

Contextualized Recovery Services for Survivors of Commercial Sexual Exploitation:

A Model for Western Practitioners

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Author's Note

This Master's Thesis was submitted to Dr. Forrest Inslee for the course *Practicum V* in the M.A. Program for International Community Development at Northwest University on April 3rd, 2014.

Portions of this document were researched from the following program courses: ICD 6422 Social Justice; ICD 5502 Cultural Studies; ICD 5672 Globalization; ICD 5413 Urban Studies; and ICD 6722 Program Evaluation

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### Abstract

For many years, both faith based and secular Western development workers practiced various types of development work in the two-thirds world. Unfortunately, these practices often resulted in unintended harm. Those sometime harmed included survivors of prostitution and sex trafficking. Through comparing a case study of effective aftercare for adult women in Quezon City, the Philippines and a case study of recovery services for adult women in Seattle, WA, I highlighted the differences between the two cultures and the need for Western development workers to use culturally appropriate recovery methods when assisting female survivors of commercial sexual exploitation. I also focused on using Geert Hofstede's six cultural indices as a measure for explaining cultural differences. I then provided contextualized practices to use with female survivors of commercial sexual exploitation in the two-thirds world. In my recommendations, I included a discussion on understanding: unintended consequences, culture, staff, and clients. I also included a discussion on the importance of using: indigenous terminology, methodologies, cultural brokers, and evaluation.

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### **Acronyms and Abbreviations**

ALS: Alternative Learning System

IACAT: Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking

IDV: Individualism vs. Collectivism

IND: Indulgence vs. Restraint

LTO: Long Term Orientation

MAS: Masculinity vs. Femininity

OPS: Organization for Prostitution Survivors

PRA: Pragmatic vs. Normative

PDI: Power Distance

UAI: Uncertainty Avoidance

### **Definitions of Terms and Concepts**

**Aftercare:** provision of social services to individuals who have left prostitution or sex-trafficking. It infers having left prostitution with finality.

**Contextualization:** in a context, especially one that is characteristic or considered appropriate.

**Culture:** collective programming of the mind that distinguishes members of one group or category of people from another.

**Cultural broker:** mediator between groups or persons of different cultural backgrounds.

**Individualism versus Collectivism (IDV):** measure of the degree of individualism to the degree of collectivism in a culture.

**Indulgence versus Restraint (IND):** extent to which people try to control their desires and impulses, based on the way they were raised.

**John:** male buyer of commercial sex acts.

**Lectio Divina:** contemplative prayer from the Catholic tradition.

**Masculinity versus Femininity (MAS):** how much a culture is defined as being driven by competition, success, and achievement or by quality of life and caring for others.

**Non-Westerner:** person not from a Western region or country.

**Pakikisama:** Filipino concept of getting along with or making concessions to others.

**Pimp:** a male who manages prostitutes to sell their sexual services, all for financial gain.

**Power Distance (PDI):** extent to which the less powerful members of a group expect and accept that power is distributed unequally.

**Pragmatic versus Normative (PRA):** how well people relate to how the actions that happen around them cannot be explained.

**Prostitute:** person who in engages in a sexual act in exchange for payment.

**Prostituted or prostituting person:** term that recognizes the activity of prostitution while removing the negative label on the person involved. It is a term used to indicate prostitution is a form of exploitation rather than something voluntary.

**Prostitution:** provision of sexual acts in exchange for payment.

**Recovery services:** phrase preferred in Seattle for the provision of social services to women and girls who are leaving prostitution or sex-trafficking. It is preferred over the term *aftercare* because women and girls often leave prostitution multiple times. The term *aftercare* infers having left with finality.

**Safe house:** often a gated compound where formerly prostituted women or girls receive access to services like food, clothing, medical care, education, counselling, legal assistance, and vocational training.

**Sex buyer:** purchaser of a sex act, most often male.

**Sex seller:** someone who manages prostitutes to sell their sexual services for financial profit.

**Sex trafficking:** when a person is coerced, forced, or deceived into prostitution.

**Sex work or sex worker:** term often used to legitimize prostitution as a normal occupation. It can also be seen as a less derogatory term over *prostitute*.

**Trafficking in Persons:** all criminal conduct involving sex trafficking and forced labor.

**Two-Thirds World:** reference to global poverty being concentrated in two-thirds of the world's population.

**Uncertainty Avoidance (UAI):** extent to which people in a culture feel threatened by ambiguous situations.

**Westerner:** inhabitant or native of any specifically Western geographical region, especially the United States, Canada, or Western Europe.

## Chapter 1: Problem Formulation

### Introduction

Not one child has ever grown up thinking that he or she would like to be commercially sexually exploited. Yet, according to the writers of the Global Slavery Index 2013, there are 29.8 million people in modern day slavery (Walk Free Foundation, 2013, p. 5). Included in modern day slavery is the sexual exploitation of women, children, and men, which is commonly known as sex trafficking. Professionals from the U.S. Department of State explained sex trafficking as:

When an adult is coerced, forced, or deceived into prostitution – or maintained in prostitution through coercion – that person is a victim of trafficking. All of those involved in recruiting, transporting, harboring, receiving, or obtaining the person for that purpose have committed a trafficking crime. Sex trafficking can also occur within debt bondage, as women and girls are forced to continue in prostitution through the use of unlawful ‘debt’ purportedly incurred through their transportation, recruitment, or even their crude ‘sale,’ which exploiters insist they must pay off before they can be free. (2012, para. 4)

Moreover, according to Antonio Maria Costa, the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, “sexual exploitation is by far the most commonly identified form of human trafficking (79%), followed by forced labour (18%)” (Global Report on Trafficking in Persons, 2009, p. 6).

On a related note, Leidholdt described prostitution as a transaction where an individual purchases an act of sex from another, “exchanging sexual pleasure for compensation” (2003, p. 170). Leidholt wrote how it also has been described as a “transaction unconstrained by social forces” where all parties involved benefit; however, she argued that prostitution actually “exists



squarely within cultures of gender-based inequality” (p. 171). Unlike a victim of sex trafficking, a woman working in prostitution may not have been forced, but she is still at a disadvantage due to inherent gender inequalities within the culture she resides in.

With these staggering realities about sex trafficking and prostitution in mind, it is imperative the issue of sexual exploitation be addressed globally. There is much debate on how to implement preventative measures, such as teaching prevention in elementary schools to tougher law enforcement for sex purchasers. If there is no demand for purchased sex, then there is no need to sell it.

Moreover, there has been a general increase in public knowledge about sex trafficking, prostitution, and the provision of recovery services for both. This is due to globalization, the media, and changes in the law. In terms of general knowledge, *recovery service* is often the preferred term over the word *aftercare*, particularly in Seattle, because receiving aftercare implies a person left prostitution completely. The use of the term recovery services indicates a continuum of services for those in various stages of leaving (L. Briner, personal communication, October 31, 2012; M. Linehan, personal communication, February 27, 2014). Both national researchers and interviewers from the Seattle area indicated survivors of commercial sexual exploitation leave over a period of time as they are ready (Pham, 2012, p. 18). In reference to aftercare in the two-thirds world, lawyer Gary Haugen wrote, “aftercare providers tell us that most young victims of commercial sexual exploitation require a minimum of two years of aftercare” (2005, p. 80).

Additionally, there are different types of recovery provided around the world. In *Terrify No More*, Haugen wrote of Cambodian aftercare facility staff who provided a caring environment with counseling and vocational training, such as tailoring, sewing, handicrafts, and

agriculture (p. 146). In Seattle, WA, staff at the Organization for Prostitution Survivors (OPS), provide links to social services while providing support groups and drop-in sessions, such as the Saturday art workshops, where they also focus on life skills and fostering positive relationships among clients (M. Linehan, personal communication, February 27, 2014).

More importantly to note, there have been many instances where Western development workers have gone to the two-thirds world and used Western methods of treatment and recovery. As alluded to earlier, this is partially due to globalization, which Robertson described as both “the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole” (1992, p. 88). Westerners are simply more aware of what is happening around the world, including international prostitution and sex trafficking. Since both are harmful, the idea has been for Westerners to help women reunite with their families, recover from the emotional and physical abuse they experienced while in prostitution, and find sustainable employment. Some good has resulted from using Western methods in a non-Western setting. For example, the staff members at Nightlife Design in Bangkok, Thailand have employed over 125 former female sex workers in their jewelry business (“Bangkok”, 2009, paras. 4 -5). If a woman has legitimate and sustainable employment, she is less likely to go back to sex work.

However, too often these efforts, as well-intentioned as they were, resulted in either little healing or further harm. Therefore, Westerners must provide culturally appropriate care when helping survivors of commercial sexual exploitation in the two-thirds world. A few years ago, a group of Westerners came to the Samaritana Transformational Ministries facility in Quezon City, the Philippines to teach athletic running to former prostitutes. They purchased running shoes and clothing. They taught the women stretching exercises, and there was a fundraising race held one evening. However, after the group left, the women did not continue athletic running (J. Nambu,

personal communication, November, 26, 2013). The Philippines does not have a culture of running. It is too humid to run, even in the cooler season. It was a well-intentioned attempt to help formerly sexually exploited women to be physically healthy, but it did not work culturally or practically.

