

November 2017

Hidden: A Case Study on Human Trafficking in Costa Rica

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Hidden: A Case Study on Human Trafficking in Costa Rica

by

Timothy Adam Golob

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirement for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
with a concentration in Government
School of Interdisciplinary Global Studies
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Date of Approval:

October 27, 2017

Keywords: modern-day slavery, Central America, tourism,
exceptionalism, politics, prostitution

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to the countless number of individuals who dedicate their lives to the fight for human rights; to those who seek to end the suffering of modern-day slaves around the globe; and to the hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children who suffer and die daily as human trafficking victims.

Acknowledgement

Looking back on this most recent accomplishment, I am astounded with the progress, with the learning, and with the experiences that I have been able to enjoy. As with all my other life goals and achievements, this one was only possible through the amazing support of a large group of exceptional individuals. Beginning any acknowledgement always starts with my forever “number-one-fan,” my mother, Rhonda. Her guidance and sacrifices can never be forgotten or repaid. She has remained my teacher, leader, guidance counselor, and best friend for all these years. Beyond her, my amazing inner circle of supporters is unmatched—my siblings—Dakota, Rose, Zachary, and Gabriel. They made every day of this process an unforgettable journey. Their support and unswerving devotion were the fuel that kept me going.

I wish to extend my gratitude to the professors who have provided invaluable assistance to me over the years in my department. Specifically I wish to thank Doctor Vanden, for his time, dedication, mentoring, and for allowing me to be his one and only PhD graduate. Doctors Reiter, Solomon, and Wells are the best and most caring committee members. I also must extend a warm thank you to all the faculty, staff, and fellow grad students in the SIGS department. They have been like a second family to me. My amazing friends and students cannot be forgotten either, as they have put up with my meticulous updates when asked, “How is your research going?” As I reach the finish line of this step of my life, their support made this possible.

I must also give thanks to my Creator, the one who provided me with a sound mind and body. He placed me in this country of opportunity and gave me the support structure that I needed to reach my potential. I can never say how much I appreciate everyone. Thank you all.

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Abstract

This is a case study on human trafficking that was conducted on the small Central American country of Costa Rica via a mixed-methods approach which included document review, surveys, and interviews. It was selected due to Costa Rica's history of fluctuation between Tier 2 and Tier 2 Watch List status on the Trafficking in Persons Report, issued by the U.S. Department of State, over the last ten years. This ranking average indicates that it is one of the worst performing Central American states in efforts to combat trafficking in persons. This finding breaks with Costa Rica's traditional placement as one of the best performing Central American countries by other indices, such as GDP, Human Development Index (HDI), World Happiness Report, and Corruption Perception Index (CPI), to name a few.

The purpose of this research was to explore the reasons why Costa Rica leads Central America in numerous international measurements of success, yet remains equal to or below other Central American countries in its fight to combat human trafficking. There were two hypotheses. First, Costa Rica has strong economic ties to and reliance on tourism. According to data collected for this study, tourism has become Costa Rica's primary means of "development," which has created a neocolonial-style enclave economy and society which responds heavily to the demands of the tourists. This reliance on tourism is associated with choices made by government officials for inaction. Second, low levels of prosecutions and convictions are due to the state's reliance on NGOs to shoulder the responsibility of efforts. The government even pays the NGOs to care for rescued children to alleviate any burden placed on its own agencies. NGOs operating in Costa Rica run shelters and rehabilitate survivors, head awareness campaigns, and

educate. Along with the United Nations, and other IGOs, NGOs have been the main force against trafficking in persons in Costa Rica.

Other findings included issues with the definition of human trafficking under the law, as it is not in alignment with those of the United Nations and the United States. As well, the limited awareness across the country, both for professionals and citizens, is a concern. Poverty, particularly increases in extreme poverty, was cited as a recurring problem by the stakeholders interviewed. Furthermore, the image of the country as exceptional was reported by many interviewees as a barrier to recognizing the relevant issues and combatting them. Finally, the persistent culture of machismo and a political and social culture in turmoil were found to be detrimental to combatting human trafficking, particularly when dealing with gendered crimes, prostitution, and the feminization of poverty and of the marginalization of women and children.

This study has synthesized the data and shows support for a correlation between the aforementioned factors, tying human trafficking to the tourist industry, to political inaction, to NGOs and their activities and responsibilities, as well as to political and social culture and a number of other factors. Prosecutions and convictions remain low, and efforts to fight modern-day slavery remain below the minimum standards. Thus, it is the implication of this study that the notion of Costa Rica as exceptional, as a leader across Central America, is more an image than reality, at least in this case. In reality, Costa Rica is caught between opposing political and social cultures, between Western capitalism, classic machismo, and Costa Rica's historical notion of peaceful living and exceptionality.

Chapter 1—Introduction

Research Problem

Modern-day slavery is synonymously termed “human trafficking.” It remains rampant, destructive, illegal, and lucrative. Tens of thousands of human beings live enslaved across the globe at any given moment. Perpetrators use force, fraud, and coercion to recruit and keep victims as if they were property (Golob 2014, 5; National Human Trafficking Resource Center n.d.; Salett 2006; Walker-Rodriguez & Hill 2011). Victims may suffer through any one or more types of trafficking, be it sex, labor, or domestic servitude. Often, exploited victims come from marginalized backgrounds; they may be minorities, children, women, indigent, or disabled. Their status as marginalized people places them in a diminished state, one far less powerful than the dominant class of property owners, business executives, and elites. They are often associated with factors such as poverty and desperation, which leave them disadvantaged and more prone to exploitation. Human trafficking is a highly lucrative crime, with global profits falling only second in line behind drug trafficking profits (Hunt, Logan, & Walker 2009, 10; Hyland 2001, 38; Golob 2014). Current estimates of total global profits per year are around \$150 billion (Luscombe 2014).

This crime is addressed in various ways. In 2000, the United Nations implemented its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (Palermo Protocol) as a unified agreement on the manner in which states should respond to the issue of modern-day slavery.¹ It is a “wide-ranging international agreement to

¹ The Palermo Protocol seeks to “prevent and combat trafficking in persons, especially women and children.” It seeks an international approach, which includes “countries of origin, transit, and destination that includes measures

address the crime of trafficking in persons, especially women and children, on a transnational level (CATW 2001, 1).” The Palermo Protocol achieved many goals. One was that it created a global language that defined trafficking in persons. It also established the parameters for cooperating across countries in combatting this crime. It was initiated due to a growing realization that the age of globalization had allowed for a number of transnational illegal industries to cross international borders. At the time, estimates were that human trafficking profits ranged from \$5-7 billion annually (CATW 2001, 1).

The Palermo Protocol was a result of the 2000 UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime in Palermo, Italy. Of the 148 countries in attendance, 121 signed the main convention and over 80 signed the supplementary Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (CATW 2001, 1). This effort sought to globalize legality by creating uniform and appropriate punishments and promoting cooperation across borders. The convention showed a determination to fight such industries as sex tourism, particularly in the regions of Asian and Latin American. Central American countries, with the exception of Panama, were not among the first to sign the Palermo protocol. However, since 2000, all of them have at least accepted it. Costa Rica signed it in 2001 and ratified it in 2003.

to prevent such trafficking, to punish the traffickers and to protect the victims of such trafficking, including by protecting their internationally recognized human rights.” This protocol includes various articles that cover the criminality of this type of crime, such that women and children are given special attention, that human rights are to be upheld to the highest standard, and that states should cooperate in meeting the objective of combatting human trafficking. The articles also cover such factors as defining "trafficking in persons" and as requiring states to adopt legislation and other measures to establish the criminality of human trafficking to include committing, participating in, or directing human trafficking. Articles also require states to protect the identity of victims, enable their concerns, implement “measures to provide for the physical, psychological and social recovery of victims of trafficking in persons, including, in appropriate cases, in cooperation with non-governmental organizations, other relevant organizations and other elements of civil society,” including housing, medical, counseling, employment, education, and safety. The Palermo Protocol continues to lay the ground work for prevention, prosecution, recovery, rehabilitation, and many other aspects associated with trafficking, like specific legislation for victims and for traffickers (United Nations 2000; United Nations Treaty Collection).

Nicaragua accepted it 2004. Belize accepted it in 2003. Guatemala accepted it in 2004. Honduras accepted it in 2008. El Salvador signed it in 2002 and ratified it in 2004. Panama signed it in 2000 and ratified it in 2004. Only El Salvador expressed any official reservations, and only then to declare itself outside the compulsory jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice.

The United States, which signed the Palermo Protocol in 2000 and ratified it in 2005, through its own Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) and its subsequent updates, is one of the nations which is spearheading the implementation process of fighting this particularly egregious crime, one that tears at humanity and at autonomy.² Each year the United States' Department of State produces a Trafficking in Persons Report (TIP Report) which gauges countries across the globe based on their efforts to combat human trafficking through the 3-Ps approach of Prevention, Protection, and Prosecution (U.S. Department of State "Trafficking in Persons") (See Table 1 for report details concerning Central America).

2 Aside from offering a definition of "trafficking in persons" that differs only slightly from the United Nations working definition, the TVPA also establishes the tier ranking system for evaluating states on their efforts to follow the minimum standards set forth by the United Nations Palermo Protocol. Furthermore, the TVPA includes 11 important findings concerning human trafficking. They are as follows: (1) the United States is a leader in combating human trafficking and slavery, (2) the current estimates of international trafficking victims is 600,000 to 800,000 individuals each year—80 percent are women and girls, (3) since 2000, the United States has focused on international trafficking in persons, (4) trafficking in persons does not have to be international, (5) there are no studies that quantify the problem of commercial sex trafficking in children in the United States, (6) runaway and homeless children are highly susceptible targets, (7) during and following armed conflicts and humanitarian emergencies there is an increase in myriad forms of violence that include sex and labor trafficking, (8) post-conflict settings and humanitarian emergencies need programs and strategies to protection and prevent exploitation, (9) there is a documented correlation between military deployments, civilian peacekeepers, and aid workers and an increase in women and girls trafficked into prostitution, (10) employees, military, and contractors of the United States Government increase trafficking in persons, despite United States' laws and policies, which undermines credibility and mission success of post-conflict programs, and (11) higher accountability is needed for all United States Government contractors and employees abroad (U.S. Department of State 2005; Hyland 2001).

Table 1. Trafficking in Persons Data Reference Chart

TIP 2017	Rank	Cases	Cases per Capita	Prosecutions	Convictions	Victims Identified	Ratio of Convictions
Costa Rica	2	26	0.0000054	27	1	17	4%
Belize	3	10	0.0000273	0	0	2	0%
El Salvador	2	55	0.0000087	7	6	53	86%
Guatemala	2WL	39	0.0000024	43	13	484	30%
Honduras	2	41	0.0000045	41	9	111	22%
Mexico	2	476	0.0000037	479	228	740	48%
Nicaragua	2WL	8	0.0000013	13	9	13	69%
Panama	2	7	0.0000017	13	2	84	15%
TIP 2016	Rank	Cases	Cases per Capita	Prosecutions	Convictions	Victims Identified	Ratio of Convictions
Costa Rica	2WL	31	0.0000064	10	1	3	10%
Belize	3	7	0.0000191	0	1	0	100%
El Salvador	2	43	0.0000068	8	19	49	238%
Guatemala	2	28	0.0000017	105	39	673	37%
Honduras	2	24	0.0000026	24	13	28	54%
Mexico	2	665	0.0000052	578	86	1814	15%
Nicaragua	2	8	0.0000013	23	10	30	43%
Panama	2	17	0.0000042	3	1	56	33%
TIP 2015	Rank	Cases	Cases per Capita	Prosecutions	Convictions	Victims Identified	Ratio of Convictions
Costa Rica	2WL	14	0.0000029	3	0	23	0%
Belize	3	0	0.0000000	0	0	7	0%
El Salvador	2	53	0.0000084	7	7	87	100%
Guatemala	2	402	0.0000242	62	20	237	32%
Honduras	2	30	0.0000033	4	0	116	0%
Mexico	2	449	0.0000035	N/A	111	1570	N/A
Nicaragua	2	17	0.0000028	24	12	67	50%
Panama	2	11	0.0000027	0	5	25	N/A
TIP 2014	Rank	Cases	Cases per Capita	Prosecutions	Convictions	Victims Identified	Ratio of Convictions
Costa Rica	2	17	0.0000035	7	7	15	100%
Belize	2WL	0	0.0000000	0	0	10	0%
El Salvador	2	51	0.0000080	14	12	84	86%
Guatemala	2	271	0.0000163	67	10	570	15%
Honduras	2	38	0.0000042	17	2	N/A	12%
Mexico	2	597	0.0000047	207	73	1000	35%
Nicaragua	1	29	0.0000047	44	20	55	45%
Panama	2WL	7	0.0000017	0	3	16	N/A
TIP 2013	Rank	Cases	Cases per Capita	Prosecutions	Convictions	Victims Identified	Ratio of Convictions
Costa Rica	2	50	0.0000103	N/A	2	22	N/A
Belize	2	2	0.0000055	2	2	13	100%
El Salvador	2	61	0.0000096	11	11	67	100%
Guatemala	2	23	0.0000014	N/A	7	127	N/A
Honduras	2WL	47	0.0000052	3	3	26	100%
Mexico	2	72	0.0000006	N/A	25	58	N/A
Nicaragua	1	27	0.0000044	57	35	N/A	61%
Panama	2	8	0.0000020	0	3	45	N/A

Sources: U.S. Department of State. 2017 "2013-2017 TIP Reports."

<http://www.state.gov/documents/organizations>

CIA. 2016. *The World Factbook*.

The countries are ranked on a three tiered system with an optional intermediate Tier 2 Watch List. The Tier 1 classification indicates, “The governments of countries that fully comply with the TVPA’s minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking (U.S. Department of State 2015, 47).”³ The Tier 2 classification indicates, “The governments of countries that do not fully comply with the TVPA’s minimum standards but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards (U.S. Department of State 2015, 47).” The Tier 2 Watch List classification indicates a country that is between the Tier 2 and Tier 3 status, where numbers of victims are high, there is a lack of evidence of improvement in the last year, such as investigations, prosecutions, convictions, and victims’ assistance, or state efforts to reach compliance with minimum standards “was based on commitments by the country to take additional steps over the next year (U.S. Department of State 2015, 47).” The Tier 3 classification is the ranking assigned to countries that do not meet minimum standards and are not making progress toward them at all. These rankings indicate that many countries still have a lot of progress to make in order to meet basic standards for combatting human trafficking, as only 36 countries worldwide were ranked as a Tier 1 in the most recent report (U.S. Department of State 2017, 46). A review of the TIP Report indicates that generally countries with higher

³ TVPA minimum standards have 12 criteria for evaluation and ranking, but the actual minimum standards are as follows:

“(1) The government of the country should prohibit severe forms of trafficking in persons and punish acts of such trafficking. (2) For the knowing commission of any act of sex trafficking involving force, fraud, coercion, or in which the victim of sex trafficking is a child incapable of giving meaningful consent, or of trafficking which includes rape or kidnapping or which causes a death, the government of the country should prescribe punishment commensurate with that for grave crimes, such as forcible sexual assault. (3) For the knowing commission of any act of a severe form of trafficking in persons, the government of the country should prescribe punishment that is sufficiently stringent to deter and that adequately reflects the heinous nature of the offense. (4) The government of the country should make serious and sustained efforts to eliminate severe forms of trafficking in persons (U.S. Department of State 2015, 49).”

GPD, HDI, and Happiness also score higher on the TIP ranking system (U.S. Department of State 2016).

One particular country of interest on this issue is Costa Rica. Of all the countries in the Americas that are ranked each year, only Chile, Colombia, Guyana, the United States, and Canada were granted a Tier 1 ranking in 2017. Most countries consistently receive a Tier 2 (U.S. Department of State 2015; 2016; 2017). A review of previous years indicates that Costa Rica has a history of falling from Tier 2 to the Watch List on several occasions previously. According to the 2015 TIP Report, Costa Rica has increased its prosecution, but prevention and protection remain consistently unsuccessful, particularly beyond the capital (131). The 2016 TIP Report indicated that prosecution fell again (140). While Costa Rica did regain the Tier 2 status in 2017, this was due mainly to government spending on projects that have yet to begin (137). There are funds in place as part of the 2013 law on trafficking (Ley Contra la Trata de Personas y creación de la Coalición Nacional Contra el Tráfico Ilícito de Migrantes y la Trata de Personas (CONATT): Ley 9095) which are to assist with prosecution, prevention, and protection, as well as to build specialized shelters. However, many of these projects, such as the construction of shelters, remain unfinished.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this research is to explore the reasons why Costa Rica leads Central America in numerous international measurements of development, yet remains equal to or below other Central American countries in its fight to combat human trafficking.⁴

⁴ It should be noted that the TIP Report ranking system is based upon an evaluative formula. Countries are measured based on if they are proactively identifying victims and if they are catching traffickers. However, the main determinant to calculate whether or not a country is actively pursuing the issue of human trafficking is to look at the ratio of number of victims identified and the number of prosecutions to the eventual number of convictions and severity of sentencing (Personal Interview, U.S. State Department, Office to Monitor and Combat Human Trafficking employee, April 15, 2016).

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Costa Rica is ranked higher than its Central American neighbors in other indices, such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Human Development Index (HDI), World Happiness Report, and Corruption Perception Index (CPI). Yet, according to the TIP Report and other watchdog organizations, it remains below the minimum standard, much like other Central American countries. The main determinant of compliance is the ratio of prosecution and conviction. Costa Rica has one of the lowest rates of convictions of human trafficking cases across the region (U.S. Department of State 2015; 2016; 2017). Over the past three years, there have been a total of two convictions. This situation creates the following main research question:

Given a higher level of development, relatively better trained police, and less corruption compared to its Central American neighbors, why is it that Costa Rica has so few cases of human trafficking prosecuted each year and a negligible number of convictions?

Other questions may be answered through this research, such as the following. Why are more cases not found? Why do cases not result in conviction? What are the root causes of human trafficking in Costa Rica? What role does an increased reliance on tourism play in human trafficking, if any? How do Costa Rica's position, role, and country image in Central America affect its capacity to comply with minimum standards for human trafficking efforts? However, the purpose of this research is to investigate the following two proposed hypotheses which seek to answer the main research question:

In Central America, Costa Rica ranks better on the previously mentioned indices that compare countries. It lags behind in efforts to combat human trafficking mainly due to its economic ties to and reliance on tourism. This cultural, economic, and political reliance on tourism is associated with choices made by government officials for inaction.

Another reason for low levels of prosecutions and convictions is the state's reliance on Non-Governmental Organizations to shoulder the responsibility of combatting human trafficking through spreading awareness and rehabilitating and sheltering survivors.

The first hypothesis, which seeks to determine correlation between a reliance on tourism and diminished human trafficking suppression efforts, must first determine a link between tourism and human trafficking. For a country that is as reliant on the economic gains of a heavy tourist industry as Costa Rica, it is doubtless essential to maintain that industry, as Costa Rica has proven through tourism development projects, economic incentives, and other initiatives. Studies on tourism often portray countries as acquiescing for the economic advantages that tourism brings, sometimes with heavy costs of environmental destruction and human exploitation (Hall 1994; Mathieson & Wall 1982). Also, tourism is dependent upon a country image that is safe and welcoming, and admitting to and openly combatting human trafficking might unsettle that image. This study seeks to empirically evaluate such a hypothesis to determine any possible causality between tourism in Costa Rica and efforts to combat human trafficking.

The second hypothesis centers on the activities and responsibilities of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). They are present and significant in Costa Rica, and they have been a growing presence for several decades. NGOs that fight for human rights and humanitarian progress are often willing and able to intervene in trafficking situations, through sting operations, rescue, and rehabilitation. This hypothesis seeks to evaluate the claim that the government of Costa Rica can thus maintain a passive position, allowing NGOs to shoulder the responsibility of trafficking efforts. This hypothesis seeks to establish correlation between a lack of force and effort on behalf of the state and increased NGO activity in this field. While it is possible that neoliberal measures imposed on Costa Rica from international sources might have put pressure

on the government to cut funding and reduce government involvement, the choice for inaction ultimately rests on Costa Rican officials and their government. Furthermore, since NGOs do not have the power to prosecute or convict criminals involved in the human trafficking situation, the support of this hypothesis would show why prosecution and convictions are low and have been low in Costa Rica for many years. This study evaluates these two hypotheses as answers to the research question in order to gain a better understand of the trafficking situation in Costa Rica.

Country Report

Compared to its Central American neighbors, its current trafficking efforts are on level or lower than most other countries in the region (see Table 1 on page 4 and Table 4 on page 18). Costa Rica does not meet the minimum standards set forth by the United Nations and could fall to Tier 3 if it does not show marked and increasing progress over the next few years. This appears to be baffling, since Costa Rica far surpasses its neighbors in other areas, such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Human Development Index (HDI), World Happiness Report, and Corruption Perception Index (CPI) (see Figure 1). At \$15,500, its GDP per capita is twice most of its neighboring Central American countries and three times the GDP per capita of Nicaragua (CIA 2016). Also, it has a stable GDP “2.5% year-on-year growth rate” and a fairly stable US dollar exchange rate (IHS 2015, 1). Its HDI for 2014 was .766, more than .1 higher than any of its neighbors (United Nations Development Programme 2015). It ranked as the highest country in the world for Happiness in 2013, with a rating of 8.5 out of ten, and is still number 12 (rating 7.1) in the 2017 World Happiness Report, soaring above its regional neighbors and even surpassing the USA (O’Neil 2013, 117; Helliwell, Layard, and Sachs 2017, 20) (Figure 1). Costa Rica also was ranked as the 40th least corrupt country in the world, far closer to the United States at 16th than the next highest Central American country, El Salvador, at 72nd (Table 2).

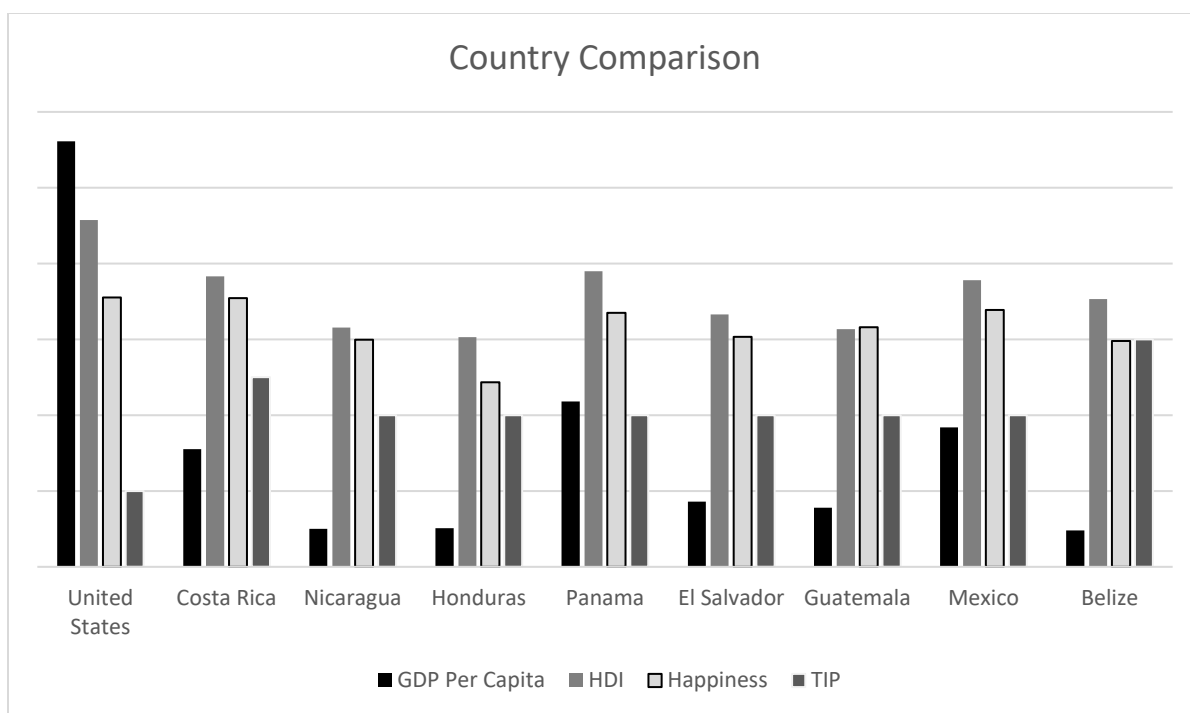


Figure 1: Bar graph showing a country comparison ratio between the United States and Central American countries on indices of development. Note: The higher the TIP, the worse a country scored on the TIP Report. Sources: United Nations Development Programme 2015; Department of State 2016; World Bank 2015; Helliwell, Layard, and Sachs 2016.

Table 2. Corruption Ranking Comparison 2017

World Ranking	CPI*	Country
18	74	USA
41	58	Costa Rica
N/A	N/A	Belize _‡
95	36	El Salvador
87	38	Panama
123	30	Mexico
123	30	Honduras
136	28	Guatemala
145	26	Nicaragua

Source: Transparency International.

https://www.transparency.org/news/feature/corruption_perceptions_index_2016

*The scale for CPI is from 0-100, with 100 as the least corrupt.

_‡Belize has been absent from the CPI report since 2008, when it ranked 109th.

According to Knaul, Nigenda, and Zuñiga of the World Health Organization, Costa Rica ranks 69th in the world according to GDP and as one of the top 35 countries according to its HDI (nd., 3). It has free, good healthcare, with the highest male and the second highest female life expectancy in Latin America, the lowest male and the second lowest female levels of child malnutrition in Latin America. It also has the second lowest infant mortality across Central America and the Caribbean, just behind Cuba. The country enjoys a 96 percent literacy rate and one of the highest-coverage retirement plans in Latin America (Knaul, Nigenda, & Zuñiga nd., 6-9). Its welfare programs are high grade and cover housing, social assistance, education, and nutrition, accounting for 20 percent of its GDP (Knaul, Nigenda, & Zuñiga nd., 15). As well, due to an emphasis on medical doctor programs at Costa Rican universities, the ratio of doctors to patients is now nearly the same as it is in the United Kingdom, 163 per 100,000 (Knaul, Nigenda, & Zuñiga nd., 18). Also, “Costa Rica boasts the most advanced and highest quality education system in the region [of Central America] (InterNations).” Education is free, compulsory, and well-funded. With no standing army, Costa Rica devotes a large portion of its GDP to education, social programs, and development. Thus, Costa Rica presents a challenge in understanding the dynamic that creates a market and a supply for human trafficking, and the strategy for eradicating it.

Despite numerous institutions, states, and organizations fighting to prevent and protect against this crime, accurate and legitimate data concerning numbers of victims trafficked, rates of trafficking, and state actions to combat these acts, remain unavailable. The TIP Reports narratives on Costa Rica indicated that it is a source, transit, and destination country for trafficking in persons (Department of State 2017, 137). The reports also state that Costa Rican human trafficking is tied to illegal drug trafficking and that many victims are from other

countries, such as Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic. The most recent TIP Reports detail how several cases have implicated government officials, including one mayor. The 2015 report provides that there were 23 victims identified during the reporting year, and that some training was offered to officials and members of the tourist industry. One of the reasons that Costa Rica received only a Tier 2 Watch List classification in both 2015 and 2016 is that there were no convictions of child sex tourists, or clients of child sex trafficking during the 2014 year and only one general conviction of traffickers in both 2015 and 2016 (Department of State 2015, 131; 2017, 137). This is down from seven convictions in 2013 and two in 2012. The TIP Reports show that prosecutions of traffickers are generally low and conviction are even lower, with the ratio for the 2017 report at only four percent. Also, the 2015 TIP Report states that none of the \$3.24 million dollars earmarked for trafficking efforts were spent, and there were no comprehensive statistics on trafficking efforts reported or collected by the country. The results of the 2016 TIP Report are very similar, showing little or no improvement (Department of State 2016). The 2017 Report indicates that the government has begun to disperse the money to various agencies and institutions involved in combatting this crime, but that it is too soon to tell if these ventures will have a positive effect (see Figure 2 for rankings over the past ten years). Costa Rica continues to have only minimal, unspecialized services for survivors. There are no shelters in the country for male victims, and for females, the government gives roughly \$156,000 to one Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) for victims of sexual violence. Also, there are virtually no services or trainings at all for anti-trafficking efforts and survivor care outside of San José (Department of State 2015, 132). The TIP report is currently the only international tool in place to gauge a country's efforts in a quantifiable manner in comparison to other countries around the globe.

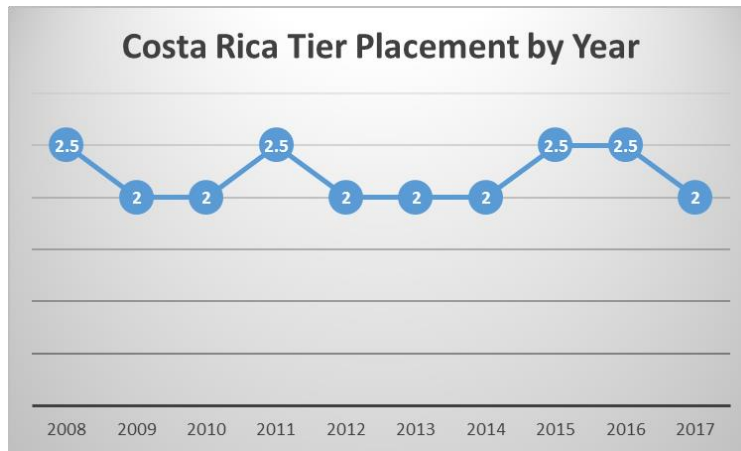


Figure 2: Line graph showing the change in TIP tier placement of Costa Rica from 2008 to 2017. Watch List is denoted as “2.5” on the scale. Source: U.S. Department of State, <http://www.state.gov/>.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime issues a Global Report on Trafficking in Persons that considers trafficking on a global scale, with a particular emphasis on certain regions (2008; 2014). Insights gained from their most recent publication include the fact that Costa Rica has a high percentage of victims detected who originated outside the country (nearly 80 percent) relative to its Gross Domestic Product per capita (United Nations 2014, 49). This means that, despite being categorized as a source, transit, and destination country for trafficking purposes, Costa Rica has a larger than average number of victims trafficked into the state from outside its national borders. Also, the Central American region tends to have a higher than average percentage of female traffickers convicted (United Nations 2014, 71). As well, victims are often trafficked domestically or subregionally (United Nations 2014, 73). The United Nations reports that “all North and Central American countries have a specific offence in line with the UN Trafficking in Persons Protocol (United Nations 2014, 75).” This indicates that all countries in this region have passed trafficking legislation on the issue. Last, across Central America, the number of convicted trafficking cases ranged per country from zero to around ten convictions per year (United Nations 2014, 77).

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime also does research on the criminal justice systems and human rights practices of countries around the globe. This includes measuring ratios of judges, prosecutors, and police officers as a means to evaluate the effectiveness of such systems. Costa Rica has the highest ratio of judges for all of the North and Central American continent, a comparable ratio of prosecutors to the United States, and the fourth highest ratio of police officers in Central America (see Table 3). When comparing the police force to other Central American police forces, it appears to be well-equipped and well trained (COHA 2011). However, Costa Rican prisons are overcrowded at 154 percent capacity (Department of State 2015, HRR). The number of privately licensed security services far exceeds the police force of 13,100 officers (Department of State 2015, HRR). The most recent Human Rights Report on Costa Rica stated, “The government, security officials, and child advocacy organizations acknowledged that commercial sexual exploitation of children was a serious problem. The government identified child sex tourism as a serious problem (2015).” Other areas of concern in Costa Rica included harsh prison conditions, sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination, domestic violence, and indigenous rights. While the government investigated and prosecuted officials charged with human rights abuses, there were very few convictions (Department of State 2015, HRR).

Table 3. Criminal Justice System and Personnel

Country	Professional Judges per 100,000	Judges Data Year	Prosecutors per 100,000	Prosecutors Data Year	Police Officers per 100,000	Officers Data Year
United States	10.8	2001	8.8	2005	223.6	2006
Costa Rica	18.0	2006	7.7	2006	280.7	2013
Belize	2.4	2006	490.8	2015
Nicaragua	1.2	2010	5.2	2006	166.8	2006
Honduras	10.7	2011	147.4	2013
Panama	8.0	2006	2.4	2006	445.4	2013
El Salvador	5.4	2006	11.1	2002	365.7	2013
Guatemala	3.4	2000	19.0	2000	174.8	2013
Mexico	0.8	2004	2.7	2006	367.0	2013

...no data available

Source: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Crime-statistics/International_Statistics_on_Crime_and_Justice.pdf
https://data.unodc.org/sys/rpt?reportfile=crime-statistics-justice-resources-police-personnel®ION=Americas®ION__label=Americas&SUBREGION=Central%20America&SUBREGION__label=Central+America&COUNTRY=__ALL&COUNTRY__label=All+%28%29&format=xls&fullscreen=true&showtoc=true#state:0

Other reports on the human trafficking situation in Costa Rica include those from the International Labour Organization (ILO), Fundación Rahab, and The Protection Project. The ILO only covers by region. So the information on Costa Rica is averaged into the general regions of Latin America and the Caribbean. The report on trafficking by the ILO shows that, by region, Latin America and the Caribbean have a 3.1 per 1,000 inhabitants rate of trafficking (2012, 15). This is relatively higher than the Developed Economies group, with 1.5 per 1,000, and relatively lower than the Central and South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) group, with the highest rate of 4.2 per 1,000 (ILO 2012, 15). Overall, the ILO estimates roughly 1.8 million victims in Latin America and the Caribbean (2012, 16).

