruitless. Instead, I recommend targeting brokers, such as 'John' in this case study, who hold the network together through the extent of their social connections, rather than their authoritative power.

The point about the market-structure leads to a recommendation about local approaches and international cooperation. This point was previously made by Campana (2016b). I would like to reiterate what he says: in many cases, a local approach may be more appropriate. As the transportation market is largely disorganised, embedded organised crime groups are likely to only exist at the very localised ends of the chain. Transportation is naturally dynamic, market-oriented networks are flexible and can change routes once law enforcement targets a particular one. In contrast, a prostitution business is local. Even though individual workers may move around, madams are established to a certain degree. They may move around to circumvent law enforcement but are only able to do so to a certain extent. Because they need physical territory, organised crime groups can control the prostitution market, whereas they are unlikely to take a hold of transportation networks as such.

Finally, the last chapter of this thesis shows that undocumented migrants logically place trust in the migrant community. Per definition, they have no other option than to work in the illegal or informal sectors. Their dependence increases the likelihood of exploitation. Restricting migration, therefore, has an adverse effect. As Campana and Varese (2016) point out, governments face a tension between protecting their borders and protecting individuals. Addressing this tension is a political issue, but acknowledging the tension in the first place is a key recommendation in policymaking. With anti-trafficking policies, states often try to argue that they are helping individuals and are protecting borders at the same time, by arresting traffickers. However, the demand for these traffickers only exists because there is a market for illegal entry into a country because legal routes are unavailable. In relation to this, criminalising sex work has an adverse effect as well. If the workers are undocumented and sex work is criminalised, they cannot report exploitative conditions, and their customers cannot either.

Appendix

Appendix A: Interview guide migrants

- For all questions, be unassuming about the nature of relationships, motives, decisions.
- Questions about background:
    - Where are you from originally?
    - Can you describe the place where you grew up?
    - Can you describe your family?
    - Would you go to school?
    - What activities would you do day to day?
    - What were your dreams and plans for the future?
    - What kind of people would you be in contact with?
    - Did your family have specific expectations for you or your siblings?
- Questions about arrival to Europe:
    - What did you think of Europe before you went?
    - How was the decision made for you to migrate?
    - How was your journey prepared?
    - What agreements did you enter into?
    - What was the journey like?
    - To what situation did you first arrive?
- Questions about long-term stay in Europe:
    - What were your circumstances?
        - Who did you speak to?
        - Can you tell me more about the relationship you had with the people you saw every day during this period?
        - What kind of work did you do?
        - What was a normal day at work like?
        - How did you feel?
        - What was you financial situation like?
        - Were you in the possession of documentation?
        - Did you feel like you could change your situation?
        - What goals did you have?
    - Were you in a stable situation or did your situation change?
- What are your thoughts about the future?
- Is there anything you would like to add?
- It may not always be a good idea to end the interview with a question concerning the future; the respondent might be emotional about an uncertain future. Rather, go back to a cheerful topic discussed during the interview.

Appendix B: Migrant interviews

Code	Sex	Age	Location	Year	Type of NGO	Taped	Education
M1	F	23	Rotterdam	2016	Dutch	Y	Primary School
M2	F	42	Rotterdam	2016	Dutch	Y	Advanced Education
M3	F	34	Amsterdam	2016	Dutch	Y	Secondary school
M4	F	33	Amsterdam	2016	Dutch	Y	1st year secondary school
M5	F	28	Amsterdam	2016	Dutch	Y	1st year secondary school
M6	F	40	Amsterdam	2016	West African	Y	Secondary school
M7	F	25	Amsterdam	2016	Dutch	Y	2nd year secondary school
M8	F	25	Amsterdam	2016	Dutch	Y	3rd year secondary school
M9	F	49	Amsterdam	2016	West African	Y	Secondary school
M10	F	38	Amsterdam	2016	West African	Y	Primary school
M11	F	20	Lagos	2017	Nigerian	N	Primary school
M12	F	21	Lagos	2017	Nigerian	N	Secondary school
M13	F	20	Lagos	2017	Nigerian	N	1st year secondary school
M14	F	19	Lagos	2017	Nigerian	N	3rd year secondary school

Appendix C: Interview guide experts

- Profession
  - Could you tell me about the work you do?
  - Where have you worked before?
  - How long have you worked in this role?
  - In what situations do you come across female Nigerian migrants who have done sex work in Europe?
- Nigerian trafficking networks
  - What stood out to you about Nigerian trafficking networks?
  - How do you think they recruit people?
  - What does this market look like?
  - Have you observed any distinct roles?
  - If they were involved in the Koolvis case: ask for clarifications
  - What do you think makes a trafficking network successful?
- The lives of Nigerian migrant sex workers
  - What accounts do you come across?
  - What decisions do they face?
  - What do their social networks look like?
  - What are their work conditions?
  - What is the impact of their work on the community they come from?
- Is there anything you would like to tell me that I haven't asked you yet?