### **Hofstede's Cultural Indices**

In fact, there has been not enough attention from Western development workers in supporting the growth of culturally appropriate recovery services for survivors of trafficking and prostitution. Moreover, there is essentially no empirical literature on using Geert Hofstede's six cultural indices in cross-cultural aftercare settings of any kind. The six indices are: *power distance* (PDI), *individualism versus collectivism* (IDV), *masculinity versus femininity* (MAS), *uncertainty avoidance* (UAI), *pragmatic versus normative* (PRA), and *indulgence versus restraint* (IND) (The Hofstede Center, n.d., paras. 1 - 14; Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010, p. 31; p. 239). Essentially, each is a category to use when measuring or understanding differences between cultures. As defined by Hofstede, culture is "the unwritten rules of the social game, or more formally the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another" (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010, p. 516). Because I will be using them throughout my thesis, the following is a short description of the six indices.

Power distance (PDI) is "the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally" (p. 521). More importantly, power is "a basic fact of society that precedes the choice between good and evil" (p. 77). In a culture with a high degree of PDI, this is noticed in individuals strictly following the orders of their leaders and of children obeying their parents.

Regarding individualism versus collectivism (IDV), it is a “measure for the degree of individualism in a country’s culture” (p. 519). This can range from highly individualistic, where there is little reliance on the group, such as one’s family or community, to highly collectivist, where everything revolves around the group, including decisions about whom to marry.

Masculinity versus femininity (MAS) has to do with “a society in which emotional gender roles are clearly distinct: men are supposed to be assertive, tough, and focused on material success; women are supposed to be more modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life” (p. 519). The biological differences between men and women are the same around the world. However, the social roles of women and men in a society “are only partly determined by the biological constraints” (p. 137).

With uncertainty avoidance (UAI), it is the “extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by ambiguous or unknown situations” (p. 191). In certain cultures, “extreme ambiguity creates intolerable anxiety” (p. 189). In a country with low UAI, such as the United States, “uncertainty is a normal feature of life, and each day is accepted as it comes” (p. 203).

The next item on Hofstede’s list of indices is pragmatic versus normative (PRA), which is defined as how well people in a culture relate to how the actions around them are not explainable. In societies with a normative orientation, most individuals have a strong need to explain as much as possible. In societies with a pragmatic orientation, the opposite is true, “as they believe that it is impossible to understand fully the complexity of life. The challenge is not to know the truth but to live a virtuous life” (The Hofstede Centre, n.d., para. 11). Both the Philippines and the United States are more normative than pragmatic (para. 12).

The remaining item on the list of indices is indulgence versus restraint (IND), which was “defined as the extent to which people try to control their desires and impulses, based on the way

they were raised. Relatively weak control is called ‘indulgence’ and relatively strong control is called ‘restraint’” (para. 13). People living in restrained societies do not afford themselves much leisure time and restrain themselves from their desires. They might feel indulging themselves is wrong (para. 14).

### **Implications on aftercare.**

All human beings are innately aware of these indices in their own culture but might not be able to articulate them, let alone acknowledge the variations in other cultures. More importantly, these indices do not seem to be utilized when Westerners work in non-Western aftercare settings. They should be. For example, in Hofstede’s writing on uncertainty avoidance (UAI), he wrote about students from countries with high incidences of UAI being more “comfortable in structured learning situations and concerned with the right answers” (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010, p. 208). With this in mind, imagine a newly arrived Western social worker conducting individual therapy sessions with former Guatemalan prostitutes. People in Guatemala live with a high level of UAI and collectivism. Now imagine that Western social worker asking each woman a multitude of open ended questions, such as “how are you feeling today? What is bothering you this morning? On a scale of one to ten, how bad did you feel when you were sold to a brothel owner? What is your opinion of your mother and father?” Imagine the damage that could happen if women gave answers they thought they were supposed to give as opposed to what they actually thought. Moreover, imagine being asked those questions when they are considered taboo and something to be completely avoided in a culture. The individual counselling session would also be uncomfortable compared to a group counselling session. Western providers of recovery services must understand the culture they are in, including differences in cultural indices.

### **Statement of the Problem and Purpose of the Study**

Because too many providers of recovery services for survivors of commercial sexual exploitation are Westerners who cause unintended harm to their clients, I contend this type of work done by Westerners in the two-thirds world absolutely must be culturally appropriate. For Western social workers, this could mean adjusting to new and effective methods of healing for formerly sexually exploited people. For non-Western social workers giving care in their own country, this could mean finding a way to say no to the Westerners who employ them, while teaching them indigenous best practices in recovery. This could even lead to aftercare practices developed in the two-thirds world being used in the West. This could be a major paradigm shift, especially considering how Western practitioners and missionaries are used to sharing their methods for everything with the rest of the world.

Furthermore, I will describe case studies of recovery methods for female prostitutes in the Philippines and the United States with the intent to highlight how each culture is different and needing different solutions. I will use the differences in recovery methods in each case study as a platform to make recommendations for adjustments in aftercare and recovery services implemented by Westerners in a non-Western setting, including how Hofstede's indices could be used for this. Among the general adjustments I will recommend are utilizing indigenous terminologies and methodologies, while listening to cultural brokers with expertise in the culture you are working in. I will then recommend using contextualized evaluation methods to measure staff and program effectiveness. It should be noted that males and transgendered individuals also experience commercial sexual exploitation. For the sake of focus, this paper will only discuss contextualized recovery practices for women and girls.

Of course, the biggest boon for all of this implementation would be a quicker, more appropriate, deeper, and long-lasting recovery for women and girls who have experienced the largest amount of personal degradation imaginable. Is not swift and full recovery what we all want for them? This thesis exists solely for the purpose of finding the best and most contextualized way to make this happen.

### **Impetus for the Research**

#### **Master's program in international community development.**

In the fall of 2012, I started a Master of Arts in International Community Development at Northwest University. My interest in justice started when I learned of South Africa's apartheid system while I was an undergraduate at Central Washington University in the early 1990's. After graduation, my knowledge about social justice grew, and I spent many years volunteering at socially minded, globally focused non-profit organizations. Upon eventually learning about the community development program at Northwest University, it became clear it was the perfect place to learn more about justice and development. I also chose the program because of the freedom to focus on topics that interested me, namely the study of refugees and sex trafficking.

#### **General knowledge and personal witnessing of prostitution.**

Admittedly, my growing concern for commercial sexual exploitation came from the current attention placed on it by people in the American media and church. However, I realized my interest was on a personal level. While I was in junior high, a neighbor had become a teenaged prostitute. Her pimp would spend time at her home where her mother ran a daycare. Being that my father was in law enforcement and my mother was an educator, they were not going to allow this in the neighborhood. My father was able to get the pimp to leave the neighborhood for good, and the daycare was shut down. I did not realize it at the time, but I

witnessed my parents doing the right thing even when it was hard. Much later I learned about the abusive home life this neighbor girl endured, which led her to her to seek comfort from someone else, in this case a pimp. Homeless youth similarly leave home because they are running from a bad home life (Ruthruff, 2010, p. 24). Often they fall into prostitution as a result.

My neighbor has moved on with her life. It took a while, but she left prostitution, went back to school, and found legal and sustainable employment. For every woman and child who has experienced the trauma of prostitution and sex trafficking, I want the same thing for them. It is why I am writing a thesis on contextualized aftercare.

### **Qualitative study in the Philippines.**

I also have academic reasons for writing this thesis. In November 2013 I was a research assistant for a pilot study on movement arts therapy with survivors of prostitution. The entire study was completed at Samaritana Transformation Ministries' training center in Quezon City, the Philippines, where holistic healing for adult female survivors of prostitution is offered. The women are provided services in counselling, education, and employment. The main researcher for the study was Renee St. Jacques, who is a doctoral candidate in Clinical Psychology (PsyD) at Northwest University. Renee developed the movement arts therapy curriculum used in the study. The movements are similar to dance therapy, but Renee did not use that title because she is not a certified dance therapist. However, she is under supervision as a practicing therapist and an experienced ballet dancer.

My role in the study was twofold. My first role was to make audio recordings of anything we did involving the implementation and study of the movement art curriculum, including group interviews. Secondly, I took notes using the qualitative method of thick, rich description. I conducted note taking during the entire study. Having this unique opportunity to



watch the inner workings of a successful aftercare facility in a country different from my own was an extremely educational experience.

### **General Summary of Recovery Services in the World**

Aftercare is the provision of social services to women who have left prostitution and sex-trafficking. This can look different in every single country. However, there are a few common characteristics. The first is that women are never forced into using recovery services. No matter the culture, women always participate with free will. For many women, “leaving is a process” (Pham, 2012, p. 18). In other words, they might leave prostitution multiple times before they leave in finality.

Furthermore, another common practice is for women to live in a *safe house* for a period of time. For the sake of safety, this is often a gated compound where the women receive access to things like housing, food, clothing, medical care, education, counselling, legal assistance, and vocational training. Their children sometimes live with them.