Fundación Rahab is an NGO in Costa Rica that works with victims of human trafficking. The leadership of this NGO argues that the issue of human trafficking in Costa Rica remains invisible to the larger Costa Rican society (British Embassy, San José 2014). They argue for early prevention and for a focus on this issue. Their proposed approach includes training for judges and law enforcement agents so that they can successfully identify victims and prosecute,

awareness campaigns for the greater society, and increasing confidence in reporting and tackling impunity. They argue that previous cultural acceptance, via a blind eye, can only be stopped through awareness campaigns and training. Fundación Rahab and their partners at the British Embassy, San José analyzed the situation in Costa Rica during an interview with *The Tico Times*:

“We don’t want Costa Rica to be promoted as a sex tourism destination,” said Rahab Foundation director and founder Mariliana Morales. “We want a country where couples come for their honeymoon. We don’t want planes landing here full of pedophiles to look for little girls and boys.”

Morales noted that Costa Rica does not suffer the same rates of sexual exploitation or slavery as some countries, including India...

The director said that victims often come from Colombia, the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua. In the case of the Dominican Republic, Morales explained that women and young girls are often trafficked into the country and quickly granted legal status through sham marriages or other means.

Trafficking victims, often young people, are lured by false promises of employment and find themselves trapped by their captors.

However, 70 percent of the center’s services are for Costa Ricans, according to 2013 figures from the Rahab Foundation.

“No one wants to believe that this is happening in communities here [in Costa Rica]; they’d rather think of it as a transnational problem. But it’s important to not forget this is happening to Costa Ricans and those of other nationalities looking for a better life,” said British Ambassador Sharon Campbell.

Morales stressed that foreign tourists are not the only drivers of human trafficking for the sex trade. Ticos are also consuming these services (Dyer 2014).

The Protection Project recently published a short report on human trafficking in Costa Rica that had rather poignant claims (2015). First, the authors argue that the “blind eye” approach to prostitution in Costa Rica creates an atmosphere of acceptance and really accentuates Costa Rica’s position as a destination state for trafficking (The Protection Project 2015, 1). Second, they propose that the causes of human trafficking in Costa Rica are the same as elsewhere, mainly poverty and decreased government expenditures on the social safety net (The Protection Project 2015, 2). This creates a marginalized sector of society, where illiteracy rates are rising, unemployment is high, and finances are bleak. These marginalized individuals are targets for traffickers. As well, “[a]s Costa Rica has increased efforts to promote its tourism industry, sex tourism has risen (The Protection Project 2015, 2).” They report that Costa Rica is the number one destination for sex tourism in Central America, with at least 5,000 people travelling per year to the country for sex with minors. In one case from 2004, 14 people were arrested for paying mothers for their children. Of those involved, a judge from Liberia, two social workers, and one lawyer were arrested (The Protection Project 2015, 3).

Unfortunately, some of the world’s NGO leaders in human rights and human trafficking, such as International Justice Mission, Amnesty International, and Human Rights Watch, provided no information or evaluation on the situation in Costa Rica. As an example, Amnesty International published its 2015/2016 report on human rights around the world that includes 160 countries in 409 pages; Costa Rica was not included (Amnesty International). Human Rights Watch, in its 2016 report on human rights

around the globe, presented its global analysis of 88 countries in 338 pages, but Costa Rica was not included. Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch do have some articles on specific cases of trafficking around the globe, but they have not focused on a holistic approach, nor has their case-by-case focus found its way to Costa Rica yet. The International Justice Mission works directly in 11 countries and partners with another 20 to fight global trafficking, and Costa Rica is not included (IJM). This leaves a heavy reliance on the United States TIP Report with few other avenues for assessing the validity of these data and conclusions by other agencies or organizations. A look at Table 4 shows that Costa Rica, though currently at Tier 2, has fluctuated over the years, and, on average, is ranked poorer than most of Central America and equivalent to Guatemala and Panama (note: the higher the number, the worse the ranking).

Table 4. Trafficking in Persons Report: Rankings and Averages

Country	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Average Status
Costa Rica	2.5	2	2	2.5	2	2	2	2.5	2.5	2	2.20
Belize	2	2.5	2.5	2	2	2	2.5	3	3	3	2.45
El Salvador	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2.00
Guatemala	2.5	2.5	2.5	2	2	2	2	2	2	2.5	2.20
Honduras	2	2	2	2	2	2.5	2	2	2	2	2.05
Mexico	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2.00
Nicaragua	2	2.5	2.5	2	1	1	1	2	2	2.5	1.85
Panama	2.5	2	2.5	2.5	2	2	2.5	2	2	2	2.20

Significance of the Study

This research sought to explore this issue of incongruence between Costa Rica's regional ranking on indices of development across Central American countries and its problematic rates of successfully combating human trafficking. Since the TIP Report only ranks countries based on the government's efforts to combat human trafficking through methods such as laws, implementation of those laws, prosecution of traffickers, and rescue of victims, the tier ranking

does not include such measurements as the amount of trafficking in a country, the number of victims who have not been rescued, or the efforts of NGOs.

This research is a case study which critically evaluated not only the situation in Costa Rica, but also the TIP Report as a measurement tool for human trafficking efforts by investigating the situation at the state level. In order to fully engage with this research, it was important to gain knowledge and insights from those directly involved in the human trafficking effort and in victim rescue and survivor rehabilitation. This study used written reports from sources such as the United Nations and other statistical sources, surveys and interviews of persons with knowledge of the situation, and information from surveys and interviews from those most involved in combat efforts, such as survivors, traffickers, survivor shelter workers, law enforcement in Costa Rica, government officials, and humanitarian workers who focus on this issue in Costa Rica. Chapter 4, the methods chapter, will further detail the methodology of this study in its search for facts, evidence, and information to inform and educate. After thoroughly researching this topic, through document and law reviews and doing surveys and interviews with staff, law enforcement officers, and any others involved in the processes of prevention and protection, the results of this study can broaden knowledge and provide insights into this situation.

For this research project, the substantive focus was on the state of Costa Rica and its efforts in the fight against human trafficking. It was chosen as the subject of this research due to its regional location in Central America and its developmental ranking compared to its neighboring countries in many other areas, particularly GDP per capita, World Happiness Report ranking, CPI, and the Human Development Index. These measurements place Costa Rica as highest in the region compared to its Central American neighbors. The country is relatively

wealthy for the region, with a lucrative tourist industry, some manufacturing, many developmental accomplishments, and positive trade and relations with developed countries, such as the United States. According to the U.S. Department of State, although money has been earmarked by the government for human trafficking purposes, such as shelter construction and preventive education and efforts, it has only recently been distributed for its intended purpose (2015, 131; 2017, 137).

In order to test the validity of the hypotheses for this study, evidence was carefully examined. This evidence included the evaluation of links between the Costa Rican economy, government, and image, with particular focus on the effects of tourism, and human trafficking. Using established literature in the field, this study utilized and forwarded theories of human trafficking, economics, and tourism to the Costa Rican trafficking situation. In order to support or disprove the hypotheses, it was necessary to provide evidence that indicated an economic advantage to promoting tourism over human rights and which showed that NGOs are currently leaders in the fight against human trafficking in Costa Rica.

Evidence supported these hypotheses and included information from victims and traffickers, intelligence from government officials and NGO representatives, insights from law enforcement and service workers, and many other Costa Ricans who are involved in the society and culture. From the data collected and the analysis of these data, this Costa Rican case study strengthened research on human trafficking, supporting the hypotheses with triangulated research. The findings of this research pointed, first of all, to supporting both the hypotheses. The literature and the data collected indicate that tourism and its variation of development have resulted in a ceding of the country's autonomy and of its culture. Reportedly, there is a huge influence of tourism on industry and culture. Many of those interviewed in this study reported

that there is a link between tourism and human trafficking. The second hypothesis also appears to be supported by the literature and data of the study. This is clearly seen by the fact that Costa Rica has no shelters for human trafficking victims that are not run by NGOs. The majority of the programs for rehabilitation are also run by NGOs. The government even pays the NGOs to care for rescued children to alleviate the burden placed on its own agencies. Other findings included issues with the definition of human trafficking under the law, limited awareness in the country, poverty in the country, the image of the country as exceptional, persistent culture of machismo, and a political and social culture in turmoil.

This particular study will help to bridge the gaps in the literature and in other research. Research on tourism, on trafficking, and on the effects of politics and image have all been completed prior, but this study synthesized a correlation between these factors, directly tying human trafficking to the tourist industry and to the inaction on the part of government officials due to economic and political incentives as well as to maintaining an untarnished country image. As such, this study showed how NGOs have increased in activity and number to answer the call to fight this crime due to inaction on behalf of the government and its officials and servants. Thus, prosecutions and convictions remain low, and efforts to fight modern-day slavery remain below the minimum standards.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework used for this study is constructed from both theoretical and methodological tools used in research to synthesize systems of meaning for issues of human trafficking. The complexities and intricacies of social, cultural, economic, and political amalgamation that are all involved in the enslavement of human beings are woven together to reach an understanding of the situation. Economic incentives drive many traffickers, as the

profits made from exploiting other human beings are high in relation to the low amount of capital that is required to force or coerce and maintain human slaves. Social and political culture, along with poverty and deprivation, play pivotal roles in creating a population of individuals who can be easily exploited and manipulated. They live in high-risk circumstances that make them easy targets for traffickers. The situation is further complicated by a capitalist, neoliberal economic world system with a focus on profits and a broad base of individuals who contribute to the problem by utilizing enslaved sex workers or by failing to ensure that labor rights are being upheld.

Authors such as Thozama Mandisa Luty and Mark Lanier (2012), David Matarrita-Cascante (2010), and Hunt, Logan, & Walker (2009) synthesize a framework for understanding the complexity of the situation of human trafficking. They use an economic approach, one which illustrates how entrepreneurial human traffickers, demand, and supply all play instrumental roles in the victimization process. They argue that countries may even experience structural constraints to supply the demand for human slaves. Their work puts forward a framework of analysis for evaluating this lucrative criminal business through the synthesis of theory integration that includes economics, demand, rational choice, and constitutive theories. Their work allows for human trafficking to be understood and evaluated in terms of international and domestic relations and politics and power. Christina Fisanick (2010) edits *Human Trafficking*, where numerous pieces of research cover topics of government efforts, minor trafficking, the effects of legalized prostitution, the correlation with migration and immigration, and the issues of defining what is and is not human trafficking. These works all use similar frameworks, where the focus is economical, and where human trafficking is treated as an illegal business that must be shut down. This angle or lens for researching this crime is also used by

Laura Shoaps (2013), who focuses on evaluating the effectiveness of the Palermo Protocol, the TVPA, and the TIP Report.

Another theoretical framework that will be incorporated in this study's conceptual framework is the social justice aspect of enslaving human beings. This theoretical understanding views human trafficking as a scourge against humanity, an injustice against the people themselves. Many authors who ascribe to this framework present human trafficking as a manifestation of some broader injustice, often against certain populations in particular. K. A. Duong (2012) engages with the gendered aspects of combatting human trafficking. Her focus is on incorporating the gender-sensitive aspects of the issue into the anti-trafficking initiatives and consequences in order to understand the particular populations which are most affected. J. K. Lobasz (2009) also incorporates gender into her analysis of the human trafficking situation. Her research is on security, not state-centric security but rather victim-centric security. Other authors, such as D. R. Hodge (2014) and McNeil, Held and Busch-Armendariz (2014), engage in the literature under this framework by researching topics on re-humanizing survivors, often through social and medical rehabilitation.

One framework that incorporates a wide array of factors in its evaluation of the situation of human trafficking is presented by Louise Shelly (2010). In her theory of human trafficking, she looks through a wide lens of world conditions, such as global migration, continued disparities between the developed and developing areas, roles of governments, a capitalist demand for increasing profits, an ever-increasing demand and supply of all types of goods and service—legal and illegal, feminized poverty and exploitation, marginalization of rural poor, growth of tourism and sex tourism, and increased global transit and refugees. Her framework incorporates the global market, economic incentives, social injustice, and geographic factors.

This study incorporates these frameworks, with particular emphasis on the areas of tourism, economics, and the role of the government. The conceptual framework for this study also includes the factor of political and social culture. The research problem and the hypotheses were developed through the theoretical and conceptual framework which argues that modern-day slavery is an illegal enterprise, one bent on exploitation for one type of profit or another. Human beings who are trafficked are victims of this crime and require rescue and rehabilitation. This modern-day slave trade is very lucrative and is intimately linked to the neoliberal capitalistic system of supply and demand. Human beings are diminished to mere resources in the eyes of traffickers. There are many contextual factors that exacerbate this crime, such as deprivation, poverty, and culture. This human trafficking framework, solidified by Shelly (2010), is shared by many human trafficking scholars and by those on the ground in Costa Rica.

Delimitations

This is a case study of Costa Rica. Other countries were evaluated only in relation to Costa Rica. This study provides a general overview of the country's efforts to combat human trafficking. Interviews and research were completed in the capital, San José, two other cities, Liberia and Limón, as well as other urban and rural areas as provided through initial interviews. It was essential to seek major tourist destinations for evaluation. Research on Costa Rica's human trafficking situation included data from a ten year period. For example, TIP reports and rankings were included from 2008 to 2017. Also, reports gathered from UNODC and academic literature on Costa Rica were from this same decade of study. The interviews were conducted over several weeks. The participants were selected based on involvement or knowledge of Costa Rica's human trafficking situation and of survivors of human trafficking. This study used only cases of human trafficking that fit the United States' definition, since this definition has become

a fairly universally accepted definition across academic literature and agencies, both governmental and non-governmental.

Assumptions

The hypotheses have a number of variables and assumptions. First, since the Costa Rican government encourages and values the high levels of tourism in the country, the government would thus use its power to increase tourism and thus revenues since the Costa Rican economy is so dependent on tourism for its GDP. Second, a positive link between tourism and human trafficking in Costa Rica means that as one increases the other does as well. Finally, it is assumed that the Costa Rican government and businesses put forth an effort to have an international image of Costa Rica that is wholesome and pure and natural, devoid of illegal activities such as trafficking in persons. This image would benefit the country as a whole, aid its international reputation, increase its tourist industry, and create greater pride and trust in Costa Rica by its citizens.

Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this study, “human trafficking” is defined as the act of “recruiting, harboring, transporting, providing, or obtaining a person for compelled labor or commercial sex acts through the use of force, fraud, or coercion (TIP Report 2015, 7).” Both the TVPA and the Palermo Protocol list “involuntary servitude, slavery or practices similar to slavery, debt bondage, and forced labor” as examples of acts of human trafficking (TIP Report 2015, 7). It may include, but is not limited by, movement across borders. The classification of a person as a victim of human trafficking is regardless of any previous consent to work for the trafficker or participation in criminal activity. This crime centers on the traffickers’ use of force, fraud, and/or coercion to enslave other human beings. It is also known by the United Nations and the

United States as “modern-day slavery” and “trafficking in persons,” a unique form of slavery different from state-sanctioned “chattel slavery.”

“Minimum standards” against human trafficking will be those set forth by the TVPA and the Department of State, in accordance with the United Nations’ Palermo Protocol. They include stringent laws against traffickers with harsh punishments, rescue and rehabilitation practices for victims, prevention efforts targeting at-risk individuals, specialized shelters for survivors, and implementation of any and all relevant laws and policies by government officials and non-governmental partners. The minimum standards are set forth in the Trafficking in Persons Report (Hyland 2001, 30). Adherence to these standards is reflected in a country’s tier ranking.

“Stakeholders” will include persons directly involved in the human trafficking situation. These persons will include law enforcement officers who work directly to rescue victims and arrest traffickers, social workers, NGO workers, and other workers who rehabilitate survivors and work in rescue shelters; sources can include survivors’ stories, traffickers’ experiences as the criminals operating as slave masters, health service workers who deal with the physical and/or psycho-social wounds, or any other professional or service individual who might provide insight, experience, or knowledge of the situation.

Organization of Remaining Chapters

The remaining chapters of this study are organized in a manner to facilitate understanding and utility for readers. Chapter 2 is a careful review of the literature that looks at three primary factors that influence the situation of human trafficking in Costa Rica—tourism and related conditions, country image, and NGO activities. The chapter concludes with the obvious gap in literature that applies these factors to Costa Rica in a substantial way. Chapter 3 is a background and history of Costa Rica, most especially how its development has led to modern-day issues.

Chapter 4 is the methodology chapter, indicating the manner in which this study was performed. This study relies on both empirical hard data from reports and documents and interviews and surveys of those directly involved in the trafficking situation on Costa Rica. Chapter 5 shows the first results of this study, from the documentation to reports, transcripts, and surveys. Chapter 6 covers this study's interviews with stakeholders on the topic. It analyzes the interviews and provides recurring themes drawn from them. Chapter 7 is the final chapter which offers the conclusions drawn from the study and the evidence that supports the hypothesis. It will also delineate and show the limits of the study, offer points of discussion, connections to theory, and implications. It ends with suggestions for future research.

Summary

The question as to why human slavery still exists has a relatively simple answer—because it is in demand. Modern-day slavery affects all countries across the globe. Citizens from Thailand and Cambodia, the United States, and Costa Rica are affected by this crime, as victims, as perpetrators, and as clients. Force, fraud, and coercion are powerful methods used to enslave human beings as sex workers, laborers, and domestic servants. As victims suffer through these situations, states are provided with minimum standards set forth by the United Nations and the United States. Many states have yet to meet these standards in their efforts to combat human trafficking. This research on Costa Rica illustrates some of the reasons that countries are unable or unwilling to combat this crime fully. In Costa Rica, indices of development fail to explain why Costa Rica has yet to meet minimum standards, as illustrated by its country narrative and ranking in the TIP Reports from the United States Department of State. However, results of this study show that there are a number of issues, mainly tourism and reliance on NGOs, which hinder efforts to combat human trafficking and rescue survivors.

Chapter 2—Review of the Literature

Trafficking in persons has become one of the fastest growing forms of transnational crime. Estimates in 2013 indicated that nearly one million people were bought and sold that year alone (Golob 2014, 19). According to the United Nations, in absolute terms, more slave trading and more slaves exist than ever throughout history (2000). Traffickers use methods of physical abuse, manipulation, brain-washing, rape, and threats, among others, in order to keep exploiting human beings for profit and for personal use. These actions have been criminal for a long time, but in 2000, the United Nations took up the mantle of combatting the issue of modern-day human slavery through prevention, prosecution, and protection. Since that time, countries around the world have been encouraged to meet with the minimum standards set forth back in 2000. For countries that fail to rank an acceptable tier level in the TIP Report, the United States government threatens funding restrictions until the country can raise its rank. Over the past 16 years, illegal profits have continued to soar, and countries have struggled to receive a ranking of full compliance with the minimum standards. This topic is not new, as forms of slavery have been around since before history was recorded. However, research on modern-day slavery since the UN's Palermo Protocol is new, and this type of research is needed to understand the current global fight against illegal slavery and to evaluate this fight's effectiveness.

In Louise Shelly's book *Human Trafficking: A Global Perspective*, she argues that human trafficking has long been undertheorized, despite the impact and prevalence of it across the globe (2010). Her theory of human trafficking incorporates the diverse methods of exploitation, including child soldiers and organ sales. She notes that the blame for these current

forms of slavery rests on world conditions, specifically increased demand and supply. Modern-day slavery is easily hidden amongst the large flows of migration that encompass the globe. Additionally, she argues that globalization has increased economic and demographic disparities between the global North and South, while making it easier for those who participate in illicit sexual activities to do so outside their countries and to engage in sex tourism. Human trafficking is easier than ever due to the increased ease of transportation and communication.

Migration flows are enormous, and this illicit trade is hidden within the massive movement of people. The supply exists because globalization has caused increasing economic and demographic disparities between the developing and developed world along with the feminization of poverty and the marginalization of many rural communities. Globalization has also resulted in the tremendous growth of tourism that has enabled pedophiles to travel and many to engage in sex tourism. Trafficking has expanded because the transportation infrastructure is there and transportation costs have declined (2010, 2-3).

Shelly also provides evidence that human trafficking has been growing and continues to be beneficial to criminals across the globe (2010). Post-Cold War trends in globalization have enhanced regional conflicts and transcended national borders. These trends have escalated numbers of economic and political refugees and illicit criminals. Capitalism, the demand for profits, and globalized markets continue to increase the demand for slave labor, paid sex, and sex tourism, while criminals have seized on this demand with a more forceful pursuit of forced, fraudulent, and coercive tactics to find and enslave new victims in order to fulfill the growing demand. Human trafficking as a business is economically lucrative with “low start-up costs, minimal risks, high profits, and large demand (Shelly 2010, 3).” Human trafficking is a cheap,

profitable, and easily replenishable business (Shelly 2010). For Shelly, human trafficking harms not only the individual victims, but also injures the principles of democracy, the rule of law, and human rights across the globe.

Although there is only scant literature that offers specific, quantifiable research on cases of trafficking and on the rescue and rehabilitation of victims, there are many studies on the concept of trafficking and on specific countries and their situations. There are several important studies that prove beneficial to this research. Marie-Eve Carrier-Moisan conducted a study in Natal, Brazil that took specific notice of the notion of hypersexualized bodies in the sex industry, and how that plays out in sex tourism (2015). The study was ethnographic, and the research showed the importance of distinctions between different types of sex work on the psychological health of those involved. Although the study did not specifically look into those forced into the industry, it did provide a clear correlation between tourism and sex work and the need for those reduced to commodities to distance themselves from the practice and image of selling themselves for sex.

K. Countryman-Roswurm and B. Bolin specifically conducted research in the area of human trafficking (2014). Their study is focused primarily on identifying and evaluating factors that put youth at risk of being trafficked in the United States. The study looks at interventions with runaways, homeless, and street youth that were implemented to discourage the likelihood of trafficking. Although the research is specific to the United States, there are many insights to be gained from the study. First, although the United States ranks as a Tier 1 country in the TIP Report, the study still found that youth brought in by law enforcement or social service workers often do not receive the appropriate legal, physical, and mental care. Second, those who are most at risk often have a history of neglect, abuse, and trauma. Third, marginalized members of

society have a higher percentage of victimization, poverty, physical abuse, neglect, substance abuse, and sexual abuse. This study was valuable for the general knowledge on trafficking, trafficking victims, and on the circumstances surrounding this crime.

Elizabeth Bernstein and Elena Shih conducted research on the trafficking situation in Thailand and the issues of NGOs and tourism (2014). Their work focuses primarily on the NGO “reality tours,”⁵ but it also affords a great deal of data and research on NGO work in general and on the effects of tourism and a tourist-based economy for victims of human trafficking. The study is openly critical of NGOs and their supposed “moral obligations,” instead the researchers find evidence to support their argument that economics drive NGOs much as they do other entities, and that tourism is profitable and tied directly to human trafficking in Thailand. They claim that the government of Thailand promotes tourism at nearly all costs, that it benefits the rich and the foreign investors, and that the notion of placing the blame on foreign clients is inaccurate and simplistic. They find through their economic study of Thailand, that it has been praised as an ideal destination for mass tourism by Western tourists for decades, due to its “hospitable tourist environment” that has been significantly economically supported by the Thai government since the 1960s. The Thai Ministry of Tourism and National Plan of Tourist Development have implemented strategies for development that have been tied to international economic policies, specifically those from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). This shift from agriculture-based development to tourism began heavily in the 1970s and climaxed in the 1990s, with the equivalent of \$39.5 million to create the “Amazing Thailand”

⁵ “Reality tours” are led by NGOs with the mission of enlightening and educating tourists on the situation of human trafficking. The tours take buses of individuals on a one-week “reality tour” “of purported trafficking-related sites...This tour was part of a growing number of trips around the world that offer alternatives to mass tourism, taking issues of social justice and humanitarian intervention as their focal orientation (Bernstein & Shih 2014, 430).”

tourist campaign in an effort to repay the IMF for its loans during the Asian financial crisis of 1997 (Bernstein & Shih 2014, 434). Their research suggests that NGOs, governments, and international monetary institutions profit from human trafficking right along with the traffickers. Since tourism is a “backbone industry,” the Thai government cannot risk harming it, even at the cost of human life and human freedom. Although Thailand is on the opposite side of the world from Costa Rica, many of the generalizations concerning tourism and trafficking may be applicable as Costa Rica has undergone a similar “touristization” of its economy.

Susan Frohlick and Lynda Johnston conducted a study on sexuality and tourism that also has proved invaluable to this research (2011). Their contribution to the field centers on the imagery of tourism in a country. One of their cases was Costa Rica and its “No Artificial Ingredients” campaign. Their study shows how this campaign was built upon notions of nature and beauty to construct a discourse. They argue that Costa Rica is a prime example of using a campaign to create an “appropriate” image to represent the country and the tourist industry. This study specifically targeted the Costa Rican example as hegemonic and overly conservative and hypocritical, excluding homosexuality and cross-ethnic encounters. They claim that sex tourism “flourishes, and is structured by wider social sanctioning of *machista*, a gendered discourse upholding a naturalized promiscuity associated with masculinity (Frohlick & Johnston 2011, 1092).” The researchers found that the “appropriate” image conveyed in the advertisements were void of any queer or “unnatural” relationships. By researching state-sponsored vacation advertisements and evaluating them through theories of sexuality in branding, the research shows that Costa Rica is a destination for tourists seeking “safe,” “pure,” and “natural” erotic experiences.

According to one study by Deborah Pruitt and Suzanne LaFont, sex tourism, economics, and power are all intertwined. Their study found that tourist women engaging in sex tourism with men in Jamaica illustrates economic status as power to dominate (1995, 422). This historically male-dominated “tourism” redefines gender and identity when “reversed,” where power rests with the women seeking men. The researchers use the term “romance tourism” for this female-centered equivalent to the classic male-dominated alternative (1995, 423). Per this study, both the males and the females involved reported that they were not engaging in prostitution, despite the exchange of funds. The authors also note that “Foreign women on the arms of local men in the resort areas of Jamaica is a regular part of the landscape (1995, 424).” This normalization of such an image is pivotal to understanding the social and cultural aspects that emerge around tourist “development” in such situations. In Jamaica, this industry is actually nicknamed “rent-a-dread” (Pruitt & LaFont 1995, 424). Women from this study reported that the “racial, educational and economic differences that constrain tourists women at home are often diminished or ignored as part of the necessity of having a ‘freeing’ experience (Pruitt & LaFont 1995, 427).” Overall, when discussing the issues and concerns regarding this and other exploitative tourist enterprises, the authors argue that there is a pervasive and disturbing assumption that tourism is “The Answer” to economic development for Jamaica (Pruitt & LaFont 1995, 428). The stated goal of the Jamaican men involved was to get a “white woman” as a ticket out of the country or at least out of the lower socio-economic status in Jamaica. To do this, a man must become the “exotic Other” through dreadlocks, Rasta dialect, and by exuding a “harmony with nature” attitude (Pruitt & LaFont 1995, 431-433).

Like the work done by Pruitt and LaFont, Denise Brennan also studies the interactions and livelihoods of individuals involved in transnational sex work (2004). Brennan studies the

Dominican Republic and the complexities of the more classical, male-dominated sex tourism “development” there. Her findings are similar in nature to other studies of this kind, showing that this globalized type of “development” is uneven and unreliable, as well as risky (Brennan 2004, 49). In one example, the goal of one “advancement” sex worker, Elena, is met when one of her patrons moves to the Dominican Republic from Germany, inviting her and her child to live with him, thus ending her career as a sex worker temporarily (Brennan 2004, 4-5). However, as illustrated by this example, such “happy endings” often do not last. The unrealistic expectations for both the sex workers and the purchasers of such “affection” do not transcend into lasting relationships. Elena thus returns to poverty, this time with two children instead of one. Brennan uses the term “sexscape” to define a region or area that is characterized by such sex tourism, where those from developed countries come for sexual relations with the “Others” from the less developed countries and where those from less developed countries are reliant on sex tourism as a means of escaping poverty and desperation (Brennan 2004, 15).

One study was completed by Marianela Méndez-Marengo in Costa Rica with five rescued survivors of human trafficking (2013). Through interviews with these survivors, Méndez-Marengo found that they were exploited young, lured with promises of work or through desperation, and that human trafficking, drug trafficking, and prostitution are all intermingled (2013, 115). Furthermore, she argues in her work that the notion of *traslado* (movement), a requirement for human trafficking in Costa Rica, is a malleable term, that movement for purposes of sexual exploitation has no set standard (2013, 116). As with other cases of human trafficking around the globe, and in alignment with the previously mentioned human trafficking theories, Méndez-Marengo found that survivors were treated as if their only value was as monetary resources; all humanity had been stripped from them (2013, 121).

From these types of studies and research, it becomes clear that the human trafficking situation and the factors that contribute to it in Costa Rica are far from unique and can thus be studied as one case among many. It is thus imperative to investigate in order to provide necessary evidence to test the validity of the hypotheses of this study and to determine the details of the situation in Costa Rica. Further literature selected centered on several main themes found throughout. The country of Costa Rica has developed progressively over the last few decades, including its global image, its economic situation, its developing tourist industry, and its country profile. This research focuses on three factors that show correlation to human trafficking, factors present in Costa Rica. The first is the increase in tourism and the country's thriving tourist industry. The second is Costa Rica's international and domestic image as a country of clean and peaceful natural beauty. The third is the increased presence and activities of NGOs at work in the country.

Political Economy of Tourism

According to Alister Mathieson and Geoffrey Wall, "Tourism is the temporary movement of people to destinations outside their normal places of work and residents, activities undertaken during their stay in those destinations, and the facilities created to cater to their needs (1982, 1)." Tourism is the most important export industry and method for acquiring foreign exchange for many countries around the world (Mathieson & Wall 1982, 1). Defining tourism and a tourist for social science research is a task, with distance, purpose, length of stay, and other factors contributing to possible definitions (Mathieson & Wall 1982, 11). Although individual tourists do not impact profoundly destination countries, tourism as an industry is a phenomenon which alters human behavior and the destination country due to the interactions between visitors, natives, and all the industries in the middle (Mathieson & Wall 1982, 14). The tourist is

motivated by rising income, a desire to escape normality, an increase in mobility and transportation, and higher levels of education and knowledge acquisition (Mathieson & Wall 1982, 17). For John Lea, tourism creates a pleasure periphery on a world scale (1988, 1). Tourism is associated with wanting to escape reality for a while (Lea 1988, 6). Colin Hall, in his book *Tourism and Politics: Policy, Power and Place*, furthers the study of tourism and its political implications. He argues that tourism is a combination of economic, political, and geographic factors, but that tourism and politics are actually mutually influential, one necessitates changes in the other and vice versa (Hall 1994, 3). He argues that tourism is the largest industry in the world, and that, even more importantly, tourism causes a reimagining of cities, countries, and cultures as commodities to be marketed and capitalized upon (Hall 1994, 1; 7). These authors provide insightful and useful analyses of the tourist industry that build a foundation for further research on tourism and how it affects countries and politics.

Hall states that tourism often grows without planning, monitoring, or guidance, but yet it maintains a generally positive acceptance around the globe (1994, 4). Other literature, such as *Tourism: Economic, Physical, and Social Impacts* by Mathieson & Wall, supports Hall by arguing that tourism is often positively associated with powerful and beneficial changes in the economy and society (1982, 1). It is a commonly held belief that tourism creates development and is a positive force in remitting economic problems, as a means to counteract economic difficulties (Mathieson & Wall 1982, 36). No other industry is as linked to so many different products and services as tourism. Yet, despite its global impact, it is best described as “coordination in a loose fashion (Hall 1994, 33).” Power and values are understudied in tourism; instead managerial skills and the technicalities of it are the focus of attention. The impact of tourism is often underemphasized (Hall 1994, 19).

For Hall, tourism is both a giver and a receiver of state's power (1994, 13). The mutual effect that one has on the other causes political strain. The main issue he illustrates is the value-laden nature of politics combined with a lack of methodology and theoretical base for studies on tourism and its effects; instead, personal judgments and practical skills pretend to be political knowledge, based on the basic criteria of measurable outcomes for tourism policies (Hall 1994, 15). In politics, the state includes central government, administration, courts, law enforcement, state-owned businesses, regulatory and assistance authorities, and semi-state bodies (Hall 1994, 23). It is the duty and responsibility of the state to govern the people through agency representation. The state thus transfers values, interests, and resources into objectives and policies (Hall 1994, 20). However, when the political influence over tourism and the influences by tourism get tangled up in the political machine of the state, there is a major issue with legitimacy for tourist-centered institutions, because most tourist regulatory institutions are not elected or overseen by the people (Hall 1994, 24). Thus, these institutions are vastly influential in the social arena without the responsibility and the duty associated with the democratic legitimacy of state institutions.

