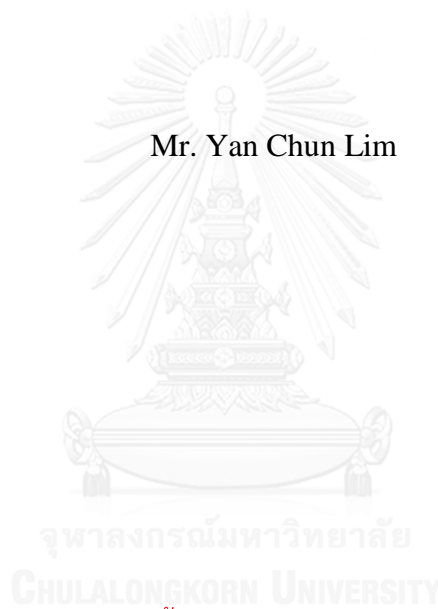


Labour Migration, Human Security and Migration Impacts in Rural Cambodia:
Case Study in Kampong Thom Province

Mr. Yan Chun Lim



บทคัดย่อและแฟ้มข้อมูลฉบับเต็มของวิทยานิพนธ์ตั้งแต่ปีการศึกษา 2554 ที่ให้บริการในคลังปัญญาจุฬาฯ (CUIR)
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การเคลื่อนย้ายแรงงาน ความมั่นคงของมนุษย์และผลกระทบจากการเคลื่อนย้ายแรงงานในพื้นที่ชนบทของกัมพูชา: กรณีศึกษาในจังหวัดกำปงธม



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การเคลื่อนย้ายแรงงานเป็นปรากฏการณ์ที่ยิ่งใหญ่ของประเทศกัมพูชา
อย่างไรก็ตามประเด็นนี้ยังเป็นประเด็นที่ไม่ค่อยมีงานวิจัยออกมามากนัก
การเคลื่อนย้ายแรงงานสำหรับชาวกัมพูชาจากพื้นที่ชนบทเป็นกุญแจสำคัญที่จะให้โอกาสทางการจ้างงานและยกระดับคุณภาพชีวิต
ของพวกเขาให้ดีขึ้นได้ อย่างไรก็ตามพวกเขาต้องเผชิญกับทางเลือกต่างๆในการเคลื่อนย้ายแรงงาน ทางเลือกเหล่านี้หมายถึง
พวกเขาต้องมีทุนในการเคลื่อนย้าย ต้องเผชิญกับความท้าทายและความไม่มั่นคงรวมถึงผลกระทบนานาประการ
จึงเกิดคำถามขึ้นว่าพวกเขาจะเลือกจะเดินอย่างไร

ที่ผ่านมา นักวิชาการและองค์กรที่ไม่แสวงหากำไร (NGOs)
เรียกร้องให้รัฐบาลกัมพูชาให้ข้อมูลในการเคลื่อนย้ายแรงงานกับแรงงานกัมพูชาเพื่อที่จะช่วยพวกเขาเลือกและตัดสินใจได้ดีขึ้น
อย่างไรก็ตามข้อมูลดังกล่าวยังไม่ได้ถูกศึกษาในเชิงประจักษ์ออกมายืนยันความชัดเจนของข้อมูล

จากการศึกษาโดยการสำรวจพื้นที่จริงจะให้ข้อมูลเชิงลึกว่า ทำไมแรงงานกัมพูช้าย้ายถิ่น
ทางเลือกรักที่พวกเขาเลือกมีก่อนย้ายถิ่น
พวกเขาตัดสินใจเลือกทางเดินเหล่านี้ได้อย่างไรและสิ่งที่สามารถสรุปได้นัยจากการตัดสินใจของพวกเขา

ผลงานวิจัยพบว่าแรงงานกัมพูชามีปัจจัยทางเศรษฐกิจที่ขับเคลื่อนการย้ายถิ่น
แรงงานส่วนใหญ่ย้ายถิ่นเพื่อค่าแรงที่มากขึ้นและหวังที่จะกลับบ้านเกิดด้วยทรัพยากรทางเศรษฐกิจที่มากขึ้น

งานวิจัยยังพบอีกว่า แรงงานกัมพูชาไม่เพียงแต่ที่จะต้องตัดสินใจเลือกพื้นที่ทางภูมิศาสตร์เพื่อที่จะเคลื่อนย้ายแรงงาน
แต่พวกเขาต้องเลือกประเภทของงานที่จะเคลื่อนย้ายแบบถูกกฎหมายหรือผิดกฎหมาย
ดังนั้นทางเลือกในการเคลื่อนย้ายแรงงานตามที่ได้สัมผัสกับแรงงานกัมพูชาและจากงานวิจัยก่อนหน้านี้ที่กล่าวว่าทางเลือกหลักขึ้นอยู่กับพื้นที่ทางภูมิศาสตร์
งานวิจัยชิ้นนี้กลับพบว่าแม้แรงงานในพื้นที่เดียวกัน
ด้วยสถานะทางกฎหมายและประเภทของงานย่อมทำให้ผลของการเคลื่อนย้ายแรงงานแตกต่างกัน
ดังนั้นงานวิจัยนี้จึงนำเสนอให้เห็นถึงผลกระทบต่อชีวิตของแรงงานจากทางเลือกในการเคลื่อนย้ายแรงงานที่แตกต่างกัน

งานวิจัยนี้พบว่าผลของการเคลื่อนย้ายแรงงานส่วนมากจะถูกกำหนดโดยปัจจัยที่นอกเหนือจากการจัดการของแรงงาน
เองแต่ขึ้นอยู่กับนายจ้างและพ่อค้าคนกลาง สิ่งที่แรงงานสามารถควบคุมได้คือ
การที่พวกเขารวบรวมข้อมูลประกอบในการตัดสินใจในการเคลื่อนย้ายเพื่อลดความเสี่ยงและประสบความสำเร็จตามที่พวกเขาคาดหวัง

งานวิจัยนี้พบรูปแบบในการตัดสินใจเคลื่อนย้ายแรงงาน 3 รูปแบบ ขึ้นอยู่กับว่าแรงงานตอบสนองกับข้อมูลอย่างไร
และข้อมูลขึ้นไหนดังนั้นที่พวกเขาเลือกอ้างอิงเป็นหลัก เปรียบเทียบทั้ง 3 รูปแบบของการตัดสินใจแล้ว
งานวิจัยนี้พบว่าแรงงานที่ตอบสนองโดยวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลในการเคลื่อนย้ายแรงงาน
อ้างอิงข้อมูลจากการเคลื่อนย้ายแรงงานจากประสบการณ์และมีกลยุทธ์การเคลื่อนย้ายแรงงานระยะยาว
มีความเป็นไปได้มากกว่าที่จะประสบความสำเร็จตามที่พวกเขาคาดหวัง

สาขาวิชา การพัฒนาระหว่างประเทศ

ลายมือชื่อนิติกร

ปีการศึกษา 2557

ลายมือชื่อ อ.ที่ปริกษาหลัก

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CONTENTS

	Page
THAI ABSTRACT	iv
ENGLISH ABSTRACT.....	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vi
CONTENTS.....	vii
CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Research Question	2
1.2 Research Objectives	2
1.3 Conceptual Framework	3
1.4 Research Methodology	5
1.5 Research Scope.....	8
1.6 Significance of Research	9
1.7 Ethical Issues	9
1.8 Research Limitations	10
CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW	11
2.1 Overview of Migration Research	11
2.2 Why does labour migration occur?.....	11
2.3 Who are the migrants?.....	15
2.4 What are the migration options?.....	16
2.5 How are migration decisions made?.....	18
2.6 Implications: Human Security in the context of Migration.....	20
2.6.1 What is Human Security?.....	20
2.6.2 What does Human Security have to do with Migration?	23
2.6.3 What does Human Security have to do with migrants?	24
2.6.4 What does Human Security has to do with the migration impacts?.....	28
2.7 Research Gaps & Research Directions.....	29
CHAPTER III MIGRATION IN BOEUNG.....	30
3.1 Background on Migration in Boeung	30
3.2 Profile of Migrants	39

	Page
3.3 Migration Options	41
3.4 Migration Decision-Making Styles	42
3.3.1 The ‘Strategist’	43
3.3.2 The ‘Hermit’	45
3.3.3 The ‘Follower’	46
3.3.4 External Locus of Control	47
CHAPTER IV IMPACTS ON HUMAN SECURITY	48
4.1 Internal Migration & Human Security	48
4.1.1 How do migrants move to Phnom Penh for work?	48
4.1.2 What do migrants see in Phnom Penh?	53
4.1.3 What are some of the risks and potential benefits of working in Phnom Penh?	55
4.2 Migrating to Thailand & Human Security	63
4.2.1 How do migrants move to Thailand?	63
4.2.2 What do migrants see in Thailand?	68
4.2.3 What are the risks and potential benefits of working in Thailand?	68
4.3 Migrating to Malaysia & Human Security	74
4.3.1 How do migrants move to Malaysia for work?	74
4.3.2 What do migrants see in Malaysia?	76
4.3.3 What are some of the risks and potential benefits of working in Malaysia?	77
4.4 Analysis & Interpretation	81
4.5 Links between Decision-Making Styles & Impact	87
CHAPTER V CONCLUSIONS	91
5.1 Key Findings & Discussions	91
5.2 Recommendations	94
5.3 Limitations & Future Research	95
REFERENCES	96
VITA	100



CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Labour migration is a major yet under-researched phenomenon in Cambodia. For many rural Cambodian migrants, migration is the key strategy for them to improve their quality of life (Todaro, 1989). Thus, by definition, it is clearly a goal-oriented activity, with the explicit aim of improving one's living conditions. The means by which this goal is to be achieved, is to by leaving the rural home village (often characterized as lacking in economic opportunities), for a more prosperous destination (that promises or seems to promise better economic opportunities) such as another province, the city or country, for work.

However, migration does not guarantee net benefits to the migrant. Taking a more balanced perspective, it would be more accurate to consider migration as an 'investment' (Sjaastad, 1962). On the one hand, labour migration offers potentially beneficial outcomes, such as higher income or savings resulting from a period of receiving higher income; on the other hand, migration is also risky because of the potential exposure to human insecurities during the migration process, which may result in the migrant being worse off than he or she may be, pre-migration. In short, migration can yield both positive and negative implications, resulting in an overall net gain or net loss in quality of life.

Clearly, labour migration is a risky investment that entails both trade-offs and payoffs. Are migrants sufficiently informed of these trade-offs and potential payoffs? How do migrants weigh the trade-offs? Do they have mitigating strategies to limit the trade-offs and maximize payoffs?

It is also important to note that in today's context, rural Cambodians enjoy a plethora of migration options to choose from, should they decide to migrate (Ministry of Planning, 2012, Fitzgerald et al., 2007, Sophal, 2009a, Sophal, 2009b). However, faced with many migration options, each requiring different sets of pre-requisite, and

subjecting migrants to different threats or insecurities, as well as different impacts, how should migrants choose which option to take?

In recent years, academic and the non-governmental organizations have urged the Cambodian Government to provide migrants with information to inform their decisions better (Heng, 2013; Maltoni, 2006; Ministry of Planning, 2012; Sophal, 2009a, 2009b; Sophal; & Sovannarith, 1999; Sovannara, 2007; Sovannarith, 1999.) Yet, such needed information have not been empirically researched.

Thus this paper aims to provide empirical evidence on how the human securities and insecurities, as well as the impacts of migration are shaped, in an attempt to identify factors or strategies to minimize migration's negative impacts and maximize migration's positive impact on the migrant. Ultimately, this paper hopes to provide valuable insights to help non-governmental organizations and the Cambodian Government to provide relevant and appropriate information to assist migrants to make better decisions.

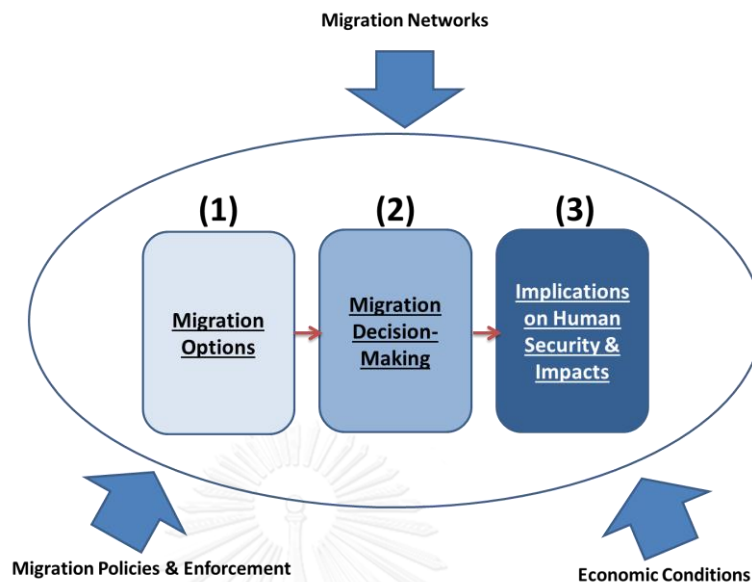
1.1 Research Question

How does migration decision-making affect the migration outcomes?

1.2 Research Objectives

- (a) **Profiling the migrants and their decisions:** Who are the labour migrants in rural Cambodia? Why do they migrate? What options are available for them to migrate to? How do they decide on which migration options to take?
- (b) **Examining the migrants' Human Security:** How does labour migration affect the migrants' Human Security?
- (c) **Identifying the link between decision-making and migration outcomes:** How does migration decision-making affect the migration outcomes?

1.3 Conceptual Framework



The conceptual framework that consists of four key portions:

- (1) Migration Options
- (2) Migration Decision-Making (& Decisions)
- (3) Implications on Human Security & Impacts
- (4) Wider Context of Migration Policies and their Enforcement, the Economic Conditions of the Labour Markets in both Origin and Destinations, as well as Migration Networks consisting of Intermediaries, Social Support and Flow of Information between Origin and Destinations.

(1) Migration Options

This refers to the different pathways and choices that would-be migrant would choose their final migration paths from. In this thesis, a migration options would have 3 key dimensions: (i) a geographical locality (ii) legal status (iii) type of jobs.

(2) Migration Decision-Making

This refers to the reasoning process and outcomes of the migrants' decision-making when faced with migration options to choose. If we consider migration as

a self-empowerment strategy aimed at achieving the migrant's aspirations (Czaika & Vothknecht, 2012), and that migration is an investment that involves risks and uncertainty (Bowles, 1970), logically speaking, we can expect that migrants to gather information available on the various migration options before evaluating which option is the most likely to realize the migrants' aspirations. This would lead them to take action according to this evaluation to decide on their next course of action to implement their decisions.

However, to what extent does information gathering occur and how do each migrant evaluate the information collected to arrive at a decision shall be further discussed and explored in this thesis. The implications of such decision-making styles would also be explored.

(3) Implications on Human Security & Impacts

As aforementioned, the human security of migration essentially looks at the potential threats that migrants will face and their ability to overcome these threats. (Alkire, 2003; Bajpai, 2000; Graham & Poku, 2005; Song & Cook, 2014; UNOCHR, 2009)

To be able to understand the challenges that migrants face upon embarking on a migration option that he or she has settled upon, it is necessary to consider all seven aspects of human security. This will allow us to paint different accounts of the threats scenario and landscape of each migration option as follows:

- Personal Security: Fundamental Human Rights
- Community Security: Discrimination and Preservation of Community / Identity
- Political Security: Political Rights
- Economic Security: Right to work, income and rest
- Food Security: Right to basic and adequate food and nutrition
- Health Security: Protection from disease, access to healthcare

- Environmental Security: Clean and hygienic environment, protection from environmental disasters (Song& Cook, 2014)

(4) Wider Context of Migration Policies and their Enforcement, the Economic Conditions of the Labour Markets in both Origin and Destinations, as well as Migration Networks consisting of Intermediaries, Social Support and Flow of Information between Origin and Destinations.

As migration is a highly complex social process that is made up of various “subsystems” that together form an inter-disciplinary migration system (Massey et al., 1993), even though the migration policies, economic conditions and migration networks are not the primary focus of this essay, they are still key background information for they provide the foundation on which migration decisions, human security landscape and migration impacts of each migration option are made.

1.4 Research Methodology

This author adopted a mixed methods approach consisting of 3 portions:

- (i) Field-based Surveys and Life History Interviews
- (ii) Key Informant Interviews
- (iii) Documentary Research

(i) Field-based Surveys and Life History Interviews

Through a 1.5 month long non-participative field work from May to June 2015, data collection for this research was completed, with the aid of 3 local translators.

The author first conducted an exploratory quantitative survey(n=50) by a simple randomized sampling of households within the commune, assisted by satellite imaging. The quantitative survey focused on profiling the migrants and their decisions: Who are the labour migrants in rural Cambodia? Why do they migrate? How do they migrate? This quantitative survey also helped to provide leads for the purposeful

sampling of the qualitative case study-based life history interviews with migrants. Lastly, this also serves as an extra source of information for triangulation and data verification purposes.