Appendix D: Expert interviews

Code	Sex	Role	Organisation	Location	Year	Taped
Dutch law enforcement						
LD1	M	Team leader	National Crime Squad	Zwolle	2014	N
LD2	M	National Coordinator	Human Trafficking Unit	Zwolle	2014	N
LD3	M	Prosecutor	Public Prosecutor's Office	Zwolle	2014	N
LD4	M	Director enforcement	Expertise Centre HT	Zwolle	2014	N
LD5	F	Lawyer for migrants	Law Firm	Amsterdam	2015	N
LD6	M	Liaison Officer for Italy	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	The Hague	2016	Y
LD7	M	Police officer	Police Unit Sexual Offenses	Zoetermeer	2016	N
LD8	M	Advisor to the Board	Public Prosecutor's Office	The Hague	2016	N
Nigerian law enforcement						
LN1	M	Head Int'l Cooperation	NAPTIP	Amsterdam	2015	N
LN2	M	Head of Intelligence	NAPTIP	Amsterdam	2015	N
LN3	M	Zonal Commander	NAPTIP	Lagos	2017	Y
LN4	F	Officer	NAPTIP	Lagos	2017	Y
LN5	F	Officer	NAPTIP	Lagos	2017	Y
LN6	M	Zonal Commander	NAPTIP	Benin City	2017	Y
Other law enforcement						
LO1	M	Head anti-trafficking	Catalonia HT Unit	Phone	2018	Y
LO2	M	Officer anti-trafficking	Catalonia HT Unit	Phone	2018	Y
Dutch social workers						
SD1	F	Care coordinator	Shelter for victims	Amsterdam	2016	N
SD2	F	Care coordinator	Shelter for victims	Amsterdam	2016	N
SD3	F	Care coordinator	Shelter for victims	Rotterdam	2016	N
SD4	F	Social worker	Shelter for victims	Rotterdam	2016	N
SD5	F	Behavioral Therapist	Mental care provider migrants	Amsterdam	2015	N
SD6	M	Care coordinator	Shelter for victims	Leeuwarden	2017	N
SD7	F	Care coordinator	Shelter for victims	Leeuwarden	2017	N
Nigerian social workers						
SN1	F	Director, Catholic nun	Shelter deported victims	Lagos	2017	Y
SN2	F	Social worker	Shelter deported victims	Lagos	2017	Y
SN3	F	Social worker	Salvation Army	Lagos	2017	N
SN4	M	Social worker	Salvation Army	Lagos	2017	N
SN5	M	Social worker	Salvation Army	Lagos	2017	N
SN6	M	Social worker	Salvation Army	Lagos	2017	N
SN7	F	Director	Women's Consortium	Lagos	2017	Y
SN8	M	Director	Anti-trafficking NGO	Benin City	2017	N
Other informants						
OI1	M	West African Priest	Pentecostal Church	Amsterdam	2016	Y
OI2	F	Nigerian Interpreter	Dutch National Police	Phone	2017	N
OI3	M	Taxi driver	Self Employed	Lagos	2017	Y
OI4	F	Anonymous informant	Part of community Edo State	Benin City	2017	Y
OI5	F	Anonymous informant	Part of community Edo State	Benin City	2017	Y

OI6	F	Documentary filmmaker	Self Employed	Amsterdam	2016	N
OI7	M	Director	Anti-trafficking activist NGO	The Hague	2017	N
OI8	F	Migration Consultant	Self Employed	Phone	2017	N
OI9	F	Researcher	Expertise Centre HT	Leeuwarden	2017	N