Hall argues that many governments accept and concur that tourism is positive (1994, 28-29). As such, tourism is a common development tool. It is used as a means to overcome economic hardship and to bounce back after other industries collapse or weaken, such as agricultural or factory exports. The idea of tourism as a quick fix by pouring money into a developing economy to ease issues such as high unemployment, under employment, low industrial development, and the dependence on agriculture, is often appealing (Mathieson & Wall 1982, 40). Hall argues that there is a major issue with capitalist democracy and the lack of planning and control. It is up to the discretion of some government officials and companies to

choose where to invest; they can simply pick areas to develop (Hall 1994, 36). Since the government can hardly keep up with coordinating, planning, legislating, and regulating the entrepreneurship and the stimulation of the realm of tourism, the industry is often “out of control,” in a sense (Hall 1994, 32). Lea furthers that many developing countries that rely on tourism cannot plan for or manage the industry due to the fact that they have little real control over the influences that determine both the size and the characteristics of the tourist industry in their country (1988, 74). Government regulations are often seen as “getting in the way” of development, a business that industry and developers would prefer to handle (Hall 1994, 39). As such, the government is often encouraged to and is often keen to take a step back and let tourism work on its own (Hall 1994, 31). It is easier for the government and better for the companies and the industry to let tourism “self-govern” like the market, so to speak. Since tourism is commonly viewed as a positive development strategy, the danger of such an enterprise is minimized. However, tourism has many overlooked “costs” for locals that governments and investors ignore due to the profitable benefits that satisfy the “big picture” and the greater good (Hall 1994, 12).

Hall evaluates the implementation of tourism and the political ramifications of it. He states that tourism policies are value setting (1994, 51). Those values are not always aligned with the supposed values of a society or a political culture. There are prescriptive models of behavior that seek to guide development of an area, but the actuality of it is very different in formation and implementation (Hall 1994, 48). Tourism has many consequences. The effects that it has on a people, on a society, and on a state are often viewed very differently depending on the perspective. International travel equates to greater economic interdependence, or dependence, depending on the interpretation (Hall 1994, 60). For some, tourism is a trap that leads to a neo-colonialist mentality of dependence and fixed modernization track. For others,

tourism is an avenue for development and a path toward independence from such colonial heritage. For others, tourism is viewed as a force for peace. Yet there is no doubt that it is also definitely the cause of much ideological spreading, as cultures intermingle and dominant ones are catered to by those that are more submissive and servile in the international tourist industry (Hall 1994, 60-61). The spreading of ideologies can easily be argued as both positive and negative.

Dimensions of Tourism

The affinity for tourism as a positive impact on countries goes all the way to the top. The United Nations declared in 1963 that tourism was a strategy for development and diplomacy (Hall 1994, 63). At that time, the removal of restraints on tourism and travel allowed for “good” growth across many nations (Hall 1994, 71). This “good” growth has been evaluated since, and new conclusions have been forwarded, such as that the “benefits” of tourism bring enclave infrastructure, or “dependent development,” with the sole intention of accommodating the tourists (Hall 1994, 122). This argument is furthered by Hall to say that the development locus of control in countries dependent on tourism is in the hands of the tourists (Hall 1994, 123). Since 1963, there have been many questions raised concerning tourism as a development tool. Yet the most pressing question remains if tourism is the force for peace that the UN decreed it to be or a “force for whorism” (Hall 1994, 89-91).” After all, it is commonly referred to as “selling of the soul of the nation” by those adversely affected and by those who study such effects.

An argument can be made to back such a reference, based on the research. Tourism brings modernization-style development, which results in gender-based inequalities. This can increase such acts as prostitution. In a way, it can be argued that tourism for the economy and development of a country is not unlike prostituting, selling itself for an economic advantage. For

many countries where tourism is the main facilitator for development, levels and types of exploitation have even been praised. For example Hall provides a quote from the South Korean Minister for Education who said that “the sincerity of girls who have contributed with their cunts to their fatherland’s economic development is indeed praiseworthy (1994, 121).” Tourism has been linked with introducing unwelcomed practices and actions, such as trafficking in drugs and humans (Hall 1994, 81). Mathieson and Wall also conclude that tourism is associated with negative changes to society, such as encouraging prostitution and crime, that it destroy resources and tradition, and that governmental prioritization favors the tourists rather than the natives (1982, 2). They argue that prostitution has always been correlated with travel, but studies remain inconclusive about an association between tourism, specifically, and prostitution at present. Studies show a close similarity between the tourist season and the crime season, providing evidence that crime increases with increased tourism (Mathieson & Wall 1982, 149-151). Lea argues that the promotion of tourism with high social costs, such as gambling, pornography, and sex tourism, can have a drastically negative effect on locals, who often become clientele of these industries despite low incomes that cannot support such habits (1988, 18). The new dominant perspective regarding effects on culture by tourism is that it is harmful; tourism chisels away culture. However, studies also show that the type of tourism and types of tourists are important in understanding this relationship (Mathieson & Wall 1982, 162).

According to editors Sarah Lyon and E. Christian Wells, “Global tourism is perhaps the largest-scale movement of goods, services, and people in history. Consequently it has been (and continues to be) a significant catalyst for economic development in sociopolitical change (2012, 6).” After all, tourism generates more than U.S. \$850 billion a year. They also note that “tourismsapes,” the regions or areas characterized by reliance and involvement with tourism,

continue to grow and blur into “everyday spaces” (2012, 7). Historically tourism has been defined by “sun, sex, sea, and sand;” however, it has grown in scope and influence recently as to become more than leisure or respite (Lyon & Wells 2012, 7-8). Tourism is a global phenomenon, a transnational business, an international developer, and a point of social and cultural change. Tourism’s impact has become more profound and heavily related to notions of gender, politics, and identity (Lyon & Wells 2012, 14). These aspects of a tourist industry are often related to “oppression, exploitation, and subordination” (Lyon & Wells 2012, 219). As shown by one study in the anthology edited by Lyon and Wells, even female-dominated industry and occupations around the world become male-dominated as more Western tourists take interest in them, gendering the profits from tourism and causing a gendered shift in society, culture, and inequality (Lyon & Wells 2012, 227).

Various dimensions of tourism development are very significant for developing countries. It has been proposed that the increasing and continued expansion of the industry is a valuable counterbalance to unemployment (Hall 1994, 115-116). However, the type of work that is created by the tourist industry is most often part-time, underpaid positions that are majorly women-centered and increase the wage disparities. Also, since tourists do not visit the poorest areas most in need of income, it is hard to argue that the impact is overly significant for those areas. Tourist locations are directly related to coastal areas rather than areas in need (Mathieson & Wall 1982, 119). Hall argues for an understanding of the tourist industry as underdevelopment, as modernization at work in a negative way (1994, 120). The basic system is that local elites drive the industry in a plantation-style economy reminiscent of times past, where supply must meet the demands of those overseas (Hall 1994, 126-127). The most secure industries have a wide variety of types of tourism to cushion the blow if one takes a hit for some

reason (Hall 1994, 129). This wide range can include all sorts of tourist-centered industries and is evidence of a massive hegemonic presence. Also, like all capitalistic industries, tourism has its limits. Hall suggests that Hawaii is a good example of dead-end tourism development, where the locals have reached their maximum potential under a tourist-dependent economy and are calling for “better” development and a cessation of tourism (1994, 130-132). Although ecotourism is often promoted as a positive type of tourism, it leaves the same structural changes and challenges. Tourism provides immediate, tangible economic results and is deceptively influential in the socio-cultural realm (Hall 1994, 149). Commoditization is the end result of over-tourism, where previously sacred practices and items with cultural relevance are traded for the unique economic value they possess, in effect “selling out” the region (Hall 1994, 176).

Mathieson and Wall observe that the capital received from tourism could be used to augment the low capital gains from exporting primary commodities and goods in an effort to develop the country (1982, 41-42). In many historical instances, this was the hope. However, some scholars argue that the economic benefits are not worth the negative consequences, both physical and social, that result from an increase in tourism. One aspect that creates problems for countries is that many developing nations cannot afford the capital investment that it takes to create a successful tourist industry; they must rely on multinational corporations to construct hotels and resorts. This mitigates economic benefits to the host country (Mathieson & Wall 1982, 62). For example, the demand for resources and supplies in tourist centric areas creates a need for imported supplies and food, because local supplies cannot meet the demands of large scale resorts, hotels, restaurants, and other vacation industries (Mathieson & Wall 1982, 83). Meanwhile, governments directly benefit from tourism on a large scale through taxes, as taxes on "leisure activities," such as hotels and gambling, are some of the highest in the world (Mathieson

& Wall 1982, 75-76). An overdependence on tourism creates a society at the mercy of changes in the demands of tourists (Mathieson & Wall 1982, 87). The environment and tourism have a mutually influential relationship, where each influences and changes the other (Mathieson & Wall 1982, 95-96). Tourism and conservation can have any array of relationships. Sometimes, tourists demand that the environment be kept safe and secure for viewing and studying pleasure. However, often they are in conflict, through their impact on vegetation, water quality, air quality, and wildlife (Mathieson & Wall 1982, 101).

Like Hall, Mathieson and Wall classify tourist development as neocolonialism (1982, 147). Initial euphoria that characterizes the host perceptions toward tourism is often replaced by xenophobic feelings as the expansion of tourism engulfs more and more of the host country, geographically, socially, culturally, and economically (Mathieson & Wall 1982, 141). Architectural pollution is a major characteristic of tourism, with large, expensive hotels and other buildings tailored for tourists needs. Segregation between tourists and residence is another concern (Mathieson & Wall 1982, 121). While tourism has long been praised as a cultural experience, the transitory and geographically limited stay of the tourist in a host country often times does not promote understanding between people; rather it creates superficial temporary relationships (Mathieson & Wall 1982, 135). The physical presence, the demonstration effect, and the foreign ownership and employment of a strong tourist industry can often times be distressing for locals (Mathieson & Wall 1982, 142). The marketing of culture and of the host country is an integral part of the tourist package. Although complex cultures cannot be diminished to a handful of characteristics and symbolic artifacts and customs, the industry continues to try to do so (Mathieson & Wall 1982, 171). It has also been argued that tourism has enabled the rehabilitation of cultures and educated people around the world who might never

have known about certain places; however, Mathieson and Wall are not convinced (1982, 176). This skepticism is understandable, yet, the argument for increased global connectivity and cosmopolitanism, such as the notion of the “global citizen,” cannot be ignored as valuable (Steger 2017). In short, it is agreed that tourism impacts a country drastically, although there is no agreement of a universally generalizable or linear fashion (Mathieson & Wall 1982, 179).

John Lea, in his book *Tourism and Development in the Third World*, agrees that tourism can bring in income and jobs, preservation, cultural understanding, and new facilities, but it also has high costs, such as special amenities, destruction of the environment, undermining social standards, and pollution (1988, 7). He argues for a political economy approach to tourism, which states that tourism has evolved in a way which is reminiscent of historical patterns of colonialism and economic dependency (Lea 1988, 10-12). The development that tourism brings is often enclave, and visitor flow is maintained through global marketing campaigns. In a sense, it is a neo-colonial enclave economy focused on the “tourist experience” rather than the extraction of raw materials. Yet, the results are not vastly different for the locals. The enclave nature of tourism separates tourists from most of the local population and the reality of life in the destination country (Lea 1988, 13). “Structural inequalities and world trade suggest that international tourism is unlikely to achieve a better balance among its rich and poor participants until a corresponding shift also occurs in the whole pattern of country-to-country relationships (Lea 1988, 16).” Thus, Lea argues that tourism is more likely to perpetuate long-standing patterns of exploitation than to bring about development.

Furthermore, Lea’s assessment is that tourism flourishes best in the more economically advanced countries rather than in the developing ones (Lea 1988, 1). Like any other industry, tourism responds to the same supply and demand continuum, leaving the supply countries at the

mercy of the demanding ones (Lea 1988, 23). He also claims that tourism is most beneficial to big industry, such as hotels and transport companies (Lea 1988, 5). It is suggested that a common pattern emerges in the tourist industry—first discovery of a new place attracts attention; second locals respond to the new income earning opportunities; third it becomes institutionalized when large foreign companies take it over (Lea 1988, 30-31). Although this is not a universally accepted pattern, and others suggest that each tourist industry emerges differently depending on the situation in the destination country, it is clear that Lea argues that the real “winners” in the tourist industry are the big businesses.

Lea states that the tourist industry claims to raise the gross national product, increase revenue for the government, generate employment, improve social services, and increase foreign exchange (1988, 38-39). However studies show that these factors are often not as influenced by tourism as is commonly claimed. Often the costs of tourism are difficult to measure, and underdevelopment is the result of an economically successful tourist industry (Lea 1988, 37). In a way, it is similar to the understanding of colonialism proposed by Stuart Hall (1992). The colonial discourse of foreign lands as paradises, natural, unspoiled, sexual, and innocent is very similar to the marketing strategies of tourist industries for developing nations. Studies show that many tourists from the developed world are attracted to the “unspoiled natural environment” and traditional ways of life in many developing areas, although the tourists’ “enjoyment” of such is not always benign (Lea 1988, 53). “An extensive literature covering all the main tourist regions indicates that tourism is closely related to increases in the sale of sex, crime of various kinds, and organized gambling (Lea 1988, 69).” The image of Third World countries as being “more relaxed” about sex has persisted in the marketing of these “exotic” destinations and has increased demands for sexual services to nearly everywhere affected by mass tourism. In order to supply

the demand of sex in tourist areas of the third world, many are forced into prostitution. They are cut off from other types of employment and often live in countries experiencing crises which force them to take drastic or dangerous measures to attempt to secure employment (Lea 1988, 69). Tourist encounters and relationships in the third world are often characterized as unequal and unbalanced, much like during colonial times (Lea 1988, 64). For many tourist destination countries the product that they offer is "made up of surf, sand, sun, and sex (Lea 1988, 74)."

Effects of Sex Tourism

Studies show that there exists a psychological distinction between prostitution and the act of having sex with foreigners for money (Carrier-Moisán 2015, 506; Pritchard 2010). For sex workers, this distinction is important to separate the “lowly” prostitute from the opportunist; the act of trading sex for money or for opportunity is labelled “help” rather than “payment” at the end of the exchange for those wishing to disassociate themselves from the label of prostitute (Carrier-Moisán 2015, 506). This is an important key in understanding the psychological distress and needs that victims of sex trafficking have (Faulkner, Heffron, Nsonwu, & Busch-Armendariz 2013; Hunt, Logan, & Walker 2009). Sex tourism is often seen as a “way out” for many impoverished men and women, who have hopes of finding a spouse or at least a benefactor. The demands of the sex industry are often met by the efforts of traffickers, not by healthy, consensual individuals. “Few women choose to work in the sex industry when other options exist, and the turnover rate of women engaged in prostitution and other forms of sexual exploitation is high (Hodge 2008, 145).” Many exploited victims suffer physical and mental distress and breakdowns from the relentless unwanted sexual activities that they endure daily with strangers (Hodge 2008, 145; Walker-Rodriguez & Hill 2011). For the tourist, tourism affords incredible anonymity and power, most especially economic power (Curley 2014, 286;

Rivers-Moore 2014). The tourist will eventually leave the country, and all that was done, behind.

Tourism is a major contributor to many developing economies around the globe (Matarrita-Cascante 2010; Rivers-Moore 2014). There are various avenues for tourism that affect countries and their development in profound ways. While some countries are known for their architecture or history, others are known for their natural beauty and unique natural phenomenon. Still, others are advertised as locations for sexual enjoyment and carnal pleasures. These different variations in tourism create different models of supply and demand for tourists.

Specific types of tourism are tied to certain supplied activities and attractions. For example, one case study on tourism in Brazil argued that areas of the country attracted a very specific type of tourist clientele with focused interests. Ninety-eight percent of tourists who visit Natal, Brazil are from Europe (Carrier-Moisan 2015, 503). Sex tourism, such as in Brazil, is built upon the notion of hypersexualized bodies as a way to earn respect through the “eroticized other” (Carrier-Moisan 2015, 501). Using Brazil as an example, events such as Carnaval and the stereotype of erotic Brazilian women have created a country image and a set of expectations for tourists of hypersexuality and promiscuity.

Sex trafficking is the most prevalent form of human trafficking, particularly in Central America. Studies show that 53 percent of cases around the globe are primarily sex cases, compared to 65 percent of cases being sex trafficking in Central America (United Nations 2014, 33; Golob 2014; Hyland 2001). Sex trafficking may include both domestic clients and clients who cross international borders to procure sex. Sex tourism is defined as persons crossing international borders to procure sex. Yet, according to sex trafficking laws, those involved in sex tourism may or may not be considered victims of sex trafficking, depending on the methods of

recruitment, particularly if they involve the requirements of force, fraud, coercion, or movement (Dekking 2007; Potocky, M. 2011; Rivers-Moore 2014). Sex tourism is thus often linked to sex trafficking, but is not officially a synonym of it. However, Hodge argues that destination countries are often associated with two factors—legal or allowed prostitution and a bustling sex industry (2008, 145). The issues in defining sex work and prostitution are ongoing, with some arguing that sex work should be viewed under labor laws, while others argue that all sex work is tantamount to slavery (Bindman 1997; Pritchard 2010).

Still, the impoverished are those who most frequently end up in sexual business, either rural or urban poor. In some instances, they are frequently seeking transnational marriage as a means “out” (Carrier-Moisán 2015, 503). Sex tourism develops out of economic and social inequalities, where resources are limited, opportunities are scarce, and hopes for a future free from social injustice and economic hardship are slim (Ourahmoune 2013, 364; Lucchi 2010). Those who work with survivors of human trafficking argue that commercializing human beings and their bodies in any way is exploitation (Fundación Rahab). Sex tourism is an “opportunity” for some and a prison for others. Tourism and business travel have been shown to facilitate commercial sexual consumption (Bernstein 2001, 411). Bernstein argues that the demand for sexual commerce has been majorly influenced by a new recreational model of sexual intimacy that has resulted in a merging of the informal economy, commercial sexual consumption, tourism, and legitimate business.

Studies show that poverty and the economy have been consistent factors in human trafficking victimization (Copley 2014, 1; Hunt, Logan, & Walker 2009, 10; Hyland 2001; Minnick 2012; Pearce 2011). Yet, these factors are, in a major part, shaped by historical and global economic and trade policies. Trafficking is thus both an economic and a social issue

across the globe based on the systemic and institutional influence of international economic development. In many areas across the globe, children sold to recruiters often find that their final destination is a brothel for international sex tourists. In areas such as Brazil, Colombia, and Venezuela, girls are forced into servitude at brothels near the Amazonia mining centers (CATW 2001, 2). “Trafficking in persons exists because it is lucrative and driven by the demand for sexual services and cheap labor. Moreover, events such as sporting and entertainment venues, conventions, and business meetings that bring large numbers of people together may increase the likelihood of the demand for sex services and provide opportunities for minor victims to be exploited (Busch-Armendariz, Heffron, & Nsonwu 2014, 10).”

Yet sex tourism is not the only variation of tourism that is associated with human trafficking. In some countries where rates of human trafficking are high, such as Thailand and Cambodia, there are human trafficking tours that exploit the situation to turn a profit (Bernstein & Shih 2014, 434). Organizations offer tourists a glimpse at the “reality” of the situation through tours that offer a shocking look at the plight of those exploited through human trafficking. Although the goals of such tours are officially to illustrate and educate, in the end, these tours can also be economically beneficial for the organizations involved in them.

Research by David Matarrita-Cascante is particularly useful for a study on the situation of tourism and its impact on human trafficking efforts in Costa Rica as this research was conducted specifically to study the tourism developments in Costa Rica (2010). In this study, Matarrita-Cascante reviewed and evaluated the tourist situation in Costa Rica and explained the history of tourism and its trends over time. The study also reviewed strategies by the state apparatus that benefit tourism development and improve living conditions for many. One area quoted as contributing to the development of the country, and specifically the tourist industry,

was the 1949 abolition of the army, which opened up that funding for other developmental projects. The research on this topic shows that the 1980s were a period of tourism development and NGO involvement.

In 1985, the government decreed the Tourism Investment Incentives Law, which promoted the development of the tourism industry. Through such law, hotels, restaurants, tourism-related air and water transportation enterprises, car rental companies, and travel agencies were eligible for certain privileges. These included income tax exemptions for 12 years on undistributed profits, exemption from all tariffs and surcharges on imported or domestic products related to the development of tourism-based services or infrastructure, exemption of property taxes for 12 years, and access to preferred interest rates on loans (Matarrita-Cascante 2010, 142).

However, the study also showed that Costa Rica continues to struggle with issues of income inequality, illegal immigration, and crime. Matarrita-Cascante notes that Costa Rica is still a developing country. Twenty percent of the population lives below the poverty line, and many more families barely manage basic needs and are at high risk of falling below the line. Women remain twice as likely to live under the poverty line, as do those who live outside the Central Valley area. He also argues that there are a great deal of concerns that are directly associated with tourism, such as problems of limited and polluted water sources, destruction of nature and animal habitats, and high amounts of sex tourism and sex industries. Despite any of these issues, the research in this study ranks Costa Rica as a current top tourist destination in Latin America.

Matarrita-Cascante is not alone in his evaluation of the situation. Authors such as Colin Hall, Jane Pritchard, and Megan Rivers-Moore all have similar arguments that neoliberalism and

international corporations have created a growth in the sex industry through expanding markets, ease of travel and communication, and high levels of migration. In Costa Rica, like elsewhere, through this relationship, the focus has shifted from a supply-driven market to one that is far more demand-driven (Matarrita-Cascante 2010, 150; Hunt, Logan, & Walker 2009; Pritchard 2010; Rivers-Moore 2014). One NGO working in Costa Rica noted that, “Though the majority of these child victims are abused at the hands of their families and locals, it’s important to note that many of these child victims are being used for child sex tourism. It’s estimated that 10% of tourists to Costa Rica engage in sex tourism (Casa Milagro 2016).”

Historically, Costa Rica offered its resources as a supply for tourism, such as unique flora and fauna and opportunities for scientific research. Costa Rica has encouraged tourism through marketing the fact that it is home to 5 percent of the world’s species (IHS 2015, 15; Matarrita-Cascante 2010). However, as tourism has increased in importance to the Costa Rican economy, international demand has enticed the hand of suppliers to meet the market demand, generating a supply for the less legal types of tourism, such as sex tourism.⁶ One researcher in Costa Rica sums up the issue:

A combination of the legalization of prostitution in Costa Rica, along with the steady rise in tourism over the past 20 years, has attributed to the boom in human trafficking operations. Often it is the same groups that are involved in the drug and weapon trade that are at the helm of sex trafficking operations, with the resources already in place to move people around the area under the radar. Most of the prostitution takes place at legitimate sex clubs and short term hotels, but there are also instances of sex tours for tourists and online operations (Pralinsky 2015).

⁶ Costa Rica is the most visited tourist destination country in Central America (IHS 2015, 15).

In many cases, in order to procure the necessary resources—in this case people—suppliers have used tactics of force, fraud, and coercion, thus increasing the human trafficking issue.

Traffickers who deal in trafficked persons are most often running a business where human beings are the resource being sold and used. Traffickers seek entrepreneur opportunities, as human beings are required as labor and sex workers to fuel industries. Like other areas and regions around the world, industrial sectors and large service industries, along with bustling airports, coastlines, and active transit networks make Costa Rica attractive to traffickers (Clearwater/Tampa Bay Area Task Force on Human Trafficking 2016; Matarrita-Cascante 2010). They seek avenues to procure individuals as victims. This is often associated with runaway teens, marginalized individuals, poverty, urban centers, and other areas of high activity (Clearwater/Tampa Bay Area Task Force on Human Trafficking 2016). Also, as in any business, where there exists a demand, a supply will be provided. “Travel agencies, hotels, airlines, businesses, and so-called child protectors are often involved in sex tourism, playing a part in organized sex tours (CATW 2001, 2).”

Impact of Image

Image becomes reality. It is true across individuals, social movements, international organizations, and states, that the image conveyed and received about an entity determines its reputation. Advertising shapes image, which shapes reality, for a fabricated authenticity (Hall 1994, 178). Kevin DeLuca, in his book *Image Politics: The New Rhetoric of Environmental Activism*, argues for the importance of image; for he says that "The ideology of a community is established by the usage of such terms and specifically rhetorical discourse. They are the basic structural elements, the building blocks, of ideology (1999, 43)." Furthermore, mass media is a delivery system for image events to reach millions of people (DeLuca 1999, 4). Media

campaigns aim to change or maintain human consciousness (DeLuca 1999, 53). Sometimes image is established over a long period of time, slowly built by the country itself, while in other instances a “mind bomb” is an image that explodes in the public's consciousness to change world views instantly, such as a video showing some atrocity or act of violence from a primary source (DeLuca 1999, 1).

DeLuca takes note of the importance of the image of progress across the globe. The notion of progress is often taken for granted background of Western culture; it is development, and it is institutionalized (DeLuca 1999, 46). Progress and progressive people have a superior image to the “backward” people around the world who refuse to or cannot progress. While many social movement groups challenge the image of the status quo in order to invigorate the masses into social, political, and economical change, the discourse of progress and modern values continues to rein pivotal (DeLuca 1999, 67). Hegemony⁷ is a relational process, a social authority, of both coercion and consent (DeLuca 1999, 93). As far as image is concerned, the dominant leadership, or hegemonic influence, of the West creates a dichotomized world of images. It has been illustrated most perfectly by Stuart Hall’s notion of the “West and the Rest,” of a Northern, progressive, intellectual, rational world and a Southern, backward, simple, emotional world (1992).

DeLuca is clear that image is constructed. Often intentional fallacies are a tactic of rhetoric in order to create a certain image or a certain reputation (DeLuca 1999, 132). In fact, such images are merely constructed by allowing certain perceptions and perspectives to prevail

⁷ “Hegemony” here is being used conceptually in accordance with the writings of Antonio Gramsci (where coercion and consent are core to the conception of hegemony and “common sense”). Robert Cox and Stuart Hall extended Gramsci’s conception of hegemony to a global level.

over others. Stuart Hall, in his *Formations of Modernity*, argued for a similar understanding of the importance of image during the colonial era. His claim is that notions of the image of the “other” in foreign lands were constructed through a varied collection of means, such as mythological fantasies and travelers’ tales, which transformed them into something larger than life, often sexual, barbaric, and uncivilized (1992, 206-207). Image was created and crafted per the situation. Sometimes the native people were exotic, enticing, simple, and natural; other times they were barbaric, heathenistic cannibals. Yet, the same people were being described both times. Today, this type of image craft is very much still in use, as countries are defined by icons that idealize them, such as the brutal cartels of Mexico, the extremist terrorists of the Middle East, the friendly and respectful Asian countries, or the sensual sandy beaches and exotic animals of Costa Rica (Hall 1992, 215).

Colin Hall wrote on the importance of image when he stated that marketing and image stimulate the tourist industry (1994, 41). A country’s image improves awareness for commercial and tourist purposes (Hall 1994, 11). Many tourist areas have become showcases for nations wishing to portray a superior image, with many popular tourist destinations kept away from areas of crime and poverty (Hall 1994, 84). After all, political stability and security are preconditions to a thriving tourism industry; and image plays a central role in marketing and promotion (Hall 1994, 93). In order to stay globally competitive in the tourist industry and politically, countries must maintain and improve their national image (Hall 1994, 86). Otherwise, it could have drastic consequences on tourism (Hall 1994, 94). Hall writes that, “Tourists like to feel safe (1994, 25).” He claims that fear of threat, perceived threat, or violations of human rights are the greatest deterrent to travel and tourism (Hall 1994, 92). Political violence and unrest destroy tourist industries (Hall 1994, 102). Mathieson and Wall concur that political and social unrest,

along with crime, can severely diminish tourist traffic to an area, region, or country (1982, 87).

Lea also states that potential visitors are quick to abandon formally popular destinations because of threats to health or security (1988, 2). Demand is likely to decrease drastically when factors of security worsen (Lea 1988, 23).

Country Image

The international image of a country is impactful and important. The image that Costa Rica has is one of natural beauty, progress, development, and a general tourist haven. One Costa Rican president, Oscar Arias Sánchez, won the Nobel Peace prize for his efforts across Central America to create peace and stability (Matarrita-Cascante 2010, 142). This is a prime example of the image that Costa Rica displays. Costa Rica has many laws to regulate tourism, no official army, and a positive image in the international community (Matarrita-Cascante 2010, 140; Woodward 1999). Costa Rica promotes a “No Artificial Ingredients” claim (Matarrita-Cascante 2010, 148). This means that the country portrays itself as natural and pure. The Costa Rican saying, “*pura vida*,” also illustrates this.⁸ This lifestyle of *pura vida* connotes a natural, simple life of living close to nature and away from technology, bustle, and industry. It is a prescription for living that is clean and pure. For the tourist of this tiny Central American country, this desire for nature and purity is strong. Costa Rica promotes the idea that there is nothing “dirty” about the country (Frohlick & Johnston 2011, 1090; Woodward 1999).

There are many important strategies that the government in Costa Rica utilizes to develop the country and promote this image (Matarrita-Cascante 2010, 138; Minnick 2012). One of the most imperative is this emphasis on purity, on a clean, natural place, full of lush vegetation,

⁸ According to an article from *La Nación*, one of Costa Rica’s newspapers, the country’s slogan of *pura vida* was originally from a 1956 Mexican movie “Pura Vida” where the main character uses the phrase to express a variety of meanings and a generally positive and laidback outlook on life (Corella 2013). Supposedly, this phrase was adopted by the Costa Ricans not long after to describe their newfound peace from 1949 onward.

tropical forests, clear beaches, and happy people. Various, tropical fauna and beautiful landscapes are the classical photos of Costa Rica. This image of Costa Rica can be easily found in pamphlets, websites, Google searches, articles, news stories, and numerous other forms of media and propaganda.

However, such as other constructed images and reputations, this image does not show the entirety of Costa Rica, nor does it cover the everyday lives of Costa Ricans. Compared to other Central American countries, Costa Rica is doing relatively well. Yet, it still has a persistent 20 percent of the population living below the poverty line (Matarrita-Cascante 2010, 144; The Protection Project 2015). This fifth of the population is not photographed and displayed as representative of the country. This large percentage of the population lives similarly to its neighbors across Central America (Hyland 2001, 39; Minnick 2012).⁹ Studies show that poverty, familial abuse, neglect, poor caregiving, and substance abuse all lead to sexual victimization and exploitation (Countryman-Roswurm & Bolin 2014, 526; Hunt, Logan, & Walker 2009, 11). According to Hodge, originating countries and those most involved in the business of trafficking human beings tend to be politically unstable and economically disadvantaged (2008, 145). Weak institutions cause bribery, forgery, and corruption. This in turn allows for easier trafficking of humans. Traffickers target the disadvantaged, such as impoverished women, orphans, those with disabilities, those illiterate or innumerate, and others at high risk of exploitation (Hodge 2008, 145; Hyland 2001; Minnick 2012; Pearce 2011). These factors are associated with low socio-economic status and diminished resources.

⁹ According to the World Bank, poverty rates across Central America are as follows: Nicaragua has a rate of 30 percent; Panama has a rate of 23 percent; Honduras has a rate of 63 percent; El Salvador has a rate of 32 percent; Guatemala has a rate of 59 percent (2016).

Many enter into illegal activities, both through force and through “choice.” In an attempt to disassociate themselves from the negativity and maladaptive behaviors unfitting a citizen of a “pure” country such as Costa Rica, many ensnared in industries such as the sex industry have to create distinctions. For example, prostitution is not viewed as on the same level as sex with foreigners for money; the difference is nuanced but important to the workers (Carrier-Moisan 2015, 500). However, the requirements of force, fraud, and coercion that define human trafficking are vague, leaving the possibility open to define these types of supposedly consensual relations between locals and foreigners as a less straightforward type of force. When options are limited, exchanging sex for money may be the only available option.

Governments are unable or unwilling to address the severity of these issues and generally do not strike at the roots of the problems. There is a service gap in addressing victims and the needs of victims; agencies are not equipped and victims are not treated properly (Countryman-Roswurm & Bolin 2014, 523; Hunt, Logan, & Walker 2009; Walker-Rodriguez & Hill 2011). In Cambodia, and other countries where the human trafficking is rampant, and the country image conveys as much, attention is paid to the international sex clients, yet locals make up the majority of the clients for sex (Curley 2014, 299). This is not uncommon across the globe. Human trafficking does not need to cross international borders or have clients from other countries. In some areas, victims often never leave their home country and may only rarely “service” tourists. The majority of survivor cases involve victims who never crossed international borders during their experience of being trafficked (Butler 2014, 835). Police are often corrupt and seek personal gain over the preservation of human life (Harlan 2012, 1128). In some instances, law enforcement officers are patrons of brothels, and in other instances police and law enforcement work with traffickers to exploit marginalized members of society.

Image plays an important role at all levels. Some countries are known for their human trafficking. As such, there is great attention focused on their trafficking crimes, victims, and perpetrators, such is the case for Cambodia and Thailand. Yet, this attention is directly aligned with the image of the country. For example, both eroticism and Orientalism are strong in Thailand, where the “othering” effect influences both those seeking to utilize human slaves and those seeking to end trafficking (Bernstein & Shih 2014, 436). In this type of situation, the “other” may be seen as erotic, exotic, and hypersexual to the purchaser, while to the defender, the “other” may be helpless, incapable, and in need of rescue. This imagery dictates the foci of domestic and international attention in Thailand. In part due to this branding, the Thai government is “stuck” with a reliance on illegal activities to stay economically afloat (Bernstein & Shih 2014, 436).