Following which, the author conducted quantitative life history interviews (n=22) focusing on examining each migration option's human security and identifying their impacts, the migrant's decision-making processes and outcomes. Maximum variation purposeful sampling was conducted as the aim was not to find representative descriptive or inferential statistics, but to find maximum variation in terms of the migration experience for each migration options.

The research drew heavily on semi-structured (biographical) interviews and life history mapping techniques, with the aim of identifying the various migration trajectories of the research subject, as well as to understand the migrant's perspectives and subjective meaning derived from their migration decision making process, migration experiences, impacts of migration, and the migrant's evaluation of migration.

(ii) Key Informants Interviews

Key informant interviews were also conducted to provide a snapshot and the contextual knowledge about the migration policies, economics and civil society action, so as to allow a more accurate accounting of the migration process. This also serves as an extra source of information for triangulation and data verification purposes.

The key informants interviewed included the 3 Commune leaders, 2 staff from a local non-governmental organization, 1 Church leader, 1 Principal of the local Secondary School, 1 local Youth leader, as well as 2 local recruitment middlemen in Boeung.

(iii) Documentary Research

To understand the migration policy, as well as to tap on existing research literature on migration issues in the region, documentary research was also performed.

As this researcher is not able to speak Khmer, the help of 3 local translators were enlisted. The 3 local translators are local villagers who have had the opportunity to receive higher education (Undergraduate level for 1, and High School for 2 others) and are well-versed in Khmer at native proficiency and English at second language proficiencies. All 3 have had experience translating for foreign aid workers, researchers and community tourists. All interviews were conducted by this researcher, with the translators acting as intermediaries to translate the questions and responses between the researcher and the interviewees. Translators were specifically requested to translate as directly as possible, and not correcting for grammatical mistakes.

In terms of data verification, the primary method for data verification is through triangulation of data and checking the data for internal logical coherence. First, data from the life history mapping will be triangulated with other information sources such as verification with the family and friends of the interview subject, as well as collection of evidence such as artifacts to corroborate the facts. Second, conclusions drawn from the analysis of data will be cross-checked and will be built upon a holistic evaluation of information triangulated from various sources outlined above.

In terms of data analysis, the primary data analysis method is by grouping and comparing:

- First, extensive field notes and field research diary will be kept and organized after every interview
- Second, from the interviews, a narrative account of each migrant's migration life history will be mapped out and described.
- Third, data verification will be done.
- Fourth, each of interviewees' accounts will be compared and dissected into various codes that answer each of the research sub-questions.

- Fifth, for each of the research sub-questions, the relevant points will be grouped and classified into concepts.
- Sixth, the relevant concepts will be logically connected by being placed into the conceptual framework, on which this research will draw conclusions.
- Finally, this researcher will consider possible alternative conclusions and seek to argue for the conclusion that is most logical and has the most exploratory power in answering the research question.

1.5 Research Scope

It must be noted that the scope of this research is limited to the place of origin; as such this research was carried out in Boeung Commune of Baray District, Kampong Thom, Kingdom of Cambodia, as the sole case study. Boeung Commune is made up of a cluster of 5 villages, namely Boeung North, Boeung Central, Boeung South, Tho Pheng Chuk and Don Pine.

According to the latest commune-level census, Boeung has a total population of 15,299 people, with agriculture being its primary economic activity (Commune Secretary, personal communication, May 29, 2015). Located about 128km away from Phnom Penh, the capital city and 194km away from Siem Reap, the commune is well connected to the national and international transport infrastructure as the National Highway No.6 cuts across the commune. It is this connectivity to various migration destinations of Cambodian migrants that makes Boeung a highly suitable case study for this investigation.

The natural resultant of this interconnectivity is the diversity of migration destinations that residents of Boeung Commune have been to. This further allows this study to catalogue and study a wider range of migration options available to rural Cambodians.

1.6 Significance of Research

This research is significant because:

Firstly, migration is an important issue in Cambodia but it is under-studied. This research hopes to fill the research gaps by providing a more grounded perspective to the situation.

Secondly, most of the previous studies on migration in Cambodia has tended to take a more economic/public policy or macro approach, this research will enrich the macro level research with more micro-level, anthropological and human-centric emphasis on the human experience of migration.

Thirdly, this research will provide useful information that the migrants themselves can make use of and tap on the information uncovered in this research to inform their decision making. This information would also be particularly useful for the NGOs and Government bodies seeking to do work in this area.

1.7 Ethical Issues

While the information being researched on neither sensitive nor likely to be harmful to any party. However, as the research focuses on the individual migrants and their private considerations, this researcher will pay special attention to ensuring that personal information is kept confidential and the subjects' privacies are protected. As such, this research will present the findings in a way that prevents the identification of the subject through the privileged information that has been made available for the purpose of this research

This research will also seek informed consent from the migrant before conducting the research, in line with the ethics of social sciences research.

1.8 Research Limitations

A key limitation of this research is that it focuses on the place of origin, and on returned migrants. This would mean that there might be a bias in sampling because returned migrants might have expressed some form of failures or problems in migration that caused them to return back.



CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview of Migration Research

Migration is defined as the movement of a person or a group from one place of origin to stay in a place of destination with the intention to settle and to earn a living (IOM, 2004). Migration has been and still is a massive phenomenon in human civilization (Demuth, 2000). Today, increasing connectivity between various places of origins and destinations has brought about a new age of mass migration. (Castles & Miller, 1998) A key context, as Castles (2000) has argued, is the disparities in economic, social and demographic conditions between developed and developing regions.

According to the International Labour Organization, there are more than 200 million international migrant and 700 million internal migrants, yet most of them are labour migrants who move in search of decent employment. Clearly, labour migration is the major type of migration that warrants greater attention.

In Cambodia, both international labour emigration and internal labour migration has been increasing rapidly since the mid-1990s after the return of peace and the unfortunate series of floods and droughts (CDRI, 2007; Sophal; & Sovannarith, 1999), with close to 65% of internal migrants to Phnom Penh being labour migrants (Ministry of Planning, 2012),

2.2 Why does labour migration occur?

Different theories have proposed different specific factors that explain why migrant migrate; this paper shall attempt to provide an overarching view of the research literature:

(a) Migration happens due to economic reasons:

At the individual level, migration is an investment that requires the migrants to incur costs to generate higher income (Sjaastad, 1962), or as Todaro(1989) puts it, migrants act according to a rational economic self-interest.

As the neo-classical economic theory of migration suggests, migrants migrate because the place of destination offers better wages and employment conditions (Lewis, 1954). Comparatively, their place of origin has limited resources for the migrant to improve their quality of life. Deficiencies of the place of origin includes limited access to capital, credit and risk management as the new economic theories of migration has suggested(Stark & Bloom, 1985).

Essentially, these micro-level processes are also manifested on the structural level domestically as argued by Lewis (1954)'s Two-Sector Theory or the Dual Labour Market Theory(Tolbert, Horan, & Beck, 1980); as well as internationally, by the World Systems Theory(Wallerstein, 1974). At both the domestic and international levels, the key argument is that there exist two sectors or economies with one being more developed than the other. The less developed sector has surplus labour, while the more developed sector requires more labour to fuel its industrial and economic growth. Therefore, migration occurs to transfer or allocate labour from the less developed to the more developed sector.

In sum, we can understand migration as a rational and economic investment to escape poverty, overcome inequalities and improve one's quality of life.

Most of the research on migration in Cambodia highlights the overwhelming role that economic factor plays: While migration in Cambodia used to be motivated by political reasons stemming from the unstable and violent political history of Cambodia's past, since the 1990s, economic reasons have increasingly become the primary reason for Cambodians to migrate(Chea, 2014).

In the rural areas, the lack of economic prosperity and opportunities to improve one's livelihoods have motivated migrants to move towards the cities or abroad. For example Sophal (2009a) argues that poverty, landlessness, unemployment and the lack of access to markets as key reasons motivating rural-urban migration. In comprehensive surveys, the prospects of earning higher income is the overwhelming motivation for migrants (Ministry of Planning, 2012).

Interestingly, Sophal (2009a) also noted that between working in Cambodia and going abroad, Cambodians tend to prefer to work in Cambodia, however, the urban economy has not been able to keep up to pace with the annual labour force's increase, causing an acute shortage of jobs, thereby forcing migrants to migrate abroad.

Looking at the pull factors, higher wages and the demand for cheap labour in the more developed countries, such as Thailand, Malaysia, South Korea, Singapore and Japan (Sophal, 2009b) has resulted in these destinations becoming extremely attractive to the migrants who are seeking to improve their economic well-being.

(b) Migration happens due to a combination of socio-economic reasons:

Also, migration is not merely an individual affair, but its economics are also intertwined with that of other members of society:

According to network theories, once some people have migrated, others are more likely to do so because interpersonal ties would facilitate migration by reducing the costs and risks involved in migration (Hugo, 1981).

In a similar vein, institutional and migration systems theories suggest that as migration occurs, negative institutions, such as black markets or trafficking syndicates, as well as positive institutions, such as voluntary organizations or social networks that help protect the rights and welfare of migrations, would over time become stable and provide social capital and support for migration (Fawcett, 1989; Massey et al., 1993).

Likewise, the cumulative causation theory which suggests that in the course of migration, economic contexts are being changed by the first migrants, thereby creating contexts by which other migrants would follow suit, resulting in a continuous cycle of migration(Massey, 1986).

Also, from a household perspective, the new economic theory of migration also suggest that many migration in developing countries are household decisions, undertaken as a collective to diversify income streams and manage financial risks and economic shocks(Stark & Bloom, 1985).

In sum, migration is not merely an individual's affair, but the act of migration has implications for both migrant and non-migrant members of the same community.

(c) Migrants migrate because of social or cultural reasons:

From a more socio-cultural perspective, migration is a life experience that has social meaning:

For example, the Bright Lights theory suggests that the excitement of urban life rather than the attraction of wage labor intrinsically attracts rural migrants to move(Du Toit, 1990).

Moreover, cultural theory suggests that migration may be rooted in social values and similar to a rite of passage(Cohen, 2004), may serve a functionalist use as part of a survival strategy during the household cycle(Arizpe, 1981).

Lastly, nostalgia for the Homeland may also spur return migration as the migrants act like sojourners venturing out to earn a living with the initial intention of returning home eventually (Brettell, 2008; Gmelch, 1980; Kenney, 1976).

It must be noted that the various theoretical perspectives discussed above are not mutually exclusive, but together, they provide lens for us to appreciate the

nuances of migration process as a complex socio-economic phenomena.

Unfortunately, in Cambodia, the economic perspective seems to be overwhelmingly reported. On the one hand, this reflects that objectively, migration decisions in Cambodia are largely influenced by the economics of seeking a better living; however on the other hand, we need to also realize that much of the research that has been undertaken had intentionally focused on the economic aspects by asking survey questions and doing focus group sessions guided by the economic theories, leaving the socio-economic and socio-cultural aspects unexamined.

2.3 Who are the migrants?

According to numerous existing research, labour migrants are likely to come from the poorer rural households (Fitzgerald, Suvannāridhhi, & Suphal, 2007; M. Heng, 2013), although Sophal (2009a) and Sovannara (2007) has also noted that migration is so pervasive that not only the poorest migrate, even those considered to be in the middle strata and part of those who consider themselves to be “well off” by local standards, also migrate.

As more comprehensive data such as the CRUMP study surfaces, it is clear that migration is not directly correlated with poverty. Recalling the self-selection hypothesis that economist Chiswick (1999) had put forth, we find that in Cambodia, migration strategies are affected by the pre-existing amount of capital endowment the migrant has. Internal migration, seen more favorably by most Cambodians (Sophal, 2009a), are often occupied by those who are more highly educated, while international migration that is often linked to labour-intensive and lower-paying jobs, are often taken up by those who are unskilled (Ministry of Planning, 2012).

In terms of age, research has shown that migrants are predominantly adults (Sovannara, 2007), put together with research suggesting that many young adults in their 20s, who form the bulk of the population budge, are most likely to migrate (Ministry of Planning, 2012), suggests that most migrants migrate individually or with

their spouse, but without their dependents, possibly out of economic necessity or the risks involved in migration.

In terms of gender, both research on international and internal migrant show that both genders are represented in the migration process (Maltoni, 2006; Ministry of Planning, 2012; Sophal, 2009a). However, gender is largely linked to the occupation and types of job that the migrant performs at the destination. Thus, the availability of gender-specific employment opportunities might in some cases, determine the gender spread of migrants for a specific destination. For example, the CRUMP project reported that female migrants significantly outnumber male migrants to Phnom Penh because the key labour absorbing industry in Phnom Penh is the garment industry that specifically hires young female employees (Ministry of Planning, 2012).

In terms of places of origins, research has consistently shown that connectivity and transport infrastructures are major determinants. As Sophal (2009a) has shown, early in the 1990s, the major sending places for international migration were along provinces near the Thai border, such as Banteay Meanchey and Battambang. However, in recent years, most provinces, except for the most rural and remote ones that have little communication and infrastructure, do export labour. As for internal migration, Sovannara (2007) has similarly shown that the nearer the provinces to the urban centre in question, the more the migrants originating from it, although most provinces except for the most rural ones that are not well-connected or served by the transportation infrastructure, do send migrants to the urban centres.

2.4 What are the migration options?

Past research have identified 5 key migration options for rural Cambodians:

- (i) Migrating to Cambodian Urban Centers (mainly Phnom Penh) for work. According to different surveys of multiple villages, almost half of the respondents aspire to migrate the Phnom Penh (Fitzgerald et al., 2007; Ministry of Planning, 2012).

- (ii) Migrating to Thailand to perform labour work is another major option, that makes up almost half of the total migrants (Ministry of Planning, 2012; Sophal, 2009a). However, most of the migrants to Thailand are undocumented or illegal migrants (Sophal, 2009b). These are mainly unskilled labour workers in the construction, fishery, manufacturing and agriculture industries (Maltoni, 2006)
- (iii) Migrating to Malaysia to be female domestic helpers (Sophal, 2009a). Malaysia is considered a major destination ranking after Thailand. Other employment opportunities in Malaysia include the construction, manufacturing and entertainment sectors (Maltoni, 2006).
- (iv) Migrating to South Korea to be industrial factory workers. This option is often limited to males migrants (Sophal, 2009a). What is interesting, as Maltoni (2006) has noted, is that migrant workers heading to Korea must first undergo a 3 months training programme to learn about life in Korea, in hope of helping the migrants pick up skills that will be useful when they return to Cambodia.
- (v) Others such as Saudi Arabia, Taiwan, Singapore and Japan (Sophal, 2009a). These options are much rarer.

It is interesting to note that prior research has not specifically studied the determinants of each migration option and the correlations (if any) between migration option choice and outcomes. This researcher would argue that this is a major research gap that warrants further study. It is ironic that while almost all of the past research literature call on the state or the civil society groups to help migrants make better migration decisions by supplying them with more information (M. Heng, 2013; Maltoni, 2006; Ministry of Planning, 2012; Sophal, 2009a, 2009b; Sophal; & Sovannarith, 1999; Sovannara, 2007), research literature has not explicitly studied the links amongst migration options, migration strategies and migration outcomes.

2.5 How are migration decisions made?

Migration is a complex decision (De Jong & Gardner, 2013) because migrants have to balance between multiple and potentially contradicting goals; upon collecting information on various destination options, migrants have to evaluate deciding on the final.

Existing migration research has given only limited attention to the issue of migration decision-making(De Jong & Gardner, 2013).

Instead, on one hand, most research assumes migrants to be rational economic agents, who would rationally weigh the trade-offs of various options and choose the option that is able to give maximum benefits. On the one hand, the neoclassical economic theories focus on the migrants' purely cost/benefit evaluation of monetary payoffs(Borjas, 1989), later theories such as the human capital theories consider both monetary and non-monetary payoffs(De Jong, 1999; Sjaastad, 1962).

While mainstream migration theories have moved from only considering economic outcomes to include non-economic outcomes in the migrants' calculus of expected benefits, the rational choice theory remains the dominant paradigm in migration literature(Baláž, Williams, & Fifeková, 2014; Lewis, 1954; Sjaastad, 1962; Stark & Bloom, 1985; Todaro, 1989). This assumes that migrants make decisions based on perfect information that they are able to capture and process all the information on all the potential outcomes, benefits and trade-offs of each option, before concluding with the best option that is benefit-maximizing.

Moreover, instead of focusing on "how" decisions are made, theories have more often looked at "who" makes the decisions. For example, early macroeconomic theories assume that individuals migrate due to his or her own economic calculus(Todaro, 1989), yet the new economic theories focused on the family as the

decision-making unit(DaVanzo, 1980). Unfortunately, both still run on the assumption of perfect information.