Appendix E: Codebook for court files

Code	Theme	Description	Example
Origin	Geographical clustering	Where the migrants and traffickers are from	"We're leaving home now okay. We're going to drive into Benin City for church."
Destination	Geographical clustering	Where the migrants are going	"I have two for Venice, yes. And one for Napels, you've been there before."
Hostage taking	Enforcement of the agreement	Hostage taking to enforce the agreement	Father to migrant: "The madam's sister is coming to pick me up on Sunday and then she wants to call you together."
Religious aspect of agreement	Enforcement of the agreement	How the families of the migrants speak about the trafficking	"Your father was dragged in front of the Ayelala shrine again. He is tired. Can you really not leave [the asylum center]?
Threats	Enforcement of the agreement	When threats are made and when they are not	"They will smear the blood of your father over you. Do you not know how many people who did not repay their debts have died?"
Invoking distrust in authorities	Information asymmetry and trust	Instances where the traffickers appeal to the migrants to trust them and not the authorities	"Those people [the Dutch authorities] are worthless. They are worthless people. We will give you a residence permit once you reach your destination."
Knowledge of migrants	Information asymmetry and trust	How much migrants know compared to traffikcers	"Oh… she has never been to Europe before. She does not know the real price. If you hear how much she has to pay, you'll get a headache."
Expectations for the migrant	Norms and expectations	Expectations of the social network of the migrant	Migrant: "I run into a man who wants to seduce me every day when we go to school." Social contact in Nigeria: "You should ask the man for more money."
Norms around smuggling and trafficking	Norms and expectations	The social norms of activities around illegal migration to Europe	"I mean… you're just helping out, but maybe it's best if you don't talk about this with people visiting your house."
Peripheral network	Network structure	Instances of relationships that are flexible and weak ties	"I should pay this guy in advance."
Core network	Network structure	Instances of relationships that are close ties	"I have know him for years and years. Do you remember when he lost his coat in Lagos? We've done business together for so long."

Code	Theme	Description	Example
Kinship and ethnic ties	Network structure	The extent to which there are kinship and ethnic ties present or not	"Yes, our baby is growing up in Paris. My girlfriend is really so great at this business, but it is not good to ask her for that kind [going to asylum centers]."
Transporters	Division of labour	What transporters do	"You can go back. You don't have to search for the girl. I will let her madam know to call her family."
Madams	Division of labour	What madams do	"I have not been able to contact her real owner yet. The person who gave Daybreak the job. Her madam in Turin."
Contracting out risky parts of the journey	Risk	When parts of the journey are contracted out	"Never in a million years would I approach that place [any asylum centre]. We will use the level from Groningen. He did something for us before."
Detection by law enforcement	Risk	The assessment of risk by traffickers and instances of detection	Madam: "I was in jail during that time and that girl did not get my any income, can you believe it."

Appendix F: Codebook for interviews with migrants

Code	Theme	Description	Example
Explaining life events in terms of religion	Religious context	When a migrant attributes life events to spiritual influence	"So whenever we think of doing something against her [the madam]. The shams get our attention back."
Oath taking	Religious context	The meaning the migrant assigns to oath taking before the journey	"So you go to a shrine and you have to swear to them: I will not betray my madam, I will not steal her money."
Migration in the context of their social nextwork	Meaning of migration	What migration means compared to others in their social network	"Yes actually, some of the people from my primary school were also in Europe. In Edo State we all want to go."
Social mobility	Meaning of migration	Mentions of strategies to improve life chances by going to Europe and within Europe	"So I was the only girl who she picked out to go to Germany. Just imagine that. So I was lucky."
Family in relation to migration	Meaning of migration	How the migrant refers to family	"My three younger siblings are still in Delta. I want to take care of them even now I'm back in Nigeria."
Trust in madam	Information asymmetry and trust	Whether the migrant cooperates with the madam or not	"So I was caught and I spend about three years plus in house arrest, but I never told the police that I was working for her."
Information about the working conditions	Information asymmetry and trust	What the migrant knows versus the traffickers	"She told me I could pay it back without hard work at all. That I would be very successful in Europe like her."
Monitoring of work	Information asymmetry and trust	The extent to which the migrant is monitored by others in their work	"They locked me up in the house 24/7. They decided what we eat, how we dress, where we work."
Safety	Exploitation	References to the physical safety of the migrant	"It is street prostitution… so they can take you to the bushes and you can yell and no one will hear you, you know."
Rewards for work	Exploitation	What the migrants receive in return for their work	"They would count my income… but then change the numbers. I would never know exactly."
Alternatives before migration	Alternative options	What options the migrants perceive to have before migraitng	"I worked for my aunt… in this restaurant. It was such hard work. They made me work so hard. Payment was always delayed."

Code	Theme	Description	Example
Alternatives after migration	Alternative options	What options the migrants perceive to have after migrating	"So when I had my daughter, I decided to leave… and report to the police. It was too much at this point. The suffering."
Norms around transactional sex	Views on sexuality	Mentions of norms on sexuality in the network of the migrant	"And then I don't go with boys, but all the other girls in my class were. Only two of us were not doing those girls. Not going to school, getting home with some money."