According to Sonia Cardenas and her review of the history of human rights in Latin America, many of the current countries across this region have long-standing historical trends that have them “stuck” as well (2010). The issues surrounding human rights stem from years of civil wars, distrust in governments, lethargic and corrupt police, and many ongoing violations of civil and human rights. The Latin American population has a persistent distrust of officials along with economic hardship and emigration. In many ways, this history and its current effects across the region are ideal for traffickers. However, Gary Prevost and Harry E. Vanden write extensively on Latin America and show that Costa Rica has quite often been the exception to the Latin American rule; Costa Rica has not suffered through countless military coup d’états, it has kept a strong Legislative Assembly for decades, it is the only Latin American country with an official and professional civil service system, and it has remained a dominant democracy for more than 60 years (2011, 193-220). In short, Costa Rica has had an exceptional image for

decades when compared to its neighboring countries (Prevost & Vanden 2011; Woodward 1999). Cardenas' notion of history as a determinant of current human rights situations further focuses attention on governments and raises specific concerns for countries such as Costa Rica which do not have the same history of exploitation and economic hardship as countries such as Thailand and Cambodia.

For countries like Costa Rica, it is imperative to maintain the pure image, despite the fact that one researcher described Costa Rica as “the child prostitution capital of the Western Hemisphere (Pralinsky 2015).” With a tourist-dependent economy and large international investors, Costa Rica needs to maintain itself as safe, hospitable, and beautiful, where nature and solace await, and the people live happy, contented lives. “*Pura Vida*” must remain as the symbol of Costa Rica, should the country wish to continue to economically succeed on the world stage and global market. Yet, as studies with survivors illustrate, it is imperative that this crime not remain in the shadows and out of the limelight of the country's political culture (Hom 2013, 80; Minnick 2012, 81; Pearce 2011). This crime relies on secrecy and ignorance of the situations of these victims; thus it is crucial that the focus be put on this situation so that combat efforts can be effective and human beings can be rescued and rehabilitated from modern-day slavery.

NGOs as Global Governance

According to Seth Kaplan, “...NGOs play crucial roles providing social services to the poor, holding governments accountable, aggregating the political power of the disenfranchised, and helping to shape public policies. Their importance to development is well known (2011).”¹⁰ Peter Willetts, in his article on the importance of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in global governance, argues that NGOs have had an increasingly influential and important role in

¹⁰ According to the United Nations, “A non-governmental organization (NGO) is a non-for-profit, voluntary citizens' group, which is organized on a local, national or international level to address issues in support of the public good.”

the matter since the 1990s (2011). His argument is that NGOs have had a major role in the global political and social arena for hundreds of years, ever since some of the first non-governmental activists started such organizations as the Red Cross. He credits NGOs for many of today's strides, even giving credit to them for the rapid and wide-spread use of the Internet for mass communication.

For Willetts, the major changes for NGOs in today's globalized civil society center on the growing number of active NGOs around the world, thousands recognized by the United Nations, and the increased speed of communication and dissemination of information. The costs of mass communication are now inexpensive and far more effective. NGOs can now be more active and more influential. Their presence at the United Nations began in 1945, when a collection of NGOs helped to solidify the UN's standpoint on human rights. "Overall, NGOs exercise far greater rights at the U.N. than they do at parliaments within individual countries...now they have permanent formal participation rights in a General Assembly body, the Human Rights Council, and at all special U.N. conferences (Willetts 2011)." Of course NGOs have no policymaking power over the issues and institutions that affect their missions. NGOs must use their influence, through media and lobbying of governments, to affect agenda setting and policy. However, the implementation of these policies and agendas must also be monitored, since governments often fail to act. Thus, NGOs become monitors, with unassailable positions, as they demand proper implementation by governments. They review and produce annual reports on progress, they attend conferences, and they are often included in the review process of the reporting cycle. They hold governments accountable.

One example in 1984 of an NGO accomplishing policy change for human rights, a difficult battlefield for NGOs, involved Amnesty International and Coalition for the ICC:

The "sovereignty barrier" was shattered when Amnesty International's decade-long campaign against torture resulted in the agreement for a Convention against Torture. Those who ratified the convention gained the right to put on trial and imprison torturers, regardless of which country they were from and where the torture had occurred, so long as their own citizens were the victims. In 1998, the statute for the International Criminal Court was agreed upon, and in 2002, the necessary 60 ratifications were achieved for the court to be established. At the ICC, again, sovereignty is subordinated to the international community's overriding interest in prosecuting those who commit war crimes, genocide or crimes against humanity when their own government proves unwilling or unable to do so. The efforts to guarantee that the court was established, led by the NGO Coalition for the ICC, overcame opposition first from the Clinton administration, which attempted to prevent the creation of a strong, independent court; and subsequently from the Bush administration, which mounted a determined and sustained campaign to prevent ratifications. Simply put, were it not for NGOs, there would be no international law of human rights and no U.N. machinery to protect them. (Willetts 2011)

Many NGOs claim to be a "voice of the people," a democratic system of activists. However, since they are often very focused on a select mission and have a unique vision, in reality, NGOs tend to be a self-selecting minority. In reality, NGOs cannot be involved in the decision-making any more than they already are, since their voice would be elitist, Willetts argues in his article (2011). Although the notion of them as democratic is easily challenged, there is no doubt that they speak for a significant constituency, and that their work is often "for

the greater good.” In this way, the main role of the NGO is often as an agent of accountability, a voice for the masses, a force for transparency. Although NGOs have long been criticized as being Northern- or Western-centric, according to Willetts, they are actually from all around the world, and they seek to spread “universal values (2011).” They are a global force in global governance.

In his article, Seth Kaplan argues that NGOs have a crucial role in some areas (2011). He states that they have even come to supplant the state in areas where the NGO is the expert, driven by its mission to confront social injustices. He blames the lack of strong and influential NGOs in countries such as Pakistan for hindered development. The lack of strong organizations retards the ability of dynamic individuals to scale up innovative projects to an impactful cover area. This weakens the ability to bring about change. NGOs operate in civil society, which cannot exist without the state. In countries with an overbearing state or strong elitist power, NGOs cannot flourish and cannot impact the greater political-social environment.

Kaplan states that NGOs determine the orientation of development. He also says, “NGOs are not a panacea.” In some cases, the state government is not “highly responsive to the needs of citizens, especially when they are poor...an overdeveloped NGO sector may actually be contributing to the country’s abysmal governance by relieving the state of many of its responsibilities (Kaplan 2011).”

This same idea is conveyed in Sandra Joireman’s book, *Where There is no Government: Enforcing Property Rights in Common Law Africa* (2011). She writes on how law enforcement in countries around the world is often directly influenced by non-state actors. She argues that this influence shows a direct, pervasive relationship between states and NGOs, wherein the responsibilities and actions of the two can overlap or where NGOs can even supplant the state, if

the state fails to implement and enforce laws. In effect, NGOs can substitute for the state institutions in some instances where the state is absent. Examples include NGOs running hospitals in Kenya and others in charge of educational programs in Singapore. NGOs start as facilitators and advocates, but when enforcement is limited from the state, NGOs often step in. They can even work behind the scenes, teaching and equipping the state officials with the knowledge and tools they need. Joireman argues that NGOs take greater roles in the political and civil society when the state is more withdrawn (2011, 100).

NGOs can never be a complete and effective substitute for the state (Joireman 2011, 100). There are certain roles that they cannot fill and certain powers that they do not have to exercise, such as sovereignty. One example of this is law enforcement. Although many NGOs assume a law enforcement role, they will always be working in the margins. No NGO can become law enforcement, as arrests and prosecutions are beyond their abilities and would be inappropriate, since NGOs are not public institutions. One major drawback to a strong and forward NGO presence is that the state may grow to expect it. This notion of government complacency is known as a “public moral hazard (Ebeke 2013, 1023).” That is to say that the state may look to the NGO to fill the roles that should belong to the state in manners of supervision, education, and enforcement (Joireman 2011, 101). “NGO activities become a crutch for the state and a justification for the allocation of state resources to other endeavors. Additionally, NGO involvement in law enforcement can limit the expectations that citizens and even public officials have of what the state ought to be doing (Joireman 2011, 101).” Citizens and state officials may see state involvement and enforcement as optional so long as the NGO remains an alternate option. What began as a few isolated groups of individuals seeking to “do good” around the world has resulted in an NGO movement. Today there are more than 3,400

international NGOs recognized by the United Nations (Willetts 2011). They have formal participation in the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council, and at U.N. conferences. In 1984, Amnesty International proved the persuasive power and governing capabilities of NGOs when its campaign against torture actually saw fruition in a Convention against Torture (Willetts 2011).

Transition to NGO

The impact of Non-Governmental Organizations on the trafficking situation has been apparent since the beginning of the UN Convention in 2000. There were several key NGOs during the consultation process, particularly over the trafficking in persons' protocol. These included the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women International (CATW), the Movement for the Abolition of Pornography and Prostitution (MAPP), the European Women's Lobby (EWL), the Association des Femmes de l'Europe Meridionale (AFEM), Article One, and Equality Now (CATW 2001, 3). More than 140 NGOs joined the International Human Rights Network and aided in defining human trafficking so that the definition protected all victims.

However, in many countries it is not particularly straightforward how NGOs impact the trafficking situation. In many cases, NGOs are doing humanitarian and social justice works that are benefitting many victims and survivors. Organizations such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International create such documents as country reports and articles on the progress of states to meet minimum standards for trafficking. The United Nations' UNODC and UNICEF also partner with organizations to research the problems of trafficking around the globe. Other NGOs work directly with victims and governments to rescue and rehabilitate victims, such as the International Justice Mission (IJM), Fight Slavery Now, and The Human Trafficking Project. These types of NGOs have mission and vision statements that include ending human trafficking

and slavery around the globe. IJM's self-proclaimed purpose is to use sting operations to expose brothels, rescuing victims through pretending to be buyers, and rehabilitating survivors through counseling and other services. Sometimes they work hand-in-hand with local governments, and sometimes they do not. Still, the type and degree of impact of these and other NGOs is debatable.

According to Bernstein and Shih the "reality tours" in Thailand and other countries offered through NGOs, such as Global Justice Projects and Abolish the Trade, have some capitalistic "commercial objectives" in exposing the issues for the tourists to see (2014, 431-434). According to the researchers, these tours fail to facilitate real change for the dire situation in these countries (Bernstein & Shih 2014, 431-434). Rather, they are most effective at increasing the tourist industry in these countries and uncovering another method of creating revenue based on those involved in trafficking in persons.

However, the issue of further exploitation is not the major concern for NGO involvement. NGOs push the agenda of human rights in many instances where states cannot or will not do so (Countryman-Roswurm & Bolin 2014, 522). This creates a problematic kink in the process of combatting human trafficking because only the state can prosecute. Thus, despite the hard work of NGOs, the state may still have a major minimum standards compliance issue, unless the state is a contributive, successful partner of the NGOs in their efforts to abate this criminal activity (Curley 2014, 290; Lucchi 2010). Using Thailand as an example of ineffective governmental involvement, Thai shelters have victims who have waited for two years for a trial with no access to their families or the outside world (Bernstein & Shih 2014, 445; OWD 2007). Survivors are treated as criminals until their trials, as they await their day in court behind bars. Being "rescued" does not always afford survivors a better life or standard of living, since there are few

programs for rehabilitation, and very few traffickers are punished criminally. In general, NGOs that seek to end human trafficking are thus seeking their own irrelevancy, so that countries and governments can create self-sustaining and effective efforts to curb this crime on their own. NGOs work with the state on many issues, but they often run the risk of taking on responsibilities that should belong to the state alone (Curley 2014, 287; Lucchi 2010). NGOs often play one of most pivotal roles, that of shining the light on dark situations around the globe, of bringing media attention and making people aware of situations.

There has been a major increase of NGOs active in Costa Rica since the 1980s (Matarrita-Cascante 2010, 141). This involvement afforded Costa Rica the opportunity to develop economically and to increase its tourism. The interest that NGOs have taken in developing Costa Rica economically and socially has led to Costa Rica's position as a leader in Central America, based on its economy, development, and tourism, and has afforded the country opportunities to receive funding for developmental projects. However, the increased presence of NGOs has merely spread the burden of rescue and rehabilitation of trafficking victims onto more NGOs; it has diminished the pressure on the government of Costa Rica to fulfill its role in the fight against slavery. As more agencies and organizations from around the world take interest in the fight against human trafficking, the more the state apparatus could rely on outside sources to shoulder the brunt of the combatting.

Studies show that the government has to play a major role in combatting this crime. Laws are often weak and enforcement of them even weaker (Hodge 2008, 149). "Despite these measures, however, the government [has] been criticized for not having the strength, resilience, or conviction to affect change. So far there have been [few] efforts made in the way of prosecuting offenders or providing assistance for victims. The government has also been accused

of not doing enough to raise awareness of the problem (Pralinsky 2015).” Penalties for trafficking humans are usually far lower than penalties for narcotrafficking and illegal arms smuggling. The issue of consent is often tricky where prostitution and sex work is involved. It is difficult to prove force, fraud, or coercion (Pearce 2011, 6; Pritchard 2010). One method proposed to rectify this is to follow Sweden’s example of labelling prostitution a violent act, wherein the “victim” is the prostitute and the “perpetrator” is the client (Hodge 2008, 145). This greatly facilitates establishing the prostitute, or victim, as the one needing assistance, not imprisonment.

It is clear from studies on trafficking and on successful efforts to combat it, that a coalition of forces works best. “The [Costa Rican] government admits there are many other victims, but a lack of resources and an ongoing mistrust of the police both contribute to the lack of identification of—and assistance for—these victims (Casa Milagro 2016).” Christina Fisanick argues throughout her book, *Human Trafficking*, that the responsibility to act and prosecute, protect, and prevent spans multiple levels when fighting human trafficking in any country (2010). She argues that governments, NGOs, the international community, and the local population must all take an active role in the process of stopping this crime. Yet, she shows that the most fundamental basis of the efforts is laws and an involved state (Fisanick 2010).

Efforts are not in vain. The drive to combat human trafficking has created measurable results overall:

Americans and citizens throughout the world understand more about modern slavery because of anti-trafficking legislation and policy, the rescue of survivors, and the prosecution of traffickers. According to the 2012 US Department of State’s Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report, in 2011 41,210 victims of trafficking

were identified worldwide; a 24 percent increase from the previous year. In those same years (2010 and 2011) there was a 17 percent increase in convictions of traffickers (Busch-Armendariz, Heffron, & Nsonwu 2014, 9).

Yet it is clear that this progress is incremental and that it will take a concerted effort on the part of all institutions involved to truly make an impactful difference and to ensure that human rights are assured for individuals everywhere.

Conclusion

Information and insights from this research and future studies can be used to increase awareness and to better inform researchers and the public and to do so in order to improve the fight to combat human trafficking. It is hoped that any insights gained might be of use for Costa Ricans to use to improve their country's rank in the tier system, possibly even to a sustained Tier 1 that is more reflective of the state's other measurements, such as GDP, HDI, and other rankings. This research is not only meaningful to the country of Costa Rica, but it can benefit other struggling countries around the region on the path to Tier 1. It is possible that Costa Rica can climb the tier ladder and make a meaningful impact on the lives of trafficking victims in this source, transit, and destination country.

After a review of relevant literature on the topic of human trafficking in Costa Rica and the formulation of three thematic areas of particular interest, it is clear that the political culture of Costa Rica is pivotal in understanding Costa Rica's efforts to combat trafficking according to the UN standards. The literature indicates that the themes of tourism, country image, and NGO influence are important to understanding why Costa Rica has not reached the level of full compliance yet. Completing research to better ascertain the influence of these factors will fill a gap in the literature as well as provide avenues for positively addressing the situation.

Chapter 3—Costa Rican Historical Development

Costa Rica has long enjoyed the reputation of being a stable democracy, having good relations with the United States, and of having a peaceful lifestyle. Costa Rica is a vacation paradise in a lush land, famous for its natural environment and peaceful political climate; Costa Rica celebrates this unique image among its neighboring countries. More than one fourth of the land in Costa Rica is in protected reserves or natural parks, and it has six percent of the world's identified species of animal life (Helmuth 2000, 2). Since the army was abolished in 1949, it has had an even more illustrious image as one of the most peaceful places on earth. It is often described as an unspoiled natural world, and even the World Bank called it the "Land of Happy Mediums (MacKinnan 2016, 17)."

Costa Rica is 285 miles long at the Pacific side and 74 miles wide at its thinnest, with a total land area of around 20,000 square miles (Mitchell & Pentzer 2008, 3-12). To the north lies Nicaragua and to the south Panama. Costa Rica's eastern and western borders include 185 miles of Caribbean coast and 630 miles of Pacific coast (Mitchell & Pentzer 2008, 1-2). The capital, San José, is situated in the *Valle Central* (Central Valley), around 3,800 feet above sea level, bringing it moderate temperatures and plenty of rain. It has a long-standing "*campesino* tradition" of farming such crops as coffee and fruits, such as bananas and pineapples, due to its climate and fertile soils. Costa Rica has a diverse geology, which includes mountains, coastlands, and a large central plain; much of the land is arable and lush. Costa Ricans prefer to use the term "*ticos*," to refer to themselves, and their common phrase *pura vida* (pure life) is

used as a greeting or for other positive exclamations to indicate their proud spirit of political freedom, relatively stable economy, and good life (Biesanz, Biesanz, & Biesanz 1982, 1).

Ecology is one of Costa Rica's biggest selling points. It has a wide assortment of flora and fauna types—evergreen forests, mahogany, and tropical cedar—which account for roughly one-third of the country's topographic coverage (Mitchell & Pentzer 2008, 3-12). Other types of landscapes include evergreen oaks, mountain grasses, some deciduous forest, palms near the eastern coast, mangroves on the western, and numerous other tropical mosses and orchids. These different and teeming biological zones make Costa Rica a hot spot for biological research. The Organization for Tropical Studies and the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Centre are housed near San José (Mitchell & Pentzer 2008, 199). The fauna in Costa Rica is an interesting mix of both North and South American animals. These include the likes of monkeys and sloths from the south and deer and foxes from the north.

Costa Rica far surpasses its Latin American neighbors in many ways. "Between 1950 and 1996, Costa Rica was the only country in all of Latin America that did not experience a breakdown in democracy (Molina & Palmer 1998, 141)." It has the second highest Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in Central America, a high Human Development Index (HDI), and one of the highest Happiness rankings in the world. Its free healthcare, high life expectancy, low levels of child malnutrition, low infant mortality, high literacy rate, high grade welfare programs, good primary and secondary education, and very good university-level education all demonstrate that Costa Rica is doing well as a nation. According to Tom Barry, Costa Ricans are friendly, courteous, and associated ideologically with the United States (1990, 1).

Costa Rica has several characteristics that align it with some of its more developed allies, such as the United States. First, its reputation as a champion for human rights has caught the

attention of several Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Inter-Governmental Organizations (IGOs) and democratic foundations, which have set up headquarters in the country. Second, although nearly 90 percent of the country is Catholic, the constitution provides freedom of religion. Third, wealth in the country is distributed in a fairer and more equal way than many of the Latina American countries, with a Gini index of 51.5 (INEC 2017; World Bank 2016; Wilson 1998, 81-82). However, like the United States, the government overspends and operates in a deficit, with the country's per capita debt highest amongst Central Americans (World Bank 2016; Wilson 1998, 145). Other negative effects of development include deforestation, a problem that the country is working hard to amend through programs and protected parks and reserves.

In many ways, the tiny nation of Costa Rica represents a less extreme case of colonial development in Central America. Due to its lack of extractable resources and exploitable indigenous population, it developed more socially, racially, and economically homogenous than its neighbors despite sharing similar political issues at times (Booth, Wade & Walker 2015, 72). Between 1824 and 1899, one-fifth of Costa Rican governments ended by coup d'état, with military ruling nearly half the time. Until the prosperous democracy of the 1950s, elections were often indirect, the few literate elites controlled power, and strong landed families prospered. However, the political will of many Costa Rican presidents would not allow a complete domination by this class. Braulio Carrillo, elected one of the first presidents of Costa Rica in 1835, distributed municipal lands to local yeoman farmers (Booth, Wade & Walker 2015, 72). This allowed for a separation of power and prohibited a monopoly on agriculture. However, some argue that this history has been tainted over time and that the "yeoman farmer myth" that "the rural *tico* has been a staunch defender of Costa Rican democracy and social justice" is just a

myth, that Costa Rica has a similar history of elitist and domination (Barry 1990, 3; Woodward 1999, 232).

As the longest stable democratic government in the region, Costa Rica has been heralded for its modern accomplishments. Voting is obligatory, although voting rates have decreased since 1994; as of 2017, turnout rates were at 64.76 percent (USAID 2017). There is no hegemonic ruling party. While Costa Ricans boast of a long-standing Costa Rican “exceptionalism,” the history of the country is far more mixed. While the early colonial period and even the pre-Colombian age evolved very differently for the tiny country, the later periods of development were still very much aligned with the rest of Central America, particularly in regards to economic price swings and dependent development (Booth, Wade & Walker 2015, 71). However, Costa Rica also led the region in its effective use of tax collection, which it implemented successfully by 1909, well ahead of other Central American countries. While Costa Rica still experienced coups, dictatorships, and other regionally common political upheavals, they were shorter, less violent, and more liberal than other countries on the isthmus, even though the early chiefs of state were political bosses, corrupt, narcissistic, and clientilistic (Bethell 1991, 61; Woodward 1999, 207). The war, revolution, and reformation in 1948 that resulted in Costa Rica’s 1949 constitution and social development did set the nation apart from its still politically tumultuous neighbors.

The current governance in Costa Rica was established by the 1949 Constitution. Since 1970, only Costa Rica has remained politically stable and democratic among Central American countries; its 1948 civil war and subsequent revolution created a lasting reform that has kept Costa Rica away from major instability, strife, and unrest (Booth, Wade & Walker 2015, 31; 42). For half a century, Costa Rica stood apart as exceptional. However, recent developments in the

country in the 21st century have cast a pall on such claims. The spread of democracy, human rights, and capitalism across Central America narrowed the distinction between the countries, and neoliberal development practices and the ever-powerful influence and pressure of external factors have re-shaped Costa Rica's welfare policies and markets to better serve the demands of the consumers (Booth, Wade & Walker 2015, 72).

Since its slow development as a European colony, many different types of immigrants have shaped the customs and character of Costa Rica, some of the first from Asturias and Galicia, Spain. Others include Germans, Italians, and British settlers beginning in the 19th century (Personal Interview [PI], X1, professor, March 3, 2017). By the 20th century, Argentinian, Chilean, Colombian, Nicaraguan, and others from Central America were pouring in to escape economic and political issues in their home countries. Costa Rica maintains a steady flow of Nicaraguans today, between 300,000 and 400,000 so far, both legal and illegal immigrants, many of whom are women looking for work (CIA 2016; Woodward 1999, 233). The Costa Rican government currently seeks to better handle the number of illegal immigrants from Nicaragua through measures of border control and fines for businesses employing "illegals." Costa Rica has also become a home for thousands of retirees from the United States.

In many areas of development, Costa Rica is a leading example. For one, the entire population is provided free medical care, while the private medical industry is still a thriving enterprise. Costa Rica has managed to balance government healthcare for all, while maintaining a free enterprise economy. However, recent cuts in program spending have hurt the healthcare system (Barry 1990, 59). Also, efforts have been made and have succeeded to diversify and resist the traditional reliance on agriculture. Its fishing industry, particularly for tilapia, tuna, and shrimp, has really grown and supplies major international and domestic markets (Mitchell &

Pentzer 2008, 130-136). Its power plants are among some of the country's most impressive development features, since 80 percent of the country's power comes from green hydroelectric sources. Some of this energy is even exported (Lara, Barry, & Simonson 1995, 51; Mitchell & Pentzer 2008, 111).

Manufacturing is still a prominent 20 percent of GNP. Domestic market products include soap, furniture, paper, and pharmaceuticals. Export manufacturing for products like machinery, food products, textiles, chemicals, and electronics remains economically beneficial (Lara, Barry, & Simonson 1995, 51). Textiles and technology production are big business in Costa Rica, most especially since the Intel Corporation opened a large chip factory in 1997. Other companies followed suit. Costa Rica has both private and state-owned banks. There is a Costa Rica stock exchange, and insurance is controlled by the state, through the National Insurance Institute. Telecommunication services are also state-run through the Costa Rican Institute of Electricity. Other state-owned, autonomous agencies include state universities, the Social Security Institute, and the Costa Rica Tourist Institute. The country promotes foreign investment and foreign companies, both of which have considerable power over industry and agriculture. Foreign direct investment contributes to around 30 percent of the country's exports (Wilson 1998, 123).

The free health services and free education have paid off for Costa Ricans. One area that has really proven beneficial is their work to reduce incidence of diseases and infection, once common in the tropical area. Malaria is virtually no longer a problem, waterborne diseases are uncommon now, and mortality rates are as low as many developed nations. Yet, like the United States, cancer and heart disease are on the rise (Lara, Barry, & Simonson 1995, 70-71). The free and compulsory education takes nearly 25 percent of the budget, but provides good education to most of the population and keeps the literacy rate in the high 90s (Vanden & Prevost 2017, 3).

The University of Costa Rica, the National University, the Universidad Estatal a Distancia, the Autonomous University of Central America, and others are all part of Costa Rica's impressive higher education system (Barry 1990, 53). Foreign exchange programs are common among Costa Rica's universities. Other public investment includes "roads, highways, hydroelectric plants, health clinics, hospitals, and other infrastructure projects (Molina & Palmer 1998, 102)." As well, the state sponsors the arts heavily, such as drama and theater.

However, despite any other exports, the service industry accounts for around 60 percent of GNP. Tourism has been the prominent source of income and employment for several decades, with tourism contributing nearly 13 percent of the overall economy and 12 percent of all jobs in the country (WTTC 2015, 3-4). "Costa Rica's reputation as a politically, economically, and socially stable country attracts tourists and tourism. Its rainforests, beaches, biodiversity, national parks, and volcanoes are known across the world, and they attract many thousands of visitors on a regular basis. Resorts, condominiums, and other development infrastructures are commonly built around the coasts and major tourist attractions (Stansifer, Elbow, Parker, & Karnes 2015)." In this manner, development and progress are hitting Costa Rica intensely and in select areas. Costa Ricans have some of the highest demand for Internet and cell phones in Central America, around 90 percent for both (Stansifer, Elbow, Parker, & Karnes 2015).

Although Costa Rica has long remained politically stable, conflicts in the region have had negative effects. War, human rights violations, and security problems discourage tourism, and thus injured the economy. Economic growth was hit hard by the escalating price of oil, and coffee exports barely covered the costs. Inflation, unemployment, and strikes were the results of years of credit issues, government spending, and negative trade balances. Recent cuts in

government funding, due to structural adjustment programs of the international monetary institutions, have resulted in deep cuts in spending on education and healthcare as well as for subsidies to basic foodstuffs. According to *The Costa Rica Star*, unemployment remains high, around 10 percent, and the middle class is getting poorer; suicide rates are around 400 a year, placing Costa Rica just behind El Salvador for most suicides in Central America (Williams 2016; Molina & Palmer 1998, 129). According to *The Tico Times*, extreme poverty is on the rise, with rates growing from 5.8 percent in 2010 to 7.2 percent in 2015 (Dyer 2015). In short, Costa Rica's status as "exceptional" has recently been thrown into question (Anders 2017; British Embassy, San José 2014; Casa Milagro 2016). Even as far back as 1998, Molina and Palmer stated, "structural adjustment has had a high social, political, and cultural cost. What is more, the rise in nontraditional exports and tourism has not added up to a model of sustainable development (137)."

History

Today's Costa Rican lifestyle of *pura vida* connotes a natural, simple life of living close to nature and away from technology, bustle, and industry. Costa Rica's image is a pure, clean, natural place, full of lush vegetation, tropical forests, clear beaches, and happy people (Foster 2000, 180). Various, tropical fauna and beautiful landscapes are the classical photos of Costa Rica. This image of Costa Rica can be easily found in pamphlets, websites, Google searches, articles, news stories, and numerous other forms of media and propaganda. However, like other constructed images and reputations, this image does not show the entirety of Costa Rica, nor does it cover the everyday lives of Costa Ricans. Compared to other Central American countries, Costa Rica is doing relatively well (WTTC 2015; United Nations Development Programme 2015; USAID 2017; O'Neil 2013). Yet, it still continues to struggle with problems,

both old and new (World Bank 2016; Woodward 1999, 233). A review of Costa Rica's history and its evolution as a state offers an understanding of the current situation and the issues that Costa Ricans face today.

Estranged Colony

Western history for Costa Rica begins with Columbus's fourth voyage. Columbus named the country Costa Rica de Veragua, meaning "rich coast," but in reality, the land made for very difficult living for the Spaniards (Cerdas 1972, 15). Prior to European arrival, the land of Costa Rica was settled by various Chibchan-speaking groups, with the thick rain forests dividing the region based on ecological barriers. The indigenous people crafted Northern-style agriculture, such as corn, on the Pacific side, and Southern-style foods, such as yucca and sweet potato, on the Caribbean side (Molina & Palmer 1998, 5). The indigenous peoples, around 1,000 BC settled, cultivated, and began to use tools made of metal, mainly copper. As well, they created pottery, like the *tecomate*, used for storing food, and the *budares*, used for cooking. Society was based on agricultural lifestyles, each with its own territory. Kinship networks were strong. For the next 1,500 years, societies in the region evolved, becoming more hierarchical and divided. The hierarchy culminated in the *cacique*, or chief, who ruled over *cacicazgos*, or chieftain-ships (Molina & Palmer 1998, 7). Sometimes *cacicazgos* would unite under *señoríos*, or political groups. These communities flourished and traded with both northern and southern peoples, like the Aztec, Maya, and Chibcha. By the time Europeans arrived, infighting between *cacicazgos* had reached extreme heights and was responsible for much death and destruction. Costa Rican indigenous people were not as unified or as technologically advanced as other indigenous groups, such as the Maya and the Inca (Molina & Palmer 1998, 11). According to Molina and Palmer, "though the Costa Rican education system has propagated the myth that there were

virtually no indigenous people in the territory when the Spanish arrived, in fact there were approximately 400,000"—most in the Pacific Northwest and Central Valley (1998, 19). By AD 1611 AD, only roughly 10,000 indigenous people remained alive.

Columbus and his crew sat down on the soil of present day Costa Rica and heard the tall tales of the gold mines nearby in the south, but it was not until 60 years later that the first settlement was established by Spain. When the conquistadors arrived, Costa Rica had several notable regions controlled by indigenous chieftain-ships and federations. These included Nicoya, Votos, Suerre, Pococí, Tariaca, Talmanca, Quepo, Coto, Boruca, Guarco, and Garabito (Molina & Palmer 1998, 13; Cerdas 1972, 15). The religions of the people were animist, believing that animals, people, and natural phenomenon all had spirits. They believed in an afterlife, and special treatment was given to corpses and funerals. The nobility were buried with their treasures, and even sometimes their slaves were sacrificed to join them. The Nicoya and other groups organized rituals of human sacrifice "...with the nobility dressed in full regalia and painted for the occasion, a ceremonial mixture of alcohol--*chicha*--was drunk, and expressive dances were performed before the temple. Then five or six people of either sex, previously selected, were brought to the altar at the top of the temple, their hearts cut out, their heads chopped off, and their bodies roll down the side of the temple so that their flesh could be consumed with all the solemnity of the moment (Molina & Palmer 1998, 17)."

During the early 1500s, several notable Spaniards, such as Juan de Cavallón, attempted to conquer the lands, but they were defeated by infighting and indigenous attacks (Woodward 1999, 33). Eventually men such as Vasco Núñez de Balboa and Gil González, traversed the lands of Costa Rica, fighting indigenous along the way and making it across to the Pacific Ocean (Urbano 1968, 231). Juan Vásquez de Coronado conquered the Central Valley in 1564 by first co-opting

indigenous lords and chiefs (Urbano 1968, 19-21). He founded Cartago, the colonial capital before pushing back and killing off nearly all the indigenous (Molina & Palmer 1998, 17; Woodward 1999, 33-34). The Miskito and other Caribbean groups were more difficult to conquer, preventing colonization of certain areas, such as Limón, for hundreds of years. The Spanish *requerimiento*, or forced conversion, and *encomienda*, or land grant that used labor without compensation, were not as heavily used such as in other Spanish colonies across the region; this was in large part due to the lack of large-scale surviving indigenous communities to exploit. The indigenous of Costa Rica had already been decimated by the viruses and bacteria, such as smallpox, typhus, Whooping cough, measles, and influenza, transferred to them from Europeans in neighboring territories long before the Costa Rican conquistadors arrived to the region to forcibly and directly take the land (Molina & Palmer 1998, 19).