However, inter-disciplinary studies on decision-making and rationality have questioned the validity of the assumption of perfect information:

On the one hand, the availability of information has been questioned; is it possible to obtain accurate and complete information on all the migration options, before migrating? On the other hand, the costs of information collection have been raised, is the migrant able to afford the time and energy to extensively research on all the options? Lastly, do migrants have unlimited processing abilities to accurately and effectively evaluate all the information on migration options to obtain an optimal decision (Baláž et al., 2014; Shafir & LeBoeuf, 2002)?

If we accept that perfect information, while useful for theoretical explorations, is limited in its external or field validity, it is thus, important to consider how imperfect or missing information skews or distorts the migration decision-making process. However, such a consideration has not been widely taken up in migration research in general(Baláž et al., 2014).

Other branches of social science have offered alternative decision-making models and assumptions that allow us to explore decision-making dynamics beyond the perfect information assumption:

Simon (1955) famously suggested the bounded rationality model that suggests that individuals do not seek full and complete information, but only seeks information until the point whereby they individually consider to have been satisfied. Such a 'limiting point' depends on one's preferences, experiences and attitudes.

Psychologists have also studied how people make decisions based on intuition, or arriving at quick decisions without much conscious reasoning, instead being based

on heuristics and bias that link different and random pieces of information together (Gilovich, Griffin, & Kahneman, 2002).

Clearly, more coverage on decision-making is needed; Mainstream migration theories aim to explain migration trends, i.e. social phenomena on a scale beyond and above that of the individual. Yet, the more a theory is generalized, the less able it is to account for the nuances and variance in outcomes between individuals. In particular, Massey et al. (1993) has noted that while mainstream migration theories can explain the differences in migration activity between groups of different socio-economic standing, they are less capable of explaining the differences in migration activities and choices amongst migrants of similar socio-economic standing.

However, as mentioned above, the research objective of this paper is to provide insights to assist the Cambodian NGOs and Government in better informing migrants, that current findings cannot provide. Thus, there is a need to focus on the individual migrants' decision-making processes in this paper.

2.6 Implications: Human Security in the context of Migration

2.6.1 What is Human Security?

Human Security refers to the security of individuals that constitutes humanity. This would refer to the freedom from the threats of fear and want, that can be primarily insured through preventive actions to secure the 7 domains of human security, namely personal security, community security, political security, economic security, food security, health security and environmental security (UNOCHR, 2009). Operationally, it refers to the safety from chronic threats such as hunger, diseases and repression, as well as protection from sudden, hurtful disruptions in daily life (UNHCR, 1993).

The 7 domains of human security include:

- (i) Personal Security is a manifestation of the fundamental human rights, which includes the freedom from death, violence, exploitation, arbitrary arrest or detention, summary execution, discrimination, as well as the right to privacy, family, property and identity.
- (ii) Community Security refers to both the right to preserve ethnicity, religion and culture and not to be discriminated against based on ethnicity, place of birth, nationality or religion.
- (iii) Political Security is the manifestation of the political rights such as the right to freedom of thought, religion, conscience, public opinion, political participation, free and fair elections, speech, association, publicity and assembly.
- (iv) Economic Security consists of the economic right to work and basic income.
- (v) Food Security refers to the right to access to basic and sufficient food and nutrition.
- (vi) Health Security refers to the right to be protected from diseases, have improvements in hygiene, access to basic health services and child and maternal health.
- (vii) Environmental Security refers to the right to a clean environment, water and land and to be protected from man-made environmental disasters.
(Song & Cook, 2014)

Essentially, human security is a reorientation of the concept of security, which occupies a unique position that commands the attention and focus from political actors in guiding state action.

During the Cold War, the dominant realist paradigm of thinking guided political actors to conceptualize security as a state of being free from threats at the nation-state level; in other words, security was defined in terms of national security (Wæver, 1993), i.e. related to national defence, military strength and the territorial integrity and sovereignty of nation-states.

After the Cold War, because of the decline in the perception of national-level threats (Wæver, 1993), a rethinking of the modernization and development project (Poku, Renwick, & Glenn, 2005), increasing attention given to and frequency of population sufferings due to the lack of state protection or in some cases, population sufferings due to acts perpetrated by state actors (Poku et al., 2005), there was a strain of discourse that sought to change the view of security as being concerned with individuals qua citizens to one of being individual qua persons (Krause, Williams, & Williams, 1997).

This strain of thinking eventually became mainstreamed and culminated in the 1994 UNDP Human Development Report that proposed a human centric view of development, and the synthesis of the development discourse with the security discourse.

However, it must be noted that while the mainstream interpretation of human security continues to make references to the initial definition as laid out in the 1994 UNDP Human Development Report, there are a number of ways to interpret human security, resulting in different actors interpreting human security in ways that fit their agenda and interests.

For example, there are 2 ends of the spectrum of interpreting the contents of human security: Some such as Lodgaard (2000) take a more narrow and conservative view by lending towards an interpretation of security relative to traditional threats of force and violence, to pay more attention to people's vulnerabilities to physical violence during conflict. On the other hand, those in the international development sector, of which this author is part of, takes a broader view to encompass all aspects of

human lives that may threaten the attainment of well-being and developmental outcomes for individuals (Sen, 1999).

Also, in terms of the orientation of actors' interests, some continue to operate from the statist paradigm, in which the nation-state remain the key actor in security issues, just that its scope of responsibilities and perceived interests set has expanded beyond traditional security to non-traditional issues that have a bearing on the nation-states' interests (Abiri, 2005; Bourbeau, 2011). On the other hand, some adopt a more human-centric perspective in putting individuals' interests at the heart of their analysis, prioritizing the direct interests of individuals over that of the nation-state (Abiri, 2005; Song & Cook, 2014).

2.6.2 What does Human Security have to do with Migration?

As we can see, the evolution of the concept of security has led to what is known as the "securitization of migration (Abiri, 2005; Anwar & Center, 2005; Bourbeau, 2011; Song & Cook, 2014)", thereby linking up human security with migration.

There are two theoretical ways to approach the Security-Migration Nexus: The first looks at the "securitization of migration", which sees migration as a threat that potentially can inflict damages on the interests of the nation-state in question (Abiri, 2005). The second looks at the "human securitization of migration", which sees migration as potentially threatening or enhancing the securities and/or freedoms of both migrants, their families, as well as the people of the destination countries (Abiri, 2005; Graham & Poku, 2005; Song & Cook, 2014).

This paper lends towards the latter because this paper sees migration as a development or humanitarian issue and aims to study migration so as to further the interests of the marginalized and vulnerable migrants.

2.6.3 What does Human Security have to do with migrants?

Having adopted the theoretical position of looking at the “human securitization of migration”, the question now is to consider how does migration affects the human security of the migrants? In other words, what threats do migrants face or are able to mitigate as they embark on labour migration?

As argued above, labour migration is a strategy for migrants to seek better quality of life. However, migrants face significant information asymmetries and uncertainties in their decision-making (Goodman, 1981; Kau & Sirmians, 1977; O'Connell, 1997). As such, migration decisions can be seen as an investment (Bowles, 1970).

While past research on how migrants act and make decisions under conditions of uncertainty have often been done by micro-economists who seek to develop economic models to explain migration trends (Bowles, 1970; Goodman, 1981; Kau & Sirmians, 1977; O'Connell, 1997), there are merits in connecting the micro-economic discussions with that of the human security framework. This is because, central to the concept of human security is the notion of threat (Song & Cook, 2014), which is essentially the probable negative impacts that could affect one's well-being or daily life either chronically or as a shock (UNHCR, 1993).

If we were to follow the economic argument that individual migrate as a rationale act to maximize benefits and minimize costs or damages, coupled with the empirical evidence that Cambodians mainly migrate for economic reasons, it becomes important to consider more comprehensively the types of potential threats and to integrate them into the decision-making for migration, so as to more accurately reflect the true costs and benefits of migration, to ensure better and more accurate decision-making. Clearly, the juxtaposing of the above academic literature suggests a strong case for integrating the human security framework with studies on migration decision-making .

It is unfortunate that so far only Chea (2014)'s paper remains the only literature that adopts the human security framework into discussion of Cambodian labour migration. Even then, it is only focused on Cambodian irregular migrants working in Thailand. Clearly, there is a research gap to fill in studying the human security of Cambodian labour migrants.

As aforementioned, there are seven domains of human security:

(i) Personal security:

Song and Cook (2014) has suggested that labour migration, especially irregular or undocumented migration, runs the risks of reducing one's personal security because their precarious legal status leaves them unprotected by the laws. They may be afraid of approaching the authorities to attain their legal rights entitlement, and thereby be more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse by employers and other actors, and unable to have their fundamental human rights protected. For example, Chea (2014) has noted that Cambodian migrants in Thailand, especially the irregular migrants, do not approach the police for help even if they are victim of crimes or have been exploited, for fear that their illegal status will lead to deportation. This situation is also linked to the migrants' vulnerabilities to human trafficking

Not only would state organs and instruments that were meant to protect the rights of individuals unable to provide the necessary entitlements, they may even threaten and further erode the personal security of the migrants by threatening or using illegal violence, abuses, exertion or deportation, as Battistella (2002); Chea (2014); Maltoni (2006) has observed in Thailand.

Moreover, Maltoni (2006) has also noted that some migrants may suffer from debt bondage, in that their freedom to move and seek other employments are restricted by their debtors whom had earlier lent money for the migrant in times of emergency.

Maltoni (2006) has also noted that Cambodian migrants also face the threat of having their documents confiscated by their employers or authorities, thereby making it difficult for them to attain their rights entitlements in Thailand and Malaysia.

(ii) Community security

As Chea (2014) argues, labour migrants, especially low skilled ones, are often discriminated against because they become associated with jobs that are most people in the receiving countries avoid, thereby forming negative stereotypes that overspill into being seen as a threat. Such myths and unfair discrimination by the locals who hold political sway would in turn result in state action that restrict the basic freedoms of these migrants so as to “mitigate” the negative threats that such migrants bring to the host community. These actions such as banning inter-provincial travel, imposing curfews, limiting the right to assembly are clear violations of the fundamental human rights and detrimental to the personal security and community security of the migrants.(Maltoni, 2006)

Such discrimination and segregation has also been observed in Malaysia.

Moreover, as Vasuprasat (2010) Thaweessit and Napaumporn, (2011) has shown, migrants usually are not able to access local social networks and interact with the locals, as in the case of Cambodian migrants in Thailand, thereby affecting the social capital of which is a part of community security.

(iii) Economic Security

In terms of economic security, labour migrants may be paid substandard wages, given poor working conditions or not being given sufficient rest days(Song & Cook, 2014).

In Thailand, Jerrold W Huguet and Punpuing (2005) has shown that Cambodian migrants are often paid less than the minimum wage, excluded from most injury

compensation schemes and pension funds, further compounding the erosion of their economic securities.

(iv) Food Security

As a result of possible economic exploitation, maltreatment or insufficient wages, migrants may lack access to food of sufficient quantity and nutrients (Song & Cook, 2014).

(v) Health Security

In terms of health security, labour migrants may be forced to perform unsafe jobs or have no or limited access to healthcare, sanitation and hygiene thereby threatening the health and environmental securities of oneself and the host community's members (Song & Cook, 2014).

The expensive health insurance scheme might also price out the migrant from affordable health care, and in some cases, as Maltoni (2006) has noted, resulted in debts for the migrant, thereby affecting his or her economic security.

Chea (2014) has also noted that cultural and language barriers might hinder the migrant from being able to access healthcare, in the case of international migration.

Moreover, research has found that some migrants would engage in jobs that are vulnerable to certain diseases, for example, Chea (2014) found that male Cambodian migrants who are in the fishery industries in Thailand tend to be engaged in risky sexual behaviours after returning from stints on the boats, thereby increasing their vulnerabilities to sexually transmitted diseases and HIV. This may also apply to internal migration, which in sex work either as a sideline, as in the case of migrants who migrate to work in Garment Factories in Phnom Penh (Nishigaya, 2002), or as a main occupation for certain female migrants in Thailand (Chea, 2014), has been observed.

As aforementioned, while the human security framework provides us with a useful tool to comprehensively study the potential threats and the vulnerability of each migrant to these threats during the migration process, however, it is unfortunate that only Chea(2014) has adopted it as the organizing framework for his research. While other scholars have separately looked at the threats in their work, there clearly is a lack of comprehensiveness in that political security, food security and environmental security remains understudied.

More importantly, the human security situation of each migration option has not been sufficiently studied. Chea(2014) has given a thorough study of Cambodian labour migrants in Thailand, however the other destinations remain under-studied. Yet, this paper will argue that it is important to fill this research gap because to help provide more information to aid migrants in choosing the most suitable migration path, the human security landscape of each migration option needs to be systematically analyzed.

2.6.4 What does Human Security has to do with the migration impacts?

As defined above, human security is essentially concerned with the threats that labour migrants would potentially face when they embark on their migration journey. Yet implicit in the human security and human development paradigm, is the capability approach to development(Alkire, 2003; Bajpai, 2000; Nelson, 1997).

The capabilities approach to development posits that people have agency to attain the goals of development and thus, should be empowered with the capabilities and capacities, so as to overcome various forms of unfreedom(Sen, 1999). Unfreedoms are essentially threats to well-being and/or development.

Thus, juxtaposing the capabilities and the human security approaches, we see that the threats that migrants face will only impact the outcomes of migration after being filtered through the migrants' agency or capabilities to manage the threat.

2.7 Research Gaps & Research Directions

In sum, this brief recap of literature suggests 3 gaps that this thesis shall aim to fill:

- (i) The assumption that migrants are all rational actors acting on perfect information.
- (ii) The lack of coverage on migration option decision-making in Cambodia and exploring the link between decision-making and migration outcomes.
- (iii) The lack of use of the Human Security Framework in providing a more holistic evaluation of migration impacts in Cambodia.

CHAPTER III

MIGRATION IN BOEUNG

To explore the links between migration decision-making and outcomes of migration, it is first imperative to understand the context and dynamics of migration decision-making. Thus, this chapter shall focus on introducing the migration context of Boeung village, propose a typology of migration options that rural Cambodians can choose from, before the next section analyses the decision-making process that migrants go through to reach a conclusive migration decision.

3.1 Background on Migration in Boeung

Firstly, *migration outflow in Boeung is substantial*. This phenomenon has been felt and acknowledged by both village leaders and members of the village.

According to the village head, Mr. H1 (personal communication, May 7, 2015), “so many young people have gone old, leaving only the old people and children.” Similarly, youth leader, Mr. S (personal communication, June 4, 2015) shared that “now the village has no people, all the young people, last time my friends, all go out to work.”

Such perceptions were further confirmed by empirical evidence collected in this study. According to a randomly sampled (n=50) survey of Boeung households, 78% of the surveyed households have at least 1 member who have migrated for work and on average, each household have 2.6 members who are currently employed outside Boeung.

Clearly, Boeung is experiencing migration on a relatively large scale and we can expect the outcomes of migration to have significant impacts on the village.

Secondly, *economic reasons are the most common motivating factors* for Boeung natives to engage in labour migration. This can be seen from the observation that the most common reasons being “poor”, the lack of jobs in the village, inability to make ends meet from rice farming or debts, as found through the randomized household surveys (n=50) and in-depth life history interviews (n=22).

This suggests that migration dynamics in Boeung is largely congruent with mainstream economic theories of migration and existing research literature on Cambodian migration (Massey et al., 1993; Ministry of Planning, 2012; Sophal, 2009a).

However, we *cannot discount social-cultural factors, such as family ties and connection with the homeland* that would moderate the migration decision-making process.

On closer inspection, we can interpret migration in Boeung as follows:

- i) ***Migration in Boeung occurs because rural Cambodians want more income.*** Through the randomized household surveys (n=50) and in-depth life history interviews (n=22), we find that this may be due to a shortage of cash assets or due to an aspiration to “earn more”.
- ii) ***The local economy in Boeung is not able to provide greater income generation opportunities*** for those who want more income, thus, they have to migrate out of Boeung to seek avenues and opportunities to generate greater income.

This is congruent with what the dual market theory had suggested; migration occurred in Boeung because of the differences between the undeveloped Boeung economy and the more prosperous and dynamic economies of migration destination (Lewis, 1954; Tolbert et al., 1980).

Should Boeung be able to provide such opportunities, perhaps migration outflow would not have happened. Thus, we can conclude that a disjoint between Boeung villagers' economic needs and what Boeung's economy could provide, was a key driver of migration outflows.

- iii) On a deeper level, we can also understand migration in Boeung in the context of the *socio-economic change from an agrarian substance-based economy to a consumerist and capitalistic economy*.