Recovery services do not always happen in the form of a safe house. In the United States, they can be through in-patient care at a drug rehabilitation center (“OPS Provides a Drop In Every Thursday From 1:30-3:30 at The Aurora Commons”, 2013, paras. 1 - 4). Women can also self-select into various other services offered in her community. These can be things such as counselling, educational or vocational training, peer support groups, art therapy classes, medical care, dental care, etc.

### **Dominant Paradigms and Literature Gaps**

#### **Dominant paradigm one: Westernized development in the two-thirds world.**

For many years, international aftercare work, along with all kinds of non-government charitable work, has been completed using Western standards and practitioners. This has been

the case because the funding came from Western governments or non-profit organizations. Practitioners often assumed people from the two-thirds world wanted this. Particularly middle-to-upper-class North American Christians need to accept how their power has silenced others. Those with power often do not think about power, but those without power do think about it (Corbett & Fikkert, 2012, "STMs from the Perspective," para. 4). For example, Corbett and Fikkert wrote of an American short term mission team building a house for a pastor in Latin America. They built it with the bathroom located in the middle of the house instead of the back. This design was counter to the local culture. The pastor had not seen the building plan in advance. When he finally realized the plan for the bathroom, he objected. However, the team did not listen, and the pastor received a house he was ashamed to live in (Corbett & Fikkert, 2012, *Learning Process Versus Blueprint Approaches*, paras. 3 - 4). The power imbalance and lack of information contributed to this mistake.

Additionally, Bob Lupton described people from developing communities in Nicaragua accumulating more than one million dollars in private savings after participating in successful microloan programs. That was amazing by any standard. However, Lupton then described how there were whole regions of Nicaragua where microloan programs were virtually nonexistent. These happened to be the same regions where church partnerships between Nicaraguan and American churches were located. Entrepreneurial spirit declines when there are free resources to be had. They are hard to ignore. Dignity is eroded as people start to see themselves as charity cases (2011, pp. 19 – 21).

Being from North America can hinder a person's ability to help someone from the two-thirds world. Power, resources, and privilege can stop a person from serving well, because "those of us born into privilege tend to think we have the answers because we have all the

resources” (Ruthruff, 2010, p. 18). Westerners need to listen to and empower those they serve. That is more altruistic, and it preserves the dignity of those they are serving, including survivors of commercial sexual exploitation.

**Dominant paradigm two: Westerners realized prostitution was not chosen.**

According to Weitzer, crusader efforts against sexual commerce in the United States were latent in the 1990s but gained momentum the following decade because of the Bush administration’s favorable view toward crusade organizations (2010, pp. 62 – 63). Lawmakers also passed the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000, which was used to combat trafficking in persons, including helping individuals “trafficked into the international sex trade, often by force, fraud, or coercion” (U.S. Government, 2000, p. 4).

In the United States and elsewhere, women were being seen more and more as coerced into prostitution rather than as individuals who chose it as a lifestyle. Right now in the United States, women are still arrested for prostitution or for crimes related to it. For example, a young woman may face jail time for selling crack cocaine on behalf of her pimp. Criminalization of this kind still creates extra complexities for helping women leave prostitution with finality. However, fewer and fewer are being prosecuted directly for prostitution.

Moreover, instead of just the women and children facing criminal charges, more and more pimps and johns are being given consequences for their actions, including incarceration. In 1999, lawmakers in Sweden criminalized purchasers of sex without criminalizing prostitutes (Andersson et al, 2013, p. 36). Instances of prostitution in Sweden have decreased significantly since then. In 2013, Washington State lawmakers passed RCW 9.68A.101 to make it illegal to promote the commercial sexual abuse of a minor (Washington State Legislature, n.d., para. 1).

Additionally, social services for prostituting people have been provided around the world, often by Westerners. Some services are quite simple, such as outreach groups bringing women New Testament bibles and thermoses of hot drinks (Herzog Jewell, 2008, pp. 88 – 93). Others are more complex, such as the staff at Girls Educational & Mentoring Services (GEMS), who provide trauma counselling, health care, employment, and other services (“Holistic Case Management,” n.d., para. 3). Some specifically help prostitutes out of the lifestyle; while others, such as New Horizons Ministries in Seattle, are more general in the populations they provide services to (“Who We Are”, n.d. para. 1). Yet, the homeless young adults they reach out to often have ties to the sex industry.

It is difficult to determine when Westerners started working abroad to provide rescue or recovery services for individuals leaving prostitution. There is not much empirical research on the issue. Per anecdotal evidence I found, it may have started as early as 1987 in Thailand when Dr. and Mrs. Paul and Elaine Lewis started the New Life Center Foundation (New Life Center Foundation, n.d., para. 6). As another example, Rahab Ministries of Thailand was founded in 1989 by Patricia Green. (Rahab Ministries Thailand, n.d., para. 1).

### **Gaps in the Literature**

At this point in time, there has not been a lot of empirical research written about the importance of contextualized aftercare for recovering survivors of sex trafficking and prostitution. Much of the available peer reviewed literature is about general prostitution issues in the United States. It is also easy to find articles about the issue in Thailand, a known hub for prostitution (“The Problem”, n.d., para 1). It is fairly easy to find the occasional article about the issue in another country, such as Senegal, the Philippines, or Costa Rica. However, it is difficult to find a wealth of information for most countries around the issue of contextualized aftercare.

Therefore, through literature reviews, interviews, note taking, and direct observation, I have set out to compare recovery services from a Western country, The United States, with aftercare practices from a non-Western country, The Philippines. By comparing the practices in these two countries, I will show the importance of democratized aftercare. I will then delineate practices for contextualized aftercare in a non-Western setting.

## **Chapter Two: Research Methods**

### **Research Design and Data Collection**

I collected data in a few different ways. For my case study on the Philippines, I collected information through interviews, observation, and note taking at Samaritana Transformation Ministries from November 22<sup>nd</sup> through November 27<sup>th</sup> 2013, while a research assistant for a pilot study on movement arts therapy with former prostitutes. I also used time during the study to interview the training center's co-founders on topics related to my thesis. I supplemented this with information from peer reviewed academic literature about the Philippines.

Regarding my case study for recovery services in the United States, I used a fair amount of information from peer reviewed academic writings, books, and websites of reputable recovery services providers. I conducted a handful of interviews with aftercare professionals. I gained information from attending public forums from respected recovery service providers, such as those put on by the Organization for Prostitution Survivors (OPS) in Seattle, WA. I also interviewed Martha Linehan, the Chemical Dependency Counselor & Arts Development Coordinator at OPS.

### **Difficulties and Limitations**

There were a few difficulties and limitations in this study, mainly due to the lack of empirical research. It took more time than I anticipated finding academic writing on the cultural

aspects of commercial sexual exploitation. Another minor issue was finding recovery service professionals with the time to be interviewed. They simply were occupied with their work.

### **Chapter Three: Results and Discussions**

#### **The Filipino Model**

As stated above, I travelled to the Philippines as a research assistant for a pilot study on using contextualized movement arts with survivors of prostitution. The study occurred from November 25<sup>th</sup> through November 27<sup>th</sup> 2013 at Samaritana Transformation Ministries. The staff indicated the movements used in the curriculum were culturally appropriate for Filipino women and could be used before counselling sessions as a relaxation technique. While conducting research for the study, I concurrently acquired case study information for my thesis. Seeing culturally appropriate aftercare practices at a successful facility was invaluable. Below are my findings about aftercare in the Philippines from personal observations at Samaritana, notes, interviews with the co-founders, and personal study of empirical literature.

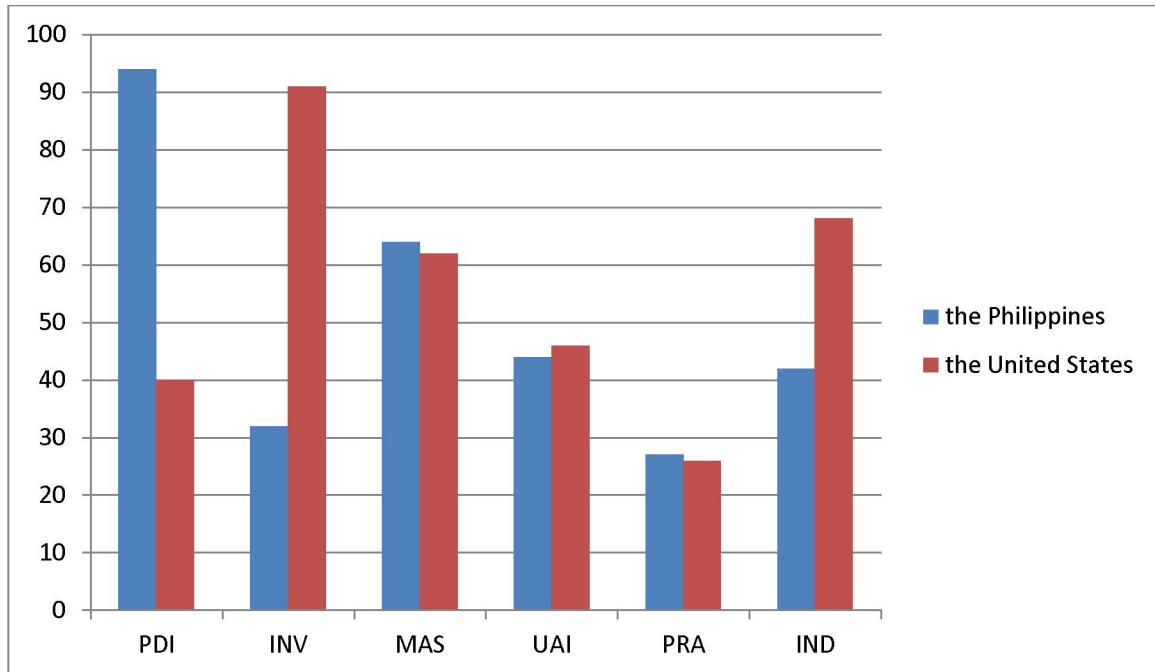
#### **Who the prostitutes are.**

Philippine prostitutes enter the lifestyle mainly because of a family member or elder in their community. According to Johnathan Nambu, the co-founder of Samaritana, a person does not choose prostitution like one chooses a job or an education. In 22 years, they have not met anyone who wanted to be in it. Over long periods of time, these women were forced, coerced, or given very limited lifestyle or vocational choices (J. Nambu, personal communication, November 23, 2013). This is underpinned by approximately 40% of the population living in poverty (J. Nambu & T. Nambu, personal communication, November 24, 2013) and the high level of PDI. Additionally, various traumas add to the complexities of the ladies' needs.