For many colonial years, Costa Rica remained under the theoretical political jurisdiction of the Captaincy General of Guatemala and the spiritual leadership of the bishop of León in Nicaragua. However, due to a lack of resources, such as gold and other precious metals, Costa Rica was distant and unimportant to the Spanish crown (Bethell 1991, 54; Cerdas 1972, 21). The “elites” in Costa Rica were farm owners, and sugarcane, tobacco, and cacao were dominant crops (Molina & Palmer 1998, 40). “Underpopulated, geographically isolated, and economically insignificant, the tiny Costa Rica colony became a neglected backwater and began its distinctive evolution (Booth, Wade & Walker 2015, 57).” This resulted in a lack of concrete Spanish infrastructure in the area’s provinces. At first, the only valuable agricultural products that colonizers could harvest were cacao and tobacco, neither of which lasted long or brought in much monetary assistance; in general, early colonial Costa Ricans developed on their own.

The situation in Costa Rica remained unique in many ways from the neighboring settlements, such as the impoverished state of the social elites, who had to do much of their own farming, exporting mules, cacao, and tobacco (Cerdas 1972, 16). Some African descendants in Costa Rica have a unique heritage for the area. The Miskito group of Africans descended from survivors from a crashed slave ship who intermarried with natives. This group survived and later partnered with Caribbean pirates in successfully demanding tributes and resources from the Costa Ricans. This practice endured successfully until 1841 (Molina & Palmer 1998, 54). The native indigenous people have long been treated much the same as natives in the United States, and Amerindians were relocated to reservations around the country. Yet, for the European Costa Rican, this labor shortage meant high wages (Bethell 1991, 42-43). The average Costa Rican during the 1800s was a laborer or a farmer, not a serf (Bethell 1991, 43). The government focused on education as early as 1814, and even women were included in this movement to educate the masses (Cerdas 1972, 39-40).

Independence “by Mail”

Independence swept across the region, beginning in Mexico in 1821, and Central America followed quickly behind, with an independent Guatemala that same year claiming independence for all of Central America, with the exception of Panama (Molina & Palmer 1998, 47; Clayton & Conniff 1999, 60). The Costa Rican legacy of peaceful transitions and political stability has its roots in Costa Rica’s romantic notion of “independence by mail” where Guatemala sent notification that the colonies were now independent from Spain (Cerdas 1972, 25-56). In reality, the independence period was filled with lawlessness and strife. 1821 was a year of revolution. The conservatives in Cartago wanted a monarchy to replace the Spanish colonialism, while the Liberals in San José preferred a democracy. Being the most remote in the

Central American region, and after independence from Spain and from the Captaincy General of Guatemala, it did see bickering between its four major cities—San José, Heredia, Alajuela, and Cartago. Cartago had been the seat of colonial power, but after the strife and conflict of the independence era, San José was named the new nation's capital (Bethell 1991, 5).

After deciding not to join the Mexican Empire, under Gregorio Ramirez, the new government of Costa Rica lacked elite classes and social order at first, and elected a school teacher, Juan Mora Fernández, as the first head of state. Costa Rica had to form a state where none had been before. Such central power was new to the area (Cerdas 1972, 34). Between 1823 and 1837, liberal reforms across Central America, from land reform, to a political attack on the Catholic Church, to the issue of public schools, taxes, production, and free trade, split and divided the people of the entire Central American region, and even Costa Rica was not unaffected (Clayton & Conniff 1999, 110). The United Provinces of Central America was a federated-style approach to a central governing body for Guatemala, Nicaragua, Honduras, Costa Rica, and El Salvador, which began shortly after independence, but it broke up by 1838 due to issues of church, of fiscal policy, and of trade, among others.

These years of Costa Rican history were not particularly unique or exceptional, with a strongman president, Braulio Carrillo, a coup through a *Pacto del Jocote* and subsequent military leader, Francisco Morazán, and various attempted presidential takeovers (Bethell 1991, 20). Morazán was the liberal leader of the United Provinces of Central America, and was responsible for relocating the capital from Guatemala to San Salvador. Subsequent liberal-conservative disputes between Morazán and Rafael Carrera played a large part in the fall of the United Provinces. Times were tough, rule was intermittent, and interference from entities such as the

Federal Republic of Central America, were a threat to state sovereignty. Costa Ricans may not have had to fight for their independence, but they certainly fought over it.

Conservatives ruled in Costa Rica for a while in the post-independence period. For more than 100 years after the 1821 independence, Costa Rica remained regionally isolated much as it had during colonial times, with the exception of its serious export of coffee in the 1830s to Chile and Europe (Skidmore & Smith 2005, 363). However, foreign troubles still managed to break through Costa Rica's isolationist policies, as Guanacaste seceded from Nicaragua in 1825 to officially be part of Costa Rica 61 years later (Foster 2000, 138-139). German immigrants and those of German heritage were the main barons in the coffee empire, and these elites maintained major political power and authority for many years (Bethell 1991, 282).

Coffee/Banana Republic

In the period from 1830 to 1845, Costa Rica became the first country to export coffee as its primary product, providing it with a marketable good to offer to the European consumers, a cash crop (Clayton & Conniff 1999, 125, 161; Woodward 1999, 96). Named the "golden bean," through coffee Costa Rica had found its link to the rest of the world at last (Molina & Palmer 1998, 48-49). At one point, coffee comprised between 70 and 80 percent of the country's exports, in excess of 50,000 pounds annually (Clayton & Conniff 1999, 172; Cerdas 1972, 10; Woodward 1999, 150). Profits from the sale of coffee were used by the elites for extravagant purchases and trips or they were used to "modernize" the country. Industry and modernization in the country required the importation of workers, mainly Chinese coolies to work on plantations and the railroad (Clayton & Conniff 1999, 152). Costa Rica was the first coffee republic (Bethell 1991, 40). 1838 saw the implementation of wet processing (*beneficio húmedo*), a more expensive, yet faster technological method available to those who could afford it (Bethell 1991,

46; Molina & Palmer 1998, 49). Coffee exports necessitated roads in Costa Rica that could carry ox carts. Roads were built to connect the coasts and the major cities by 1850 (Bethell 1991, 47).

The country was in a capitalistic, chaotic state when Juan Rafael Mora took over in 1849 and led Costa Rica for a decade, controlling through a strong fist (Bethell 1991, 23). In 1855, William Walker, a United States citizen, began to realize his idea of a US-controlled Central America. By 1856, he had taken over Nicaragua and began to expand US influence and culture by making English the official language, legalizing slavery, and offering land grants to US citizens (Clayton & Conniff 1999, 172). Walker then began to expand his control to other countries in the region. An opposition force, led by Costa Rica's President Juan Rafael Mora, defeated Walker in 1857 (Molina & Palmer 1998, 62). One young drummer boy, Juan Santamaria made himself a martyr and a national hero when he ran through heavy crossfire to ignite Walker's stronghold and thus secure victory at the cost of his own life. Costa Ricans were thus bolstered in their notion of nationality and pride.

President Mora established the Banco Nacional Costarricense in 1858 and was soon after toppled by a coup, orchestrated by the large coffee barons. This new bank would take the economic control of the coffee market out of the hands of the barons and allow the average farmer the ability to get loans and handle credit (Bethell 1991, 44). After struggling with a dictatorial rule in the later 1800s, Costa Rica soon fell into the hands of the landed yeoman, those tied to coffee exports, due to the land tenure system and the governmental push for coffee as a viable and profitable export. Still, liberal reforms in education, economics, and religion began to spring up, eventually bolstered by the liberal dictatorship of Tomás Guardia (Bethell 1991, 36).

A United States businessman, Henry Meiggs, a railroad tycoon, was contracted to lay rail along the Caribbean coast; he left the contract in the hands of his nephews, Minor Cooper Keith

and Henry Meiggs Keith (Skidmore & Smith 2005, 364; Molina & Palmer 1998, 70). Minor Keith took a particular interest in Costa Rica and in expanding industry there. Minor Keith began to ship bananas from Limón while working on the railroad (Woodward 1999, 177-178). He exported lumber and bananas to US cities, such as Boston, as a means of making more profits (Clayton & Conniff 1999, 233). He soon began the Tropical Trading and Transport Company, exporting greater than half a million bunches of bananas per year by 1855 (Woodward 1999, 177-178). By 1899, Keith had joined with his major competitor in the region, the Boston Fruit Company. The new company was called the United Fruit Company (UFCO), with Keith as vice-president and Andrew Preston of the Boston Fruit Company as president. The UFCO became a virtual monopoly on the production, distribution, and exportation of bananas (Skidmore & Smith 2005, 364). Their UFCO steamships were known as “The Great White Fleet” across the region, and they controlled and influenced much across the region (Woodward 1999, 179).

Under the influence, guidance, and control of the United Fruit Company, Central America was overrun by enclave economies set up specifically around the production and exports of the UFCO. The UFCO owned great tracks of land, the major railroad companies in the region, docks, ports, the radio and telegraph companies, ships, and even dabbled in the politics of the region in order to gain reserve lands and to tackle issues of policies and laws. Thousands of Chinese, Italian, and Afro Caribbean workers were imported for the railroad, along with some workers from India (Bethell 1991, 57; Molina & Palmer 1998, 71; PI, X1, professor, March 3, 2017). Even when UFCO abandoned its holdings on the Caribbean coast, the farmers there continued to farm, creating a Costa Rican banana cooperative which sold its fruit to the UFCO independently (Bethell 1991, 53).

Through the UFCO, Costa Rica was entrenched in enclave development. Buyers of Costa Rican coffee in the 1800s were mainly Britain, France, Germany, and the United States. As the nation entered the 20th century, ties to the United States strengthened as the ties with other countries waned (Bethell 1991, 48). The material and economic progress of General Tomás Guardia, the primary ruler from 1870 to 1882, were marked by involvement by Minor Keith and the United Fruit Company in banana exports (Woodward 1999, 154). The influence and power of the Catholic Church in government also declined around this time, and secularization increased. As the democratic leader in the region, Costa Rica celebrated Central America's first free and fair election when José Joaquín Rodríguez became president in 1889. In 1897, Costa Rica made a considerable leap in development and modernization when it opened its crown jewel, the National Theater, modeled after the Paris Opera House (Clayton & Conniff 1999, 125). By the 20th century, the United Fruit Company had turned the Central American nations of Costa Rica, Panama, and Honduras into "banana republics," while rendering similar situations in Guatemala, El Salvador, and Nicaragua with coffee (Skidmore & Smith 2005, 365).

Revolution

As the 20th century began, Costa Rica had made some progress, but remained isolated and underdeveloped. Costa Rica has long been centered at San José, with other areas expanding from the Central Valley as it developed. Costa Rica experienced one of its few coups in 1917, when General Federico Tinoco Granados overthrew Alfredo González Flores for a time, before pressure from the United States and revolts caused him to step down only two years later.

Many banana plantations were closed after a bout of Fusarium Wilt (Panama disease) in the 1920s. It was not until the subsequent reopening of these plantations 30 years later that Costa Rica was reestablished as a major banana exporter. As the country developed over the years, the

influence of the global market and the shift toward an export industry, for comparatively advantageous products such as coffee, increased the size of farms and created a social distinction between the large capitalists and the rest. Most farms in Costa Rica remain relatively small, around 10 acres, and are often family owned. This is commended as a contributing factor to increased democratization (Helmuth 2000, 8-9). Today, coffee and bananas still compete with tourism as Costa Rica's primary economic earner.

The 1930s brought dictatorships to other Central American countries, but Costa Rica stood apart by becoming democratic (Molina & Palmer 1998, 98). However, Costa Rica was impacted by the depression as well. This resulted in the creation of the National Republican Party as the alternative to communism, while the distinction between Liberals and Conservative waned. In 1934, there was a banana workers strike in Limón. It lasted around 45 days, and it signified a new level of independent unionization and social development (Bethell 1991, 79). Also, the country settled a long-term boundary dispute with Panama in 1941, and the long-standing Liberal/Conservative dichotomy became irrelevant under the changing political culture (Woodward 1999, 171; 224). The victory of the National Republican Party in 1936, 1940, and 1944 resulted in social security and a labor system for the people (Skidmore & Smith 2005, 371). As well, this ruling party symbolized the changed political system and paved the way for future political parties and political developments. After the 1944 election, two new parties emerged—the anticommunist National Union Party (PUN: *Partido Unión Nacional*) and the leftist, but not communist, Social Democratic Party (PLN: *Partido de Liberación Nacional*).

Costa Rica survived the great depression without political unrest, and by 1940 Rafael Calderón Guardia had been elected. With the support of the Archbishop of San José, Monsignor Víctor M. Sanabria, a friend and confidant, and as an educated, Catholic, Communist-associated

leader, Calderón began a new wave of social programs and progress, such as social security, labor laws, Constitutional amendments, social guarantees, civil rights, confiscating lands, and hurting the coffee barons through teaming up with the Catholic Church and the Communist Party (Bethell 1991, 81; 283). It is said that Calderón furthered the welfare state by creating the University of Costa Rica (Molina & Palmer 1998, 88-89). Costa Rica took a turn away from classical Latin American politics when it entered WWII a day ahead of the United States. The Inter-American Highway, build during World War II, really opened the country up and made for easier travel, relocation, expansion of agriculture, and greater animal husbandry (Percy 1960, 125-126).

Calderón's administration was an alliance of communists, the Church, and the government. Many were opposed. However, real opposition did not develop until he annulled the election results that would have replaced him; Congress favored Calderón and agreed to his demands. The political alliance resulted in major election fraud in 1948 (Woodward 1999, 225). Otilio Ulate, the winner of the presidential election, was arrested, and the people rebelled. Archbishop Manuel Sanabria y Martínez negotiated Ulate's release. By that time, the social democrats, founding the National Liberation Party (PLN), had had enough (Woodward 1999, 226).

Insurrection in the form of the "Revolution of '48" ensued and the Second Republic was born (Bethell 1991, 83-84). Calderón faced this mounting insurgency force against his elitist rule (Clayton & Conniff 1999, 459). These opposition forces, the Caribbean Legion along with local revolutionaries, were led by a man named José Figueres, more affectionately referred to as "Don Pepe." Figueres had been exiled in 1942. He spent time in the United States, Mexico, and Guatemala. He helped organize a Central American force to overthrow dictatorships. The first

overthrow was with Ubico in Guatemala. He forged an alliance with the new Guatemalan president Juan José Arévalo to rid the region of dictators and bring democracy and social reform (Bethell 1991, 286-287). Figueres made the Caribbean Pact of 1947 with the Caribbean Legion and Arévalo for aid to oppose Calderón and reform Costa Rica (Molina & Palmer 1998, 93).

This era of Costa Rican history saw odd political alliances during the brief, but bloody civil war. While Guatemalan communists supported their president, Juan José Arévalo, the president and the Guatemalan government supported Figueres, who was particularly anti-communist fighting against the communist Picado and Calderón in Costa Rica. In the meantime, Picado and Calderón had aligned themselves with the anti-communist Somoza in Nicaragua against Guatemala and Figueres's rebellion (Bethell 1991, 288). When Figueres entered into the Costa Rican civil war, Arévalo supplied the reform group with aid and arms. Figueres was able to take Cartago, and his allies in the Caribbean Legion took Puerto Limón. Workers from the UFCO aided him. Within a month, Figueres' forces had surrounded the capital, and negotiations began. With US and Mexican intervention, Santos León Herrera became chief of state, while Picado and Calderón were sent to Nicaragua (Woodward 1999, 226). Figueres and his leadership became cabinet members of Herrera's government. The war lasted one year and cost 2,000 lives. It ended with a distinct victory for Figueres. The rebellion established the PLN as the dominant party of the people (Booth, Wade & Walker 2015, 74; Molina & Palmer 1998, 96).

As part of his pact with the Caribbean Legion, Figueres had offered to make Costa Rica a base to restore democracy across the region and to oust dictators and other opponents of liberal reform (Clayton & Conniff 1999, 462-463). He restored democracy and added a new 1949 constitution that laid the groundwork for many of Costa Rica's strides toward development, equality, and all manner of liberal reform. He even negotiated a new contract with UFCO that

had Costa Rica sharing in the company's profits such as never before (Woodward 1999, 228). Much of the proposed constitution was rejected by the more conservative Congress (Bell 1969, 109). However, there were some concessions that made Costa Rica one of the freest democracies in the region with the freest elections in the world (Woodward 1999, 227). This new constitution created an entire Second Republic, with a Supreme Electoral Tribunal for free and fair elections, term limits on presidency, enacting civic rights and social programs, nationalizing healthcare, taxing the rich heavily, establishing a minimum wage, granting universal citizenship to Costa Ricans, democratic socialist reforms in the creation of the welfare state, and many other rights and freedoms for the people (Bethell 1991, 298). The army was abolished in favor of a national police force. Women gained the right to vote in Costa Rica in 1949, with the new constitution, and they voted for the first time in 1953 (Clayton & Conniff 1999, 360; Molina & Palmer 1998, 77). Costa Rica was one of the last countries in the Americas to gain women's suffrage. As part of his victory, Figueres broke up monopolies of coffee barons and the coffee oligarchy (Bethell 1991, 296). Figueres even improved Costa Rica's image in the eyes of the United States, as a "champion of democracy" (Bethell 1991, 304). Perhaps some of this was due in part to the influence of his American wife, Henrietta Boggs.

Figueres did step back down after his revolutionary reformation to allow the elected President Ulate to lead. Afterwards, Figueres ran and ruled in years 1954-1958 and again later in 1970-1974. In the meantime, Calderón attempted to return and take back his position. He attempted invasion from Nicaragua, with the support of Samoja and his *coyotepes*, twice over the next few years (Bell 1969, 117). His efforts failed miserably both times. Eventually he was allowed to return to Costa Rica from his exile by president Echandi near the end of the decade. In the meantime, Figueres' party, the National Liberation Party (PLN), would become the party

of his son, also José Figueres, who would win the presidency in 1994, along with many other political leaders throughout the rest of Costa Rican history (Clayton & Conniff 1999, 462-463). In general, the PLN created a new-age candidate group of principled, educated, young, determined leaders. Other political parties which later would emerge as strong opponents included the Social Christian Unity Party (PUSC), a united coalition of the four strongest, right-wing opposition parties to the PLN, and the Vanguardia Popular, a united coalition of long-standing communist and Marxist parties that had been outlawed after the end of the civil war.

Unfortunately for Figueres, the success in Costa Rica in 1949 was not repeated across the region as both Figueres and Arévalo had hoped and expected (Clayton & Conniff 1999, 462-463). Failed attempts to fight Somoza in Nicaragua led instead to a truce. Trujillo survived Costa Rica's effort in the Dominican Republic. Similar situations resulted with Batista in Cuba and Jiménez in Venezuela (Clayton & Conniff 1999, 462-463). The success in Costa Rica was limited only to the country itself. While the United States thwarted other socially revolutionary movements in the Americas for fear of Communist tendencies, Costa Rica was able to maintain a good standing with the United States owing to the fact that it was a communist coalition which was defeated in the 1948 civil war. Furthermore, during the civil war and his revolution, Figueres was married to Henrietta Boggs of Alabama, USA. Thus Costa Rica held US favor despite its center-left government (Booth, Wade & Walker 2015, 74).

The really unique aspect of the civil-war-turned-reformation-presidency was the fact that the 1958 election saw Figueres' party voted out in a very profound example of democracy. The PLN was criticized with a barrage of accusations, from socialism to corruption. As such, the PUN returned to dominance in 1958. Mario Echandi Jiménez was elected. These two parties rotated presidential candidates in 1962, 1966, and 1970. Figueres returned to presidency in

1970. Throughout these periods, the PLN retained power in Congress (Woodward 1999, 228). The PLN gained and lost the presidency on and off for the next 60 years, sharing wins with the conservative Social Christian Unity Party (PUSC). Due to the party rotation and the popularity of the two dominant opposition parties, Costa Rica's government and laws illustrate a social democratic nation.

Due to an ongoing heavy reliance on the United States for its exports, the countries of Central America—Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama—formed their own free trade alliance and tariff strategy in 1960 called the Central American Common Market (CACM) (Skidmore & Smith 2005, 365). While successful with manufacturing and commerce, CACM was unable to remedy high unemployment rates of nearly ten percent and eventually fell apart due to political disputes in the 1970s (Skidmore & Smith 2005, 366). Like much of Latin America, Costa Rica would need strong politicians and a resilient economy to handle the rough period of the late 1970s and 1980s, along with the fortitude to handle the toppling of the Somoza dictatorship in Nicaragua and the Sandinista presence in Costa Rica.

Post-Revolutionary Politics

PLN's Daniel Oduber was elected in 1974. By 1978, a coalition had formed to oppose the PLN; the PUSC narrowly became victorious with its candidate, Rodrigo Carazo (Woodward 1999, 229). This new coalition party was comprised of dissenting PLN members, fans of Calderón's legacy, and oligarchical elites. Carazo's presidency had Costa Rica in a \$2.6 billion debt by 1981 due to borrowing to abate the incongruence in pricing between the export profits from bananas and coffee and the import costs of oil. Inflation was at 40 percent, and the *colón* devalued from 8.6 per dollar to 40 per dollar. Plummeting banana and coffee prices necessitated

millions of dollars in US aid.¹¹ In 1982 Luis Albert Monge, of the PLN, won, as did the PLN in Congress (Woodward 1999, 230). Monge relied heavily on US aid to stabilize the economy and the *colón*, which leveled off its steep climb at around 50 per dollar. He accepted US\$1.1 billion in aid from the United States in exchange for collaborating with the Nicaraguan counterrevolutionaries. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), with pressure from the United States, demanded the implementation of austerity measures (Wilson 1998, 113-114). Major borrowing abroad helped to alleviate the burden of economic hardship, but it increased foreign debt to 147 percent of GDP by 1982 (Booth, Wade & Walker 2015, 79). Payments on these loans consumed one third of the earnings from exports. In 1981, Costa Rica was forced to default. This devalued the nation's currency by 90 percent (Booth, Wade & Walker 2015, 79).

The PLN managed to win the 1986 election with Oscar Arias Sánchez over the young Calderón junior and his Social Christian Unity Party (PUSC). Arias was the son of a coffee farmer, and he became a favorite of the Costa Rican people and of the world when he successfully brokered peace in Nicaragua, Guatemala, and El Salvador (Woodward 1999, 230). However, even a Nobel Peace prize in 1987 could not help him with domestic issues associated with economic hardship and a flailing welfare state. The executive in Costa Rica is weak, unlike many other Latin American countries, and Arias could not get his initiatives through the much stronger legislative branch. Prior to his election, Costa Rica had faced dual issues of a 60 percent diminished market for its exports due to troubles with U.S. involvement in both Nicaraguan and El Salvador and the rising cost of oil (Wilson 1994, 153). These two issues

¹¹ The proximate cause of the financial turmoil here and elsewhere in Latin America was the “Volcker shock” of dramatic interest rate increases in the U.S. leading to a deep recession in the U.S. and in many countries with strong economic linkages to the U.S. (Amadeo 2017).

“caused the terms of trade to plummet from 114 in 1978 to 69 in 1983 (Wilson 1994, 153).”

Inflation in 1982 was at 100 percent. Pressure from international institutions coupled with the intense measures proposed by the neoliberal legislative body were ineffective at curbing the economic hardship, rising unemployment, and suffering of the people.

Despite having the healthiest economy in Central America, the "lost decade"¹² of the 1980s still hit Costa Ricans hard (Woodward 1999, 231). Real wages took a 42 percent hit. The banana and coffee exports were hurt, but a more diversified economy, one that included flowers, nuts, and other fruits, helped to keep people employed and to counter the more severe effects felt in the rest of the region. During this decade, leaders in Costa Rica accommodated mobilized lower sectors to preserve stable electoral democracy (Booth, Wade & Walker 2015, 75). Many of the social welfare programs were dependent upon economic prosperity from traditional exports such as coffee and bananas, but after the economic crisis of the 1970s and 1980s, the country experienced high inflation of 100 percent, layoffs and unemployment of around 10 percent, and issues with revenue (Booth, Wade & Walker 2015, 75). However, unlike other Central American countries, Costa Rican wage earners experienced temporary dips in pay rates followed by recoveries and even some rates higher than before the "lost decade." Other countries were not so fortunate (Booth, Wade & Walker 2015, 76). Still, the large debt forced the more socially supportive PLN party and the Arias administration to cut spending, dismantle parts of the welfare state, privatize, and implement austerity measures. While the country as a

¹² Latin Americanists are familiar with this period of Latin American history where debts reached crisis level for many countries across the continent. Known as the “lost decade,” this financial crisis originated in the early 1980s as a result of U.S. actions, and many countries reached a point where foreign debt exceeded foreign exchange earning power excessively. Many countries were unable to make loan payments, let alone actually begin to pay off the debt itself.

whole survived, there was a reformation of a poor under class once more and a stagnation of the high unemployment rate.

U.S. led international agencies and financial institutions, such as the IMF, World Bank, USAID, and IDB were very influential and responsible for many of the issues during this period (Lara, Barry, & Simonson 1995, 3). The new structural adjustment measures caused demonstrations and strikes from agricultural workers, hospital staff, teachers, oil workers, among others. Rapid urbanization caused housing problems, and unemployment remained high. The country was limping along on massive international loans. Illicit drug traffic became a major concern as far back as the 1980s (Biesanz, Biesanz, & Biesanz 1982, 168). Although Arias was unable to combat some of the major economic issues of his country, he focused on leading peaceful negotiations instead. Costa Ricans were marching for peace against the Contra wars (Molina & Palmer 1998, 122). He refused to aid the United States in the war in Nicaragua. His efforts to end the Contra wars in Nicaragua and the armed conflicts in Guatemala and El Salvador went farther than any other person at the time (Helmuth 2000, 36-37). The Esquipulas II peace accords across the region, which excluded Nicaragua, made significant headway in regional stability. Reagan opposed the initiative, and he cut aid to Costa Rica (Bethell 1991, 115). Costa Rica turned to intergovernmental lenders and subscribed to neoliberal economic models of capitalistic development (Booth, Wade & Walker 2015, 80). Through structural adjustment agreements in 1985, 1989, 1985, Costa Rica was forced to trim its public sector payroll, social service programs, infrastructure investment, and privatize the banks and other government institutions, while forgoing subsidies (Booth, Wade & Walker 2015, 81). This struck the marginalized populations hard, increasing poverty rates to as high as 48 percent in the 1980s (World Bank 2016).

Rafael Angel Calderón Fournier of the PUSC, son of the famous Calderón, was elected in 1990, and he continued the implementation of neoliberal policies, such as ending protectionist legislation and privatizing banks and state agencies. These measures did help to balance the books, and relative peace in Central America increased tourism, which provided an avenue of revenue for Costa Rica which rivaled its previous income from banana and coffee exports (Wilson 1998, 143).

In 1994, José María Figueres Olsen, another PLN politician and son of the revolutionary leader Figueres, was elected. He sought to aid the ailing economy through cuts and increased taxes. Shunned by the World Bank, which had closed its Costa Rican office in 1990, the PLN had to work with other parties to enact reforms (Mitchell & Pentzer 2008, 207). Figueres did succeed by reducing inflation by one half and by reducing the deficit, but unemployment began to steadily rise once more from its all-time low of 4 percent, and the percentage of the population under the poverty line hit 20 once more from its 15.8 percent at the beginning of his presidency in 1994 (Woodward 1999, 233).

In 1998, the conservative Miguel Angel Rodríguez, of the PUSC, was elected and implemented neoliberal privatization and encouraged foreign investment. With tourism booming as never before, Costa Rica rebounded economically and attracted new investment. In 2000, the new Citizen Action Party (PAC: *Partido Acción Ciudadana*) received many former PLN leaders and voters (Booth, Wade & Walker 2015, 83; Skidmore & Smith 2005, 373). The other major party, PUSC, managed to elude signing any of the SAPs, despite embracing them in principle (Booth, Wade & Walker 2015, 84). Abel Pacheco de la Espriella was elected in 2002. However, the next few years were an upheaval. In 2003, the Supreme Court of Costa Rica annulled the legislative reforms of 1969, the constitutional reforms that included the limitation of a president

to a single four-year term (Mitchell & Pentzer 2008, 203). By annulling these reforms, it reverted the country back to the original 1949 constitution. The original parameters for a presidential reelection were that the president could run again, provided that there was an eight year gap between terms.

These changes permitted the former president of Costa Rica, Óscar Arias Sánchez, to run for reelection for the presidency in 2006, as he had been out for eight years. Just before this election, Pacheco and his administration were experiencing issues related to an ever-increasing budget deficit. Also, the Pacheco administration faced a troubling event as there was a scandalous discovery of mishandling of funds from the campaign. To make matters worse, three past presidents of the PUSC, the party of the president, were charged with accepting bribes (Mitchell & Pentzer 2008, 217-219). They were placed under house arrest and disgraced the party. Complicating this, the former president Rodríguez was forced to step-down as secretary-general of the Organization of American States. He had to return to Costa Rica to answer to the corruption charges. Due to scandal, embezzlement, and corruption, PUSC nearly collapsed by 2006 due to a lack of voter support; PAC became the second largest party in Costa Rica (Booth, Wade & Walker 2015, 84).

The 21st century has been notable for Costa Rica so far as well. The 2006 reelection of Oscar Arias was historic (Mitchell & Pentzer 2008, 218-219). He worked to end state monopolies, such as those in electric power and telecommunications. Under his presidency, Costa Rica ratified the Central America–Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA–DR) after a strong fight. In 2007, he established economic and diplomatic ties with China, breaking from decades of Taiwanese diplomacy. By 2006, Costa Rican political parties numbered 27. Since Costa Rica uses proportional representation as its system of election, some

of the smaller ones, including the Libertarian Movement Party of Costa Rica (PML), managed to win a few seats in the legislative elections (Booth, Wade & Walker 2015, 84). By the late 2000s, party support was lowest in Costa Rica among all Central Americans (Booth, Wade & Walker 2015, 85). Laura Chinchilla of the PLN became the first female president in 2010. During her term, Costa Rica and Nicaragua had a border dispute over the San Juan River that ended with a compromise facilitated by the International Court of Justice. Shortly after taking office she trained 1000 new police officers and unveiled a ten year crime plan "to improve law enforcement training, institutional coordination, and crime prevention programs (Booth, Wade & Walker 2015, 88)." According to *The Costa Rican News*, the lowest salary for a law enforcement officer is around \$850 per month; Costa Rica has around 14,000 in its force (2013). Costa Rica receives invaluable support from the USA, particularly in developing and overseeing trainings and the academy curriculum for officers; the USA also trains investigators, judges, and prosecutors (U.S. Department of State 2017 “Investment Climate Statements”). Yet homicide rates rose in 2013 due to drug trafficking (Booth, Wade & Walker 2015, 88). Chinchilla’s presidency was plagued with resignations and scandals and a Legislative Assembly which refused to pass bills due to a poor relationship with the president (Booth, Wade & Walker 2015, 88). As such, Luis Guillermo Solís of the PAC became president in 2014, the head of a coalition, and the first presidential victory that was not PLN or PUSC since 1948 (Booth & Richard 2015) (see Table 5 for current and past political parties).

Costa Rican politics is nuanced. While nearly 70 percent of the population votes, only 10 percent or less of those votes go to extreme parties or candidates (Skidmore & Smith 2005, 372). Unemployment has been an ongoing problem, with numbers near ten percent on and off since the 1980s. While political culture remains fairly stable in Costa Rica, so too do the commercial,

economic, and political interests of companies such as Motorola, Intel, and Coca-Cola. Unions, strikes, and other types of protests and popular uprisings have long been repressed and discouraged in Costa Rica. There is no real history of popular uprising in the nation since the outlawing of any communist parties in 1948 after the Civil War (Woodward 1999, 227). Marches and protests in the late 1980s at the hands of the UNSA, a national coalition of farmers, and UPAGRA, a workers' coalition, were met with government repression (Barry 1990, 43). However, the Costa Rican government is known for responding to mobilizations, even violent ones, with compromises to diffuse the tension and only modest force when necessary (Booth 1991, 53). Instead, Costa Rica is known for its *solidarismo*, its philosophy of worker owner cooperation, including cooperatives between owners and manager. It is financial assistance and contributions to make credit cooperative and invest in projects. The state has some of the best welfare and social programs in the region, and it has maintained fairly consistent real wages over time (Booth 1991, 42). However, as one scholar stated, neoliberal economic development in Costa Rica has "misguided" the state's policies, has led to "devolution of governance to non-state actors," and has left out large sections of the population as now vulnerable to exploitation (Matulis 2017).