Consider the fact that in Boeung, most households have traditionally relied on subsistence-based rice farming and livestock rearing to meet their livelihood needs. It is this way of life that has been inherited from generations to generations, that explains why most households own land plots that are only big enough for subsistence agriculture. This would have met the nutritional and food intake needs of a family as in the traditional way of life.

With the advent of manufactured consumer products due to the interconnectivity with the urban markets, the demand for and expenditure on such products in the rural area has increased.

However, the consumerist economy places more emphasis on trading and cash-based transactions in meeting the needs of each household. This, in turn, means that rather than focusing on subsistence farming, wage labour becomes more important because the cash-based income can then be used to trade for other products available on the market. In other words, needs are now to be met via cash-based waged labour and exchanges in the market rather than being met within a household through subsistence farming.

However, many households continue to organize their lives around subsistence production modes as shown in the fact that almost all of the surveyed continue to engage in rice farming as a main employment. As such, they continue to be

cash-poor, even though they may be able to receive adequate supplies of rice to sustain their lives as their ancestors had done so.

Since a cash-based consumerist economy allows one access to a greater variety of goods, migrants can be expected to be attracted by the wider range of good available.

However, their pre-existing agrarian livelihoods do not endow them with the ability to purchase these goods, resulting in these rural Cambodians having to engage in the production methods of a consumerist society: waged labour.

As aforementioned, there exist a lack of sufficient wage labour opportunities in Boeung, thus, rural Cambodians migrate out to engage in cash-based income generation activities.

As such, we can understand migration outflow in Boeung occurring because of the socio-economic transformation that is happening between agrarian livelihoods to a capitalist model of economic organization. Villagers engage in labour migration so as to participate in the more attractive capitalist economy.

- iv) The *issue of “choice” and “agency” of the migrants must be carefully considered*. While it is tempting to extrapolate the economic differentials between Boeung and other more developed regions to suggest economic determinism; i.e. migrants have “no choice” but to migrate out of Boeung to “survive”, the reality is more nuanced.

On the one hand, *there are indeed those who are “forced” to migrate because of economic shocks* such as the accumulation of bad debts due to failed investments, death of the breadwinner (Ms PP 8, personal communication, June 3, 2015) . These represent the minority and they tend to have the whole family migrating as a unit.

On the other hand, the *majority are those who voluntarily seek a better way of life because of their own aspirations*. These represent the majority and they tend to have only the family's youths and adults of working ages migrating for work.

While both of the above group claimed to have been “forced” to migrate because they are “poor”, the amount of agency or choice in the latter group is clearly higher than that of the former. This is especially when we juxtapose against the minority who chose not to migrate despite knowing of the potential economic benefits of migrating:

As Mdm. R2(personal communication, May 16, 2015) puts it, “there are also ways to survive and earn money in the village, it is just the young people cannot wait... want things faster. For me, it is a matter of patience.”

Clearly, each of the above groups have different levels of choice and agency, and it is less accurate to portray rural Cambodians as being “forced to migrate”; there is a degree of volition in choosing the desired economic lifestyle and to subsequently adopt migration as a strategy or instrument to realize the aspired lifestyle.

- v) ***Connection with the “homeland” features prominently in the migration experience*** and decision-making, acting as a “pull-back” factor against permanent migration.

A recurring theme throughout the in-depth life history interviews is that labour migration is seen as a temporary or short-term livelihood strategy to “earn money”, so as to “help the family”.

However, when asked if the ultimate aim of labour migration was to leave the village, villagers tend to reject this idea. Instead, the majority hopes to “earn

enough money” so as to return to the village to engage in other forms of income-generating activities or even to retire from work.

This observation is consistent across the randomly surveyed households and life history interviews with returned migrants. It is possible that there might be a self-selection bias in this observation, for the returned migrants could have claimed attachment or preference for returning to Boeung because they do not have alternative choices that they can afford, or that this research focuses on returned migrants and does not adequately sample migrants who have left Boeung because of weak connection with the “homeland”.

However, the strong prevalence amongst the return migrants, even extremely successful ones who had become businessmen and could afford to buy landed properties in Phnom Penh, also found a certain sense of attachment with the “homeland”, suggests that the pull-back factor should not be ignored; although Mr PPS 1 (personal communication, June 2, 2015) has properties in Phnom Penh, he would still like to maintain a house in Boeung, so that he may spend time at “home”.

While it is difficult to conclusively generalize this finding, we can see that connection to “homeland” is likely a prominent factor in migration decision-making that warrants more coverage and attention.

It must be noted that the concept of “homeland” while consistently prominent in the findings, its definition and interpretation varies widely across individuals.

For some, it is the attachment to the “homeland” where the family is; for others it is the “rural lifestyles and environment” that appeal to them.

Thus, although new economic theories of migration suggest about the family or household being the unit of decision-making or playing a central factor in

migration decision-making(Stark & Bloom, 1985), the findings in Boeung would caution against doing so.

This is because while the family plays an important role in Cambodian societies and cultures, the coherence of each family varies widely.

Some families like Mr. PPS1's are less coherent with weaker familial ties, with each member of the family responsible for their own survival, yet he still claim an affinity to the homeland (Mr. PPS1, personal communication, June 2, 2015).

Others, such as Mr. R23(personal communication, May 20, 2015)'s while stronger in familial ties, allow members of the family the latitude to individually decide on whether to migrate or not.

In either case, there is a strong affinity and preference for Boeung as an ideal place of residence. Thus, the new economic theories are valid if and only if the family has strong coherence, strong familial ties and actually discuss their migration decisions as a collective.

Perhaps it is more useful to consider the “pull-back” factor to be Boeung as the idealized “hometown” which unfortunately is lacking in economic vibrancy and prosperity. Even though it Boeung is economically backwards, the surveyed villagers still value it intrinsically. Thus, instead of abandoning Boeung in search for an alternative “homeland”, they seek to solve their individual economic problems elsewhere so as to return to their beloved “homeland” to lead an ideal life: rooted in traditional lifestyles yet being cash-rich to afford material goods and luxuries.

Clearly economics cannot displace the socio-cultural connection to the “homeland”.

From the findings, the only factor that can modify the socio-cultural connection to the “homeland” is marriage. It has been found that upon marriage, while the socio-cultural connection to the “homeland” is still strong, its contents are now reoriented towards where the newly-wed’s “homeland” is.

For some, it is the bride’s homeland, for others, it is the groom’s. When this researcher asked further, the newly-weds were not able to account for how they chose which homeland do they re-orient their affinity to the “homeland” to (Mr. and Mrs M5, personal communication, May 28, 2015). This is an area of potential future queries.

Nevertheless, even when married couples migrate, the desire to return to their “homeland” remains prominent.

In sum, while the economic woes of the homeland motivate migrants to head out for work, the socio-cultural connection continues to bind them to their rural homes. This accounts for the high prevalence of temporary rather than permanent migration. This finding rejects cultural theories such as the “bright lights theory(Du Toit, 1990)” that suggest that migration to urban areas are ends in themselves .

Thirdly, the findings *worryingly suggest that that there might be an overtly biased perception of migration* as a highly efficient and effective livelihoods improvement strategy and that sharing of migration experiences and information relating to migration is limited.

A strong link between migration and “earning more money” was observed in both the randomized survey and in-depth interviews. Firstly, when asked if they felt if migration was a “good thing”, an overwhelming majority of the household interviewees said yes, whether or not any members of their family had migrated.

When probed further on how it was a “good thing”, the overwhelming answer was that it brought in more cash income.

However, when asked if there was anything “bad” about migration, 95% said that they were not aware of anything “bad” or any “risks”.

Taken at face value, this suggests a biased perception of migration. Critically, we need to consider if the interviewed villagers were truthful in this survey; it is possible that they were reluctant to disclose knowledge of failed migrants to avoid embarrassing him or her.

However, when we juxtapose such a preliminary finding with the in-depth interviews with migrants, we find that few of them were aware of the risks and dangers involved in migration. Most had assumed that migration would bring about positive benefits.

The above point to the highly likely situation that there is a positive bias towards migration as an effective livelihood improvement strategy.

Lastly, ***information exchange about migration experiences is asymmetrical: ‘good’ news get spread more than ‘bad’ news.*** While almost all of the household interviewees reported to have known of fellow villagers who had become richer after migrating, only less than 20% reported to have known of fellow villagers who had failed or ended up being poorer after migrating.

Such findings can possibly be interpreted as either the villagers were not comfortable with sharing information about other villagers who had experienced migration failure for fear of embarrassing them or that villagers who had failed in their migration tended to keep a low profile to avoid embarrassing themselves.

However, in either case, it is clear that information sharing is limited and biased towards sharing of positive migration experiences. The fact that this author and

the key informants of this study had difficulties in locating or snowballing failed migrants for in-depth case studies further reinforces this point.

In conclusion, the above evidence strongly suggests that there is an overtly positive bias towards the positive outcomes of migration and limited awareness of the risks involved, and this may be linked to the limited and biased information sharing on migration experiences. This is worrying because, as the next section will show, migration entails many risks that will affect the expected outcomes of migration. Failure to acknowledge and make adjustments to protect against such risks puts the migrant in potentially vulnerable situations to end up worse off than they would have should they have not migrated.

3.2 Profile of Migrants

According to the field-based survey, labour migration is primarily motivated by economic aspirations for higher incomes and greater material quality of life, in most cases. In other words, it is a chosen lifestyle aspiration for most.

Under this context, it was found that working adults form the bulk of the labour migrants, because they are physically most suitable for work, being at the ages of being economically active. On the other hand, dependents such as retirees and school-going children are seldom found participating in labour migration. Only in rare exceptional cases, such as that of an economic shock to the family or extreme poverty, are dependents found participating in labour migration.

However, the precise limits of economically active ages are subjective and dependent on each family's perception of education. Parents generally allow their children to attend primary and secondary school, however, it has been noted that the majority drop out during or after high school to participate in labour, often migrating for work. A small minority do allow their children to continue beyond high school before migrating for work.

As such, most labour migrants have received education up to secondary school level, migrating at the age of 15.

Again, those who were forced to migrate due to economic shocks, tended to drop out at the age at which the economic shocks happened. As such, this research has noted that the youngest migrant migrated at the age of 14, after dropping out of secondary school, while the oldest is 62 years of age, migrating because of economic shocks.

As for the socio-economic status, it must be noted that almost all strata have been involved in labour migration, further suggesting the poverty and limited nature of economic opportunities in the village. However, one's socio-economic status does affect one's migration options because each migration option has different barriers to entry and risks.

Those from the highest strata tended to aspire to migrate internally for its low risks or South Korea for its lower risks and higher payouts. Those in the lower strata tended to migrate internally because of its low costs and barriers of entry, and tended to aspire to migrate to Thailand or Malaysia in search for higher payouts, albeit at higher risks.

It is often found that before one is married, as long as one is fit for economic activities, both males and females can potentially migrate. Upon marriage and the birth of a child, females may decide to stay home while the male migrates out for work. However, should they be economically stressed or when the children is older (age of above 2), it is also common for parents to leave their young children in the care of their extended families.

3.3 Migration Options

In the context of Cambodia, a potential migrant is potentially faced with a plethora of options:

- (i) Migrating to other parts of Cambodia, such as Phnom Penh, Siem Reap etc., for work. According to different surveys of multiple villages, almost half of the respondents aspire to migrate to Phnom Penh (Fitzgerald et al., 2007; Ministry of Planning, 2012).
- (ii) Migrating to Thailand to perform labour work is another major option, that makes up almost half of the total migrants (Ministry of Planning, 2012; Sophal, 2009a). However, most of the migrants to Thailand are undocumented or illegal migrants (Sophal, 2009b). These are mainly unskilled labour workers in the construction, fishery, manufacturing and agriculture industries (Maltoni, 2006).
- (iii) Migrating to Malaysia to be female domestic helpers (Sophal, 2009a). Malaysia is considered a major destination ranking after Thailand. Other employment opportunities in Malaysia include the construction, manufacturing and entertainment sectors (Maltoni, 2006).
- (iv) Migrating to South Korea to be industrial factory workers. This option is often limited to male migrants (Sophal, 2009a). What is interesting, as Maltoni (2006) has noted, is that migrant workers heading to Korea must first undergo a 3 months training programme to learn about life in Korea, in hope of helping the migrants pick up skills that will be useful when they return to Cambodia.
- (v) Others such as Saudi Arabia, Taiwan, Singapore and Japan (Sophal, 2009a). These options are much rarer.

These findings are validated in Boeung where Internal Migration, Thailand and South Korea stand out as the more popular choices.

Table 1: Overview of Survey Results

	No.	%
Internal Migrants	102	79.4%
Thailand	23	17.7%
South Korea	2	1.5%
Malaysia	0	0.0%
Total	130	100%

In Boeung, internal migration remains the majority, with almost 80% of migrants migrating internally; while only about 20% partake in international migration.

It must be noted that although the random sampling process did not return any households with members migrating to Malaysia, the purposeful sampling process did return about 5 migrants who had travelled to Malaysia for work, suggesting that Malaysia as a destination must not be ignored in our study.

3.4 Migration Decision-Making Styles

Having discussed the available migration options, next section analyses the decision-making process that migrants go through to reach a conclusive migration decision.

As argued above, with a diversity of migration options available, to maximize the benefits of migration, migrants or would-be migrants will have to carefully find the most appropriate migration option considering his or her personal circumstances and context.

Thus, this paper shall further argue for the importance of how decision-making styles affect the ability of migrants or would be migrants to choose the most appropriate migration option, which in turn, would subject the migrant to the risks, human insecurities or securities and potential impacts of the selected migration option.

First, this paper shall propose the key dimensions and criteria that will assist in creating our typology of decision-making. This paper considers 3 key dimensions that will assist in organizing the typology:

- (i) Decision-making locus of control, i.e. whether the individuals have the power to make their own decisions or are the decisions imposed on them?
- (ii) Reaction to information, i.e. do they take what is told to them as it is or do they critically question or challenge information given.
- (iii) Key decision-making reference, i.e. do they decide their course of action based on a thought-through strategy, availability of job opportunities or following the crowd?

Secondly, this paper shall present a typology of 4 decision-making styles based on the above dimensions, as follows:

3.3.1 The ‘Strategist’

The ‘strategist’ is one that has a highly internal locus of control over his or her decision-making process. While family members and friends may provide inputs or indicate their preferences or advice, the strategist is the ultimate decision maker. Thus, his or her key decision-making reference and information reaction styles are critical to his or her decision-making styles.

The key feature of the strategist is a conscious attempt to exercise a relatively coherent plan, guided by his or her goals and evaluation of his or her situation after

each migration episode. This allows him or her to recalibrate or change his or her migration decisions and choices, according to new information and insights he or she has gained through the previous migration experience. In turn, his or her approach becomes more empirical-based rather than opinion-based.

The strategist's key reference is his or her plan, which in turn, is a careful thought through and is guided by his or her goals. More importantly, the strategist's reaction to information is a combination of being critical, in that he or she will question prevailing thoughts or assumptions about migration and he or she tends to adopt a more experimental approach to managing his or her migration decision.

Guided by his or her insights gained from experience and observations, the strategist may tend to invest some time to search for opportunities or ways to realize his or her goals, even when opportunities are not directly presented to him or her.

For example, consider the case of interviewee PP1 (personal communication, June 2, 2015), who left Boeung at a young age for Phnom Penh. He professed to have always been interested in the traditional Khmer art of stone carving and his motivation for migration was to earn a living to support his family.

However, when he first came to Phnom Penh, he initially worked as an assistant at a relative's handicrafts business because that was the only contact that could provide him with a ready job opportunity. Thus, he had to compromise and settle for it.

After a few years, he quit his job to enroll in a stone-carving school after learning that the owner was his brother's friend, allowing him to attend the school at a fee that he could afford. This was a conscious decision to change his migration option, upon the arrival of new opportunities that allowed him to be closing to attaining his goals.

Subsequently, after learning that starting his own business was key to improving his financial position, he moved to save enough money to start his business, even though his previous job was satisfactory. This is yet another conscious decision to adjust his strategy, as guided by a coherent adherence to his ultimate aims.

3.3.2 The ‘Hermit’

The ‘Hermit’, like its name suggest, is characteristic for choosing his or her migration option based on what job opportunities is known to him or her to be available at the point of his decision-making. Thus, even though his or her decision-making locus of control is internal, the hermit’s key reference is currently known available job opportunities.

As such, the hermit’s migration episodes reflect the prevailing local economic norms more closely than the other roles. Unlike the strategist, the hermit does not actively seek out better opportunities except those that present themselves.

For example, consider the case of interviewee PP4(personal communication, June 3, 2015). He is currently a construction site leader, who is tasked with recruiting and directing a labour force to build houses according to the requirements of the real estate developer.

Like a typical hermit, his migration decisions are based more on the job opportunities available to him.