Prostitution has been considered the fourth largest source of gross national product in the country. About 15 years ago, Trinidad estimated 500,000 women were involved in prostitution there. Nambu also cited this statistic during an interview (personal communication, November 23, 2013; as cited in Thompson, 2007, *The Global Sex Industry*, para. 1). The number has since increased due to poverty and women leaving the country to find work. Many Filipina women find themselves prostituting in the Wan Chai bar district in Hong Kong (J. Nambu, personal communication, November 23, 2013). Furthermore, an estimated tens of thousands Philippine children are sexually exploited online. This happens “when adults pay or offer other rewards in order to direct and view live streaming video footage of children in another country performing sexual acts in front of a webcam” (Terre Des Hommes, 2013, p. 4; U.S. Department of State, 2013, p. 300).

#### **Hofstede’s indices and Filipino culture.**

Per Hofstede’s cultural indices, there are some notable differences between the Philippines and the United States.



Note. PDI = power distance; IDV = individualism; MAS = masculinity versus femininity; UAI = uncertainty avoidance; PRA = pragmatism; and IND = indulgence. Copyright n.d. by the Hofstede Centre.

Figure 1: Cultural Indices Comparison of the Philippines to the United States.

For the sake of brevity, I will not touch on all of the indices mentioned above. However, I will explain the most important regarding Philippine culture. To reiterate, power distance (PDI) is the extent to which the less powerful members of a group expect and accept that power is distributed unequally. Per the above figure, PDI is twice as prevalent in the Philippines as it is in the United States. Because Philippine communities have such a strong social hierarchy, women in economically disadvantaged communities have an extremely hard time saying no when a family member or community elder coerces or forces them into prostitution.

In fact, to say no to an elder also means to lose your place within the group. Without question, the Philippines is a collectivist culture (INV). Major decisions are made by the group, even decisions on relationships and marriage. Confrontation and risk taking is frowned upon (Inslee, 2012). Moreover, a very similar concept specific to Philippine people is *pakikisama*,



which is the achievement of “smooth interpersonal relations, which in turn is an important means of maintaining social acceptance” (Church & Katigbak, 2002, p. 133).

Another cultural issue that may affect a woman entering prostitution is how individuals in Philippine culture handle indulgence (IND). Essentially, Filipina women work from the time they are very young, which means there is little leisure time. Filipina girls help their mothers and feel the need to provide for their families as they get older (J. Nambu & T. Nambu, personal communication, November 24, 2013). Women may feel indulging what they want is wrong, and the need to provide for a family may push them to prostitution.

### **The recovery process.**

The following is an overview of what is working well in the aftercare process in the Philippines for women recovering from sex trafficking and prostitution.

### ***Leaving prostitution.***

Brothel raids are one method for rescuing women and girls out of prostitution, but it is not the only method here. Sometimes they actually do not work because of breakdowns within the legal framework, such as when policemen tip off brothel owners (U.S. Department of State, 2013, p. 302). Surprisingly, sometimes the women do not actually express a desire to leave. However, staff members at Samaritana Transformation Ministries use a different approach for helping women leave. They begin by developing friendships with prostitutes in smaller bars. At some point, a woman will be in crisis, leave prostitution, and then join Samaritana. It is rare for them to leave before training is finished, but a woman is always welcomed back if she chose to leave early. All the women currently at Samaritana are out of prostitution (J. Nambu & T. Nambu, personal communication, November 26, 2013).

*Other cultural issues.*

One cultural issue working in favor of former prostitutes is the industrious nature of Philippine women. A number of women at Samaritana have been doing legitimate work since they were children. During our study, some had just found out they received a 10,000 peso grant (\$226 USD) from the Philippine Department of Social Welfare to start a convenience store.

Additionally, boys are socialized differently. Unlike women, men relax more and participate in activities like drinking, cock-fighting, and basketball. This difference in socialization is not talked about. It is considered a fact of life, with men demanding it more (J. Nambu & T. Nambu, personal communication, November 24 - 25, 2013). In terms of Hofstede's indices, women could feel the pressure to practice restraint while men indulge more often.

It should also be noted that narcotics is a part of prostitution in the Philippines; however, it is not a main push factor like it is in the United States. Philippine women do sedate themselves after prostituting, but they do not actually need drug rehabilitation. In fact, more Philippine men are in drug rehabilitation programs than women (J. Nambu & T. Nambu, personal communication, November 24, 2013).

As mentioned earlier, a sizable cultural issue in prostitution is the connection to family (T. Nambu, personal communication, November 25, 2013). Samaritana staff members found having women live at home as opposed to living at their facility was a better arrangement. In fact, they consider their building a training center and not a shelter (J. Nambu, personal communication, November 23, 2013). Living at home can work against women if family was the catalyst for entering prostitution. Cultural issues around PDI, INV, and IND can also be at play here. However, living at home can also be a part of healing. Because of this, staff members at Samaritana work with the women on setting boundaries. Women can also maintain boundaries

at home because they are a main source of income through making cards and jewelry at the training center (J. Nambu & T. Nambu, personal communication, November 24, 2013). This might look strange to Westerners who may assume group homes are best for recovery. This is not always the case in the Philippines.

It is common for a woman to leave her community once becoming a prostitute. They might leave the province, or they might prostitute in another country, such as South Korea or the Wan Chi bar district in Hong Kong (Lee, 2006, p. 1; J. Nambu, personal communication, November 23, 2013). Especially because of their collectivist nature, this separation from family is not easy on prostituted women. Therefore, redeeming relationships with a woman's children becomes very important (J. Nambu & T. Nambu, personal communication, November 26, 2013). By living at home, family systems can be restored and maintained. Moreover, the women simply like living in their own homes. Periodically, they also need space from the other training center women (J. Nambu & T. Nambu, personal communication, November 24, 2013).

In addition to the above, the Philippines has become a hub for electronic communication. In fact, many call centers exist in the country. It is logical considering how many Philippine people speak English and are willing to work for less pay. Along with this increase in technology, Filipino children are being used to perform sex acts on the internet while being watched by paying foreign viewers (U.S. Department of State, 2013, p. 300).

### ***Communication methods.***

Communication in the Philippines is very contextual, according to Johnathan and Thelma Nambu (personal communication, November 24, 2013). Thelma, who is Samaritana's co-founder with Johnathan, stated it can take a while for a Filipino person to open up. However, once they do start talking, they will not want to stop (personal communication, November 25,

2013). Moreover, Philippine people are not confrontational. If there is an issue, they will just be silent and avoid you. Nonverbal communication is 90% of how a person communicates. Added to this is the cultural norm for Philippine people to not discuss personal problems. This is due to people typically having no physical privacy. They simply make up for it in internal privacy (Maggay, 2013). For these reasons alone, it is crucial that Samaritana's founders hired Philippine counsellors and staff members. They have direct cultural expertise regarding effective communication with clients.

### ***The law and criminalization.***

Women in prostitution are not criminalized, nor are survivors of sex trafficking, which can happen domestically or internationally (U.S. Department of State, 2013, p. 300). While the Philippine government has yet to fully comply with minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking, it has made significant progress. The government did sustain levels of funding for the Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking (IACAT) in 2012 and continued efforts to implement anti-trafficking policies and laws at provincial to national levels. Unfortunately, the government did not make enough progress in addressing the root weaknesses in the judicial system. The number of prosecutions and convictions stayed disproportionately low for the size of the problem. The long length of trials and lack of prosecutors dedicated to trafficking cases was part of the issue. Moreover, corruption at all levels undermined efforts to stop it (p. 301).

Although the Department of Justice encouraged expedited processing of trafficking cases based on a 2010 Supreme Court circular which set a six-month limit, "government and NGO observers estimated the average length of trafficking cases to be between three-and-a-half and five years" (p. 301). International Justice Mission's staff in Pampanga, Philippines just got their first conviction after an eight month trial. Such a short trial is unheard of ("IJM's First

Conviction Against Traffickers in Pampanga,” 2013, para. 1). Hopefully shorter trials will set precedence for a decrease in sex trafficking in the area.