Table 5. Costa Rican Political Parties

Prominent Political Party	Abbreviation	Party Information	Current Legislative Seats	Party Ideology	Presidents from the Party
National Liberation Party	PLN	The dominant party since 1951	18	Center/Center-Left	Óscar Arias, Laura Chinchilla, José Figueres Olsen, Luis Monge Álvarez, Daniel Oduber Quirós, José Figueres Ferrer...
Citizens' Action Party	PAC	Created in 2002, it has had one president (2014)	13	Center-Left	Luis Guillermo Solís
Broad Front	FA	Created in 2004 after the end of the two-party system	9	Left	none
Social Christian Unity Party	PUSC	Since 1983, it has been the main opposition to the PLN. It had presidents in 1990, 1998, and 2002.	8	Center-Right	Abel Pacheco de la Espriella, Miguel Rodríguez Echeverría, Rafael Calderón Fournier
Libertarian Movement	PML	Created in 1994	4	Right	none
Costa Rican Renovation Party	PRC	Created in 1995	2	Right	none
National Restoration Party	PRN	Created in 2005	1	Right	none
Accessibility without Exclusion	PASE	Created in 2001. Single issue on disabilities.	1	Single-issue	none
Christina Democratic Alliance	ADC	Created in 2012.	1	Right	none
National Union Party	PUN	Created in 1901.	0	Center-Right	Ascensión Esquivel Ibarra, Ricardo Jiménez Oreamuno, Otilio Ulate Blanco, Mario Echandi Jiménez, José Trejos Fernández

Costa Rica Today

Costa Rica has a presidential system, with two vice presidents and a unicameral Legislative Assembly. Legislators serve for four years, and the president may only run for reelection after waiting through two successive terms. The president also appoints governors to administer the seven provinces, with each province broken into many *cantons* that are run by local elected council officials. The unitary state maintains tight control over spending, even at the local level (Wilson 1998, 115). Although court cases are handled by judges, with no jury, they are still viewed internationally as fair. There is no capital punishment, and all prison sentences are to be year specific. The Supreme Court of Justice is the highest court possible.

Magistrates of the Supreme Court are chosen for eight-year terms and automatically continue for a second term, unless removed by a two-thirds vote by the assembly. They are nominated and approved by the Legislative Assembly of Costa Rica as established in the Constitution. Costa Rica has an independent Supreme Electoral Tribunal. This tribunal enjoys extraordinary powers during elections and oversees the election process, ensuring its free and fair nature (Biesanz, Biesanz, & Biesanz 1982, 25). In 2013, Costa Rica has one of the lowest populations in Central America with a total population of 4.9 million (Booth, Wade & Walker 2015, 5). Despite this, the court system is often overburdened with cases and operates slowly and inefficiently, mainly due to a lack of deadlines and its three-tiered trial process.

Despite any and all political strife and interference, when ranked against other Latin American nations, Costa Rica scores just below the mean of 77.7 for a preference for democracy over authoritarian rule; yet, like their geographic neighbors, Costa Ricans do show around a 40 percent approval for a strong-handed leader (Booth & Richard 2015, 99). They have some of the lowest support for a violent overthrow (see Table 6). Costa Ricans score very high when surveyed concerning their support for participation rights; at a score of 80, they place much higher than the US score of 75 and second only to Uruguay in the Americas with its score of 83 (Booth & Richard 2015, 28). Costa Rica also ranks very high across the Americas, including the United States, for citizens perceiving democracy favorably (see Table 7). However, for a country with free and good education, the average Costa Rican only has 8.7 years of schooling (Booth & Richard 2015, 96). While this number is superior to countries like Nicaragua, Honduras, and Guatemala, whose attainment years are below seven, it is also below the 9.1 average for Latin America and far below Panama's 11 (Booth & Richard 2015, 95).

Table 6. Support of Violent Overthrow of Elected Government

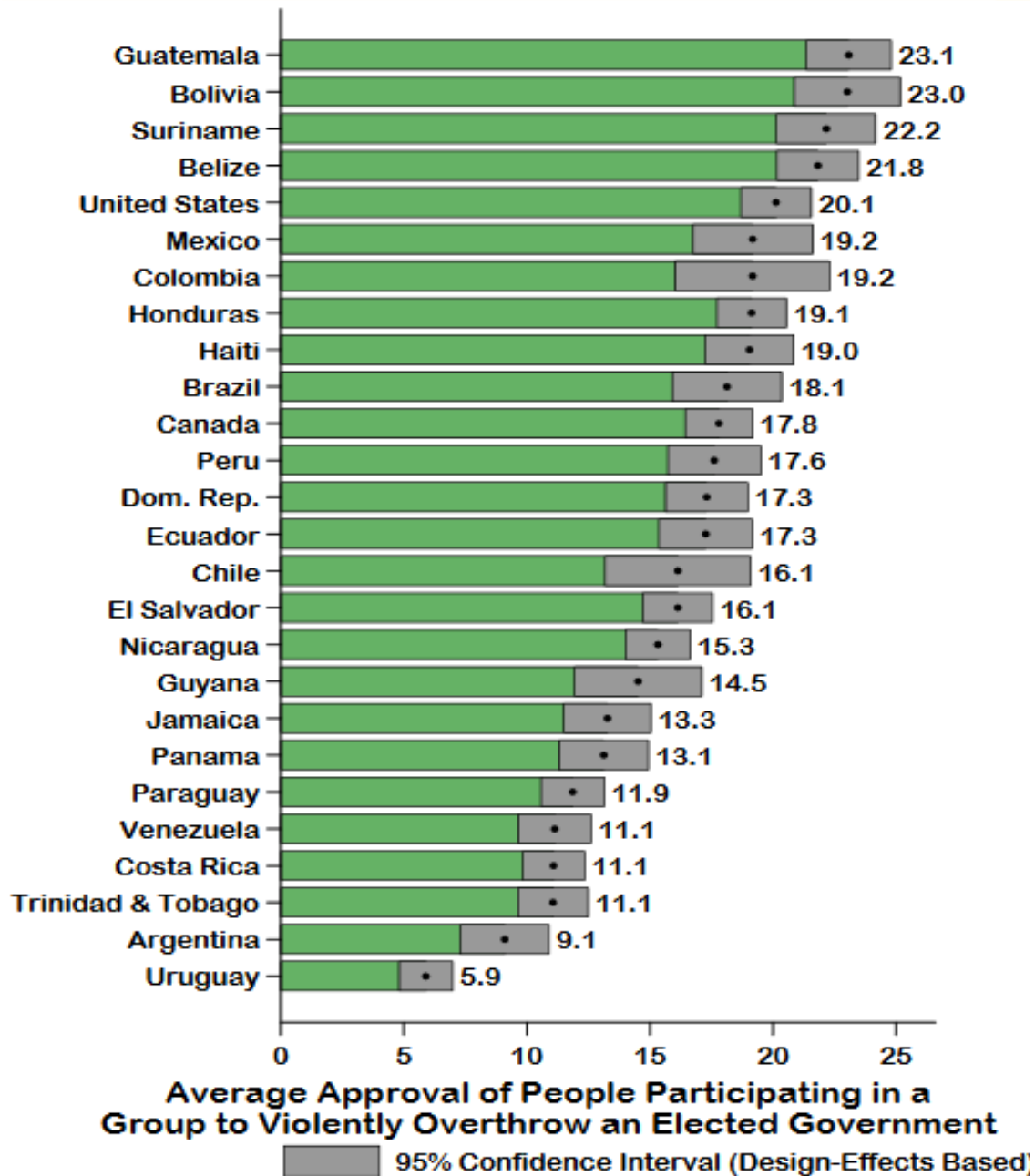
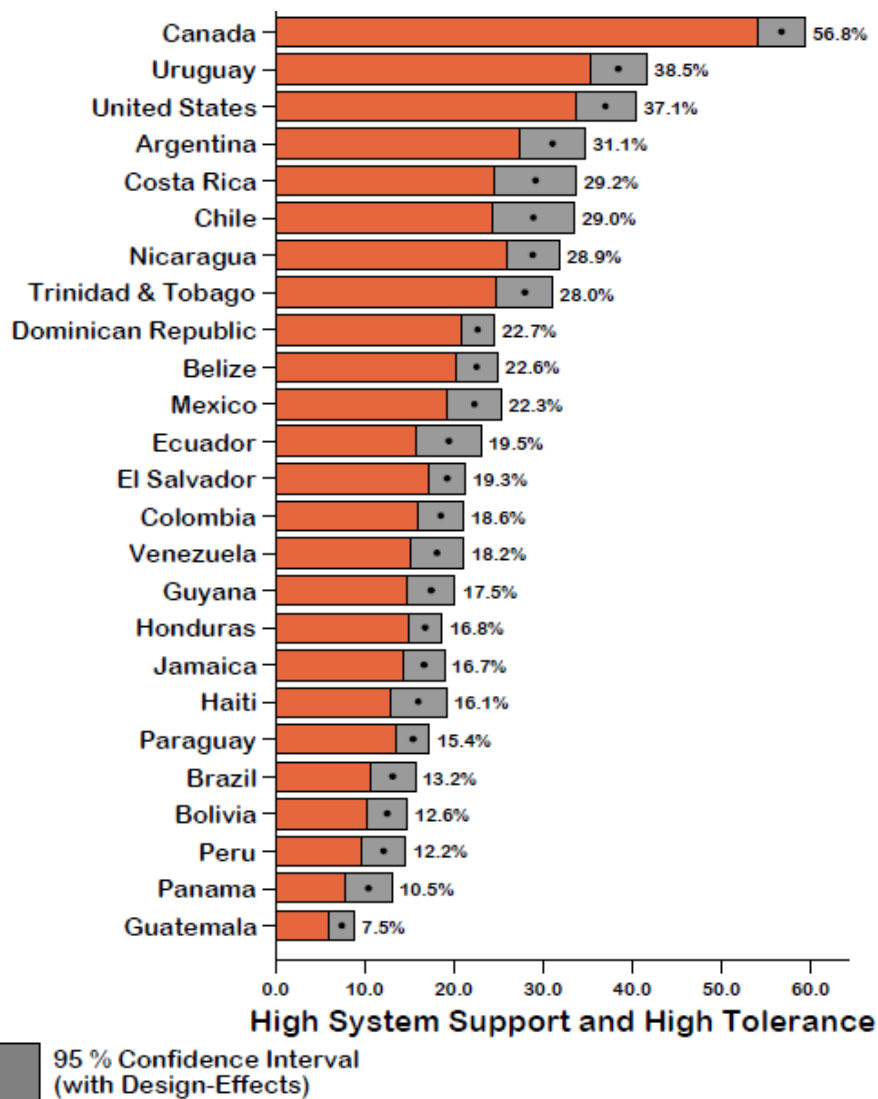


Table 7. Attitudes Favorable for Stable Democracy in the Americas



Source: AmericasBarometer Insights: 2015 by LAPOP, no 111

The AmericasBarometer by the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP)

http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/insights/IO911en_V2.pdf

Across Latin America, no other country has anywhere near the length of experience that Costa Rica has with democracy, with 65 years of continuous democratic government in Costa Rica far surpassing the second and third runner-ups, Argentina and Uruguay, with 27 and 24 years respectively (Booth & Richard 2015, 191). Due to years of democratic traditions and norms, such as education and economic development, studies suggest that the citizens of Costa

Rica hold high democratic values, unlike many of their geographic neighbors (Booth & Richard 2015, 176). Costa Rica has many politically liberal policies, such as freedom of abortion to protect the mother's health, that align it more with the United States than Central American countries (Booth & Richard 2015, 143). Costa Rica has been known across the region for the equality of its liberal reforms, particularly those embodied in education and healthcare for all. Due to this and its politically active population, it has developed much faster than any of its neighbors in technological advances, trade, and other indices of development, such as HDI (Bethell 1991, 58).

The Costa Rican economy far outperforms those of its poorer neighboring countries, and in measures of social investment, Costa Rica has historically allocated more to education and healthcare than any other Central American country (Booth, Wade & Walker 2015, 6-7). "Only three percent of Costa Ricans live on less than two dollars per day in 2000, by far the lowest in the region (Booth, Wade & Walker 2015, 83)." Booth, Wade, and Walker argue that, "In these facts, one repeatedly finds that Costa Rica has done better than its neighbors in economic growth, economic equality, poverty reduction, providing education and literacy, and promoting its citizens' health (2015, 23)." While this analysis is true overall, there is still a significant portion of the population that lives marginalized, cut off from the developed Central Valley, and in persistent and structural poverty. As well, a persistent culture of machismo and historical traditionalism of *pura vida* place women and children at a disadvantage and at higher risk of victimization and exploitation.

In the 1980s, Costa Rica's ratio of spending for social services compared to defense was more than four times greater than the closest Central American neighbor. Because of this, Costa Rica has enjoyed higher literacy, greater life expectancy, and lower infant mortality. The country

has also been more egalitarian throughout history (Booth, Wade & Walker 2015, 77). Some argue that popular organization and protests throughout its democratic history were addressed moderately, unlike the violent reactions from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua during this time period (Booth, Wade & Walker 2015, 78). Instead of revolution and reaction, Costa Rica has experienced evolution and reform. Despite more recent violent strikes and riots, the government reportedly maintained “moderate force,” preferring negotiation and compromise to any counter-violence (Booth, Wade & Walker 2015, 79). Since its democratic transition, the government of Costa Rica has been viewed as fair and bureaucratic in its authority. The US Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs stated in a 2017 report that, “Rule-making and regulatory authority is housed in any number of agencies specialized by function (telecom, financial, health, environmental) or location (municipalities, port authorities). Tax, labor, health, and safety laws, though highly bureaucratic, are not seen as unfairly interfering with foreign investment (2017).” The bureau also noted that the country’s unicameral legislature is strong and that the courts are respected.

While fairly successful at maintaining income distribution, keeping wages up, and maintaining funding for social assistance and housing programs, the current economic and political policies anger many Costa Ricans, as evident in their changing political culture, most especially post the end of bipartisanship in 1999. These issues have negatively affected attitudes toward democracy which used to be much higher (see Table 7). After several elections of the lower turnout, Costa Rica saw an end to its two-party dominant political structure in the first part of the 21st century (Booth, Wade & Walker 2015, 81).

In the early 2000s, effects of the new Costa Rican development model were still unfolding...they included the following: Deregulation allowed a new private

banking system dominated by international capital and deepening integration into the world economy. Investment in traditional agriculture and agricultural extension services had declined along with the domestically consumed agricultural production, pushing rural populations toward urban areas to seek employment. Investment in industry, however, had lost ground to investment in the commercial and service sectors. The informal sectors (petty commerce and services—often street vendors, unlicensed taxis, etc.) had grown rapidly, drawing those unable to find formal sector employment. Female participation in the workforce had risen sharply without a proportionate accompanying public investment in family social services and childcare. Large numbers of Nicaraguan immigrants had flooded Costa Rica to assume lower-skilled jobs in nontraditional agriculture, construction, and service. Nicaraguan immigrant workers, vulnerable to police and immigration authorities, experienced employer victimization while inserting downward pressure on wages and undermining Costa Rican work for organization and mobility. (Booth, Wade & Walker 2015, 81-82)

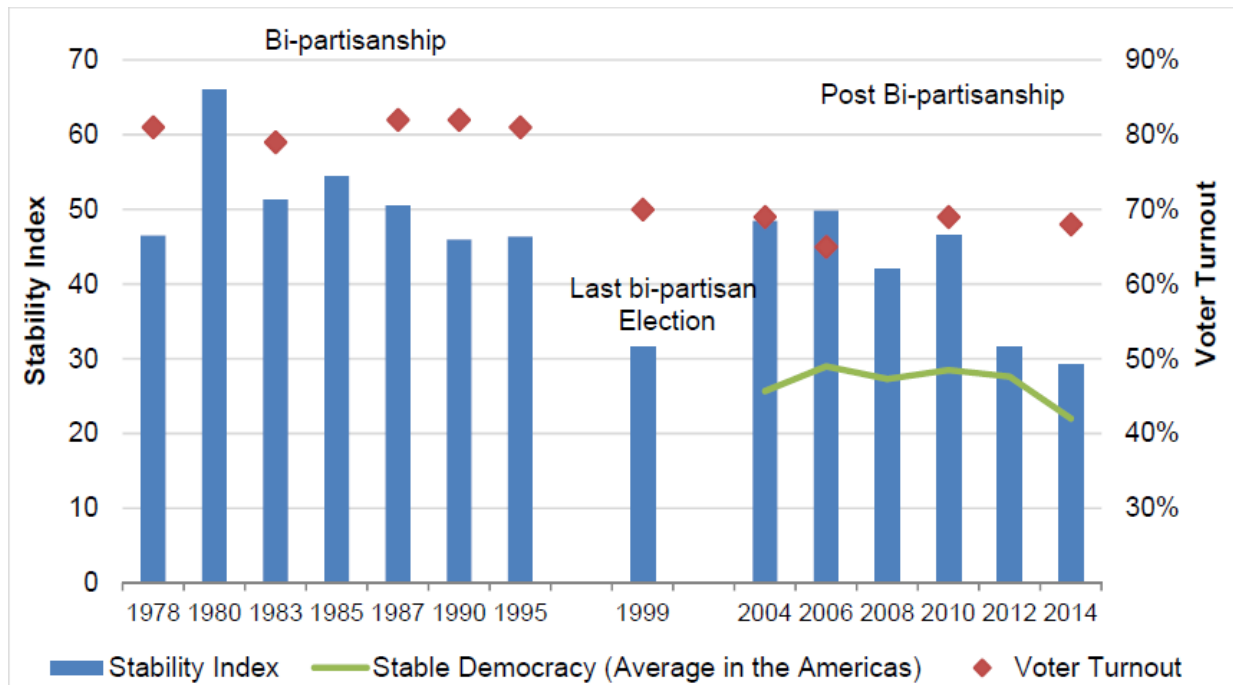


Figure 3: Bar graph showing the evolution of favorable attitudes for stable democracy from 1978 to 2014. It also shows the influence of bi-partisanship and of the end of bi-partisanship after 1999. Sources: AmericasBarometer Insights 2015 by LAPOP, no 111.

Development for Costa Rica has meant the arrival of several major international actors. While the US is the largest, by far, others include a plethora of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) which began to develop in the 1980s, and have increased in number and scope since. There are three factors to explain this increase. The first is “a response to the government’s failure to address deteriorating social and economic conditions (Barry 1990, 65).” Brett Matulis states that this is due in major part to the country’s preference for “neoliberalisation,” for steering programs toward market ideals, and for allowing quasi-governmental organizations too much power and influence in the country’s decision making (2017). The second is due to USAID and other foreign funding agencies and their preference for working with NGOs. In one instance, the World Bank was sought out for a development loan by FONAFIFO (*Fondo Nacional de*

Financiamiento Forestal; National Forest Financing Fund) a quasi-governmental organization acting on behalf of the government; in the end, rather than procuring the \$750,000 loan requested, FONAFIFO wound up with more than \$40 million from the World Bank. The third is due to the many headquarters of global IGOS, NGOs, and regional institutions who deal with human rights issues to house themselves in Costa Rica, such as the Arias Foundation for Peace and Human Progress, the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights, and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.

Some of the more notable additions include Private Voluntary Federation, which supports women's charitable organizations, CINDE/AID (Coalición Costarricense de Iniciativas de Desarrollo), a USAID cooperative coalition, ACORDE (Asociación Costarricense para Organizaciones de Desarrollo), a US-backed funding and coordination organization, and Private Agencies Collaborating Together (PACT), an NGO funded by USAID. Other NGOs include CENAT (Centro Nacional de Alta Tecnología), CEDECO (Corporación Educativa para el Desarrollo Costarricense), Alforja (Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones Alforja), ACDI/VOCA (formerly Agricultural Cooperative Development International/Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance), AIFLD (American Institute for Free Labor Development), CARE (Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere), CRS (Catholic Relief Services), IESC (International Executive Service Corps), PADF (Pan American Development Foundation), Partners of the Americas, Planned Parenthood, Salvation Army, Technoserve, and World Wildlife Fund (Barry 1990, 66-67). These organizations have the goal of “profitable productive products” with such transnational companies as Coca-Cola (Barry 1990, 66). It is worth mentioning that these and other NGOs at work in and from Costa Rica have stronger ties

with the United States than they do with Costa Rica. They are not Costa Rican agencies with social assistance in their mandates. Some purely Costa Rican NGOs, such as FOV (Fundación para las Organizaciones Voluntarias) have reported that US-backed NGOs, such as ACORDE, have undermined independent NGO organizing (Barry 1990, 66).

One quote by Barry is still valid today:

Unlike other Central American countries, where social conditions are more serious, the NGO sector in Costa Rica does not serve, along with the churches, as society's safety net. The social infrastructure set in place by NGOs and churches elsewhere in the region is the domain of the public sector here. As these government-sponsored welfare services are cut back, churches and NGOs are gradually moving into this type of social assistance activity, although most NGOs continue to focus on specific objectives, such as family planning, business development, and technical assistance. (1990, 67)

Unlike its colonial past, present day Costa Rica has a dramatic cultural and economic divide that separates elites from the masses of population who are trapped in impoverishment (Molina & Palmer 1998, 137). The Costa Ricans of European descent make up nearly four-fifths of Costa Rica's population. Mestizos are nearly the remaining one-fifth. Race and cultural issues remain on the political agenda, as there are some 70,000 native indigenous still living in Costa Rica and a 1.1 percent minority of Afro-descendants, along with hundreds of thousands of Nicaraguans (CIA 2016). The majority of the Afro-descendent population originated in the enclave workers brought in by the United Fruit Company around 1872; as such, their culture is more similar to Belize and the Atlantic coast of Nicaragua and has remained fairly Protestant and

English speaking ever since; they also live in some of the most impoverished areas of the state (Mitchell & Pentzer 2008, 255-260). The indigenous groups of Costa Rica that are still alive today include the Ngabe, Boruca, Terraba, Bribri, and Cabecar, and although their cultures have been passed down through descendants on the reservations, they face the same assimilation and integrations struggles as many natives across the world (Biesanz, Biesanz, & Biesanz 1982, 65-66). Costa Rica's indigenous groups are assigned to protected reserves by law. However, the land is infertile, and most survive through subsistence agriculture. They are among the country's poorest people and those at high risk of exploitation (Mitchell & Pentzer 2008, 255-260). The prominent native language family is Chibchan, which includes Bribri, Boruca, Maléku, Jaíka, Cabécar, and Térraba.

One percent of the population is Sino-Costa Rican, or of Chinese descent. Like other Chinese immigrants across the region, they tend to do well for themselves and even have a famous Costa Rican astronaut, Franklin Chang, who flew seven US space mission (Biesanz, Biesanz, & Biesanz 1982, 68-69). Other minorities include the Italians, US Quakers, famous for their dairy and cheese, and some 35,000 *gringos*, who are mostly retirees from the US, Canada, and Europe. Costa Ricans are unabashedly proud to be the "whitest" people in the region and to have the "most honest government" as well (Biesanz, Biesanz, & Biesanz 1999; Personal Interview [PI], X2, educator, May 30, 2017; PI, X3, May 30, 2017). In 2014, the country finally officially recognized the numerous ethnic groups.

Costa Rica has undergone many changes over recent years through industries, accomplishments, and influences. In 1869, Costa Rica became the first nation in the world to make education free and mandatory. Costa Rica has the second highest percentage of women in legislative assembly seats across the region, 33 percent compared to Nicaragua's 41 (World

Bank 2016). Unfortunately, like any other country, it has its own problems, ones that have arisen since its increased development status. High divorce, rampant teen pregnancy, and minor access to pornography as high as 50 percent are all major issues (Anders 2017; OECD 2016). These problems point to a much larger and complex set of socio-cultural issues that need to be addressed. Some of these, such as access to pornography, are directly related to “progress,” such as the expanding use of the internet. While other issues, such as divorce and teen pregnancy, are very much associated with more developed countries, such as the United States.

Some parts of Costa Rica remain culturally distinct. Since Guanacaste was once part of Nicaragua before joining the state of Costa Rica, the locals are more culturally diverse, even Nicaraguan, and more “folk” than other area in the country (Biesanz, Biesanz, & Biesanz 1982, 175). Likewise, Limón was the historical hotspot for export and commerce as well as more heterogeneous and often “forgotten” by the capital. Residents there, who were majorly Afro-Caribbean with a greater Caribbean culture and mentality, have been more engaged with protests, rallies, and with African and indigenous heritage (Biesanz, Biesanz, & Biesanz 1982, 190). This is no surprise, as many Afro-Caribbean immigrants were brought in to work the railroads in the late 19th century. Upon its completion, they were the only group to not be granted citizenship. They were confined to Limón until finally granted citizenship as part of the 1948-49 revolution. As such, this area continues to be home to most of the country’s Afro-descendants. Areas like Limón continue to be more neglected, poor, more racially diverse, and less literate and educated than the rest of the country (Barry 1990, 2). Crime is higher there as well, but across the nation, drinking problems are common and deforestation is a matter of national concern. San José, the capital, is the only metropolitan city, and it remains the heart of progress and modernization, through politics, society, and culture, for this small country. This

large metropolitan area has its share of skyscrapers, and it contains roughly half of the total population (Biesanz, Biesanz, & Biesanz 1999, 37).

Changing times have caused an urbanization that has left less than one-sixth of the labor force in agriculture, which contributes about ten percent of GNP. Urban expansion has promoted Americanism and Westernization of thought. This movement majorly began in 1981 with the introduction of cable television, it includes teaching English in schools, and the style of American life led by the wealthier (Molina & Palmer 1998, 132). In the 1990s, Costa Rican traditional culture experienced a rapid progression in modernization, such as shopping malls and movie theaters. Certain export agricultural products and other goods, such as cut flowers, macadamia nuts, and handicrafts have increased lately, and export crops are dominating agricultural land (Lara, Barry, & Simonson 1995, 45-48). Nearly half of the country's exports are to the United States, with several others taking a fair share as well (see Table 8). Imports include staple foods, such as corn and beans, which are not grown in the country by choice. Nearly half of all imports come from the United States as well.

Table 8. Costa Rica Exports and Imports

Export Country	In US Dollars	Percentage	Import Country	In US Dollars	Percentage
United States	\$3,903,662,102	40.85%	United States	\$6,164,438,077	41.03%
Panama	\$558,579,995	5.85%	China	\$1,947,535,997	12.96%
Guatemala	\$523,862,138	5.48%	Mexico	\$1,153,294,267	7.68%
Nicaragua	\$522,651,156	5.47%	Japan	\$418,780,252	2.79%
Netherlands	\$440,009,480	4.60%	Guatemala	\$399,176,770	2.66%
Belgium	\$430,357,380	4.50%	Korea, South	\$391,010,704	2.60%
Honduras	\$332,821,026	3.48%	Germany	\$378,493,137	2.52%
El Salvador	\$285,428,682	2.99%	Colombia	\$306,993,434	2.04%
Dom. Republic	\$265,836,363	2.78%	Brazil	\$296,025,974	1.97%
Mexico	\$239,525,417	2.51%	Panama	\$285,579,660	1.90%
Other Countries	\$2,053,460,675	21.49%	Other Countries	\$3,281,949,793	21.85%

Source: Global Edge "Costa Rica: Trade Statistics" 2017 <https://globaledge.msu.edu/countries/costa-rica/tradestat>

One aspect that separates Costa Rica from its Central American neighbors is the smaller than average distinction between the wealthy and the working class. Still, some workers make considerably less than others, while minimum wage is second highest in Central America (see Table 9) (Costa Rica Law 2017). Also, around 30 percent of the documented workforce is women, while Nicaraguans perform the “grunt work” in the country, work that keeps prices low and profits high (Wilson 1998, 14).

Table 9. Minimum Wages in Central America (monthly)*

Country	2016
Costa Rica	512
Belize	°295
El Salvador	251
Guatemala	380
Honduras	341
Nicaragua	115
Panama	744

* in US dollars

Source: FinancialRed Mexico. 2016. "Salario Minimo."

<http://salariminimo.com.mx/comparativa-salario-minimo-latinoamerica/>

°Belize statistics from 2012. Expansion.

<https://countryeconomy.com/national-minimum-wage/belize>

In a manner reflective of its status, the country boasts a cosmopolitan culture, most especially in the major cities. Like their allied counterparts in developed countries abroad, Costa Ricans spend time with such amenities as major cinema and motion pictures, international music, global television, and concerts and other plays at the National Theatre. The nation also celebrates pre-Columbian art, such as stone works and figurines of precious metals and gems. Their Ministry of Culture, Youth, and Sports has worked for nearly fifty years to increase an interest in the arts, from painting and sculpture, to literature, to music and orchestra. Costa Rica’s National Symphony Orchestra has been playing for several decades. As for literature,

notable writers include Roberto Brenes Mesén, Ricardo Fernández Guardia, Fabián Dobles, Carlos Luis Fallas, and Carmen Naranjo (Helmuth 2000, 88-96). Most cultural institutions are found in San José, including the architectural feat of the National Theatre, constructed in Renaissance style with statues, marble staircases, and murals. The National Museum in San José is home to hundreds of years of Costa Rican art (Helmuth 2000, 111-113).

However, the globalization of markets and neoliberal model of development have taken a toll, like in other countries around the globe, on Costa Rica by removing its capacity to shape its own destiny (Chávez Mata & Muñoz Flores 2009, 69-70; Molina & Palmer 1998, 142).

Although the term “globalization” is without a set definition, its effects are definitely felt and its influence is great; globalization for Costa Rica is obvious in the “Westernization” of the development of society. One author, Luz Nagle writes of the changing world as a result of this globalization of the world, “To some, the rush to integrate regional and international markets has steered nations to take the wrong turn, converting the world into a place that for many is unsafe, unethical, under-inclusive, and impoverished (2008, 131).” She continues to say that, in such a globalized economy and culture, everything is commoditized, even people. In a world of tangled up and intertwined “cultural, economic, social, and political dimensions” the global supply and demand chain is a product of many factors, including high unemployment, discrimination, lack of opportunity, high demand for cheap labor, indifference to morality and social conditions, and a lack of public awareness and law enforcement (Nagle 2008, 137-138). In Costa Rica, many of these factors have resulted in a plethora of issues, where the commoditization of all things has resulted in the selling and using of men, women, and children as if they were mere resources to be exploited (Chávez Mata & Muñoz Flores 2009, 80-81). According to Brett Matulis, Costa Rica has become a society of “users” and “providers,” where

these relationships foster a sense of competitiveness and a market-based approach to governance (2017). The effects of globalization on developing nations, such as opening of trade barriers and increased markets, have been likened by some critics as to the selling of their souls and the souls of their countries.

Today's social situation in Costa Rica is worsening, with an increase in violent crimes and in smuggling and types of trafficking (Booth & Richard 2015, 151). In 2009, Costa Rica was the last country to implement CAFTA, but the only one to approve it through popular vote (Booth, Wade & Walker 2015, 86). It was a tedious process fraught with opposition; it barely passed. Costa Rica was reluctant to agree to CAFTA due to a historical dislike and negative repercussions of privatization (Booth, Wade & Walker 2015, 298). Costa Rica continues to be reliant on a few key exports, such as bananas, coffee, and computer chips (Booth, Wade & Walker 2015, 87). Under the new neoliberal development model, Costa Rica sought to attract investment and, in turn, curtailed policies of equality and human development (Booth, Wade & Walker 2015, 90). This included "limiting the function of the state and its growth through such means as privatization, reducing tariffs, and the elimination of business taxes to promote foreign direct investment (Lubliner 2006, 20)." Costa Rican civil society engagement, such as church activities for the community, school groups, and business groups, is lowest in the region; it is argued by Booth, Wade, and Walker that this is due to less recourse despite a good-performing public administration (2015, 329).

Studies show that Costa Ricans, like their neighbors, Panama and Nicaragua, are increasingly more supportive of vigilantism as a means of curbing the escalating criminality, with rates reaching past 30 percent (Vanden & Prevost 2017). When ranked alongside other American countries, including the United States, on its biggest national problem, Costa Rica sits

right alongside its neighbors, Panama, Guatemala, and El Salvador, with 39 percent stating that crime and personal security are the major concerns (Booth & Richard 2015, 68). This position puts it opposite the more developed countries, such as the US and Canada, whose concern for crime and security are negligible. However, when asked specifically if they felt safe, Costa Ricans' scores indicated that they felt safer than other citizens around the region, despite the fact that Costa Rican crime rates parallel those of Peru (Booth & Richard 2015, 69). Due to domestic and international pressure to cut public spending and privatize, by 2017 Costa Rica's HDI ranking had fallen from 50 in 1980 to 66 (United Nations Development Programme 2017). After the volatile mix of economic stagnation and neoliberal policies, in 1999, 15,000 teachers went on strike to protest wages alongside workers from energy and telecommunications sectors (Booth, Wade & Walker 2015, 85-86). There is a dualism in Costa Rica. One is of the persistent belief in the *pura vida* lifestyle, of a rich and beautiful, exceptional country. The other is desolation and despair of those living in constant poverty, victims of an exploitative economic system that favors social Darwinism and survival of the fittest. Both exist simultaneously, and one hides the other from view, facilitating further exploitation and inhibiting awareness and true efforts to counter the problems.