When he first left Boeung when he was 20 to spend 14 years working as a construction worker in Koh Kong, his decision-making was informed by his “friend” who had asked PP4 to accompany him to Koh Kong for work. Clearly, the job opportunity ‘presented itself’ to him. Even though it fell short of his migration goals and aspirations, he neither quit nor attempted to find better job opportunities.

Similarly, his reason for returning to Boeung after Koh Kong was also because the job opportunity had expired.

His return to construction work, albeit in Phnom Penh, in 2014 was also because of a new job opening for a construction site leader that came to him because the previous site leader, a fellow villager from Beoung, quit.

Mr. PP4 did not consciously set out to find better job prospects, but was more than happy to take up the opportunity after it had presented itself.

To some extent, it seems that Mr. PP4's good fortune in receiving job opportunities and job offers seems to be relatively random and not a result of his active actions. When asked if he has any plans, he said he only had a vague target outcome of "just earn money", clearly he does not have a plan or strategy as sophisticated as that of a strategist.

3.3.3 The 'Follower'

Although the follower has control and ownership of the decision-making process, he or she tends to be reference to others around them to make decisions. They may either be overtly trusting or somewhat impulsive in evaluation information given to them.

For example, consider the case of interviewee couple, Mr. and Mrs. T1 (personal communication, May 18, 2015), as well as the case of interviewee couple, Mr. and Mrs. T4 (personal communication, May 19, 2015). Both cases are highly similar in that both were unsatisfied with their pre-existing jobs and were motivated to migrate with the lure of better income after hearing from their friends.

More worryingly, both couples made snap decisions to leave for Thailand to work illegally without passports, upon seeing their friends deciding to go to Thailand. For Mr. and Mrs. T1, they were only knew that they were going to work in a factory,

and did not know further details such as how much wages would they command, lodging and accommodations and other contingency issues.

For Mr. and Mrs. T4, the decision was even more impulsive; they claimed that they saw their “friends boarding a mini-bus to Thailand to work, so they immediately decided to take their clothes to go... [even] without informing their families.”

Clearly, both couples are typical followers who made decisions without thinking much about the potential consequences and risks, instead they had assumed that if their friends are migrating, the migration option their friends had chosen can be trusted.

3.3.4 External Locus of Control

For some of the migrants, the decision to migrate was imposed on them by other authorities. In this case, to explain the decision-making process, one needs to look at the decision-making style of the decision-maker instead.

Table 2: Decision-Making Styles

Decision-Making Styles	Locus of Control	Key reference	Reaction
Takes on the role of the decision-maker	External	-	-
Strategist	Internal	Plan	Critical & Experimental
Hermit	Internal	Job opportunities	Normal
Follower	Internal	Others	Impulsive & Trusting

CHAPTER IV IMPACTS ON HUMAN SECURITY

4.1 Internal Migration & Human Security

As shown above, internal migration in Cambodia is the overwhelmingly popular choice for rural migration with over 80% of the survey respondents having participated or are participating in internal labour migration. Of which, the most popular destination is Phnom Penh, with almost 75% of internal migrants choosing to work in the capital city.

The types of jobs that our survey respondents have been involved in, includes: construction worker, craftsman, domestic helper, retail or service assistant, factory workers.

4.1.1 How do migrants move to Phnom Penh for work?

a) Key Information Sources & Networks

According to in-depth interviews with 8 migrants from Boeung, there exist many pathways and methods to finding work in Phnom Penh, which we can broadly classify as one of the three categories:

i) Social Network

Firstly, by social network, the most common of the 3 is through social networks with friends, relatives or neighbours acting as intermediaries. Such intermediaries may be those who have migrated before and are in connection with prospective employers, or in some cases, run their own businesses in Phnom Penh.

It is noteworthy that the handful of most successful migrants from Boeung who run their own businesses or are in managerial positions in Phnom Penh do consciously recruit from Boeung. This is probably because of both out of affinity with fellow villagers and out of convenience:

For example, 2 of the most successful migrants who run their own stone or wood carving businesses in Phnom Penh enjoy high popularity in the village, and their family members who still reside in Boeung are often approached by fellow villagers who aspire to move towards Phnom Penh (Mr. PPS1 and Mr. PPS2, personal communication, June 2, 2015). 2 of the interviewed stone carving business owners are entrepreneurs who had left Boeung decades ago to learn their crafts and eventually start their own businesses. They chose to hire their fellow villagers because they want to “help the village”; while a construction worksite leader working in Phnom Penh chose to recruit from the village because he requires large numbers of labourers and his social network is primarily in the village.

ii) Commercial Middlemen

Secondly, the next most common is through a commercial middlemen acting as an intermediary. According to key informant interviews which were later verified by a larger scale survey, there exist 2 middlemen for Phnom Penh job opportunities.

It must be noted that such commercial middlemen are not professional recruiters who exist to provide employment matching services. Rather, they are also members of the village who have become “institutionalized” as middlemen because of their connection with businesses and recruiters in the city.

For example, one of the middlemen helps the upper class in Phnom Penh recruit domestic workers began because of a chance meeting with a rich businessman who was looking for a domestic helper. After recommending a fellow villager to this businessman, this businessman then introduced other members of the upper class to her, eventually making her the de facto expert in domestic helper recruitment. What

initially was a non-for-profit linking up became her second job which she continues today (Mdm. KFIM1, May 24, 2015).

It must be noted that these middlemen note the decline in inquiries and requests from villagers for their “service” in recent years, possibly because of the increasing interconnectivity between Boeung and the internal migration destinations; as more people participate in internal migration, more information about migration and more linkages with employment opportunities are formed and taken back to Boeung and shared within Boeung, more intermediaries of the social network category emerge, reducing the reliance on commercial middlemen.

iii) Go First, Find Jobs Later

Lastly, the least common method is to move to the destination first before finding a job opportunity. This is a pathway that was more common before, but is now rare because of the prevalence of social networks that can provide information and linkages to employment opportunities.

b) General Process

In general, the process is as follows:

i) Firstly, a trigger factor is needed:

While economic reasons seem to be the overwhelming factor, the trigger can be an economic shock, a “coming of age”, or the realization of the benefits of migration. Examples of economic shocks would include defaulting on loan repayment, death of the breadwinner. “Coming of age”, refers to the point in time when the individual is deemed to be old enough to contribute to the family’s income through work. Finally, realization of the benefits of migration would include seeing friends or neighbours returning from successful migration, learning employment opportunities from friends of neighbours or seeing broadcast advertisements of employment opportunities placed by recruiters or middlemen.

ii) Information Gathering & Decision-Making:

Following which are information gathering about available options and pathways, as well as the decision-making itself. While making or after making the decision, potential migrants might seek more information from his or her social network. The wide variance in information gathering strategies and efforts are noteworthy.

On the one hand, there are migrants who take on the first migration opportunity that they learn of from their social networks, without searching for potential alternatives. Not only do they tend not to collect more information about alternative migration options, neither do they solicit more information about the first migration opportunity they come across.

Take for example Mdm PP7 (personal communication, June 3, 2015), the whole family migrated to Phnom Penh to do construction work after an economic shock that had forced them to sell their land and livestock, mortgaging their previous sources of livelihoods. The head of the household shared that they did not find out about the salary that they would receive, or about the cost of living in Phnom Penh. They jumped at the first employment opportunity after their neighbour had told them about it. Now, their monthly expenditure is so high that they struggle to save enough to stand a chance of buying back their land and livestock, even though they aspire to save enough to return back.

On the other hand, there are some migrants who would query more about the migration and job opportunity presented, but stopped short of comparing to other migration options.

Take for example Ms. PP3 (personal communication, May 26, 2015), who migrated to Phnom Penh to be a housekeeper did query the middlemen about the salary, accommodations and work arrangements before embarking on her migration

episode. However, she ended up realizing that the housekeeping job was not able to meet her economic aspirations. While she was well aware of the salary before she had agreed to the work, she did not go further to find out about other job opportunities. It was only on hindsight that she wanted to find other job or migration opportunities.

It can be expected that the probabilities of the first and second type of migrants attaining their aspired migration goals is suspect. For the former, it is largely a gamble and a game of luck; while for the latter, they would already know beforehand if their chosen option would payoff to the extent they had expected.

What is intriguing for the latter is the perceived lack of options and inactivity; these migrants could have looked for better migration options yet they were not aware of their potential agency. This suggests that migration decision-making is clearly not a rational decision-making process; each migrant has his or her own style of decision-making and would correspondingly put in different amounts of effort in information collection. As the bounded rationality model suggests, they collect information to the point that they subjectively consider to be sufficient to make a good decision. Herein lie the variable that might influence the quality of decision being made.

Theoretically speaking, it is not possible to have full perfect information, neither is it easy to develop an objective benchmark or rule of the thumb by which a potential migrant can decide if he or she has collected sufficient amounts of information. However, the last type of migrant seems to have reasonably maximized their probabilities of attaining favourable migration outcomes.

Lastly, there are also migrants who are more conscientious and selective, in that would find out about alternative migration opportunities such as international migration, compare the various known and available options before deciding on their migration choice. This is, theoretically, the best decision-making strategy for it implicitly acknowledges economic rationality in that migration decision-making is a zero-sum game, in which only one option may be undertaken each time. The taking up of one option necessarily requires the sacrifice of the other, thus, opportunity costs, or the benefit that can be derived from the next best alternative that has been

sacrificed for the option undertaken, must be considered. The logical outcome is that one needs to compare between options to find the best option, which this group has done so.

It is interesting to note that there exist a small group of migrants belonging to this category tend not to choose internal migration options because of the awareness of the wide disparities between the potential benefits of internal migration and international migration.

It must be noted that after their first migration episode, migrants may realize the limitations of their chosen migration option in realizing their aspirations, as such, they start to adopt an economically rational paradigm in which they would make decisions not solely by looking at a singular option more fully, but to evaluate the current option against the alternatives.

iii) *Finally, the actual travelling to migration destination and beginning work.*

The only mode of transport from Boeung to Phnom Penh or other domestic migration destinations is by land. This is often done via National Highway No.6 which cuts across the village. Head south on the Highway leads to Phnom Penh and the other South-western destinations, while heading North brings the migrant to Siem Reap and other migration destinations. The cost of travel from Boeung to the domestic destination is always paid for by the migrant, with one-way travel ranging from USD\$3 to USD\$30 depending on the distance and type of vehicle, with travel duration not between 2 to 12hours. Take for example, Boeung to Phnom Penh would cost between USD\$3 to USD\$10 in price and about 3 to 4 hours.

4.1.2 What do migrants see in Phnom Penh?

First and foremost, *Phnom Penh represents economic or job opportunities.* This manifests in two key ways:

One, Phnom Penh has jobs that Boeung cannot provide. For example, some jobs only available in the city would include factory work, housekeeper etc.

Two, for the same types of jobs, Phnom Penh pays more than that of Boeung. Take for example, the unskilled labour in the construction sector, PP2(personal communication, May 21, 2015) shared that working in the provinces (Kampong Thom and Boueng) will earn about 50USD per month, but in Phnom Penh, it can go up to USD100 per month.

Secondly, *for the earliest rural migrants, Phnom Penh was seen to be the “only choice”* because of limited connectivity to other destination in the early days. As Mr. PPS1 (personal communication, June 3, 2015) puts it, “Phnom Penh was the only choice.. because is everything; the rich [also] come, the poor [also] come”.

Again, this has implications on the migration choice today:

Being the “oldest” and most “established” migration option, discourse on migration in the village would perpetuate Phnom Penh as an *obvious option or almost the “default option” to consider*.

As the first migration option to be established, it has since accumulated the greatest amount of migrants who have been to Phnom Penh. These migrants would naturally form a *bigger social network that brings information and linkages to the job opportunities*, than other destinations, thus, taking a leaf from the migration systems and network theories(Fawcett, 1989; Massey, 1986; Massey et al., 1993), the greater social network would over time give more social support and institutions that support and lower the costs for future migrants, making the option more attractive.

More importantly, internal migration *has relatively low costs, lower barriers to entry and fewer risks relative to other options*. It is also an option that allows migrants to *drop out or back out easily*.

However, the trade-off or down side is that the payouts or benefits are relatively lower. This shall be explored in greater details below, using the human security framework:

4.1.3 What are some of the risks and potential benefits of working in Phnom Penh?

While all aspects of Human Security were explored through in-depth interviews in the field, this paper found that economic security, especially income security, was the top concern for migrants working in Phnom Penh.

In summary, the key risk of working in Phnom Penh lies not in whether one is vulnerable to exploitation by employers, nor in exposure to health, environmental or security hazards. Rather, the key risk of working in Phnom Penh lies in the difficulty of realizing one's income aspirations because of the high costs of living.

a) Income Security(Economic)

From the migrant's perspectives, Income Security is indisputably the most important aspect of Human Security. 3 key observations can be made about migrant's understanding of income security of moving to Phnom Penh for work:

Firstly, there is a general sense of income security in spite of weak enforcement of labour standards and the wider macroeconomic trends suggesting that there are not enough jobs in Phnom Penh to cater for the inflow of migrants.

In terms of size of income, labour migration to Phnom Penh or to most parts of Cambodia has been seen as and would likely yield higher incomes than working in Boeung, as discussed in the previous section, where by it has been argued that Phnom Penh offers jobs that are non-existent in Boeung and even for the same category of jobs, destinations outside Boeung pay more than Boeung does.

More specifically, salaries range from 50USD per month to 200USD per month, on the lower end of the spectrum would be unskilled labour in construction work, domestic helpers; while the other end would include business-owning craftsmen and managerial positions of worksites.

In terms of risk factors in income security, there is a general sense of confidence in income security on two counts:

First, there is the confidence in the timely remuneration by employers in that none of the surveyed or interviewed respondents reported being denied pay by their employers. Almost all of the surveyed felt that there was “no problems” migrating to Phnom Penh to work and employers defaulting on payment never considered.

However, while individual villagers rarely consider the legal protection and other social protection mechanisms, an evaluation of Cambodia’s labour laws and social protection mechanisms would show some of the systemic loopholes in terms of income security. Labour laws are segmented between certain privileged industries such as the garment industry because of the unique linking of export quotas to advancement of labour rights, and the rest of the formal and informal economy in which most Cambodians are employed in. The former having more substantial protection such as minimum wage and arbitration mechanisms for labour disputes, the latter enjoying none of such(ILO, 2010).

Clearly, the lack of legal protection and enforcement is a risk factor, even though such exploitation has not been widely reported from Boeung villagers.

Secondly, there is a lack of awareness of the macroeconomic conditions of Phnom Penh. While the respondents all saw Phnom Penh as a place with economic opportunities, as reported above, there is a total lack of knowledge of the fact that many studies have shown that Phnom Penh does not create sufficient jobs for the rural migrants(Hughes & Un, 2011). This represents two issues for the migrants: new

migrants may not be able to find jobs and that existing migrants would see their wage levels constantly depressed by the labour market.

Secondly, there is a general acceptance or acquiesce of the less than optimal labour and remuneration arrangements.

In general, working hours and conditions vary widely, dependent on the employer and job type. For some, such as construction workers and domestic helpers, there are virtually no rest days and they work more than 10 hours per day. For the factory workers, because of the unique legislative environment of the garment and manufacturing industry, there are mandated limits on working hours that are being enforced (Polaski, 2006).

It must be noted that although the labour laws have explicitly mandate that employees can work for a maximum of 8 hours per days, 48 hours per week and must be given one full day off, meaning 24 consecutive hours, per week, according to the "Labor Law of Cambodia" 1997). However, there is a general lack of awareness of such laws on the part of the migrant workers, a general lack of enforcement on the part of the authorities, and a general lack of adherence on the part of the employers.

Yet, Mdm. PP 2 (personal communication, May 29, 2015) who works in the construction industry has no rest days, works 9 hours of day with no rest days, which is in direct breach of the labour laws, has never considered himself to have been treated unfairly by his employers whom he considers to be a “good boss”, in his own words

Clearly, with the legal protection weak, it is up to individual employers to determine the working conditions and terms for their employees. For migrants, it is up to each individual’s tolerance levels, he or she can decide if he or she wants to accept such working conditions or to find alternative employments.

On balance, it is not so much of a potential risk, but there is widespread acceptance of non-compliance with labour standards. This is not to suggest that all migrants are necessarily exploited, because migrants have agency and are generally not coerced into jobs they do not accept.

The key issue is whether migrants realize that they have such a choice and right to demand for better working conditions. Most are unaware of their rights to certain standards, but most do turn away for better opportunities after trying out a job for some time.

Thirdly and most importantly, there is a high risk or potential of migrants to Phnom Penh not being able to attain their income aspirations.

While the income levels in Phnom Penh are one of the highest in the country, the net economic outcome of migration is not dependent solely on income. The net benefit is the resultant of the expected economic benefits minus the cost of living in the destination and the cost of transit.