On a more encouraging note, the Philippine government does use formal procedures to identify and assist trafficking victims. Victims are referred to government or NGO facilities for short and long-term care (p. 302). All of the women at Samaritana came on their own volition because of previous trusting relationships with training center staff.

### ***Religion.***

Religion is a substantial part of life in the Philippines. At Samaritana, a form of contemplative prayer called *lectio divina* is practiced among the women and staff every morning and evening. Lectio Divina is an ancient practice of listening intently to God’s voice through reading the scriptures (Valters Paintner, 2011, p. XI). Worship in a large group is very much in alignment with the collectivism in the culture. Many of the women at the training center are Catholic, so this method of prayer works very well.

Also, about 5% of the country belongs to a highly structured religious cult called Iglesia ni Cristo, and a few of the women at Samaritana belong to it (J. Nambu, personal communication, November 23, 2013). This is likely correlated to the high PDI in the country. I did not notice religious differences being a source of tension between any of the Samaritana women or staff members. However, Protestant or non-religious development workers do need to consider the religious preference of their clients.

### ***Recovery timelines.***

Samaritana staff members conduct outreach events at bars every Friday night. They befriend prostitutes on a personal level. Once a woman has left prostitution and joined the

training center, Samaritana staff had programs for women ranging from 6 months to 3 years (J. Nambu, personal communication, November 23, 2013)

### ***Education.***

Many of the women at Samaritana had not completed high school. Even if they do graduate from high school or college, finding a job can be difficult. Even a college graduate often works at a fast food restaurant. Regardless, Samaritana staff members implemented the Alternative Learning System (ALS) educational program (J. Nambu, personal communication, November 23, 2013). It is similar to the GED diploma in the United States. It is a nationwide flagship program of the Department of Education and primarily for those living in poverty. Once an individual finishes elementary or secondary education through it, that person is then able to pursue higher education. (“Thousands”, 2013, para. 2)

### ***Buildings and equipment.***

State run aftercare facilities are fairly sparse in the Philippines. Staff at the Department of Social Welfare provide services, including shelter. However, “facilities were generally inadequate to address the specific needs of trafficking victims, and at times, shelters lacked the space necessary to accommodate the influx of victims following large-scale law enforcement operations” (U.S. Department of State, 2013, p. 302). However, Samaritana staff and clients have ample physical resources and use them well.

The formerly prostituted women are considered trainees by the Samaritana staff. They are there for an eight hour day Tuesday through Friday. They do not stay the night unless they work at the facility’s revenue generating retreat facility, which is located on site. For women who need it, they can make referrals to long-term housing. Because the women are only there four days a week, the staff receives a much needed break from providing counselling, vocational,

and educational services. A day facility is also less expensive and easier to staff. Moreover, it can be difficult for a woman to leave a live-in shelter and go back to normal life. Shelters can be very nice while a woman's own home can be quite simple. It can be difficult to know when a woman should leave a shelter. Because of this, Samaritana staff decided that a day facility was more practical (J. Nambu & T. Nambu, personal communication, November 24, 2013).

The facility itself was well-equipped and strategically located. The building was completely paid for due to a large and unexpected financial gift from a previous volunteer. They equipped the training center with: a kitchen space, dining area, multipurpose area, courtyard, prayer room, office area, conference room, counselling room, staff sleeping quarters, laundry area, guest retreat center, and a large craft room for their card and jewelry businesses. In fact, the women earn a livable income from this employment. All of it is considered fair trade. The entire facility is secured with a tall fence. The co-founders picked the current location because it is near the dump, where many people live informally, including their clients. (J. Nambu, personal communication, November 23, 2013).

***What is not working.***

To begin with, the Philippine government needs to follow through with arresting and prosecuting pimps and traffickers. They also need to partner with local tech companies to put a stop to men paying to watch Philippine children over the internet. Also, instead of promoting vocational opportunities abroad, they could do more to create living wage employment opportunities for their citizens. Doing so could decrease any need for a family to coerce a woman or child into prostitution.

According to Johnathan Nambu, one thing that does not work in aftercare is anything deemed short-term. Aftercare is a long-term investment. You will not have a deep impact with a

deeply abused person if you cannot offer long-term assistance. Nambu noted they received intermittent emails from Westerners who had seen a movie about sex trafficking and then wanted to participate in a brothel raid. They never received a request of this type until sex-trafficking began to be depicted in recent movies. While they seem to think it is acceptable elsewhere, individuals from the West would probably not make this request at home. Aftercare of any kind in the Philippines is not short-term. It is long-term (J. Nambu, personal communication, November 23, 2013). Because of this, short term mission groups from American churches should probably not provide recovery services.

Additionally, Samaritana staff members do not offer individual counselling to women who have left prostitution; albeit, sometimes it is offered informally (J. Nambu, personal communication, November 23, 2013). Because they reside in a collectivist culture, group therapy is used instead. Collectivism is so strong that one Samaritana client told us she only participated in our movement art exercises because the entire group participated. For logistical reasons, we had originally thought we would conduct the exercises in small groups. Yet, doing so simply would have been uncomfortable for this client. Western aftercare providers simply should not provide individual counselling in a place like the Philippines.

When reaching out to female prostitutes, another practice that does not work is making a personal introduction, giving her a religious tract, and then leaving the brothel's premises. This does nothing to create a relationship, and it is disrespectful.

At one point, there were too many men involved in outreach. According to Thelma Nambu, because of the sensitive nature of female prostitution, this should be a women's ministry. In the beginning, Thelma would use a van to take women ministers to reach out to prostitutes. She would, however, use a male driver to get them there. The driver would be the



one to escort her into a bar because she could not enter as a single woman. The risk of being mistaken for a prostitute or madam was too high (T. Nambu, personal communication, November 26, 2013). However, the rest of their outreach was completed by women.

Geography and natural disasters, such as Typhoon Yolanda can also affect prostitution. Natural disasters result in desperate people willing to do anything to provide for family. They can also cause care givers to slow down services for women already in recovery. The Nambus think Typhoon Yolanda might be why the Department of Social Welfare was slow in granting the 10,000 peso request to the women wanting to start a convenience store (personal communication, November 24, 2013). Western aftercare workers will need to have knowledge of how natural disasters could affect recovery services.

### **The American Model**

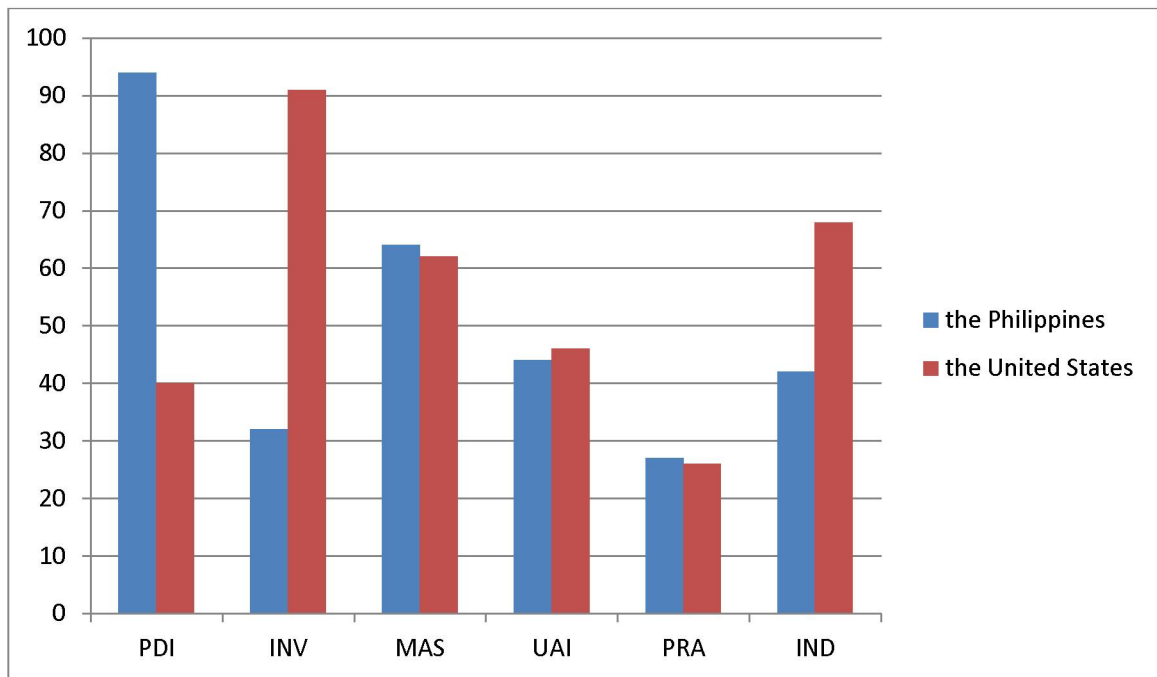
The American model for helping prostitutes and sex-trafficking survivors is both similar and different than in the Philippines. I acquired the information below from interviewing staff members at various recovery service organizations in the Seattle area. My interviews were conducted in person, over the phone, and by email. I also obtained information from attending community forums led by aftercare professionals in the Seattle area. I supplemented all of this with an extensive literature review. I put a heavy case study focus on the work of staff and volunteers at the Organization for Prostitution Survivors (OPS) in Seattle, WA.