Tourism as Development

Tourism has blossomed in Costa Rica, a country that was previously agriculturally centered. According to Matarrita-Cascante, this progress in Costa Rica's society, economy, and government to develop tourism is a result of "national level social and environmental strategies" which have attracted and promoted tourism due to the country's improved living conditions (2010, 138). The country had established the *Junta Nacional de Turismo* in the 1930s to regulate tourists; it was renamed in 1955 as the *Instituto Costarricense de Turismo* (ICT: Institute of

Costa Rican Tourism) and was granted its own budget and status as an autonomous governmental institution (Matarrita-Cascante 2010, 141). After the abolition of the army in 1949, the freed economic resources were used in social reformations, such as health and education, which improved living conditions and promoted the country as peaceful and stable. By the 1960s, scientists and researchers were journeying to Costa Rica to study the plant and animal life; they promoted tourism back in their home countries. By the 1970s the tiny nation had created Costa Rica's National Park Service to protect the country's biodiversity (Matarrita-Cascante 2010, 141). As a means of abating the economic hardships of the 1980s, including issues of rising oil prices and plummeting coffee prices, the government leadership opted to invest more heavily in the opportunities afforded by tourism. The 1980s were the era of NGO and non-profit emergence; both promoted tourism, financial resources, and human capital. In 1985, the government implemented the temporary Tourism Investment Incentives Law to promote and encourage tourism and a tourist industry (Matarrita-Cascante 2010, 142). This law gave privileges and incentives, such as tax breaks, an import tax waiver, and preferred loan rates to hotels, restaurants, transportation services, and other tourist-related companies to develop tourism services. "In 1988 the *Coalición Costarricense de Iniciativas de Desarrollo* (CINDE) and the *Instituto Costarricense de Turismo* (ICT) designed a strategy to aggressively promote tourism development in the country. Both entities signed an agreement to establish an incentive program aimed at attracting foreign tourism investors to Costa Rica (Matarrita-Cascante 2010, 142)." This incentives program to seek foreign investment includes many aspects, such as a number of free trade agreements, protecting intellectual property rights, and privatizing certain markets. By 2008, the number of tourists arriving in Costa Rica had reached more than two

million, nearly seven times the 1975 rate (Matarrita-Cascante 2010, 145). By 2015, there were 2.66 million visitors annually (Dyer 2016).

Tourism continues to expand as an industry and as a possible answer to the development situation in the country recently (See Figure 4). Costa Rica has celebrated two decades of tourism as its primary industry, with numbers in 2015 reaching \$2.6 billion in revenue and employing 600,000 people (Dyer 2016). Ecotourism and adventure tours are some of the more popular and advertised types of vacations in Costa Rica, attracting tourists from Europe, Canada, and the United States (Dyer 2016; Molina & Palmer 1998, 127). It has been labeled an ecological and geological treasure. Costa Rica is also known for its strong commitment to the environment and for protecting its numerous national parks. These factors, coupled with the highly established ecotourism industry, have attracted foreign investment. Through tourism and dependent development, Costa Rica managed to combat the economic hardships and massive amounts of debt associated with the “lost decade” unlike many of its neighbors, and by 2000, Costa Rica was able to return to previous economic levels overall, even gaining on its previous GDP per capita (Booth, Wade & Walker 2015, 66). This is due mainly to finding new sources of growth—assembly plant production, new exports, and increased tourism. This new type of economic development that began in the late 20th century has successfully shifted the country’s economy from one reliant on agriculture to one dominated by services and technology (Mitchell & Pentzer 2008, 137-138). As Hall reported, such a shift can have lasting negative consequences and result in a country losing its identity and its autonomy to the wills of the market (1994, 89-91). Costa Rica emerged from the “lost decade” with two other developments, the expansion of Protestantism and the rise of previously mentioned *solidarismo* (Molina & Palmer 1998, 124).

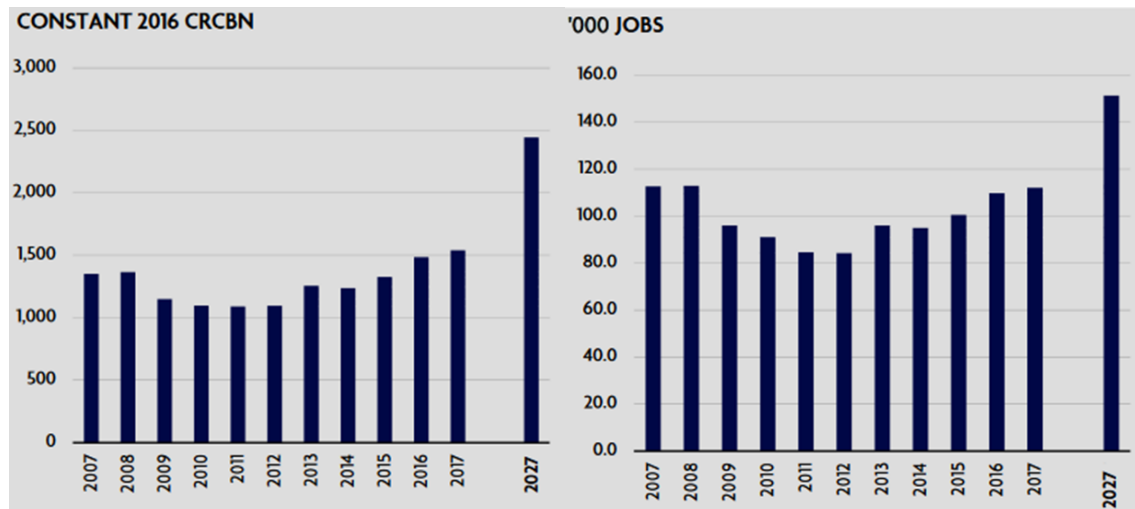


Figure 4: Travel and Tourism. Bar graph (left) showing direct impact of travel and tourism on Costa Rica's GDP from 2007 to 2017, with projected 2027 (total impact for 2017 was 13.4 percent of GDP). Bar graph (right) showing direct impact of travel and tourism on Costa Rica's employment from 2007 to 2017, with projected 2027 (total impact for 2017 was 12.9 percent of all jobs). Source: World Travel & Tourism Council "Travel & Tourism: Economic Impact 2017 Costa Rica" 2017.

Costa Rica has many laws to regulate tourism, no official army, a relatively good police force, and a strong image in the international community. Costa Rica promotes a "No Artificial Ingredients" claim. It sports a reputation as a pristine example of biodiversity, a tourist's paradise of lush vegetation, exotic animal life, and of friendly and hospitable people. The country portrays itself as natural and pure, a vacation hotspot for those wishing to "get away" from the industrial world. In 1998, Molina and Palmer noted that, "the rapid growth in foreign tourism began in 1985, and it reached 750,000 people in 1994... the industry has expanded at the cost of coastal ecosystems, and much of it is controlled by transnational companies (128)." With labor costs between \$1.80 and \$4.11 an hour, free trade agreements, good infrastructure, and a great geographic location, many transnational corporations find Costa Rica most amenable (Cordero & Paus 2008, 5). This continues to be the case today, as evidenced by more than 20 percent of banks in Costa Rica being foreigner owned. Furthermore, the amount of real estate

purchased by foreigners is staggering, with more than \$763 million spend between 2004 and 2006; that is 25 percent of all foreign direct investment (Cordero & Paus 2008, 4). In many ways, this opening up of the country is negative. Tom Barry argues that Costa Rica's global image of "peace" is a public relations ploy to increase tourism for Costa Rica and help a country that is economically and politically tied heavily to the United States (1990, 3). Brett Matulis still agrees nearly twenty years later (2017).

Despite the numerous efforts engaged in towards the improvement of the country's living conditions, it is recognized that Costa Rica has several pressing issues to resolve, particularly in areas like income inequality, illegal immigration, and crime...Directly associated with tourism, concerns have been raised in regards to excessive development in some parts of the country with related problems resulting from limited and polluted water sources, destruction of natural habitats (particularly acute around the West Pacific coast), and a high incidence of sex tourism (Matarrita-Cascante 2010, 144).

The billions of dollars in money from USAID, IMF, and the World Bank that Costa Rica has accepted or been forced to accept in order to escape financial ruin has left the country a virtual puppet of the United State. Due to debt, aid, and loans, this tiny nation has lost its national sovereignty (Barry 1990, 4; Molina & Palmer 1998, 121; Matulis 2017). The very ethos of Costa Rica has changed in recent years, as the focus of the government has been to pursue foreign direct investment and new strategies for increased tourism as a means to combat debt and other economic hardships; as mentioned above, both tourism and foreign direct investment have severely increased government revenue. Cordero and Paus note that, "Since the early 1980s, the Costa Rican approach to development has been based on two pillars: the attraction of high tech

FDI along with the promotion of tourism, and the pursuit of trade agreements with other countries or regions (2008, 11).” USAID has a headquarters in San José and has established what Tom Barry calls a “parallel state,” wherein this US institution forwards its own international agenda, inhibiting the Costa Rican government from fully and effectively managing its own affairs (1990, 82). These \$10 million headquarters are lavish and are designed to stabilize and privatize the Costa Rican economy. USAID, created “an infrastructure of private-sector institutions designed to undermine corresponding public ministries and agencies (Barry 1990, 82).” The World Bank, which closed its Costa Rican office in 1990 after declaring Costa Rica unfit for loans, reopened its doors and its business in 2000 (Matulis 2017). The presence of such entities and economic interest often work together to ensure that Costa Rica and its politics, economy, and culture cater to tourists and foreign investors. Both of these major international players coincided with tourist booms for Costa Rica, which has increased its tourism by nearly 10 fold since the 1980s (Dyer 2016; Cordero & Paus 2008, 20; Molina & Palmer 1998, 1).

Although Costa Rica has enjoyed years of democratic government and of relative peace and prosperity, there are still major concerns. Costa Rica has a history of drug trafficking (Barry 1990, 21). During the early 20th Century, Costa Ricans began to use and abuse a number of drugs, such as opium, marijuana, heroin, and morphine, due to the country's status as a transit country for drug trafficking and arms trafficking (Molina & Palmer 1998, 83; 134). There have been many incidences of human rights violations and violent repression at the hands of uniformed members of security forces, right-wing paramilitary forces, and official police (Barry 1990, 22). Law enforcement is made up of thirteen agencies each with their own police force. Costa Rica still struggles with social-justice issues, women battering, child abuse, rape, indigenous rights, and land seizure, among others (Anders 2017; Barry 1990, 68-70). For

example, according to *The Tico Times*, in 2016 the number of domestic violence victims rose by one-third since 2013, and the pretrial prisons in San José is currently operating at 200 percent capacity due to the number of accused persons waiting for trials (Krimhotlz 2016; Arias 2016). Costa Rica has been implicated in some serious issues of child-sex tourism and labor trafficking, such as the open case of the former mayor and accomplices who attempted to start a trafficking ring with minors back in 2011 that remains awaiting a court date (Chaves 2016; Department of State 2017, 138). One tourist guide by MacKinnan even has a small insert with the following quote:

Caught between seriously addressing the issue of child-sex tourism or exposing the country's pure ecotourism image to unfavorable publicity, Costa Rican authorities have so far chosen to hide their heads in the sand. A damning US Embassy report on Human Trafficking in 2011 placed the country on its Tier 2 watch list, for failing to condemn or prosecute the practice. Tourist from the US, Germany, Sweden, and Italy are the main customers, but Costa Ricans are also complicit. In 2012, the mayor of the canton that includes Quepos and Manuel Antonio, was arrested on charges of child pornography. (2016, 57).

Furthermore, according to the research done by Marianela Méndez-Marengo, a Costa Rican scholar, the issue of human trafficking is well hidden throughout the country (2013, 109). One professor at the National University, Sara Sharatt, was quoted as saying, "In Costa Rica we live with the myth that this is a peaceful society. We are so busy thinking about no army that we ignore the fact that there is widespread, institutionalized violence against women in this 'peaceful society' (Barry 1990, 68)."

Conclusion

Costa Rica began its colonial period as unique. At first, “unique” meant resource poor and unimportant to the Spanish (Skidmore & Smith 2005, 371). Thus it developed very differently from the rest of Central America, with few natives, fewer blacks, and no landed elites. By the early 1800s, coffee cultivation was wide-spread, with family farms becoming the prosperous middle sector. There was never a large, landless peasantry such as in other areas. Yet, like other countries, Costa Rica still fell victim to the commercial monopoly of the UFCO, which took over great areas of land, created enclave economies, and made bananas the principle export (Skidmore & Smith 2005, 371).

Costa Rica has remained unique in many ways. It has been and remains socially and racially homogenous, with an 84 percent majority mestizo (Costa Rican’s say “white”) population, eight percent black/mulatto, and only one percent indigenous (CIA 2016). Also, democratic ideas and government have prevailed throughout most of its history since independence, with Liberals and Conservatives taking turns in power until the mid-20th century. Costa Rica boasts a unique historical and political progression and stability for the region. Mainly ignored by the crown, the country did experience classical dependency development with the United Fruit Company and the brief battle with William Walker. However, Costa Rica survived and thrived through difficult years. The constitution in 1949 was remarkable for its time and made a profound political and social impact that moved the country on a path toward such Costa Rican strides as free and good health care and education.

While this country took a particular path, one that led to a strong middle class, no army, and a lasting democracy, it also resulted in strong ties with the West, with the United States particularly. In turn, this connection created a vibrant and flourishing tourism industry between

Costa Rica and its Western allies. One unfortunate result of these ties is the link to human trafficking, to modern forms of slavery and exploitation. Despite areas of deficiency, Costa Ricans imagine their country as an example of political and social stability and economic prosperity across Latin America, even as it struggles with issues from the “other,” hidden side of Costa Rica, the dark side of neoliberal economics and globalized development, a testament to its relationship with the United States and European countries.

Chronology

- 1000 BC** Indigenous groups settle the land now known as Costa Rica.
- 500** Hierarchical *cacicazgos* (groups) are established.
- 800** Major villages are established.
- 1500** Infighting begins between groups and *caciques*.
- 1502** Christopher Columbus visits the Island of Uvita, the first European explorer to land on present day Costa Rica. He encounters a native tribe.
- 1522** Spanish colonization begins.
- 1572** The first Spanish colonies settle in Costa Rica, but it is largely overlooked due to its lack of resources. Cartago is the capital.
- 1736** The city of San José is founded.
- 1808** Coffee becomes the principle crop.
- 1821** Costa Rica gains its independence, joining the Mexican Empire.
- 1823** The Mexican Empire dissolves; Costa Rica becomes part of the United Provinces of Central America. The political civil war between conservatives and republicans ends with a republican victory. San José is made the new capital.
- 1824** Juan Mora Fernández is the first head of state of Costa Rica.
- 1825** The first Costa Rican constitution is written and implemented.
- 1832** Coffee exports begin to Europe.
- 1838** Costa Rica becomes fully independent. Braulio Carrillo begins his dictatorship.
- 1842** Braulio Carrillo's dictatorship ends.
- 1848** Declaration of the Republic of Costa Rica.
- 1858** William Walker is defeated by the combined Central American forces, of which Costa Rica was a major player. Juan Santamaría, a drummer boy, became a legend and a hero to the people of Costa Rica due to his suicide mission while battling against Walker.
- 1870** A military coup leaves Tomás Guardia Gutiérrez in charge. He introduces a new liberal constitution.
- 1880** Costa Rica begins to export bananas.
- 1882** Costa Rica abolishes the death penalty.

- 1886** The younger Costa Rican generations are granted compulsory education by the Costa Rican government.
- 1890** With much development taking place, such as the Atlantic Railroad that spans from Limón to Cartago, Costa Rica holds its first free and fair election across Central America. José Joaquín Rodríguez becomes president.
- 1919** A short stint of dictatorship supported by coffee barons ends after two years through an uprising.
- 1930** Costa Rica begins its first major tourism effort by building “Gran Hotel Costa Rica.”
- 1934** After striking against the United Fruit Company, workers are rewarded by the government with a right to strike and a minimum wage.
- 1941** On top of troublesome and diminishing coffee exports, Costa Rica declares war on the Axis powers one day prior to the United States.
- 1944** After four years of social reforming, President Rafael Calderón Guardia is successful in the implementation of the social changes.
- 1945** The Social Democratic Party (PSD) is founded. Later, the PSD would evolve into the Partido Liberación Nacional (PLN), the party of the famous José Figueres.
- 1948** Calderón Guardia seizes control of the presidency, declaring an annulment of the President-elect. Costa Rica’s civil war is begun and ended, and José Figueres and his junta take power to reestablish democracy.
- 1949** Costa Rica’s new constitution is implemented. It abolished the army, replaced by a civil guard. Black Costa Ricans and women gain suffrage. Other social programs are created to develop Costa Rica. As promised, José Figueres hands power back over to the President-elect. However, José Figueres returns to serve several terms as president in later elections in the 50s and 70s.
- 1955** Establishing of the *Junta Nacional de Turismo* (later *Instituto Costarricense de Turismo*).
- 1958** Opening of the Juan Santamaría International Airport in San José.
- 1979** After the Somoza dictatorship is toppled by the Sandinistas and during the first waves of the guerilla battles and Contra Wars in Nicaragua, Costa Rica receives hundreds of thousands of individuals fleeing and regrouping from Nicaragua. This includes anti-Sandinistas and guerilla groups.

- 1985** Tourism Investment Incentives Law begins.
- 1986** Oscar Arias Sánchez is elected president. One year later, due to his peace-building work in the region, he is awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.
- 1990** Rafael Angel Calderón Fournier wins the presidency as a member of the Social Christian Unity Party (PUSC).
- 1991** Costa Rica is affected by an earthquake. It hits Limón hard and kills 60. It destroys the Atlantic railroad.
- 1994** José M. Figueres is elected president. His administration is caught up in scandal.
- 1996** Hurricane César hits Costa Rica, doing massive damage and killing some.
- 1998** Miguel Ángel Rodríguez of PUSC is elected president. He begins to engage in neoliberal economic actions for the state, like privatizing.
- 2002** Abel Pacheco of PUSC wins the presidency. Franklins Chang, a Costa Rican astronaut, goes to the moon.
- 2006** Due to a change in the constitution, Oscar Arias Sánchez is able to run for and gain the presidency again.
- 2008** CAFTA is ratified via a referendum.
- 2010** Laura Chinchilla of the PLN is elected as the first woman president.
- 2011** Costa Rica appeals to, and wins the case with, the World Court over a border dispute with Nicaragua.
- 2014** Luis Guillermo Solís Rivera of Citizens' Action Party (PAC) wins the presidency.
- 2015** The Turrialba volcano erupts and hurls ash up to 8,200 feet, resulting in the closure of the main international airport.
- 2016** Costa Rica named number 32 best place to travel by Travel Leisure. Costa Rica goes 250 days without burning any fossil fuels.
- 2017** Drug traffickers destroy millions of acres of forests to launder their profits. Costa Rica and Nicaragua continue border disputes regarding the Nicoya peninsula. In total, 1,490 workers in public hospitals strike against a one percent raise in deductions for the pension system.

Chapter 4—Methodology

Introduction

This methodology chapter seeks to comprehensively cover all aspects relevant to the study so that the results can be adequately judged and could be validly replicated. This chapter will cover assumptions, the type of design, the researcher's role, the site and sample selections, data collection techniques, the process of managing and recording data, the data analysis procedures, and the methods for verification and trustworthiness. The purpose of this research was to explore the reasons why Costa Rica ranks higher than the other Central American countries in numerous international indices of development, yet remains equal to or below other Central American countries in its fight to combat human trafficking. This research was based on the root question—Given a higher level of development, relatively better trained police, and less corruption, how is it that CR has so few cases prosecuted and fewer cases convicted? It is the goal of this research to provide a viable answer to this question.

Assumptions

The hypotheses had two main assumptions that must be addressed. It was assumed that the global image of Costa Rica as pure and natural and wholesome is coveted by businesses and the government. This image brings tourists and allows the country to portray itself as safe and beautiful. Thus, political and economic pressure would attempt to maintain this image.

Furthermore, it was assumed that the best method for researching the situation of human trafficking in Costa Rica would be to research laws, cases, and other documents and compare them to the minimum standards by interviewing individuals with knowledge on rescue of survivors, on the legal and rehabilitation processes, and on traffickers. These individuals would

be able to provide detailed, qualitative evidence concerning the situation in Costa Rica and how the reality of the situation compares with policies and with best practices.

Type of Design

Supporting the hypotheses is difficult. Human trafficking is a massively lucrative criminal business. The causal links and process tracing behind it are therefore linked to economics. However, in order to show the relationship between this illegal activity and the prosperous tourist industry, NGO activities, and global country image in Costa Rica, it was necessary to explore the association between human slaves and the legal and illegal industries in the country.

Historically, scholars have used some form of dependency theory to explain maladaptive behavior in previous colonial countries. It is easy to see the lasting effects that colonialism and resource extraction have left on many countries around the globe, specifically in Central America (Galeano 1971; Skidmore & Smith 2005, Prevost & Vanden 2011). Other theories use a more gendered theory of human trafficking to explain the marginalization of women, children, and indigent men at the hands of the more powerful (Wolken 2006). Both of these theories can shed light on the situation in countries such as Guatemala and Honduras, countries plagued with racism, violence, and poor development (Lucchi 2010; Minnick 2012; Noble Women's Initiative 2012). Yet Costa Rica has done, and is doing, relatively well compared to its other Central American neighbors, most especially since its 1949 constitution and the development associated with it (Prevost & Vanden 2011). It therefore represents a strategic case to understanding why countries do not meet minimum standards in the fight against human trafficking even when they have a relatively high GDP, rank notably on HDI, CPI, and other indices.

Thus it was useful and appropriate to conduct a mixed-methods case study on the human trafficking situation in Costa Rica. A mixed-methods, quantitative/qualitative general inquiry study can provide a holistic picture through field research, observations, surveys, interviews, and an analysis of written documents. This was the best design strategy for this study because a mixed-methods, general inquiry involves collecting both quantitative and qualitative data which reveal both objective facts and subjective knowledge and opinions (Percy, Kostere, & Kostere, 2015). This option was superior for this study over other types, such as an ethnography of cultural studies, grounded theory, which does not seek to explain, and a phenomenological study, which is focused on “lived experiences” (Percy, Kostere, & Kostere, 2015). According to Russell Bernard, such a case study as was completed here would fall under the category of “quasi-experimental” with selected participants (2006, 110). It is a natural experiment, one not orchestrated for the study, but rather observed by the researcher (Bernard 2006, 133).

In order to provide evidence to evaluate the argument in the hypothesis, it was necessary to engage in background research and to conduct interviews and surveys with stakeholders in Costa Rica, such as survivors, traffickers, social workers, law enforcement, and personnel, who are directly involved in human trafficking. These individuals were able to elucidate and provide insight into the situation. Other pertinent resources included any and all government documents, policies, and efforts to combat the human trafficking situation. It was useful to evaluate numbers of victims rescued and perpetrators arrested, including information on sentences and punishments. It was also beneficial to explore the types of services offered to survivors and what funding and future plans the government has for the fight against this crime. By conducting a case study similar to a “country narrative,” such as the one included in the TIP Report, this study

evaluated the validity of the report and further developed an understanding of the situation in Costa Rica.

For the purposes of this study, the type of trafficking and the demographics of the victims were gathered. While this study was focused on policies and laws and implementation of those policies and laws by the Costa Rican government, data were gathered to develop as great an understanding as possible. This study sought to explain the ranking that Costa Rica received on the 2015, 2016, and 2017 TIP Reports and the previous Tier 2 or Tier 2 Watch List rankings for the past ten years. The research design for this study was a case study that used government documents, reports, surveys and interviews with stakeholders to evaluate the legitimacy of the hypothesis and to develop a greater understanding of the trafficking situation in Costa Rica.

Researcher's Role

Social science research has a long history of multiple methods for conducting research, with a greater expansion since the behavioral revolution. No longer are researchers limited to seeking a “true” representation of social reality, uncovered by an objective scientist (Fink 2000). The social sciences can now seek to encompass important aspects of human lives, such as meaning structures, social reality, subjectivity, and complex understanding (Fink 2000). As such, my role as the researcher in this study was one of learner, an explorer seeking answers the “why” questions. I sought to understand the nature of the situation of this case rather than any supposed "objective truth" that is likely to change over time. Slavery and the modern trafficking in humans is a heinous global crime that tears at humanity and freedom. Through this study, it is my goal to educate and increase knowledge related to this phenomenon and, should it be useful, to assist in combatting this crime, rescuing and rehabilitating victims, and punishing traffickers.

I conducted this study under a post-positivistic mixed-methods model of social science, where, “the entity to be studied is the life world of human being as it is experienced individually (Fink 2000).” I understood that my role was as an interpreter of the case study, as only a human being is “sufficiently complex to comprehend and learn about human existence (Fisk 2000).” Undoubtedly, my interactions with and presence among participants resulted in influence on both sides. Yet, through any and all bias that I brought and through any subjectivity in the study, the research retains its value to the field due to the diligence and rigor of the study and the validity with which I performed any and all research.

Site and Sample Selections

This case study of Costa Rica is national, with three specific cities for research as well as other regions around the country. I conducted interviews and research in San José, Liberia, and Puerto Limón. I also met the goal of spreading into surrounding rural areas to conduct research with these populations. However, legal documents, laws, and other types of sources were for the entire country, as the state was the unit of analysis. This study sought a general overview of the country’s efforts to combat human trafficking. Research on Costa Rica’s history and issues of slavery spanned ten years, such as through ten years of TIP Reports. In an attempt to avoid extreme selection bias, I selected these sites due to population and amount of tourism (Bernard 2006, 116).

The sample selection had to be convenience sampling due to the nature of the study and the criminal and secretive nature of the subject matter (Bernard 2006, 192). This study sought the greatest understanding of the situation. I used any and all available sources to gather the most knowledge and information. This convenience sampling method included chain referral/snowball sampling from one interviewee to another, from one source to another, some of

it specifically respondent-driven sampling, where participants actively seek out further participants (Bernard 2006, 192-194). This method, though less scientifically rigorous than true experimental studies, ensured a maximum sample size and gathered the most data. This method included any and all interviews at rehabilitation houses, government offices, NGOs, etc. It also allowed me to draw inferences regarding how members of this particular social network perceive these problems.

Data Collection Techniques

I began some data collection as a foundation for the study. This first set of data consisted of a review of statistics, laws, and court cases. I collected these data by visiting statistical sites, libraries, and government entities, among others. These data were used to establish a quantitative and scientifically rigorous framework for the subsequent interviews and surveys.

Empirical evidence to support the hypotheses needed to come from stakeholders in the field in Costa Rica, such as NGO workers, survivors, traffickers, and those who work within the system and the institutions of the Costa Rican government. In order to gather this information, it was necessary to conduct interviews and surveys to gain insights and knowledge regarding their understandings of the situation of human trafficking and human trafficking efforts in Costa Rica.

I interviewed a wide range of subjects. These included law enforcement officers, social workers, health care workers, and others directly involved in the prosecution, prevention, and protection efforts. This study also included interviews with heads of the division that handles human trafficking cases, professionals involved in oversight, NGO leaders who lead watchdog institutions or anti-trafficking coalitions, police chiefs and patrol officers, city officials, and those police most associated with patrolling “red light” districts and tourist areas. These stakeholders provided insights into the workings of the Costa Rican system to combat human trafficking.

Their involvement gave them intimate knowledge and insights into the complexities of this system and the reasons that it has yet to meet minimum standards. I also interviewed journalists, university professors, and prostitutes for their particular expert perspective on the situation of human trafficking and any possible interactions they might have had with this issue.

These interviews were purposive, with emphasis on finding informants with intimate knowledge of the human trafficking situation in Costa Rica. These were valuable contributions to this case study, where the population being studied is hard-to-find. As noted, sampling was done via chain referral (Bernard 2006, 192). Interviews began with the social service workers at Casa Milagro and Face of Justice, anti-trafficking organizations in San José. I gained further participants through honest transparency and a promise to share results to assist in moving toward fuller compliance with minimum standards. I found that some participants were willing to share contact information for other sources, while others made the initial contacts themselves and set up interviews for me. This type of sampling was necessary due to the hard-to-find and hard-to-study population (Bernard 2006, 192). This topic is very sensitive and deals with victims in current crises and survivors who may be actively hiding. Beginning with the shelters lent validity to any future interviews and helped to establish me as a trustworthy researcher and a legitimate scholar interested in facilitating positive education and lasting change for Costa Rica. Interviewees at Face of Justice and Casa Milagro served as key informants, as they were familiar with other sources, having had various interactions with all types of stakeholders across the state.

I conducted semi-structured interviews, since there was only a limited numbers of meetings with each informant. Interviews were conducted in a safe environment established mutually by me and the interviewees. I evaluated and made use of suggestions from the informants, such as researching records or policies in order to gain further understanding.

Through rapport with Face of Justice and Casa Milagro, I was able to include multiple interviews with various individuals from several different backgrounds and varying involvement with the human trafficking situation. By combining their knowledge and insights, I was able to argue for support of the hypotheses and for possible reform in the Costa Rican system.

I also gathered empirical evidence concerning the Costa Rican government and its actions toward combatting human trafficking, such as money spent, institutions in place, policies enacted, implementation of those policies, and numbers of reported and prosecuted traffickers and of rescued victims. I compiled this information and compared it with the evidence from the interviews and surveys as part of analysis.

I conducted the interviews over several months. I created a survey/questionnaire and used it to ask questions in an alternative manner for maximum information gathering (see Appendix A). Such a questionnaire asked for the participant's understanding and opinion on the situation in Costa Rica, perceptions of the participant on the situation, how long the participant felt human trafficking has been present in Costa Rica, whether there has been a decrease or increase in trafficking, where it is concentrated, and how the government is doing to combat the crime. I selected participants based on occupation, knowledge, and experience. Also, I was able to procure stories from survivors and one trafficker because their stories, as direct participants, are invaluable to understanding this issue in all of its entirety. This study used only cases of human trafficking that fit the United States' definition, since this definition has become a fairly universally accepted definition across academic literature and agencies, both governmental and non-governmental.¹³

¹³ According to the TVPA, under U.S. federal law, human trafficking includes both sex and labor trafficking, which are defined as follows: "Sex trafficking is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting of a person for the purposes of a commercial sex act, in which the commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such an act has not attained 18 years

Managing and Recording Data

Human trafficking victims are typically members of vulnerable populations prior to their involvement in the victimization of their trafficking (Hodge 2008). Those at highest risk of becoming victims of human trafficking are members of a disadvantaged population because of risk factors associated with marginalization, such as socio-economic status, economic and political upheaval, and gender (Shelly 2010). These factors contribute to vulnerability; victims are often ensnared while seeking economic opportunities, as runaway teens, when escaping natural or political disasters, and as homeless or disadvantaged individuals. Commonly, victims are female and children. These populations are often in higher demand for sex trafficking, especially. Victims of human trafficking often do not self-identify as victims. Many survivors of trafficking will be re-trafficked again, according to statistics (Clearwater/Tampa Bay Area Task Force on Human Trafficking 2016). As such, every care was taken to ensure protection and security for this population and those involved in combat efforts, through proper data collection and management. All interviews were completely confidential and pseudonym codes were assigned to assure anonymity of victims and other vulnerable informants. Furthermore, this

of age (22 USC § 7102). Labor trafficking is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purposes of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery, (22 USC § 7102).”

To understand the definition, the follow terms are defined by the TVPA: “Involuntary servitude—a condition of servitude induced by means of any scheme, plan, or pattern intended to cause a person to believe that, if the person did not enter into or continue in such condition, that person or another person would suffer serious harm or physical restraint; or the abuse or threatened abuse of the legal process (22 U.S.C. 7102 (6)). Debt Bondage—the status or condition of a debtor arising from a pledge by the debtor of his or her personal services or of those of a person under his or her control as a security for debt, if the value of those services as reasonably assessed is not applied toward the liquidation of the debt or the length and nature of those services are not respectively limited and defined (22 U.S.C. 7102 (5)). Coercion—(A) threats of serious harm to or physical restraint against any person; (B) any scheme, plan, or pattern intended to cause a person to believe that failure to perform an act could result in serious harm to or physical restraint against any person; or (C) the abuse or threatened abuse of the legal process (22 U.S.C. 7102 (3)). Commercial Sex Act—The term “commercial sex act” means any sex act on account of which anything of value is given to or received by any person (22 U.S.C. 7102 (4)).”

study was approved by the Institutional Review Boards, FWA No. 00001669, approval code Pro00029679.

There are a number of ways to ensure accurate and appropriate data collection that allows those involved to stay secure and comfortable. First, all participants were assigned pseudonym code names for the entirety of the process. There is no record in the data of their actual names. Second, all interviews were conducted in a secure location. Only audio recording were used; no video recording took place. Only hand-written notes were used. Third, data were password protected and encrypted once entered into digital format. Fourth, after all research was completed and synthesized, all those involved were provided access to the completed study prior to release so that they could provide feedback and request changes to their parts, if they so desired. Fifth, all documents reviewed for the study were handled appropriately per their required procedure. Only public information was shared.

While completing this study, I incorporated elements of the Belmont Report (1979) in order to ensure respect for persons, beneficence, and justice. I honored respect for persons as the research was conducted with every effort to protect the survivors. Those involved signed consent forms and were informed of the objectives of the study. I also ensured that all participants in the study were aware that participation was voluntary, that they could have exited the research, if necessary, at any time. As mentioned earlier, for beneficence, all interviewees were assigned pseudonyms. Finally, after completing the study, I stored all sensitive records from the study in a secure location. For justice, I published the completed research to assist in combatting this global crime, ensuring that participants directly benefit from the research. I managed data carefully, with every effort to ensure both accuracy and security.