The respondents of this study have all flagged out the issue of high costs of living in Phnom Penh as a critical factor in determining the outcomes of their migration.

Consider the case of Mr. PPC(personal communication, June 5, 2015), who was employed at a Phnom Penh worksite: he was paid 3USD a day, but has to spend at least USD1.25 a day on food and USD10 per month on other necessary expenditures, leaving him with only USD42.5 of net income, which is similar to the amount he would have earned by working in Boeung. As such, he considers to “no(sic) meet my target” and the migration episode a failure.

There are two further observations that must be raised:

Firstly, there is a variance in terms of the employers' coverage of living provisions such as lodging, food and basic necessities. While most of the migrants surveyed have to pay for their own food, lodging and basic necessities, some migrants do enjoy such amenities provided. In general, it is not expected of the employers to provide for such, except for stay-in jobs such as domestic housekeepers. This is an important point to note because it is the cost of living that plays an influential role in determining the success of migration outcomes.

Secondly, it must be noted that of 10 respondents interviewed, only 5 of the respondents rated their experience in Phnom Penh as "successful".

The common thread amongst the 4 of them is their focus on upgrading themselves: 2 of them are running their own businesses after learning craftsmen skills, 1 is running his own construction company after learning from engineers in Phnom Penh, while 1 has accumulated 14 years of experience to be recently promoted to a construction site leader. These 4 individuals were able to command higher incomes that match their aspirations because they were performing jobs that were higher up the value chain, relative to the other villagers who were engaged in unskilled labour.

The only migrant who was able to meet her income aspirations while engaging in unskilled labour was working as a factory worker in a garment factory. This should be interpreted as an exception rather than the norm because the garment industry in Cambodia enjoys special labour protection enforcement that are not applicable to the other industries. Moreover, the garment industry's prospect for further expansion or sustainability is suspect or limited at best, thereby giving it little room to absorb more migrant workers (Bargawi, 2005; Natsuda, Goto, & Thoburn, 2010; Rasiah, 2009).

Yet, for the other 5 who had failed in their migration episodes to Phnom Penh, their aspirations were not met possibly because they were performing unskilled labour that cannot give them sufficient income. They had little plans or awareness of the possibility of climbing up the value-chain to take on higher-paying but more demanding jobs and were solely focused only on income generation.

Thus, there is a high risk for such unskilled migrants, who form the bulk of the migration outflow, will not be able to attain their economic aspirations, in spite of Phnom Penh being seen as the land of economic opportunities.

b) Personal, Political & Community Security

Second is the issue of Personal, Political and Community Security, which refers to the fundamental human rights, rights to be free of discrimination and rights to identity or a community (Song & Cook, 2014), there seems to be less of a risk factor in Phnom Penh.

In general, ***there appears to be fewer risks involved that can potentially threaten a migrant's personal safety or basic human rights, except for sporadic reports*** noted below.

Of the few indicators of personal and community security surveyed, none of the respondents reported any instances whereby they felt that their personal security of their lives or property were threatened, neither did they experience being victims of any crimes, nor faced any threats of unlawful arrest, detention, harassment from any state authorities. Clearly, they did not consider Phnom Penh to be dangerous or risky to migrate to.

They also had almost no restriction on their rights to movement, gathering, except for those employed as full-time domestic helpers in which the norm is to almost always be in the employers' house. It is interesting to note that for PP3 (personal communication, May 27, 2015), the domestic helper, she did not consider this to requirement of staying in as being problematic or potentially risky.

Perhaps the only noteworthy complaints were verbal discrimination by co-workers or employers for coming from the rural areas and not accustomed to urban lifestyles. For example, PP3 who was a domestic helper was once scolded by her

employer for “not knowing how to operate a car door” because she was “a villager from the countryside who did not know anything”. The coping mechanism was to ignore and the respondents did stress that these were often once-off incidents.

As we can see, perhaps the occupation of being a domestic helper stands out as being more vulnerable to threats to personal and community security.

However, on a more general level, it must again be noted that systemic legal protection is suspect, although many migrants or households with migrants reported little problems on this front, suggest that the likelihood of such threats to be low or moderate.

c) Food, Environmental & Health Security

Next, is the issue of Food, Environmental and Health Security. Food and Environmental Security would be concerned with the sufficiency of nutrition value and quantity of food, the availability of water, as well as the general living and working environment(Song & Cook, 2014).

The key finding is that ***Food, Environmental & Health Security are often under the purview of the migrant and self-determined***; Phnom Penh provides ease of access to food, safe accommodations and healthcare and there is usually enough income to pay for better living conditions , it is a matter of how much the migrant wishes to spend on these.

As aforementioned, food and lodging are often under the migrant’s own purview, as such, it is difficult to paint a general picture. Most migrants attempt to limit their food and lodging expenditure and thus would settle for whatever quality they can afford. As such, food security is not about hunger or malnutrition as the migrants do earn enough to buy food. The issue is about the nutritional value because the migrants have agency to decide on their food intake, constrained by their willingness to spend.

As for Environmental Security of living space, it depends on the type of jobs. For construction workers, they often live in incomplete worksites, where they may be exposed to worksite hazards. For domestic workers, they almost always stay in the employer's house. While the actual location and conditions of the domestic helper's living space varies, the respondents have shared that it is often better than their rural homes. For other jobs, the onus is on the migrant to find his or her own lodging, thus each migrants have agency to decide on their quality of lodging, constrained by their willingness to spend.

As for Health Security, as a general rule, the law requires all employees to pass a medical check of which the costs are borne by the employer (I. S. Heng, 2009; "Labor Law of Cambodia," 1997). However all respondents interviewed showed no awareness of such a rule and this rule is effectively ignored in reality.

On the issue of healthcare access and sick leave, respondents noted that sick leaves are non-paid and they have to be responsible for their own medical expenses. This is in contrast to the law, which requires employers to be paid on sick leave at least for first 3 months of illness (I. S. Heng, 2009; "Labor Law of Cambodia," 1997).

Since healthcare expenditures are covered by the migrants themselves, they tend to self-medicate and avoid missing work even when sick. Thus, the quality of healthcare they receive is suspect.

In terms of work-related injuries, there is no general rule again, it is up to the employers to decide on their own compensation policies. These policies are usually not spelt out formally, but migrants know about them only when their colleagues are involved in accidents and receive compensations that the employer unilaterally decides on. While the law does stipulate that employers must pay for the medical bills and compensation, it does not spell out procedures nor guidelines on determining the amount (I. S. Heng, 2009; "Labor Law of Cambodia," 1997), thereby putting migrants at the mercy of their employers' goodwill.

As this section on health security has demonstrated, migrants are quite vulnerable and open to risks due to the lack of legal protection enforcement. They are often potential at the mercy of their employers' goodwill, yet this issue has rarely been raised or discussed before a migrant decides to take on a particular migration option.

4.2 Migrating to Thailand & Human Security

Migration to Thailand is the second most popular destination for rural Cambodians in Boeung. As this is an international migration that requires the crossing of international borders and legal jurisdiction, there are significant challenges, risks and costs involved that make it different from that of internal migration. The key difference being the higher costs and premiums that has to be paid to gain access to Thailand legally.

However, the expected payoffs are also considerably higher.

It is also important to note that because of the porous land borders between Cambodia and Thailand, there exists a black market where there are opportunities for migrants to migrate into Thailand at lower costs than they would have to pay via the legal routes. However, this would naturally also increase the risks and potential problems.

The job options that rural Cambodian migrants have found themselves taking on are primarily unskilled jobs that include being factory or farm workers, retail assistants etc.

4.2.1 How do migrants move to Thailand?

a) Key Pathways

As suggested above, the legal regime of international migration imposes itself on the pathway for international migrants, in this case, rural Cambodians, to enter Thailand for work, resulting in higher costs of transit and migration. Yet, the higher costs may not be affordable to every Cambodian migrant. Those who cannot afford to pay this premium will have to look for illegal ways to enter.

As such, we can categorize the pathways to Thailand into:

- A) Legal pathways
- B) Illegal pathways

Moreover, due to the added administrative and legal procedures required, as well as the absence of free flow of job opportunity information, rural Cambodians tend to be less well informed about the legal and administrative procedures required. Thereby, in international migration, middlemen, especially commercial middlemen play an exceptionally pivotal role. Relative to internal migration, social networks are relatively weak and underdeveloped, while the option of “move first, find job later” is virtually unheard of because of the lack of knowledge on migration know-how.

b) General Process

The typical pathways are as follows:

- i) ***Firstly, a trigger factor is needed:***

Much like internal migration, economic reasons seem to be the overwhelming factor motivating migration. However, the difference between migrating to Thailand and internal migration is that while internal migration is seen as the “default” option, migrating to Thailand is seen as an “alternative” or “step-up” option from internal migration.

- ii) ***Information Gathering & Decision-making:***

After deciding to go to Thailand, the would-be migrant will have to search for a concrete pathway to travel to Thailand.

As mentioned above, the information barrier is so high that all have to resort to some form of commercial middlemen to travel to Thailand and seek employment. There is little choice in this, therefore, it is accepted as inevitable that the price paid to the commercial middlemen is a given.

The commercial middlemen or other intermediaries would be key in providing the information that the migrant requires to make a key decision:

Perhaps the most important decision for a migrant to make is to decide if he or she wishes to pursue a legal or illegal pathway. The primary considerations of this decision are costs and expected outcomes.

To enter Thailand legally, the costs varies widely according to the middlemen that a migrant chooses. Some such as Mr. R2 (personal communication, May 26, 2015) have reported that his experience cost USD400 for passport making, transportation by land and guaranteed employment opportunities, while others have reported costs going above USD500 (Mr. M5, personal communication, May 28, 2015). Through a key informant interview with a Boueng villager who acts as an intermediary representative of a commercial middleman based in Phnom Penh, she suggested that her company charges USD450 (Mdm. KIFM2, personal communication May 27, 2015).

Clearly, the lack of free flowing information on the price of legal migration to Thailand has rendered space for commercial players to mark up their prices. Take for example, the case of making a passport:

As the Cambodian Interior Ministry has announced, the official price for making a passport is USD124 and 20 working days, the reality is that most of the migrants are not aware of the official prices, therefore a black market of brokers has emerged (Sophal, 2009a). Even amongst the brokers, the prices for similar services vary. Unfortunately, none of the migrants interviewed ever considered comparing

prices amongst different middlemen, simply because they were not aware of where and how to find the other middlemen.

To enter Thailand illegally, the costs can range from USD55 to USD75 for one-way transport through illegal crossing and an approximately further USD15 for linking up with job opportunities. As with legal migration, depending on which middlemen a migrant chooses, the prices can vary.

Also of note is that the waiting time for passport making, obtaining the relevant work permits and waiting for job opportunities vary can range from at least 3 months to half a year as Mr. R2 reported (personal communication, May 26, 2015). While the illegal channels were reported to be much faster by Mr. M4 suggested (personal communication, May 29, 2015).

In the following sections and analysis, this paper will highlight the differences between the legal and illegal pathways to show that not only are the price barriers to entry different, the resultant risks and potential benefits are also very different.

It must be noted that unlike internal migration, the variety of jobs available to would-be migrants from Cambodia is much limited to unskilled labour. As previous research has noted, Cambodian migrants tend to be found in the “3Ds Jobs” that are dirty, dangerous and difficult (Chea, 2014; M. Heng, 2013; Sophal, 2009a, 2009b; Sophal; & Sovannarith, 1999), as such, there are little opportunities for the migrants to choose their jobs, much less to think of choosing their jobs.

iv) Finally, the actual travelling to migration destination and beginning work.

As mentioned above, there exists a dichotomy between legal and illegal migration to Thailand and this extends to the transit to and from Thailand and Cambodia.

The domestic leg of the travel, either from Phnom Penh to the border crossing at Poipet or from Boeung to Poipet is the same as described in the internal migration section, for both legal and illegal migrants. This is because of the legal right to the freedom of passage and movement that Cambodian citizens have.

However, the border crossing experience is radically different. For the legal migrants, it is rather effortless and routine, often travelling in a mini-van or a coach. Yet for the illegal migrants, it is a very difficult journey.

On the one hand, due to the profit maximization of the commercial middlemen, respondents Mr. M7(personal communication, May 29, 2015) reported that a seat on their mini-van was shared with “5 or 6 people”, while Mr. M4(personal communication, May 27, 2015) claimed that there were about 35 people in their mini-van.

On the other hand, because of the need to avoid the custom officials and border guards, the illegal migrants have to either “hide in the dark for 2 or 3 days” or “walk through thick forests at night”, without proper food or rest, before the Thai counterparts pick them up, where they would be driven quickly on the Thai highway to their destinations, while evading police checks.

In particular, Mr. M7 recounted how he was very scared as the van he was travelling on was stopped for a police routine check, yet the driver sped off suddenly and did not stop in spite of the Thai police shooting at the van. He recounted how they were extremely fortunate to have survived the ordeal.

As we can see, while M7’s experience was likely the exception rather than the norm, it goes to contrast the security and relatively risk-free option of legal migration. The risks and potential benefits of both options will be further elaborated and explored in the human security framework in later sections.

4.2.2 What do migrants see in Thailand?

As aforementioned, migrating to Thailand is seen an “alternative” or “step-up” option from internal migration.

It is noteworthy that many migrants going to Thailand or who have gone to Thailand chose it out of disappointment with the less than satisfying migration outcomes of internal migration.

As Mr. R3 (personal communication, May 21, 2015) who has worked in Phnom Penh before working in Thailand puts it, “Thailand can earn lots of money, in Phnom Penh [can earn] little money but cannot save, in the village [can]no[t] [earn] money.”, clearly Thailand is seen as another opportunity to attain one’s financial aspirations after internal migration has failed to do so.

Even though peer comparison, i.e. learning about a peer’s experiences in Thailand, or social network, i.e. friends or family recommending the migrant to a job, are factors observed to have played a part, the learned or experienced disappointment with internal migration options continue to play a dominant role. This suggests a growing recognition of the limited net positive outcomes of migrating internally.

4.2.3 What are the risks and potential benefits of working in Thailand?

In terms of potential benefits and risks, this paper will argue that significant disparities exist between legal and illegal migration to Thailand:

a) Income Security(Economic)

Firstly in terms of income security, we can observe a difference between the legal and illegal migrants. For the former, those interviewed showed that they all

received their pay on time and were all paid above the minimum wage of 300THB per day, meaning that they were much well-off than their counterparts in Phnom Penh.

As Mr R3(personal communication, May 21, 2015) shared, he used to earn USD100 a month in Phnom Penh as a service assistant. In Thailand, as a factory production assistant, he was earning 310THB a day or approximately USD270 a month, allowing him to realize his economic aspirations.

On the other hand, M4 (personal communication, May 27, 2015) who entered Thailand illegal reported that she was paid only 1000THB or 30USD a month, much less than what she was earning in Phnom Penh before. Even though she realized that she was exploited, she was not able to return as she had no money to return. She decided to continue working but her final straw was when she had saved just enough and her boss started to withhold her salaries. It was then when she decided to return to Cambodia.

Of course, this is not to suggest that *illegal migration would necessarily expose oneself to income insecurity*, for example, illegal migrants M7 (personal communication, May 29, 2015) and R1 (personal communication, May 25, 2015)reported having good employers who paid them above the minimum wage at 350THB and 600THB per day.

However, what is illuminating about M4's case is that she felt helpless and had nobody to turn to for help, not only were the police, the legal enforcer and protector of legal rights, not one she could turn to, she was also constantly evading the police because of her illegal status.

While scholars are generally sceptical about whether legal migrants receive adequate legal protection even when minimum wage and other labour laws are in place(Jerrold W. Huguet, 2014), income vulnerability is perhaps heightened when one is an illegal migrant.

As far as the above case studies suggest, *the determinant of income security seems to reside in the “nature” of the employer*. However, whether one ends up with a good or exploitative employer is almost a matter of luck; a more reliable alternative is to look at the systematic protection that legal statuses can at least assure.

Even then, this paper recognizes that relative to internal migration, in which the migrant has more agency and power to reject or exit from an exploitative arrangement, moving across borders makes the cost and convenience of doing so much more complex, thereby the risk level is higher.

Secondly, the issue of net outcome must be considered. The net benefit is the resultant of the expected economic benefits minus the cost of living in the destination and the cost of transit. In the case of migrating to Thailand, it seems to many migrants that the benefits due to the much expectation of minimum wage of at 300THB per month is vastly higher than the expected income for unskilled labour in Phnom Penh.

The issue in question is the cost of migration, which would consist of much higher transportation charges and middlemen charges, which mattered much less in internal migration, and the risks involved.

As M4's case has illustrated, should one be exploited and be paid less than what one would have earned in Phnom Penh, one would suffer a loss of not only the differential in income between the two places, but also the higher migration costs, making the migrant absolutely worst off than when one was working in Phnom Penh.