#### **Who the prostitutes are.**

In the United States, there is not enough “comprehensive research to document the number of children engaged in prostitution in the United States” (Walker-Rodriguez & Hill, 2011, para 6). However, according to Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) professionals, it is estimated that 293,000 American youths are at risk of becoming sexually exploited (para. 6).

Because they are under 18 years of age, they are legally considered victims of sex trafficking (Washington State Office of the Attorney General, n.d., para. 1). In 2008, Boyer’s study estimated there were between 300 – 500 youth in prostitution in Seattle (p. 5). In 1985, Akers conservatively estimated the number of women and girls in prostitution in the United States at 1 million (as cited in Miller, 1991, p. 45). During my research, a more current national estimate regarding the number of adult women simply did not exist in the empirical literature. Moreover, it is difficult to know the exact number because many women and girls do not self-report. It is estimated the average female prostitute starts when she is 12 – 14 years old (Polaris Project, n.d., para. 1). Most women do not start in prostitution when they are adults. They age into it.

**Hofstede’s indices and American culture.**



Note. PDI = power distance; IDV = individualism ; MAS = masculinity ; UAI = uncertainty avoidance; PRA = pragmatism; and IND = indulgence. Copyright n.d. by the Hofstede Centre.

*Figure 1: Cultural Indices Comparison of the Philippines to the United States.*

For the sake of brevity, I only discuss a few of the indices. Compared to the Philippines, there is not nearly the same level of collectivism in the United States. Instead, Americans are

only expected to take care of themselves and their immediate families. This could be less of a social or financial burden on a woman leaving prostitution, but it could also make the recovery process lonely.

In terms of recovery, this can further manifest in survivors wanting access to a choice of recovery services. It can also manifest in them viewing recovery as a process. In Seattle, recovery is not forced on a person. An individual is able to start and stop the process at any time repeatedly. Martha Linehan, the Chemical Dependency Counselor and Arts Development Coordinator for OPS, said they must meet women where they are at. They have to be non-judgmental. They have to be empowering. Providing services is not contingent on a woman being in or out of prostitution. Regardless of a person's circumstances, they are supportive. It is all relationship building (personal communication, February 27, 2014).

In regard to the other cultural indices, Americans are not subject to a high level of power distance (PDI), and they value indulgence over restraint. Linehan referred to OPS staff as allies with their clients (February 27, 2014). Additionally, women and girls in prostitution do not initially appear to be indulgent, but it could be the indulgence of sex buyers that is a push factor for them. There is no sex work without demand.

### **The recovery process.**

The following section is an overview of what is working well in recovery for survivors of sex trafficking and prostitution in the United States.

### ***Leaving prostitution.***

As mentioned briefly above, therapy is an acceptable way to help a person recover from the sexual trauma that happens within sex trafficking and prostitution. This therapy can happen one-to-one or in a group with a professional, accredited counsellor. Formal therapy sessions,

whether for a group or individual, can last for years. Survivors can use these sessions to talk through their various past traumas to the point they start to feel closure. In reference to the Hofstede chart above, one-to-one counselling works very well in the United States due to our high levels of IDV.

Some programs, like the drop-ins OPS staff provide a few days a week, are designed to allow clients to come to a session whenever they want. They are also designed to be survivor led. In fact, a survivor leads their Wednesday evening drop-in sessions. Martha felt it was important for woman to see other women who have exited the life (M. Linehan, personal communication, February 27, 2014).

Contingent on funding, staff members from various anti-trafficking organizations can offer other services to help a person leave prostitution, such as vocational training, art therapy, medical, and dental services. For example, OPS staff members provide a drop-in art workshop every Saturday for women in prostitution. In the workshop, women make art projects while working on things like self-regulation, resilience, appropriate coping, self-esteem, self-acceptance, and self-care (“Art Workshops”, n.d., para. 1). Recently, because of help and encouragement from OPS staff and community, a workshop attendee checked in to in-patient treatment. An OPS staff member made the call to the treatment facility, and a bed happened to be available (“Thursday Drop In”, October 31, 2013, paras. 1 – 5).

### ***Other cultural issues.***

In terms of Hofstede’s cultural indices, there are some things in American culture that speed along the recovery process for formerly sexually exploited people. Americans can be fairly talkative about their emotions, so it can be easier for them to express pain and traumatic feelings. Saving face is not as important for Americans as it is for those from a culture with high

levels of PDI, such as in the Philippines. Also, individual counselling works well with Americans due to our high levels of IDV. Moreover, because of the ability to deal with ambiguity, Americans do not have a high level of uncertainty avoidance (UAI). It can be easier for an American prostitute to enter into treatment or therapy sessions for the very first time than it is for a former prostitute from a culture where unfamiliar things are avoided at all costs.

Regarding prostitution in the Seattle area, there are also cultural differences between prostitutes who live in different parts of the same city. According to Martha Linehan, there is a specific type of woman they see because they are currently located in North Seattle. The majority of the women are Caucasian and in street prostitution. Most have addiction issues, such as heroin, that are a cause for them being in prostitution. They range in age from the late 20's to the 50's (personal communication, February 27, 2014).

According to Denise Sams, a staff person at the Genesis Project in South Seattle, the majority of their clients are in their 20's, with one currently as young as 15. They have helped a few in their 30's to 40's. Many have a connection to the foster care system (personal communication, February 14, 2014).

### ***Communication methods.***

Depending on the situation, it can be socially acceptable for feelings about past trauma to be expressed verbally, as well through art, music, dance, drama, literature, and visual art. Staff or volunteers at four different organizations I interviewed talked of providing art classes to help their clients open up. The Saturday art workshop at OPS is an example of this (M. Linehan, personal communication, February 27, 2014). Feelings and experiences of trauma can be expressed to one person or in a group setting, such as a counselling session.

Moreover, it is permissible in American culture for a person to share publicly about past abusive experiences with the direct or indirect intent of preventing others from exploitive sex work. Alisa Barnard, an OPS board member, did this very thing when she shared her recovery from the abuses of prostitution while speaking at Seattle's Town Hall on January 29th, 2014. This level of openness about sexual trauma is very different from what is typical in the two-thirds world.

One communication barrier to healing is a former prostitute's connection to her pimp through her cell phone. Until recently, the staff at YouthCare in Seattle, WA had a home specifically for underage survivors of sex trafficking. It was common for clients to have multiple cell phones, with a pimp always having the number for one of them. Because the girls often did not turn in all of their phones, it made it difficult to enforce a no cell phone policy. Additionally, there were times the girls legitimately needed a phone, such as for a job interview. Eventually, the staff allowed monitored use of cell phones (L. Briner, personal communication, October 31, 2012). Staff working at the Genesis Project drop-in center in South Seattle also monitor the phone use of their clients and will restrict it on a case by case basis (D. Sams, personal communication, February 14, 2014).

### ***The law and criminalization.***

Across the United States, women and children in prostitution are being seen less as criminals. It has finally been recognized that most prostitutes are in the lifestyle due to coercion or deceit rather than choice. The earliest examples I found of this paradigm shift were in 1999, when Swedish lawmakers criminalized sex purchasers but not prostitutes (Andersson et al, 2013, p. 36), and in 2000 when United States lawmakers passed the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act (U.S. Government, 2000, p. 4). Now, more focus is on criminally

charging johns and pimps for the purchase of sex. In fact, during a 2012 Seattle study, researchers found:

“both sex buyers and non-sex buyers agreed that the most effective deterrent to buying sex would be to be placed on a registry of sex offenders”. Additional sanctions and options included “public exposure techniques such as having their name or photo publicized on a billboard, newspaper, or the Internet” and jail time. (Pham, p. 15)

To be clear, the recent changes in law in Washington State only affected minors. Per RCW 9A.88.030, prostitution is still a misdemeanor offense for persons over 18 (Washington State Legislature, n.d., para 1). As more and more states focus on criminalizing the purchase of sex as opposed to the selling of sex, the legal issues of women leaving prostitution should decrease as it has for women and girls in Washington State.

### ***Religion.***

For many women leaving prostitution, religious belief is often a factor in being able to do so. Because they live in a culture with a high level of IDV, it is easier to make a personal choice regarding whether to believe in God or not. According to Seattle researchers, many women leaving prostitution, “said that they were able to leave (without relapse) due to the supportive assistance of others; usually it is their peers (other survivors) and the assistance of a nonprofit/faith-based organization” (Pham, 2012, p. 18). Staff at faith-based organizations can provide a sense of community and support for positive life choices. Staff members at Engedi Refuge Ministries in Bellingham, WA provide many services to adult women who have left prostitution, including a spiritual awakening class. The instructor covers topics on the definition of God and why God matters. Because they do not assume every client holds Christian beliefs,

their clients are required to attend the class but are not required to participate (L. Newcomb, personal communication, February 12, 2014).