Appendix G: Codebook for interviews with experts

Code	Theme	Description	Example
Perception of Koolvis case	Universe of trafficking cases	How do they perceive the Koolvis case compared to other cases	"So in some cases the madam does everything: recruitment, transportation. But in the Koolvis case it was highly organized, by others."
Land versus air travel	Universe of trafficking cases	Comparison of modus operandi between land and air	"It still happens. Flights to Heathrow… but those guys are much more sophisticated."
Developments over time	Universe of trafficking cases	Observations about changes in the phenomenon over time	"It has really spread to other regions over time. Look here, mostly the area of Delta State neighboring Edo."
Hostage taking	Cooperation	Mention of hostage taking as a cooperative mechanism	"The madams they are smart eh. They will ask: Where does your mother live? Let's send her a handbag."
Division of labour	Cooperation	References to the division of labour among traffickers	"And the migrant may see 20 different faces during the journey. The madam does not get involved at all."
Safety	Exploitation	References to the physical safety of the migrant	"And it was when she was on the streets when someone came and attacked her."
Rewards for work	Exploitation	What the migrants receive in return for their work	"So this debt… 50.000 euros. And they have to pay for their housing. We see it takes increasingly long to pay it back."
Migrant's position in Europe	Information asymmetry and trust	References to the migrant's position in Europe	"And they don't speak the language right. Imagine, arriving in Italy from Nigeria. And the Italians don't speak English."
Trust/distrust between migrant and trafficker	Information asymmetry and trust	The extent to which there is trust or distrust between migrant and trafficker	"It is so difficult to get Nigerian girls to speak… compared to… Eastern European for example. They won't speak to us."
Information the migrant has before traveling	Information asymmetry and trust	Information the migrant has before traveling	"And in the village they have no idea. It is ignorance. But in other cases it is greed. They have misplaced priorities."
Origin	Geographical clustering	Where the migrants and traffickers are from	"Yes we still see… like 90% of them come from Edo State."
Destination	Geographical clustering	Where the migrants are going	"So… I worked as a liaison officer in Rome… and it is mostly on the main streets into the city, the Via […]."

Code	Theme	Description	Example
Religion and enforcement of contracts	Religious context	Observations about religious context of contracts	"So if you go to the shrines here in Benin, you will see that some have NAPTIP posters."
Religion and migrant's position	Religious context	Observations about the migrants' reaction to religious symbolism	"We find the voodoo packages, and really, only when they are returned, do the women feel free to speak."

Appendix H: Word frequency phone conversations

Word	Count
Efosa (main suspect)	1239
Bellen (calling)	936
Persoon (person)	776
Gebeld (called)	619
Nummer (number)	606
Probleem (problem)	505
Mensen (people)	483
John (main suspect)	456
Goed (good)	421
Vrouw (woman)	412
Doen (do)	394
Beller (caller)	393
Geld (money)	393
Weg (gone)	393
Wel (well)	390
Man (man)	388
Geven (give)	382
Morgen (tomorrow)	371
Komen (to come)	370
Iemand (someone)	366
Door (through)	359
Terug (back)	358
Gebelde (call receiver)	341
Kunnen (can)	340
Moeten (must)	332
Wordt (becomes)	326
Jullie (you)	314
Uur (hour)	312
Weten (know)	303
Gesprek (conversation)	299
Telefoon (phone)	292
Zodat (so that)	286
Verteld (told)	279
Iets (something)	265
Meisje (girl)	263

Appendix I: Research Ethics Approval

SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANITIES
INTER-DIVISIONAL RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Research Services, University of Oxford, Wellington Square, Oxford OX1 2JD
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Co-ordinator of the SSH IDREC
Research Services

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

15 December 2015

Ms Charlotte Baarda
Department of Sociology

Dear Charlotte Baarda,

Research Ethics Approval

Ref No: R42767

Title: Nigerian human trafficking for sexual exploitation to Europe: the structural features of a transnational criminal network

The above application has been considered on behalf of the Social Sciences and Humanities Inter-divisional Research Ethics Committee (IDREC) in accordance with the procedures laid down by the University for ethical approval of all research involving human participants.

I am pleased to inform you that, on the basis of the information provided to the IDREC, the proposed research has been judged as meeting appropriate ethical standards, and accordingly approval has been granted.