Moreover, unlike internal migration, whereby migrants have greater agency to escape from an economically unviable labour arrangement relatively easily, M4(personal communication, May 27, 2015) was literally stuck in Thailand because she was not able to afford the trip back, which would cost between 2,500 to 10,000THB for an illegal entry back to Cambodia, depending on her middlemen's

mark-up (M8, personal communication, May 30, 2015; M7, personal communication, May 29, 2015).

Looking at the differences between legal and illegal options, while illegal options have the chance of turning out like M7 (personal communication, May 29, 2015) and M8's case thereby making them on the whole, receiving a bigger payoff than R3 who had paid more to enter legally, illegal migration it also has the potential to turn out more catastrophically like M4's. Thus, will there is no guarantee of success; illegal options seem to be riskier.

Thirdly, looking at other aspects of economic security such as adequate rest and holidays, it must be noted that both legal and illegal migrants faced the potential of having employers who refuse to give them adequate rest.

For example, while both R3 and R2 were legal migrants, the former was given paid leave and could rest on weekends, while the latter was not given unpaid rest and asked to perform unpaid overtime work. However, it is noteworthy that neither R3 nor R2 placed much emphasis or importance to these working arrangements. R2 did not express to the interviewer that felt that he was treated unfairly, instead he considered his migration experience to be successful because of the income that he was commanding.

This suggests that while we are concerned about such arrangements, the migrants may either be unawares of their labour or economic rights, or that they simply are less concerned because such aspects of human security do not affect the realization of their economic aspirations directly

b) Personal, Political & Community Security

In terms of political, personal and community security, which refers to the fundamental human rights, rights to be free of discrimination and rights to identity or

a community(Song & Cook, 2014), there seems to be more significant relative to internal migration in Phnom Penh, and especially so for illegal migrants.

First and foremost, it must be acknowledged that because of how the transportation and transit processes are handled by the commercial middlemen, and *it is usually difficult to ascertain the reliability of the middlemen until after one has completed the transit process, there is an inherent risk of being trafficked involved*, regardless of whether one is a legal or illegal migrant(Jerrold W. Huguet, 2014).

Secondly, in terms of *being victims of crime, discrimination and extortion, the risks are present for both legal and illegal migrants*. This is because the legal protection afforded to legal migrants is only as strong as law enforcement efforts possibly can deliver; it is not omnipotent and such, it is no surprise that although R3 and R2 are legal migrants, they have reported episodes of being discriminated. Also, Mr R1 although having been registered, documented and have received the Tor Ror 38/1 card, was still extorted by Thai policemen for 300THB (Mr R1, personal communication, May 25, 2015). Clearly, while legal status does offer protection, it is not a guarantee of a risk-free environment.

Thirdly, *the risks are heightened both at transit and at work for illegal migrants because an additional actor to hide from, that is the Thai police*. This manifests in two ways:

One, the need to hide from the police brings psychological stress and if caught, these migrants are at their bosses' mercy, in that they require the bosses to bribe the policemen. Should the boss refuse to do so, there is a risk of deportation or having to pay for their own bribes.

All 3 illegal migrants interviewed all shared in vivid details how they were very scared and had to hide themselves in dirty or dangerous places such as the sewage tank or the roof of the buildings. They also mentioned how they were worried

and feared the worst should their employers not come and pay the bribe for their release.

Two, as a result of having to hide from the police, there is likelihood that employers might place additional restrictions on the freedom of movement. All 3 interviewed were not allowed out of their workplace as a result.

Clearly, we have seen how local corruption further complicates the risks and potential dangers these migrants face in Thailand.

c) Food, Environmental & Health Security

In terms of food and accommodations, migrants have reported that the norm is for the migrants to pay for themselves. However, some employers may be exceptional in that they may provide free food or lodging. In either case, across both legal and illegal migrants, all but 1 reported being very satisfied with the food or lodging, claiming that these arrangements were much better than that of their own country.

Although this is difficult to generalize from this small sample, it does illuminate the fact that ***food and accommodations arrangements are often not the top priority of the migrants.*** Moreover, the outcomes are often determined by the employer.

In terms of health security, the legal (including registered) migrants noted how they could flash their “cards”, which would refer to the Tor Ror 38/1 card, at public hospitals to receive healthcare at affordable prices. However, it ***depends on individual employers to decide if they would give unpaid leave for sick employees.***

4.3 Migrating to Malaysia & Human Security

Although this paper's randomized survey did not find any migrants working or having worked in Malaysia possibly due to the small sample size, official statistics showed that Malaysia while not a large recipient of Cambodian migrant workers, like the scale of Thailand, it is still one of the more significant receiving countries, ranking third overall.

Thus, it is unsurprising that this paper's purposeful sampling was able to find 5 respondents who had migration experiences to Malaysia.

While domestic helpers and factory workers used to dominate the jobs that Cambodian migrants were employed in Malaysia, following a 2011 ban imposed by Prime Minister Hun Sen following reports of worker abuse by Malaysian employers and Cambodian recruitment agencies, factory work was the only type of work available (Huling, 2011; Kassim, Too, & WONG, 2014).

4.3.1 How do migrants move to Malaysia for work?

In general, the process for legal is as follows:

i) Firstly, a trigger factor is needed:

As with most cases of labour migration, the economic imperative is an important factor. However, the difference for Malaysia is that it is a less known and popular choice. On the one hand, it is not as popular as Thailand for being close and potentially more lucrative than internal migration; on the other hand, it is not as selective and highly lucratively as South Korea.

Thus, for potential migrants to choose Malaysia, this paper is of the view that a trigger factor is equally important. Unless there exists some cultural affinity with

Malaysia, like in the case of the Cham people, or some form of intermediaries (such as friends, relatives of commercial middleman) extolling the benefits of working in Malaysia, Malaysia is unlikely to be as attractive as a destination.

For example, Mr. MV1 and Ms. MN both attributed it to the attractive advertisement and touting by commercial recruiters for convincing them that work in Malaysia is “easy [to do] and can earn good salary”(Mr MV1, personal communication, June 2, 2015; Ms. MN, personal communication, June 3, 2015). For M6(personal communication, May 26, 2015),it was because her church and community leaders were friends with a middleman whom they trusted, thus they recommended M6 to consider Malaysia, M6 noted that if not for this recommendation, she would not have gone to Malaysia.

ii) ***Preparation and payment to middlemen***

In this phase, the middlemen are again crucial for providing the intermediary services because international migration requires close knowledge of the administrative procedures and linkages with the job market at the destination. Both of which migrants or rural Cambodians do not possess. Thus, the migrants have no choice but to be dependent on the middleman.

However, as for the payment, it depends on the job opportunity and employer. For domestic workers, it is the norm the agent fees, passports and tickets and other costs such as medical examination fees are borne by the employer first, and to be deducted from the eventual salary, as M6 noted(personal communication, May 29, 2015). For factory workers, some have to pay upfront USD300 for passport, blood tests, air tickets and a simple exam, others will have their bosses pay first before being deducted from their salaries (Mr MV1, personal communication, June 2, 2015).

iii) ***Traveling to migration destination and beginning work***

From the interviews, the waiting time between payment and departing for the destination by plane is between 4 to 10 months for the processing of the visa and job application. (M6 , personal communication, May 29, 2015)

It must also be noted that even though Cambodia does not share borders with Malaysia, there still exists “illegal” means of entering the country, people who enter on non-work visas to work or those who overstayed their visa term to continue working. Even though the ‘source’ of ‘illegal’ status differs from that of migrating to Thailand, illegal migrants, similarly, face heightened risks and challenges from that of legal migrants.

For example, Ms. MN(personal communication, June 3, 2015) decided to return to Malaysia to work illegally after her first attempt as a legal migrant worker failed because the middleman had overpromised the salary that she was expecting. Instead of spending USD300 on middlemen fees that she no longer trusted, she spent USD150 to enter Malaysia illegally via a journey consisting of a road trip, long trek through the border regions and finally by boat, and entering Malaysia as an illegal migrant.

Alternatively, Mr. R9 (personal communication, May 24, 2015) entered Malaysia as a legal migrant but overstayed after running away from his first employer who retained his official documents. Also, Ms. M5(personal communication, May 23, 2015) entered Malaysia on a tourist visa before overstaying 2 years to work.

4.3.2 What do migrants see in Malaysia?

Malaysia being one of the relatively more development Southeast Asian countries and one that has also been relatively open to migrant workers to supplement its local workforce is a natural draw for migrants looking for economic opportunities.

However, when compared to other migration options, such as Thailand, there does not seem to be as much a confidence in or popularity as there might be

for Malaysia as a destination. For most of the randomized surveyed, they seemed to be more interested in Thailand, possibly because of the much larger number of migrants who have travelled to Malaysia.

For the minority of Cham people in Boeung, there is however some cultural affinity with Malaysia that perhaps has tipped the balance in favour of going to Malaysia to work. Otherwise, for most of the Khmer respondents who had gone to Malaysia, they were often convinced of Malaysia's attractiveness because of a recruitment middleman or an intermediary's recommendations.

Otherwise, there seems to be less conviction or enthusiasm for Malaysia as a migration destination compared to that of Thailand.

4.3.3 What are some of the risks and potential benefits of working in Malaysia?

a) Economic Security

In terms of Economic Security, there exist two key risk factors.

First, *there is the issue of over-trusting the middlemen.* As argued above, international migrants are heavily reliant on middlemen, as the middlemen acts as a filter between the migration situation and the migrants themselves. This applies to both legal and illegal migrants.

It is worrisome that apart from M6 who was recommended to the middlemen whom her community leaders knew personally, the other 3 legal migrants were cheated by their middlemen to differing extents. For Ms. MN(personal communication, June 3, 2015), he was promised a much higher salary by the middlemen, he was only offered USD130 a months by his employer upon reaching Malaysia, which was just slightly more than what he was earning in Phnom Penh. Unfortunately for him, he was too embarrassed to ask for his family for help, therefore he stayed on until he saved enough to return.

For R9(personal communication, May 24, 2015), he had deliberately chose to work in Malaysia because the middlemen had promised “an easy job at an electronic factory”, in fact, he was considering between working in Thailand at a wood cutting factory and the Malaysian offer of working in an electronics manufacturing factory. Unfortunately, he was cheated by the middlemen, as he only found out when he was sent to work in a remote and tough wood cutting factory in Malaysia. He was initially promised USD250 a month by the middlemen, only to be paid USD50 a month by his employer. Therefore, he ran away but because his travel documents were withheld by his employer, he soon became an illegal migrant who needed to evade police checks.

Second, *both legal and illegal migrants are at the mercy of their employers in terms of income security and work/rest arrangements*, across all migrants interviewed, they were not informed about the legal protection of labour laws. For example, R9’s case is illustrative:

When he was a legal migrant at his first employer’s, he was not paid on time but he had no opportunity to seek recourse because his workplace was simply too remote to get legal help. When he ran away from his employer who kept his travel documents, effectively making him an illegal migrant, he found himself not receiving pay on time for the next two jobs he took on. It was only at his fourth job where he found a better employer who would finally pay him on time and paid him decent wages of USD400 a month.

This goes to show the risks that migrants to Malaysia are exposed to, regardless of their legal status. The labour protection is simply insufficient to guarantee what migrants value most, income security.

Lastly, *the high costs of migration often tip the balance against the favour of the illegal migration.*

Whether a migrant is successful or not, depends on his or her finding a good employer who pays more than what a migrant would command in Phnom Penh, as

well as allowing the migrant to work sufficiently long, so as to overcome the costs of travel, living and middlemen fees.

Even assuming that one has the good fortune of finding a good employer that pays well, the difficulty challenging for the illegal migrants is the costs involved to leave the country and to pay the bribes should they be arrested. The costs of leaving the country illegally via underground methods would cost about USD250 (Mr. R9, personal communication, May 24, 2015), while M5 (personal communication, May 23, 2015) had to pay a fine of USD1300 on top of USD300 for air tickets for a safer journey back. In this case, R9 and M5 were fortunate to have worked and saved enough to be able to afford the trips back.

Clearly, while it is tempting to choose the illegal path initially, the costs involved in leaving Malaysia as an illegal migrant was something few considered and can easily tip the balance in determining the net effects of the migration outcomes.

b) Personal, Political & Community Security

In terms of personal and community security, while there was only one instance reported of verbal discrimination, ***there was a notable worry for personal security because of the perceived prevalence or experience of crime***. As R9 (personal communication, May 24, 2015) recounted, he was robbed at knifepoint, while M5 (personal communication, May 23, 2015) noted how local gangsters would make her feel fearful of her surroundings.

Perhaps ***the most notable difference between the legal and illegal migrants lie in their relationship with the police***. For the legal migrants, even if the police is unable to enforce protection of their legal labour rights, they were at least immune to police spot checks; should they be victims of crimes, they could also seek reasonable police help. However, for the illegal migrants, not only were they not able to expect police protection, they were also subjected to fears and insecurities arising from police searches. In particular, Ms. MN (personal communication, June 3, 2015) noted how she or her employer had to bribe the police every week because of the police

raids, on certain months when the police mount an extensive “operation”, the bribe would go up RM3000.

As we can see, while legal status does not necessitate actual protection, the lack of one is punitive in that it increases the personal insecurity level.

Also of note is the *personal security of transit*. While legal migrant enter by plane, which is relatively routine and less of a risky journey; those who enter or leave the country illegally, such as Ms. MN or R9 (personal communication, May 24, 2015) respectively, would have to undertake a 3 day 2 night underground journey that while costing almost USD250, subjects one to a tiring and risky road trip, trekking through the borders and boat trips to get from Malaysia to Cambodia via Thailand and vice versa. Both Ms. MN (personal communication, June 3, 2015) and R9 reported that they felt extremely insecure on these journeys as they have to put their faith in the middlemen, making them vulnerable to being trafficked.

c) Food, Environmental & Health Security

On the issue of food, health and environmental security are dependent on the individual employer. In the absence of strict enforcement of standards or safeguarding of the migrants’ welfare, migrants are left to hope for a good employer that would provide enough food and adequate lodging arrangements while not charging the migrant too much.

On the one hand, the only job in which it is the norm for employers to provide for both food and lodging would be the domestic workers. On the other hand, most other jobs would require the migrant to at least pay for meals or lodging. In some cases, such as Mr. MV1 (personal communication, June 2, 2015), although she was promised free lodging and food, these were only free for the first two months and in inadequate quantities. Clearly, the risks on these fronts cannot be underestimated.

On the issue of health security, again the issue of access to healthcare and whether paid sick leave is given depends on the individual employer and is seemingly not related to the legal status of the migrant. Thus, there is always a risk on the health security front.

4.4 Analysis & Interpretation

Having analysed the above migration options, this thesis can distil the following findings:

a) It is insufficient to conceptualize migration options solely on geography, instead the legal status and nature of job opportunity must be considered.

As asserted above, each migration option entails different risks and potential impacts. So as to examine each option closer, this author has distilled the various options that are available to rural Cambodians, should they decide that they wish to migrate to improve their quality of life. While labour migration options have traditionally been split according to the destination, this paper would argue for a using 3 dimensions or criteria to develop a typology of migration options. The 3 dimensions are: Destination, Legal Framework/Status and Nature of Job (Potential for Upgrading). This is because having 3 dimensions allow us to more finely categorize the various options according to their potential risks and benefits.

Firstly, destination would naturally refer to the geographical locality and the corresponding socio-economic implications of the migration option, such as “Cambodia Internal”, “Thailand”, “Malaysia” and “South Korea”.

Second, “legal framework/status” refers to the legal protection and status (and the lack thereof) of the migrants. For example, a migrant might enter Thailand either legally or illegally and this has correspondingly different implications on his human security and resultant impacts of the migration episode.

The implication of this is that those on the illegal side would find themselves being targeted by legal and judicial systems, i.e. the law enforcement and judiciary are hostile or unresponsive to the migrant; while those on the legal side would usually find themselves being protected and shielded by the law enforcement and judiciary, i.e. they are friendly or protective of the migrants.

As interviewee ,Mr. T3(personal communication, May 29, 2015) had said, “having passport [makes things] easy”, he did not have live in fear of police checks, extortion by bosses and was paid above the 300baht/day minimum wage. In contrast, interviewee couple Mr. and Mrs. T4(personal communication, May 29, 2015), both 35 years old, had entered Thailand without passports to work because they “heard there can earn a lot, [even] without paying USD400-500 for passport”, they ended up having to be smuggled past the borders by walking through forests for a full day and night, paid lower than the minimum wage at 140baht/day, had to constantly evade police checks, while not being able to seek legal help when their bosses withheld their salaries and refused to pay them the minimum wage. They saw themselves as having to hide from, much less having to seek protection from the law.