***Recovery timelines.***

The time it takes to leave commercial sexual exploitation and recover really can vary. At OPS there did not appear to be a timeline; however, there was a huge focus on empowering the women to leave prostitution on their own terms (M. Linehan, personal communication, February 27, 2014). This is also evidence of the women living in a culture of strong IDV. According to Lan Pham, who is the Seattle Human Services Department's Senior Planning and Development Specialist, the more traumas, the harder it is to leave. Girls who are kidnapped into prostitution have a much easier time leaving than those who were forced by their parents. The majority are not kidnapped. They are actually groomed by the time they are 12 years old. They are really entrenched (personal communication, February 18, 2014). This makes it much harder to leave.

***Education.***

Unfortunately for many young women leaving prostitution, receiving higher education is often not a priority. The felt need for immediate, viable employment trumps the benefits of receiving higher education. Minors leaving prostitution in Seattle see education as an afterthought. They have to begin to see themselves as normal workers; otherwise, it is easy to defer back to prostitution practices (L. Briner, personal communication, October 31, 2012). However, staff at Seattle's Bridge program do provide wraparound services for minors and young adults leaving prostitution, including educational programs (YouthCare, n.d., para. 2). Staff members at OPS do not appear to provide clients with higher education resources.



***Buildings and equipment.***

Because many women and girls enter prostitution because of a broken family, home is not always the place they can return to when they leave prostitution. Coupled by the lack of formal vocational training, stable housing can be difficult to access. Martha Linehan felt that more housing options were needed for women leaving prostitution (personal communication, February 27, 2014). However, there are some programs in the Seattle area that can offer housing services. For minors and young adults leaving the life, staff at YouthCare's Bridge Continuum program provide “dedicated beds in emergency shelter to minors who have experienced sexual exploitation, as well as dedicated beds in transitional living programs to minors and young adults” (para. 2). It is not clear how long minors and young women stay in these homes. These homes are expensive to operate, which makes them a struggle to keep open (L. Briner, personal communication, October 31, 2012). One unintended consequence of a group home is that young women might get acquainted and then create a new prostitution ring (Cusick, 2002, p. 237). Because things like this can happen, staff need to be well educated on the needs and issues of this population. Not including the YouthCare emergency beds, the only known home for survivors of prostitution in Washington State is the Engedi Refuge Ministries house in the Bellingham, WA area.

OPS staff can connect women to various services, but they do not have a housing program. In fact, until they can find the funding to purchase their own facility, they are currently using a space in North Seattle called the Aurora Commons. They have no office space and little storage. Because of the lack of a permanent space, they are not able to do simple things, like developing an in-take process for new clients (M. Linehan, personal communication, February 27, 2014).

***What is not working.***

The best recovery services are those simply not needed because prostitution no longer exists. The United States needs better services for survivors, but a cultural shift to zero tolerance for the purchase of women is more important. According to Linehan, most people still think prostitution is a choice (personal communication, February 27, 2014). The change needs to stem from how we treat and view women. There are more opportunities for women than ever before, but they continue to be objectified. Too often, men objectify women, and women often objectify themselves. Additionally, Americans treat sex very casually, even as a recreation. We need to reset our boundaries around it.

Moreover, we need to shore up family units. A step in this process is access to stable, living wage jobs for family providers. This helps to keep family units together over the long term (Anderson, 1990, p. 240; p. 254). When parents are not overwhelmed with the burden of providing to keep the family together, it can be much easier to develop positive coping skills than harmful ones. Coping through substance, physical, or verbal abuse are all things that can cause a young person to leave home and eventually join prostitution.

Another step for preventing the need for prostitution recovery services is stronger penalties for sex buyers and sex sellers. In 2013, lawmakers passed RCW 9.68A.101 to make it illegal to promote the commercial sexual abuse of a minor (Washington State Legislature, n.d., para. 1). However, lawmakers could impose more penalties, such as adding a sex buyer's name to a sex offender registry, publicizing a buyer's name and photo, and tougher sentencing.

Yet, another issue to consider in recovery is pornography. Researchers provided evidence that sex buyers and sellers show pornography to prostituted women. Sex buyers did so to exhibit the sexual act they wanted to purchase. Pimps and traffickers used pornography to

desensitize and instruct their victims on how to perform. Researchers also found the frequency of pornography use correlated with the frequency of purchasing sex (Peters, Lederer, & Kelly, 2012, p. 3). There is a definite connection between pornography and prostitution, and the effects on a former sexually exploited person must be addressed during recovery.

Practically speaking, Martha Linehan of OPS felt there were many changes that could be made. They need more services. There's no way they can provide services without more funding and a permanent space. First, she felt there needed to be more support groups. Women should be able to choose the group they want to attend. She would also like to see more treatment for survivors, such as chemical dependency and mental health. She also felt employment was very important for women. She approved of resume building and on the job training, such as a barista program (personal communication, February 27, 2014).

Providers of recovery services in the United States are doing everything they can to aid women and girls. However, so much more needs to be done. Moreover, because we do not have a complete handle on recovery services in the United States, it makes it more difficult to support Americans doing this work in the two-thirds world.

## **Chapter Four: Conclusion and Recommendations**

### **Conclusion**

Through observations, note taking, interviews, and literature reviews, I came to a thorough understanding of aftercare facilities in the two-thirds and Western worlds. As I noticed the cultural differences between the two case studies, I concluded that Western development workers must modify their healing practices to be culturally appropriate when used in the two-thirds world. Doing so reduces unintentional harm upon women who have left prostitution and sex trafficking. Any harm in recovery could cause a delay in a client's recovery. Moreover, by

paying attention to the ideas and practices of indigenous development workers, Western aftercare workers may learn some techniques which could be used in their home countries.

## **Recommendations**

### **Understand the potential harm of Western style aftercare.**

Here are some recommendations for any Westerner working in recovery services in the two-thirds world. First, understand any potential harm in administering Western style recovery. All NGOs or churches that send development workers abroad must implement a training program beforehand. They must use it to become cognizant of past unintentional harms along with what caused them. This is especially important when working with a vulnerable population like former prostitutes. Middleton shared a case study of visiting an aftercare home in Mumbai, India. Upon speaking with the women there, they learned of another woman who had been rescued from a Bombay brothel. She had been treated very well by the staff and had made a decision to follow Christ. However, she did not enjoy going with the organization's leader to tell her story to various church organizations. The women identified how there was not much difference between how the brothel owner and the leader of the Christian aftercare facility treated this woman (2007, Conclusion "Case Study" paras 1 - 2). Aftercare workers must be very careful to not accidentally harm a client, including assumptions that levels of communication transparency are the same.

This is even more important if the population also had a demoralizing history with Western colonization (Maggay, 2013). Westerners could learn this history of unintentional harms from listening to both Western and indigenous experts on the issue while reading empirical research on it.

**Understand the culture and the context.**

It will be very important for development workers to thoroughly research the culture they are about to enter. This can be accomplished through reading empirical literature and by interviewing both Western and indigenous experts on a given culture. One very helpful tool for understanding culture is to use the Hofstede cultural indices to compare cultural differences between the Western caregiver and the culture to be entered. This also means understanding why women in that culture have gone into the sex trade. For example, young women in the United States often work in commercial sexual exploitation because they are running from an abusive home life. On the opposite extreme, young women in the Philippines are often coerced into it by an elder in their family. A Westerner cannot know what family reunification services to support unless he or she knows what caused any separation. Moreover, culture affects the way distress is expressed and the way a caregiver perceives it (Engelsvold, 2007, Communication, para. 2). Culture also affects how a society or an individual views issues like karma, poverty, shame, family honor, and virginity, all topics which affect sexually exploited women and girls (2007, p. 6752).

Along with this, a Western development worker will need to understand the context of the sex work the woman or child was in. An adult survivor in Thailand could have been trafficked from Nigeria. An under aged prostitute in India could have grown up in generational prostitution. Middleton wrote, “some generalities are helpful, but aftercare providers must consider the uniqueness of their survivors, the sex industry in their area, and the means of trafficking in their locale” (2007, “Major Components,” para. 2). This affects the services that are needed for recovery.

**Understand the staff.**

The next issue to understand is why aftercare facility personnel operate the way they do. For example, the running group who came to Samaritana should have specifically asked if there was a culture of running in the Philippines, let alone with prostituted women. Understanding that Philippine weather is too humid for outdoor running could have saved them time and money. In fact, the money used to finance the trip and purchase athletic gear could have been used for conducting activities already proven successful. Moreover, when there is conflict, Filipino people will just be silent and avoid you. The nonverbal is 90% of communication (Maggay, 2013). Things like this are helpful to know when co-workers are from a different culture.

Furthermore, it is important to understand staff needs. Within the context of their culture, their need for encouragement, rest, training, and compensation must be understood and acted upon (Middleton, 2007, Staff Issues, paras. 1 - 3). This could be implemented through time set aside in staff meetings where they are able to voice their needs and logic behind their operations.

**Listen carefully.**

An important step in providing culturally appropriate aftercare is to listen to what indigenous stakeholders say and do not say (Lupton, 2011, pp. 147 – 148). For example, I doubt the founders of Samaritana asked that a well-intentioned outdoor running program be implemented with their clients. It was probably presented to them and they kindly accepted the offer. However, Thelma Nambu, the co-founder and current Program Supervisor for Samaritana, said they could actually use more materials and lessons written in Tagalog or Taglish. It would be even more helpful if these were written in simple language for adult readers who have not finished high school (T. Nambu, personal communication, November 27, 2013). As an outsider, I would not have thought of that. However, Thelma did.