Should there be any subsequent changes to the project, which raise ethical issues not covered in the original application, you should submit details to the IDREC for consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Claudia Kozeny-Pelling

Claudia Kozeny-Pelling
Coordinator and Secretary SSH IDREC

cc: Prof Federico Varese
Gwendolene Cheve

CKP/JM

Approval for Court Files and Interviews with Experts

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Dr Charlotte Susan Baarda
Cc: Prof Federico Varese

26/01/2015

RE: Ethics Decision for 'The social embeddedness of human trafficking: Transitional social networks in a local context' – Ref. # SOC_R2_001_CA1_15_03

Dear Charlotte Susan Baarda,

The Research Ethics Committee of Department of Sociology (DREC) at the University of Oxford has received and reviewed your CUREC Form 1A checklist. On behalf of the committee, I would like confirm that your research project has received CUREC Approval from the Department. Please note that this approval has the following provisions:

1) You will follow the protocol for interviewing and gaining consent as outlined in your application.
2) You will complete your risk and safety assessment prior to departing for any field work.
3) Any deviations from the responses in the CUREC Form 1A Checklist will be immediately reported to the Committee for consideration.
4) You ensure that data is anonymised as far as is practical and have secure handling and storage arrangements for anything deemed personal or sensitive under the University's Data Protection Act guidelines, available at http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/councilsec/compliance/dataprotection/policy/. Please use caution when transferring and storing data that may be sensitive. The University doe shave secure file transfer systems such as OxFile which can transfer raw data with a good degree of security. Please contact the Manor Road It team if you need support with determining options for data security here at Oxford.
5) This approval is granted from **1 February 2015 to 1 June 2018**. If the research presented in your CUREC Form 1A is delayed, please request an extension to this approval with any changes to procedures documented to the Committee.

As the named applicant, you are responsible for compliance with all the applicable research ethics policies at the University of Oxford, available at http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/curec/about/policy/.

Your DREC reference number is SOC_R2_001_CA1_15_03. Please keep this letter on file as documentation of your ethics approval and the conditions of that approval.

Sincerely,

Gwendolene Cheve
DREC Secretary, Department of Sociology
University of Oxford

Approval for Interviews with Migrants

SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANITIES
INTER-DIVISIONAL RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

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UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

3 August 2016

Ms Charlotte Baarda
Department of Sociology

Dear Charlotte

Amendment of research ethics application

Ref No: R42767/RE002

Title: Nigerian human trafficking for sexual exploitation to Europe: the structural features of a transnational criminal network

Number of Amendment: 1

Month notification received: July 2016

Subject of amendment: Recruitment of new participant groups from different shelters

The above request for amendment has been reviewed on behalf of the Social Sciences and Humanities Inter-Divisional Research Ethics Committee (IDREC).

I am pleased to inform you that, on the basis of the information provided to the IDREC, this amendment has been judged as meeting appropriate ethical standards.

Yours sincerely,

Claudia Kozeny-Pelling

Claudia Kozeny-Pelling
Research Ethics Manager & Secretary SSH IDREC

cc: Professor Federico Varese
Professor David Stuckler
Agnieszka Swiejkowska

Approval for Interviews with Migrants in Grass Roots Organisation

SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANITIES
INTER-DIVISIONAL RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

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UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

6 September 2017

Ms Charlotte Baarda
Department of Sociology
University of Oxford

Dear Ms Charlotte Baarda,

Research Ethics Approval (CUREC 2)
Ref No: R53117/RE001
Title: The Social Embeddedness of Human Trafficking from Nigeria to Europe

The above application has been considered on behalf of the Social Sciences and Humanities Inter-divisional Research Ethics Committee (IDREC) in accordance with the procedures laid down by the University for ethical approval of all research involving human participants.

I am pleased to inform you that, on the basis of the information provided to the IDREC, the proposed research has been judged as meeting appropriate ethical standards, and accordingly approval has been granted.

Should there be any subsequent changes to the project, which raise ethical issues not covered in the original application, you should submit details to the IDREC for consideration.

Please note that you may be required to submit an annual progress report on each anniversary of study approval, until the study is completed, and that your study may be selected for review by the SSH IDREC during an annual audit. External funders may also request ethics audits of any studies they have funded.

Yours sincerely,

Claudia Kozeny-Pelling

Claudia Kozeny-Pelling
Research Ethics Manager and Secretary SSH IDREC

cc: Dr Federico Varese; Sociology DREC

Approval for field trip to Lagos and Benin City, Nigeria

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