As we can see, interviewee couple Mr. and Mrs T4, faced significant inhuman insecurities, ranging from the personal insecurity to economic insecurities, yet they were not able to seek legal protection unlike that of Mr. T3, because of their difference in legal status.

This dimension is usually more relevant to international labour migration, for the crossing of international borders entails a change in legal jurisdiction, which would correspondingly mean a relatively different in legal treatment enjoyed by the migrant in the host country compared to the home country. In contrast, the legal status of a Cambodian in his or her own country is uniform within Cambodia’s borders.

Third, “Nature of Job(Potential for Upgrading)” is concerned with the economic nature of each labour migration option. For all labour migration option, they are necessarily for income generation as unskilled labour, however, some labour

migration options offer the chance for the migrant to upgrade themselves to be able to take on “semi-skilled” or even “skilled” labour jobs or opportunities.

For example, migrant interviewee Mr. PP4 (personal communication, June 2, 2015), migrated internally to work in the construction industry, initially as a merely an unskilled labourer in Koh Kong for 14 years. The potential for upgrading was relatively limited until the latter years when he had gathered sufficient experience to become recognized as a “semi-skilled” labourer. However, the potential for upgrading was relatively higher when he moved to Phnom Penh a year ago, when he was offered the opportunity to become a worksite leader, who on top of providing manual labour, was tasked to organize the worksite’s labour force, thereby commanding higher prestige and pay.

As this PP4’s case study has shown, we need to consider the potential for upgrading of the migration option, because the economic impacts of migrating to be an unskilled, semi-skilled, skilled labourer and worksite leader are different: As interviewee PP4 suggested, the pay for unskilled, semi-skilled and skilled labourer are USD\$5, USD\$7 and USD\$10 per day respectively; while worksite leader pockets the balance of the entire worksite’s wage bill minus the wages of all other labourers under his or her charge.

Lastly, it is important to note that, the boundaries between each category are more continuous than discrete, especially with regard to the last category of “potential for upgrading”. “Potential for upgrading” is an ordinal variable and thus, its value only indicates a difference between 2 statuses. Correspondingly, this variable is judged relatively when compared between 2 migration options.

b) More successful migrants see migration as an attempt to upgrade themselves or their livelihoods rather than just gaining more income.

As noted above, the more successful migrants would see migration not just as an income generation endeavour, but also a skills building or livelihood upgrading one.

The common thread amongst successful migrants is their focus on upgrading themselves: 2 of them are running their own businesses after learning craftsmen skills, 1 is running his own construction company after learning from engineers in Phnom Penh, while 1 has accumulated 14 years of experience to be recently promoted to a construction site leader. These 4 individuals were able to command higher incomes that match their aspirations because they were performing jobs that were higher up the value chain, relative to the other villagers who were engaged in unskilled labour.

More most others because they had little plans or awareness of the possibility of climbing up the value-chain to take on higher-paying but more demanding jobs and were solely focused only on income generation, their success or otherwise depends on the risks, benefits and jobs that they take on, of which they arguably have less control over.

c) Migrants prioritize some aspects of Human Security over others and it is reasonable to do so as long as we consider the impacts of the risks.

From the above analysis, migrants seem to prioritize income over every other form of security. This is because of a lack of information of their legal rights, a lack of consideration of the risks involved and possibly also the willingness to trade-off other form of securities and to absorb the risks and hazards involved.

One interpretation of this is that some aspect of human security is more prized than others. In the context of a migrant aspiring to improve his or her livelihoods, perhaps the tolerance for human insecurities is high as long as the insecurity does not have a seemingly direct impact on his or her economic aspirations.

For example, within economic security, income security is prized higher than right to adequate rest. This is because rest is considered a 'luxury' that can be traded away for higher incomes. This is because income is more directly linked to and aligned with the anti-poverty aspirations of the migrant. This would explain why some aspects of human security are prioritized over others.

Moreover, as outlined in the above table and discussions, each migration option has a barrier to entry, which may be skills, age or money needed to complete the legal formalities. These barriers to entry serve as "prices" or "gatekeepers" and impose a cost on the would-be migrants. In general, the higher the payoffs and lower the risks, the higher the barriers to entry.

Herein lies the problem, some migrants who cannot afford the barriers to entry, would attempt to "cut down the costs" by attempting to enter the country illegally or overstaying. This would expose them to the risks, which has a probability of being translated into real negative impacts.

As a result of cutting down on the "costs" by going illegal, the removal of legal protection means that some form of freedom or security might be sacrificed, for example, by agreeing to work with an exploitative employer who disregards the legal protection of freedom of movement, a migrant would lose this right.

From a benefit maximizing perspective of the migrant:

Firstly, the issue then is whether the migrant is willing and/or capable of absorbing the negative impacts or risks from the removal of legal protection and its consequential security and freedom protection.

Secondly, can they be sufficient informed of the hidden costs or risks so as to determine if the risk is something they can take on.

Thirdly, there is a need to categorize between risks that can derail their economic aspirations or well-being, such as income security, risks of fines etc. and

risks that are less likely to have direct impacts, such as quality of accommodation and food., or freedom of movement. The latter can be safely traded-off with little direct impact.

Unfortunately, most interviewed migrants are not aware of such considerations.

d) Migration decision-making follows the bounded rationality model, however, balancing the amount of time and effort in information-gathering is tricky.

From the interviews, it is clear that information gathering efforts by potential migrants are limited and insufficiently consider important issues and risks.

On the one hand, there is the issue of limited information gathering about available options. Across the respondents, there seems to be a tendency to only consider one option, usually the option that they encounter first. This impairs their ability to increase their probability of success because it shuts them off from potentially higher-paying options.

On the other hand, there is the issue of limited information gathering about the expected benefits, costs and risks:

On just the economic dimensions, migrants tend to only consider the income but not the costs involved, nor the potential to upgrade themselves. This results in a dichotomy between those who travel to the same locality, got engaged in different nature of jobs (with potential for upgrading oneself or otherwise), getting polarizing outcomes.

If we were to consider migration as an instrument to escape poverty, each migration option offers different efficacies in attaining the goal of escaping poverty and such efficacies need to be acknowledged and evaluated before decision-making, so as to allow the possibilities of choosing the optimal option.

Unfortunately, such planning and consideration is only observed in the handful who invested in skills upgrading job options, who were able to distil maxims such as, “to do well, you need to have good skills” and “to earn, you need to start your own business”, that guided them towards attaining success.

4.5 Links between Decision-Making Styles & Impact

Lastly, this paper shall argue that decision-making styles would affect the probability of a migrant or would be migrant to choose the migration option most appropriate to him or her, which in turn, would result in the migrant being exposed to the impacts and human insecurities of that migration option being. Consequently, should the migrant be able to choose the most optimal option, he or she would not have been exposed to the human insecurities or negative impacts of the sub-optimal option.

On the surface, interview data has shown that all 3 roles, namely the strategist, the hermit and the follower, can result in both successful and unsuccessful migration experiences. This can be attributed to the incomplete information and the potential lack of resources on the part of the migrant at the point of decision-making.

On closer inspection, we realize that even as we acknowledge that there is a “randomness” of outcomes because the migrant or would be migrant is highly unlikely to have complete information of the migration option at the point of decision, nor definitely have all the necessarily pre-requisites and resources to choose the most optimal option, this paper would argue that the strategist style of decision-making is more likely to be yield more positive outcomes than that that of hermit and the follower.

Empirically, this claim can be backed up by looking at the extremes of successes and failures by strategists. The most successful strategists are now successful business owners in Phnom Penh (Mr. PPS1, personal communication, June 3, 2015), while the least successful one was exploited by Thai employers, and unable to attain legal recourse because she had entered Thailand illegally (Mdm. M4, personal

communication, May 24, 2015). However, it is important to note that upon realizing the “mistake” of choosing to work in Thailand illegally because she could not afford the passport fees of USD300, she returned to the Phnom Penh to rebuild her life after managing to return to Cambodia.

As we can see, even though adopting a strategist decision-making style cannot guarantee success, it allows the migrant to actively reflect and adjust their strategies according to the outcomes, thereby allowing negative outcomes to be adjusted and risks actively minimized. Clearly, even the most extreme failure by strategists has a potential to be corrected, thereby limiting the failure rate in the long-run.

As for the hermits and the follower, this paper will argue that the hermit tends to be more successful than the followers.

Conceptually, this is because the hermit’s referencing to the job market in decision-making is more reliable than referencing to the opinions of others. Job availability is more reliable because they are underscored by the job market, which is the primary instrument of matching migrants with employers. On the other hand, referencing to the opinions of others adds additional filters and variables that might distort the true information about the migration option. The efficacy or reliability of referencing to others is contingent on the accuracy of the information, which is suspect as the source of information cannot be verified.

Empirically, this can be evidenced by the observation that followers tends to return a wider and more extreme range of outcomes.

Consider the case of Ms. R2 (personal communication, May 27, 2015), one of the most successful ‘follower’, who used to work in a Phnom Penh factory until she “saw others go, so .. also want to go”, to Thailand in 2011. She did follow the model of others who did enter Thailand legally by applying for a passport. Eventually, she did earn enough to return and improve her family livelihoods.

On the other hand, consider the aforementioned cases of interviewee couple, Mr. and Mrs. M7 (personal communication, May 29, 2015), as well as the case of interviewee couple, Mr. and Mrs. M4 (personal communication, May 26, 2015). Both cases are highly similar in that both were unsatisfied with their pre-existing jobs and were motivated to migrate with the lure of better income after hearing from their friends, and following their friends footsteps in entering Thailand illegally, only to have to undertake dangerous journeys through forested border areas, before being exploited by their employers with no possible sources of legal recourse.

As we can see, in all 3 cases, the migrants were highly similar in their approaches, yet they turned out rather wide range of outcomes. This is because since additional variables, i.e. accuracy of information as it is being spread from persons to persons until the migrant or would be migrant receives the information, we should expect a more extreme range of outcomes.

Empirically, the fact that accuracy of information is extremely crucial can be seen by juxtaposing between Ms. M6's migration episode to Malaysia as a maid, as recommended by her pastors who knew and trusted the middlemen, ensuring that Ms. M6 was not exposed to human insecurities and negative outcomes (Ms. M6, personal communication, May 20, 2015).

In contrast, Ms. MV1's experience with the middlemen that was trusted and recommended to her by friends and family members who had positive experiences with this middleman, still failed to prevent Ms. MV1 from being cheated of her money by the middleman who has failed to deliver on the promise of sending Ms. MV1 to Malaysia in spite of her having paid up the full sum a year ago (Ms. MV1, personal communication, May 28, 2015).

As we can see, even though social recommendations are important indicators of reliability, the fact that even such information cannot be accuracy verified, underscores the questionable reliability of basing one's decision on the information provided by others.



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CHAPTER V CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Key Findings & Discussions

In conclusion, this paper has found that:

- (1) Labour migration in rural Cambodia is primarily motivated by economic factors, with most migrants aspiring to migrate for work to earn more income, so as to return back to their “homeland” with more economic resources.

Indeed, the prominence of the economic motivation is in congruence with existing literature on migration in general and Cambodia (Chea, 2014; Lewis, 1954; Sjaastad, 1962; Todaro, 1989; Tolbert et al., 1980). The findings also find the prominence of the “pull-back” factor or affinity with the “homeland” that although raised by anthropologist and sociologist (Brettell, 2008), have received considerably less coverage in Cambodian scholars who tend to focus on the economic or demographic aspects (Chea, 2014; M. Heng, 2013; Maltoni, 2006; Ministry of Planning, 2012; Sophal, 2009a, 2009b; Sophal; & Sovannarith, 1999; Sovannara, 2007).

While the lack of jobs in the village and the economic opportunities in the cities form powerful push-pull factors that motivate the migration outflow from rural Cambodia, we need acknowledge the powerful socio-cultural connection to the “homeland” which acts as a “pull-back” factor to make migration episodes temporary and not permanent, even when migrants have been highly successful.

- (2) While migration theories focus more on the structural factors that push and pull them towards migration (Massey, 1986; Massey et al., 1993), this must be balanced with an understanding that rural Cambodians have agency with respect to two issues:

Firstly, they have agency to decide if they wish to migrate. Migration decisions are motivated by lifestyle aspirations, which are, in turn, a matter of subjective choice. Except in circumstances of economic shock, most of the time, migrants seek better opportunities outside the village because of a subjective aspiration. This agency has seldom been recognized by existing Cambodian research literature.

Secondly, they have agency to decide which migration options to undertake. As De Jong (1999) has correctly pointed out, migration is a complex decision because migrants have to choose by comparing their goals with the options available. With each option offering different sets of risks and potential payouts, it is up to the individual migrants to decide on the path to seek.

However, it is important to qualify that De Jong(1999)'s discussion of agency in decision-making is premised upon the migrant's awareness of such agency and choice, which was seldom observed in interviews conducted as part of this thesis.

- (3) While migration options are traditionally classified and conceptualized by migrants as being based on their geographical localities as reported by interviewed migrants and existing Cambodian research literature(Derks, 2005; M. Heng, 2013; Ministry of Planning, 2012; Sophal, 2009a; Sovannara, 2007), this paper has found that even within the same locality, the legal status and the nature of jobs have significant implications on the migration outcomes.

While legal status does not guarantee better outcomes or human securities, it offers a higher chance of being exposed to fewer risks. While the nature of the job cannot guarantee a short-term improvement in economic security, it does yield longer-term benefits by allowing the migrant to access higher paying job opportunities.

- (4) The determination of migration outcomes is full of risks and uncertainties that are beyond the full control of each individual migrant.

For example, many aspects of human security, such as health and environmental securities are largely dependent on the employers.

Also, the honesty and reliability of middlemen seems to be impossible to validate until one has gone on the migration journey, even peer recommendations cannot guarantee.

Even choosing to migrate legally, with the assumption of legal protection, the limits of legal protection are real, especially when employers choose to disregard them. However, while legal migration does not exonerate risks, it does avoid the situation where migrants not only do not obtain legal protection from the police, but have to hide themselves from the authorities, further exposing them to unnecessary and greater risks and insecurities.

The individual migrant can have relatively more latitude of control over their choice of geographical locality, legal status and types of jobs. It is important to note that most migrants have grudgingly accepted the type of insecurities that they are exposed to, not realizing that they actually have agency to change their jobs.

- (5) Since migration risks and human insecurities are inevitably beyond the full control of each migrant, what each migrant can do is to be aware of and attempt to factor in the likelihood of risks and insecurities, categorize the risks and potential outcomes of each risks, consider exit strategies and to focus on their decision-making styles.
- (6) Migration decision-making follows different styles, varying in terms of each migrant react to information and the piece of information they choose to adopt as the critical piece of information, as well as their locus of control.

As this paper has earlier asserted, many mainstream theories of migration is premised upon the economic rationality assumption (Baláž et al., 2014; De Jong, 1999), while this research acknowledges that economic rationality allows for much conveniences in theoretical modelling and academic discussions, from an empirical perspective, this paper's findings suggest more support for Simon (1955) and Gilovich et al. (2002)'s assertions that decision-making can be either limited in rationality or based on non-rationality processes.

Indeed, from a practical perspective, it is more appropriate to consider the bounded rationality paradigm.

As to the different styles of decision-making, one that is guided by a longer term strategy, that allows one to adjust his or her migration decisions according to past experiences, instead of hearsay, seems to be a better strategy in the long-run, because it offers migrants a chance to self-correct poor decisions and openness to better opportunities.

5.2 Recommendations

This paper argues for more coverage on a migrants' decision-making style, because it is critical in helping a migrant to choose what he or she perceives to be the most suitable migration option, from the plethora of other migration options that exists.

As each migration option exposes the migrant to different human insecurities and provides different opportunities to achieve potential successes, careful evaluation should ideally be sought, in choosing the migration option that is most likely to attain migration's most positive impacts, considering the individual rural Cambodian's characteristics and situation.

Thus, instead of attempting a broad-stroke evaluation of whether migration's impacts are positive or negative, this paper would argue that whether migration outcomes are overall positive or negative, depends largely on whether a rural migrant is able to utilize the most appropriate decision-making style, to select the most appropriate migration option, considering the migrant's individual context and circumstances.

Thus, this paper would recommend Governments and non-governmental organizations to consider advocating decision-making styles as part of their migrant education work, on top of current approaches that focus on regurgitation of best practices for the migrants to emulate (ADRA Staff, personal communication, May 29, 2015).

5.3 Limitations & Future Research

In terms of research limitations and recommended future directions, the above conclusion was sought from the qualitative portion of this research that was conducted through non-randomized sampling, as such, the population representativeness and the subsequent external validity of this conclusion should be further investigated through a more focused quantitative research.

Moreover, this thesis has not been able to sufficiently obtain interviewees who have travelled to South Korea for work. Due to data availability issues, this migration option, albeit an important one, was omitted in this report of the key findings, because of the questionable accuracy and reliability of the singular case study.

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