**Engage cultural brokers.**

One way to facilitate the smooth implementation of all of this is to use a cultural broker, which Jezewski defined as someone who acts as a link or mediator “between groups or persons of different cultural backgrounds for the purpose of reducing conflict or producing change” (as cited in the National Center for Cultural Competence, 2004, p. 2). In an aftercare setting in the two-thirds world, a cultural broker would be someone with a clear understanding of both the culture of Western development workers and the culture of the non-Western staff and former prostitutes. It could be a staff member of your aftercare facility or a qualified community member. In the case of Samaritana, the co-founders Johnathan and Thelma Nambu were excellent cultural brokers. Thelma is from the Philippines but had received her counselling degree from a school in the United States. Johnathan is from the United States but had lived in the Philippines for many years. Both Johnathan and Thelma were fluent in English and Tagalong. Both had years of experience working with people from different cultural backgrounds and likely have a comprehensive understanding of differing cultural views on power distance and collectivism. They could likely explain these things to opposite cultural groups who interact. In fact, when the Nambus explained how they used group counselling and not individual counselling, I trusted their methodology because of their expertise.

**Understand yourself and your culture.**

Along with understanding all of the above, a Western development practitioner must understand his or her internal motivation for working against prostitution or sex trafficking. For example, if this work is a way for a person to process his or her own healing from trauma, it may be better to stay home and heal. Also, remembering why you are there can be helpful when the work becomes difficult, like when a client suddenly returns to prostitution. It may then be

helpful to compose a work mission statement and to reference it when the work is difficult. It will also be imperative to develop healthy coping mechanisms and to know when to utilize them (Lile, Tetsch, Nason-Clark, Ruff, & Sharpe, 2007, What to Do, para. 1).

Additionally, before going to the two-thirds world, American development workers should take ample time to research how recovery services are provided in the United States. Doing so could help a person to understand why differing methods must be used in another culture. It could help to clarify why a method that works at home, such as individual counselling, would not necessarily work elsewhere.

**Utilize the Hofstede indices as a litmus test of the cultural appropriateness.**

Per Figure 1, it is very important to understand Hofstede's cultural indices in relationship to your own culture and the culture you will be working in. For example, especially compared to the United States, the Philippines has a huge hierarchy in PDI. It is also a highly collectivist culture. People there are comfortable with hierarchy and making decisions with the group. Instead of working against these cultural differences, a Westerner needs to work with them. Working within a culture group's context is empowering to them, even if it feels uncomfortable to the Westerner. In a lecture for a class in Cultural Studies in a Global Context, Dr. Forrest Inslee explained how he used Hofstede's cultural indices to help Christians in Turkey write their own worship music. Since he was considered their Christian leader, they insisted he guide them in writing their new music. However, to Dr. Inslee, it was important they write it for their context. Knowing it was a collectivist culture, he simply broke the larger group into smaller groups, with each group composing their own songs. They did so, and these songs continue to be used in Christian worship services (Inslee, 2012).



Similar methods could be used in an aftercare setting. For example, instead of automatically instituting Western models of counselling in a new shelter in the Philippines, it would be better to assemble recovery service staff and have them work together to create shelter curriculum and policies.

**Utilize indigenous terminology and methodology.**

Next, a development worker must figure out how to use indigenous terminology and methodologies in recovery services. This includes understanding who is considered a legitimate counsellor in a culture. In Western societies, a counsellor has met academic credentials and does not necessarily have any prior familiarity with a client. However, Vontress wrote how in many cultures, “authority and wisdom are attributed to the oldest living men and women in the village... When counselling other than that provided by elders in the family is needed, people may consult traditional healers” (as cited in Engelsvold, 2007, “Culture Determines Who is Seen,” para. 1). Because culture determines who is considered a legitimate counsellor, a Westerner must seriously figure out how to implement this so misunderstandings or feelings of frustration are mitigated (Engelsvold, 2007, “Culture Determines Views,” para. 3). Practically speaking, it could mean hiring an older adult with fewer credentials over someone younger with more credentials.

There are other practical ways to implement indigenous methodologies. In reference to Philippine style psychological evaluations, Church and Katigbak wrote how indigenous methods “are perhaps most crucial, when investigating less educated samples, who have limited familiarity with traditional surveys and inventories, or when investigating particularly sensitive topics” (2002, p. 137).

Moreover, Loubser advocated for indigenized social science in the following manner:

(1) derivation of indigenous theories, concepts, and methods; (2) research based on local needs; (3) development of own teaching and training materials; (4) recruitment and training of own nationals as members; (5) incentives for scholars to stay in the country and to publish in national journals; and (6) provision of indigenous sources of support.

(as cited in Church & Katigbak, 2002, p. 141)

Not only will these indigenous methodologies need to be implemented, but they can also be grown and stabilized through institutional or structural improvements (Church & Katigbak, 2002, p. 141). For example, local universities and networks of aftercare NGOs could begin to support indigenous terminology, theories, methods, research, teaching materials, training methods, and staff development. The International Christian Alliance on Prostitution is an example of an international network of practitioners who could offer various types of support for the growth of indigenous aftercare services. Staff members at Samaritana Transformational Ministries are a member of this international organization.

Church and Katigbak also wrote about the stages indigenous development workers can go through in developing methods in psychology. The stages range from uncritical acceptance and practice of Western psychology to the search for and use of more indigenous methods. At some point these stages can be accompanied by an uncritical rejection of all Western psychological elements (2002, p. 142). However, as confidence builds for non-Western practitioners, they will become more comfortable with moving toward “an increased or renewed openness to the blending of Western elements that may be culturally relevant” (p. 142). As much as I am for contextualized recovery services in the two-thirds world, I do not advocate for the complete elimination of Western methods. They should be implemented as experienced, indigenous professionals deem them appropriate and practical.

In fact, an openness to the blending of Western and indigenous elements is important because it can also foster new healing methods to be used in Western aftercare facilities. For example, the clients at Samaritana typically do not go back to prostitution after completing the programs offered there (J. Nambu & T. Nambu, personal communication, November 25, 2013), whereas young women in the United States typically leave prostitution multiple times before they leave for good. There could be something for Westerners to learn about the methodologies used at Samaritana.

### **Utilize evaluation.**

As the idea of using culturally appropriate aftercare methodologies becomes normalized, even institutionalized, it will be important to develop a contextualized method of evaluating staff and program effectiveness. Eventually this could come in the form of larger quantitative or qualitative research studies. Yet, a more pragmatic approach would be to perform smaller, regularly scheduled program evaluations; albeit, this could be considered a Western methodology. Therefore, when conducting evaluations with people groups who have not had a complete –let alone Western-- education, a traditional approach would be more appropriate. This is especially true when discussing sensitive issues (Church & Katigbak, 2002, p. 137). In fact, during our study of movement arts therapy at Samaritana, we did not collect feedback from the women via paper surveys of any kind. If we had, it would have taken an arduous process to translate them. Instead, we collected our feedback by electronically recorded group interviews and our own detailed note taking. All of this was verbally translated for us in the moment by a Samaritana staff professional. The Samaritana clients already participated in group counselling on a regular basis, so they were comfortable with group interviews. A staff counsellor was always present during these procedures.

Developing appropriate evaluation procedures will help staff at aftercare shelters in many ways. First of all, evaluations can help staff to understand linkages between various strategies. For example, if Samaritana counsellors were to start regularly including movement arts in their group counselling sessions, they could eventually conduct an evaluation to determine if it was helping the women to relax and open up. Regular evaluations can also help staff determine if their programming is achieving their long term goals or if there is any programming that needs to be improved or eliminated (ORS Impact, 2013, p. 3).

### **Know unintended consequences for implementing non-Western methods.**

Another critical topic of discussion is the potential for negative unintended consequences for removing Western style recovery practices. For example, what if using therapy that takes into account a culture's strong preference for power distance actually confuses former prostitutes and causes them to leave a recovery shelter? What if individual counselling had been taken away when it had actually been helpful in recovery? It is unlikely any of this would happen; however, it is recommended to make any needed changes slowly, with the support of staff.

In fact, any implemented evaluation methods could measure for plausible unintended consequences for removing Western methods. An evaluation using Hofstede's cultural indices could explain how close a Western method actually adheres to a cultural practice in the two-thirds world. If the method is deemed to actually be culturally appropriate in terms of PDI, IDV, UAI, etc., then it may be appropriate to keep in the long term.

### **Final Remarks**

Essentially, when Western people work at aftercare shelters for recovering prostitutes and sex trafficked women in the two-thirds world, they will need to administer care in a culturally appropriate manner. The best way to do this is through: understanding the negative impact of

unintended consequences, understanding the culture, understanding the staff, listening to staff and clients, supporting the use of indigenous terms and methodologies, using cultural brokers, and developing appropriate forms of evaluation. Once these things happen, then women who have suffered from the most horrible abuses on the planet will have the chance to heal more fully and more quickly. Is that not what we all want?

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