Data Analysis Procedures and Trustworthiness

Data analysis took place in an ongoing manner throughout the duration of the study (Bernard 2006, 452-453). Since there was no video recording during interviews, I had to perform analysis accurately and diligently. After every interview, I analyzed the data and stored the digitalized copy with a password before securing the hand-written notes. This method ensured security and provided that data analysis took place while the interview and the data collected from it were still current. Data analysis was an ongoing process throughout the duration of the study. As Russell Bernard states in his book on methodology, “Analysis is ultimately qualitative...As you develop ideas, you test them against your observations: Your observations may then modify your ideas, which then need to be tested again, and so on. Don’t look for closure in the process. If you’re doing it right, it never stops (2006, 453).”

Data analysis can sometimes be problematic, as there is much room for error and blatant dishonesty or manipulation. Thus, it was of the utmost importance that I conducted this research accurately and honestly, with no fabrication or falsification. The results of this research could be used in policy changes for the state and for educational purposes. As such, it was paramount that the conclusions I drew were a true reflection of the data collected. I used the triangulation method by gathering data from multiple sources on the same topic—survivors and providers, government and non-government reports and documents, and other stakeholders—and then peer debriefing with two or more colleagues with no background in human trafficking. I also followed Bernard’s steps to analysis—throughout the interviews and surveys, I looked for consistencies and inconsistencies, I checked reported behaviors and facts against more objective evidence, I remained open to negative and missing evidence, I sought explanations from informants, and I incorporated extreme information into my research and theory (2006, 453).

Chapter 5—Results/Outcomes—Documentation and Surveys

As stated in Chapter 1, the study reported here had the purpose of exploring the reasons why Costa Rica leads Central America in numerous international measurements of success, yet remains equal to or below other Central American countries in its fight to combat human trafficking. This chapter and the next show the results of this study—the documentation, the survey results, and the interviews. They will thus continue in three sections over the two chapters, corresponding to each type of result. Each section will be expanded by subtopics and themes.

Documentation

While surveys and interviews were the primary focus of this research and the main focus for a study researching implementation, it was both necessary and useful to obtain as much relevant documentation as possible. Documents reviewed included the written trafficking law in Costa Rica, various pamphlets from the government and NGOs/IGOs on trafficking for the public, educational materials for law enforcement and social service workers on trafficking, audio recordings of interviews with minor survivors currently in a safe house post rescue, and the transcript of an interview with a trafficker. These documents, particularly the copy of the written human trafficking law, were pivotal in understanding the actual situation regarding legality and combat work in Costa Rica, along with differences between the definitions of human trafficking by the United Nations, the United States, and Costa Rica.

Documentation was difficult to acquire, and several requested pieces of documentation were completely unavailable. For example, to complete a thorough investigation of previous

cases, case notes were requested for review. However, case notes are not available as a matter of public record through any type of online system, nor were any officials willing to deliver such notes for the purpose of this study. Furthermore, only one NGO was able to provide any type of case notes or transcribed interviews from victims or traffickers. All other NGOs and government offices were unable or unwilling to provide such documentation.

Human Trafficking Law

The human trafficking law in Costa Rica was passed by and put into effect by the Legislative Assembly in February of 2013. The law, number 9095, is specifically titled “The Law Against Trafficking in Persons and the Creation of the National Coalition Against Illicit Trafficking of Migrants and Trafficking in Persons (CONATT)” (*Ley Contra la Trata de Personas y creación de la Coalición Nacional Contra el Tráfico Ilícito de Migrantes y la Trata de Personas*) and was backed by the support of the International Organization for Migration (OIM/IOM). The law is divided up into twelve chapters, each dealing with a particular aspect of the law.

Chapter 1 is general provisions. In this section the old laws regarding trafficking are replaced, the law establishes equality and antidiscrimination regulations, and puts no national or international limitations on the crime. It also establishes special circumstances for minors, particularly where the “*interés superior*,” or “greater good,” needs be recognized and upheld, considering aspects such as age and maturity. The Patronato Nacional de la Infancia (National Board of Children; PANI), the child welfare agency of the state, is given authority over minor victims. It ends with a list of conventions, laws, agreements, and protocols, of which Costa Rica is an active member, that are to be upheld by this law. The Palermo Protocol is among them. The final paragraphs make clear the working definition of human trafficking and the crimes

covered by this trafficking law, although it differs from the universal definition established by the United Nations.¹⁴

Por trata de personas se entenderá el promover, facilitar, o favorecer la entrada o salida del país o el desplazamiento, dentro del territorio nacional, de personas de cualquier sexo para realizar uno o varios actos de prostitución o someterías a explotación o servidumbre, ya sea sexual o laboral, esclavitud o practicas análogas a la esclavitud, trabajos o servicios forzados, matrimonio servil, mendicidad forzada, extracción ilícita de órganos o adopción irregular.

Trafficking in persons is understood as the promoting, facilitating, or favoring the entry or exit of the country or the movement within the national territory of persons of any sex to carry out one or more acts of prostitution or subject to exploitation or servitude, sexual or labor relations, slavery or practices similar to slavery, forced labor or services, servile marriage, forced begging, unlawful removal of organs or irregular adoption. (Ley 9095 2013, 11)

Chapter 2 covers definitions used throughout the rest of the law, such as “*esclavitud*” (slavery), “*explotación*” (exploitation), “*trabajo forzado*” (forced work), and “*adopción*”

¹⁴ In Article 3 of the Palermo Protocol, the United Nations’ definition of human trafficking is articulated as “(a) “Trafficking in persons” shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs; (b) The consent of a victim of trafficking in persons to the intended exploitation set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article shall be irrelevant where any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) have been used; (c) The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered “trafficking in persons” even if this does not involve any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article; (d) “Child” shall mean any person under eighteen years of age.” (United Nations, 2000)

irregular” (irregular adoption). There are no definitions that supersede common knowledge or offer an extreme or irregular understanding. There are a total of 28 definitions.

Chapter 3 sets up CONATT (National Coalition Against Illicit Trafficking of Migrants and Trafficking in Persons). In this section, it is expressed that the objective of CONATT is to “promote the formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of national, regional and local public policies for the prevention of illicit trafficking and trafficking in persons, care and protection of victims, and the prosecution and punishment of those responsible” (*promover la formulación, la ejecución, el seguimiento y la evaluación de políticas públicas nacionales, regionales y locales, para la prevención del tráfico ilícito y la trata de personas, la atención y protección de las víctimas, y la persecución y sanción de los responsables...*) (Ley 9095 2013, 17). This coalition of agencies and forces to combat human trafficking is comprised of numerous permanent members, such as PANI (National Board of Children), social security, the prosecutor’s office, the agency that handles tourism, etc. In this section of the law, it also establishes a leader of the coalition and the responsibilities of that position.

Chapter 4 is the national policy. In this section the law establishes the role of the state in fighting human trafficking and reiterates the state’s support of such efforts. This chapter also notes that the state is the main force against this crime, that other agencies, institutions, and organizations can support the efforts, but that they cannot replace the state and its role. The state’s actions are meant to be in accordance with the following cores: “The core of attention and protection to victims. The core of prevention. The core of justice. The core of information, analysis, and research. The core of institutional coordination” (*Eje de atención y protección a víctimas. Eje de prevención. Eje de procuración de justicia. Eje de información, análisis e investigación. Eje de coordinación institucional*) (Ley 9095 2013, 24).

Chapter 5 sets up the emergency response team, ERI (*Equipo de Respuesta Inmediata*). It is comprised of members from social security, INAMU (National Institution of Women; *Instituto Nacional de Mujeres*), OIJ (Judicial Investigation Agency; *Organismo de Investigación Judicial*), PANI, and Migration (*Policía Profesional de Migración*), among others. This team is responsible for answering tip calls and arriving on the scene where human trafficking crimes have been committed. They are the first response team, and they are in charge of identifying victims and coordinating protection and prosecutions efforts.

Chapters 6 and 7 are both short and relatively direct. Chapter 6 is about protection and privacy. This section covers basic confidentiality and protocols for victim identity security, etc. It is also where the use of the term “*denuncia*” or “complaint” is clearly identified. It is also here that the law permits and establishes procedures for complying with statistical surveys and academic uses of the information on trafficking in persons. Chapter 7 is prevention. This section is relatively small, a mere page front and back, and establishes the three specific areas of focus—disclosure, detection, and training. However, there are very few specifics in the law which detail how these areas will be developed and implemented.

Chapter 8 is about victim protection. This large chapter lays out the rights of survivors of human trafficking, such as physical and emotional protection, appropriate accommodations and security, education on victims’ rights, legal and psychological assistance, identity protection, the right to remain in the country despite national origin, and a right to be returned home if desired, among various other rights and benefits, such as assistance, programs, and trainings. The law also establishes a right to health services, both physical and mental, and to legal counsel. This chapter also establishes an obligation for both private and public entities to report suspected cases of trafficking. Article 42 of this chapter launches particular procedures for minor victims

and for those who appear to be of a minor age. Such provisions include an intercessor for interview purposes and for a representative in the courts. Furthermore, this chapter establishes that certain at risk groups, such as children and women, will have specialized agencies for their assistance; PANI and INAMU respectively for these two examples. This chapter concludes with a proclamation regarding the necessity for programs of reintegration and resettlement.

Chapter 9 covers finances. It is in this chapter that the establishment of the trafficking fund (Fonatt—*Fondo Nacional contra la Trata de Personas y el Tráfico Ilícito de Migrantes*), paid for by \$1 of the exit tax from the country, thus directly linking it to tourism and travel. The law sets up that the fund can only be used by administrators directly involved in the fight against human trafficking and the rehabilitation of survivors. The responsibility for spending of the money falls on the *Junta Administrativa de la Dirección General de Migración y Extranjería* (a branch of CONATT). The money is legally bound to an account at the national bank. Under the law, funds are followed and accounted for and are to be accessible by the proposed projects.

Chapter 10 lists procedural provisions. This chapter begins with, “Victims of the crime of trafficking in persons are not criminally or administratively punishable for the commission of misdemeanors or offenses, when they have been committed during the execution of the crime of trafficking in persons and as a consequence of this, without prejudice to the legal actions that the aggrieved person may exercise against the perpetrator or perpetrators of the acts” (*Las víctimas del delito de trata de personas no son punibles penal o administrativamente por la comisión de faltas o delitos, cuando estos se hayan cometido durante la ejecución del delito de trata de personas y a consecuencia de esta, sin perjuicio de las acciones legales que el agraviado pueda ejercer contra el autor o los autores de los hechos*) (Ley 9095 2013, 45). This clearly indicates that victims are to be treated as victims only and not held accountable as criminals for any

actions that they were forced or coerced to commit while enslaved. This chapter also makes clear the possible repercussions of being convicted a trafficker, such as medical costs for the victims, psychological costs for rehabilitation, and other compensations, among other penalties.

Chapter 11 is about reforms and punishments. It states that prison sentences for traffickers can range from four to ten years depending on the severity of the trafficking, the age of the victim for minors, presence of coercion, individuals with disabilities, organ trafficking, etc. There is also a specific part for sex tourism that states, “He/she will be punished with imprisonment from four to eight years, who promotes or carries out programs, campaigns or advertising, using any means to project the country nationally and internationally as a tourist destination accessible for the exploitation of people of any sex or age” (*Será sancionado con pena de prisión de cuatro a ocho años, quien promueva o realice programas, campanas o anuncios publicitarios, haciendo uso de cualquier medio para proyectar al país a nivel nacional e internacional como un destino turístico accesible para la explotación de personas de cualquier sexo o edad*) (Ley 9095 2013, 49). The rest of the chapter deals with specific penalties for specific crimes associate with human trafficking and illicit trafficking of migrants. Finally, Chapter 12 is titled “final provisions,” but is a mere two sentences stating the power of the law and its date of regulation.

Clearly, there is a solid legal basis to act against human trafficking. Aside from the difference in definitions of human trafficking, the law is thorough and well-explained. The TIP Report states that Costa Rica’s law is sufficient and that its punishments for offenders are likewise just (U.S. Department of State 2017). The limitations that hinder Costa Rica from reaching full compliance with the Palermo Protocol would seem to be elsewhere.

While human trafficking is illegal, neither prostitution nor sex tourism is. There are several movements by NGOs, such as Alianza por tus Derechos and Paniamor, to make laws regarding sex tourism, but, at the moment, only sex tourism with minors is illegal. There are many international NGOs, such as World Vision and End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking in Child for Sexual Purposes (ECPAT), as well as several IGOs, such as the United Nations' UNICEF, ILO, and World Tourism Organization, working to mitigate illegal child sex tourism in Costa Rica. As many of the clients of these “services” are U.S. citizens, the United States recently passed the PROTECT Act, making conspiring to or engaging in sex tourism with minors abroad a criminal offense.

Pamphlets for the Public

Awareness campaign for the public are nearly nonexistent in Costa Rica. There are currently no TV spots, no billboards, and no public service announcements of any kind in regard to awareness of human trafficking. This is at odds with the state's normal behavior when it comes to educating the public. Announcements regarding healthy eating and exercise play before every movie at the theater, billboards and TV advertisements by PANI and social security teach children about bike safety and the rule of the road, such as where and when to cross. However, there are no such ads or posters about the reality of human trafficking. After attempting to locate awareness campaigns, there were two locations that had pamphlets, posters, or any type of public awareness messages—the OIJ (Judicial Investigation Agency) office and the PANI (National Board of Children) offices.

The department that handles trafficking at OIJ (*Delitos Contra la Integridad Física, Trata y Tráfico de Personas*; Crimes Against Physical Integrity, Trafficking and Smuggling of Persons) is located in downtown San José, at the main office of OIJ. There it is possible to find

the pamphlets on trafficking. The first, “Prevención del abuso sexual a menores” deals with sexual abuse against children; however, it does not specifically mention anything about parental trafficking or trafficking of any kind. The second, “¡Denuncie la explotación del ser humano!” is specifically about denouncing trafficking. In it, OIJ educates readers on the definition of trafficking, the different types, characteristics of victims and how to look for them, factors that lead to victimization, and common contexts and situations of victimization. Some of the listed factors that lead to victimization include poverty, lack of education, prostitution, globalization, and commercialization. The last pamphlet is “¿Cómo reportar un hecho ante el OIJ?” (How to report a fact to OIJ) This one tells the how, when, where, and who of filing a complaint. It also offers a 24 hour hotline number for reporting activity. On the wall, there is a poster for Corazón Azul, a UN partnership on awareness.

This same poster and several others can be found on the information walls at PANI. They have several “shocking” posters that reflect domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking. As for pamphlets on human trafficking for the general public, they have two that are out and available. The first is “Trata de personas: La esclavitud del siglo XXI” (Trafficking in persons: 21st century slavery). It is a five-page booklet that provides a wide range of information on defining, reporting, and giving examples of human trafficking as well as on CONATT and PANI and the work they do. In this booklet, PANI educates that not all victims are women and girls, that in 2010, 74 percent were male. It also cautions that traffickers can be parents and other trusted individuals. It shows the allotted prison sentences for convictions, the stages of being trafficked, and the history of a victim. The booklet was created in 2011. The second is a far smaller pamphlet from 2014 “¿Qué es la trata de personas?” (What is human trafficking) This one defines trafficking according to the new law, explains the National

Coalition Against Illicit Trafficking of Migrants and Trafficking in Persons (CONATT), and gives the three categories of requirements—the process of capturing, transporting, and recruiting; the use of force, fraud, coercion, and abuse; and the final result of exploitation and slavery. Three different workers verified that these materials are only displayed at the offices of PANI and OIJ.

Educational Materials

As far as educational materials are concerned, the only place that provided any collection of training materials, histories, and strategic plans was the International Organization for Migration (OIM/IOM). All the organizations and agencies researched used the same materials provided by OIM/IOM. These included some booklets, manuals on CD, research studies on victims, and a strategic plan. It must be noted that these materials were produced for the region of Central America. Some had specific Costa Rican areas, while others did not. There were no survivor cases from Costa Rica in the examples and histories. The first two were on CD and were larger manuscripts. The first, “Trata de personas con fines de explotación laboral en Centroamérica” (Trafficking in persons for the purpose of labor exploitation in Central America), was published in 2011, and was an attempt by OIM/IOM to influence Central American states into realizing the prevalence and criminality of labor trafficking. This large manuscript covered the definition of labor trafficking, offered statistics on survivors, explained the way that labor trafficking works and how profits are made, and provided a general case study by country, by interviewing the various department and agencies that handle such matters. The Costa Rican section alone was 110 pages and covered the economic and social situation in Costa Rica, and how it exacerbated the problems of labor trafficking. It also analyzed the older trafficking laws prior to 2013 and offered criticism. The results of the study showed that Costa

Rica did have an issue with labor trafficking, particularly for male victims. According to the report, the problem of human trafficking in general, but specifically labor trafficking, is understudied and under-fought in Costa Rica. Yet, it is a basic violation of human rights.

The second OIM/IOM digital manuscript, “Manual de actuación en materia de trata de personas para las secretarías y ministerios de relaciones exteriores de Centroamérica y México” (Handbook on trafficking in persons for the secretariats and ministries of foreign affairs of Central America and Mexico), was published in 2012 and was 53 pages long for all of Mexico and Central America. This manual was created to orient and educate agents of organizations set to combat human trafficking. It begins with a collection of human rights that cover trafficking victims. Then it covers methods and procedures to protect, assist, identify, interview, etc. victims and survivors. It serves as a “best practices” guide for dealing with human trafficking.

The other educational materials from OIM/IOM are far less comprehensive. “Historias de Sobrevivencia II” is a collection of survivors’ stories from Central America, although there are no cases from Costa Rica in the booklet. “Plan Estratégico de Trabajo” (Strategic Work Plan) is currently being rewritten, but the 2012-2015 booklet outlines the action plan for dealing with trafficking cases and organizes the different institutions according to their roles and responsibilities. It provides a chart of strategic actions, activities, methods, deadlines, organizations involved, and indicators to be implemented. The “Glosario de Términos Trata de Personas” (Glossary of Human Trafficking Terms) is simply a glossary of terms used across the board. “Trata de Personas: Estudio Regional sobre la Normativa en Relación a la Trata de Personas en América Central y República Dominicana y su Aplicación” (Trafficking in Persons: Regional Study on the Regulations Concerning Trafficking in Persons in Central America and

the Dominican Republic and their Application) is from 2008 and thus very dated. It outlines the crime of human trafficking, how to investigate it, and procedural processes.

Interviews of Minor Victims of Sexual Exploitation

While this study was approved for interviews of adults only, one NGO was able to provide complete and full recorded interviews of minor victims of sexual exploitation. All of the cases were of girls, interviewed from 2015-2017. While these cases are not necessarily human trafficking, especially according to the Costa Rican definition, a brief summary can certainly illuminate the types of situations that result in child prostitution and sexual exploitation. In some cases, the girls were forced into prostitution by parents or other individuals; however, in several cases, they claim to have entered into prostitution willingly to help pay for their families' expenses. They all blame poverty and a lack of assistance for their predicaments. At this time, none of these girls has an active case in the court system for human trafficking; there are some with lesser cases, but none under the trafficking law.

In the first case, the victim was molested by her grandfather when she was very small. She ended up being sexually active with other men by the age of 11. Not long after, she left her home and began trading favors to survive. She wound up living with her grandmother after her grandparents split up. She had an irresponsible mother and an absent father. As a teenager, she would trade sex for money with men 45-50 years old.

In the second case, the girl was sexually abused at age nine. Her mother abandoned her when she was young, and she was forced to take care of all her younger siblings. By the time she was 11 years old, she had turned to prostitution to earn money. By this time, she had gotten heavily involved in drugs. She continued to prostitute herself from age 11 to 22, when she got

off drugs and turned to religion. Today, she is 32 years old. She is unable to have children. Her greatest dream is to overcome that and have a child of her own.

The third case involves a girl who is still a young teen today. Her mother was on drugs and was an alcoholic. She reported problems at home with her sister as well. After being passed around to different family members, including an aunt who did not want her, she ended up in a shelter. She was psychologically abused by her mother and called names. She was unable to tell about her sexual exploitation at this time, crying frequently at her losses and her poor grades due to a hard life.

The next case is of a 16-year-old. She began to prostitute herself at 14 because someone in school suggested it as a way to make money. She was pandered by an older woman who found clients for her. Her clients included people from all over; she would meet them on the streets or in hotels. Never did anyone working at the hotels question her, even at 14. She needed money to buy resources to live. Her father was okay with it for the money. At 16, she already has a son.

Another case is of a 14-year-old. Her father left them. Earlier in 2017, she began to prostitute to keep up family. Her mother could not work since there were too many kids to take care of. After a few months, she told someone at school to help get herself out of that life. She has three younger siblings, and one older.

In another case, one girl turned to prostitution to earn money for her sick mother. She began when she was 13 years old. She is currently 16. She reports that her mother did not like it, but said it was necessary. Over and over, she expressed her gratitude and repeated that she was so thankful to escape that life. There is no father present. According to the girl, she was

pimped out by an older woman. Now that she has escaped that lifestyle, she wants to become a police officer and fight crime.

In one case, this girl had to drop out of school in the third grade to sell food and such to earn money for her family. Unable to take it and the responsibility, by 14 years old, she had stopped living with her mother and was on the street. A man got to her and she got pregnant with his child. She was with him for 6 years. He was a drunk, violated her, and would not let her leave or talk with her family. Eventually he forced her into prostitution with many men. She was finally able to escape all the guys, started going to church, and moved in with her sister. She now has a total of three children. She reports that one has to always have faith to escape the lure of the streets because that lifestyle on the streets is easy and quick. She wants to help others who have been exploited. She says that Costa Rica has so much exploitation due to so much poverty.

Another victim of exploitation is currently 14 years old. At an early age, she was molested by her father's friend. By 13, she had decided to prostitute herself, as her friend had told her it was a good idea to earn money. Her mother did not know about her prostitution. Despite the easy money, she reported feeling really bad while prostituting, that it was an emotionally difficult thing to do. She stated that she felt robbed of her childhood. Her goal in life is to forget all that has happened to her. She wants to be a doctor.

In a similar case, a 17-year-old girl began to prostitute herself at 14. She had been living with her grandmother since she was seven, but with ailing health, the child had turned to prostitution to keep them both up. She said that it felt hard to prostitute herself, and that she hopes to be a lawyer someday to help people.

In a case that should be a clear example of human trafficking, this victim was physically abused as a child. At the age of seven, she was sent out to be a prostitute by her mother in order

to make money for the household, to pay bills. Poverty was a major issue, as the family did not even have a solid floor, just dirt. Now 20 years old, this survivor recalls her time in Jacó, where she prostituted, as a time of fear. After walking the street looking for men, her clients would take her by car to houses to have sex with many men, one after another. She reportedly feared for her life. Her clients were both domestic and international. Today, she has a child, but PANI took him from her and placed him with an aunt. She is supposed to have visitation, but the aunt will not let her come in. She is illiterate still.

The final case that was shared involves a now 16-year-old. At the age of six, she was abused sexually. By 12 years old she was already involved with drugs and men and became a prostitute. She did so to help her family, due to economic needs, such as water and light. She is the eldest of all kids. Her cousin was a prostitute and told her it was an easy way to survive. She continued to prostitute until she got pregnant with her son. She says that the father is Nicaraguan, but he claims that the boy is not his. She stated that on a given night, she could make 25,000 to 50,000 *colones* (roughly \$45 to \$90). She stated that some men treated her better than others as a San José prostitute. She also claims that in her neighborhood of Guadalupe most girls prostitute and that clients come from all different countries and positions, from drug dealers to government officials.

These cases illustrate the limitations of the Costa Rican system. While some of these cases would not fit the definition of modern-day trafficking by the United States or the United Nations, particularly where the victim has reached the age of consent or where the victim sought out prostitution on her own, other cases would be considered trafficking under the UN and US definitions, but not according to Costa Rica. Furthermore, a few of them would seem to fit

directly under the trafficking law in Costa Rica, yet there is no active case despite the victims having been rescued.

Transcript of Trafficker Interview

In completing this study, one NGO working against trafficking in persons, was able to provide a twelve page transcript of an interview with a trafficker who, out of guilt, wished to confess his actions and inform someone of the trafficking work going on in Costa Rica.¹⁵

According to the NGO leader, “We met at a shack near where he lived. He covered his face with a cut out t-shirt. We talked for an hour and a half. I do not know his name or what he looks like. He is no longer involved in this type of criminal activity...He never wants to return.”

Furthermore, “He was in the mafia but got out because he killed his boss. He was told if he ever shared the information with anyone and they found out about it, they would find him.”

According to informants, he has fled the country. His report is detailed and graphic. In it, he is unable to tell a number of victims he trafficked because he states that “thousands” feels insufficient. His work in the trafficker ring was in recruitment and transport, and he confessed to all the usual forms, from promises of work, to smooth talking, to forceful kidnapping. He claims that he used to be in drug trafficking, but that the risks in it were too great, so he switched to human trafficking which was easier, less risky, and far more profitable. In his own words, “...trafficking people holds less risk than trying to get 1 or 2 kilos of cocaine over the border (Trafficker’s Report 2017).” While the report by the trafficker is a pivotal source, it must be noted that many of his claims seem particularly hideous and gruesome with numbers of victims higher even than many estimates. They also cannot be verified by other sources, as his is the only report of this nature procured for this study.

¹⁵ To protect the interests, safety, and identity of the NGO, the informant and source are not disclosed in this study.

The trafficker, in his explanation of the process states that, “It’s like dealing with meat (Trafficker’s Report 2017).” He explains that the purchasers put in orders, and that he and others like him were tasked with filling those orders. “And it’s easier, you know, you get to the point where it’s easier taking x piece of meat from x country (Trafficker’s Report 2017).” About sex trafficking specifically, he noted, “Everything is by order. All the girls are asked for beforehand (Trafficker’s Report 2017).” For several pages, his gruesome story seems specifically targeted toward international sex trafficking, until he mentions, “It’s not only for sexual reasons that people are kidnapped. I know that in lots of places where huge buildings are being built, manual labor is needed, so strong boys are taken, so strong that people say, ‘This boy works well.’ So the Chinese mafia comes to you and says, ‘Listen, we need 60 men because we need them to work (Trafficker’s Report 2017).” He also reveals in the interview that organ trafficking is flourishing despite a lack of coverage. “Because when the traffic police got there and opened his truck, there were 40 girls in the back, all dead. They were frozen...But that never comes out in the news (Trafficker’s Report 2017).”

As usual, the lucrative nature of human trafficking reveals that the kidnapping and coercion of human beings into exploitation pays well for all parties involved. “I would receive for every girl that I took out of the country, they would give me \$5,000. For every girl I took out of the country. If it was a special request, I would receive \$15,000-\$25,000. After, the clients, they were from different countries. There were politicians from the United States that would request girls. There were people in Spain, and also Russian, where Tica women are highly desired (Trafficker’s Report 2017).” Besides the money earned, his interview suggests the severity of the situation in Costa Rica and the large pool of clients and victims, in both domestic and international cases.

On numerous occasions, the trafficker mentions the mafia, Chinese and otherwise, as major players in the trafficking rings. “This is the mafia’s paradise because it’s very easy here (Trafficker’s Report 2017).” He even mentions their methods of persuasion “...they don’t kill you, they kill your family. And they don’t kill them by shooting them, instead they will open a huge barrel, fill with acid, and put them in there so that they fall apart slowly. That is how they work (Trafficker’s Report 2017).” He continues to note that the organized crime in Costa Rica is very much embedded with the trafficking rings, both labor and sex, and domestic and international. Yet, it does not stop there. “Costa Rica has lots of kidnapped people. It’s not just the mafias, but also there are peaceful people. I know more than one Christian minister who has two or three kidnapped Nicaragua women. He has them as maids (Trafficker’s Report 2017).” This claim is unverified by any other sources.

The report by the trafficker also includes a number of references to a permissive political and social culture. “And so if you grab a little girl who’s 12 and whose mother doesn’t care about her, why wouldn’t you take advantage of what she’s doing because she wants to, why wouldn’t you take advantage? That’s the mentality that everyone has here...people take advantage of people. There are little girls who do things because they want to (Trafficker’s Report 2017).” Here he blames the economic depravity and the harsh living conditions that lead to desperation and exploitation. Sometimes, this moves beyond permissiveness and into criminality on behalf of the common people. “...there’s a lot of people involved, women, old women, even girls their own age, there’s all kinds of people involved. It is a very large network...we’ll send a girl, a kid, or a pregnant woman, and we tell them, ‘Hi, we need help with directions (Trafficker’s Report 2017).’” About the other areas of the country besides San José, he argues a point regarding the Pacific coast, “Because there it’s so normal that girls walk around

topless smoking marijuana in front of police because the police and OIJ don't go in there, nobody goes in there. The only ones that are there are the four nobodies in the station and if you give them \$100 and they're happy (Trafficker's Report 2017)." Both of these claims, regarding toplessness and marijuana use in front of police along the coasts are verified by other sources (Personal Interview [PI], X14, tour guide, June 17, 2017; PI, X16, hotel manager, June 17, 2017).

According to the trafficker's report, the police and other Costa Rican officials are either directly or indirectly involved or at least complacent. "Because Costa Rica doesn't have an army, it doesn't have armed forces, you have useless people from OIJ, or useless people from DIS, for the mafia it's easier here (Trafficker's Report 2017)." This position is the best-case scenario that he elucidates. He also argues that, "Taking someone out of the country is so easy, because the border officer who's there in that moment is in control. And the officer who's there has such a low salary that when you offer him \$1,000, he opens the border (Trafficker's Report 2017)." This claim of police indifference on the border is supported by the source from the Migration Department, who concurs that the borders are very soft and corruption is a major concern when it comes to crossing (Personal Interview [PI], U12, Migration Department official, June 12, 2017). Yet, according to the trafficker, this is hardly the end of the bribery and facilitation by officials. "In this country, everyone is involved. Even those officers in immigration. Because they're the ones that know why those girls are coming in (Trafficker's Report 2017)." The bribes are no small amount, according to the trafficker. "The government will not get involved with them and they won't look for them or anything if the government officials are always receiving bribes... You know what it is like to be a police to make \$500 a month? And then someone comes up to you and says, 'You're gonna make \$100,000 a month if

you do this for me (Trafficker's Report 2017).” As well, the transcript of his interview shows that the situation, the political, economic, and social context allows for and encourages such crimes against humanity. “We also prey on those who have no security here. There are lots of Nicaraguans who don't have their papers, so we offer them opportunity to work outside of the country is like offering them a route to Miami. And so they agree without knowing what they're getting into (Trafficker's Report 2017).”

The trafficker relays the reality behind his own ability to engage in such behavior and to commit such atrocities.

After doing it for a while, one feels partially bad about it, but it's so much money that it brings in and it's so hard to make money here and get a job without a good education, you can't be anybody, and here it's very easy to say, 'I'm a person who's prepared, I've studied this and that,' but it's hard to stay in school and on the streets you will always find a friend who other than giving drugs, they give you food, they give you shelter, and they offer something more than what your family can offer. They give you freedom, they teach you that you can just take advantage of innocent people, of people that don't understand how the world works (Trafficker's Report 2017).

According to the trafficker's report, clients and victims vary widely. “And for the internal consumption in Costa Rica, there are lots of women from Jamaica, Venezuela, Colombia, they bring women like that because they are from countries that are economically weak and so here they offer them things...When they get here, they take away their passports, they take away everything and make them work (2017).” He notes, “There's no age in prostitution. They could ask for an 8 years old, a 5 year old. There are people that are so sick in

the head that it leaves you surprised (Trafficker's Report 2017)." He continues to say, "The clients vary. The internal clients are lots of police, lots of government people. Here, everybody knows who kills, who robs, who traffics drugs, who traffics people, they know it all. But the world is based on money (Trafficker's Report 2017)." This claim lays a lot of blame on police and the governmental system, indicating a very hard and aggressive perspective from this trafficker.

The supposed truth behind the treatment of victims is astonishing. According to this particular source, they are viewed as property, without consideration to their humanity. The trafficker reported one story he knew about, "I knew a little girl who...kept resisting, and between 15 and 20 men raped her, and after that she still didn't want to cooperate, so what did they do? They cut off her nipples, they cut her clitoris. They took out one of her eyes, they cut out one of her kidneys, and they sent her back. She didn't want to cooperate, but at least they could make money off her kidney, off her cornea (Trafficker's Report 2017)."

One area that the trafficker stressed throughout his interview was the hidden nature of the crime, mostly by choice of the government, which would prefer not to divulge such news for several reasons. "The government says that shouldn't be shown so that people don't say, 'Oh, how terrifying! Costa Rica has become a terrible country! (Trafficker's Report 2017).'" Yet, according to this trafficker, the crimes, the kidnapping, and the deaths are real and prevalent.

...before they can tell anyone who was in the car or who the girls were, the police is dead. There is no connection. And that happens and it doesn't make news. You don't see that on Channel 7...And it's not going to be on the news because OIJ prohibits it...You'll never see that. They won't report either that they found a deputy with an underage girl. Why? Because the chauffeur takes this politician to

some woman's house and the woman has four or five little girls to lend out like toys. And what do those girls get? They get iPhones. They get a good car. They're dressed nicely. And so it's not only doing damage but these girls also want it. Because here the little girls want to get money from people. (Trafficker's Report 2017)

According to him, status and power have everything to do with politics and culture. "...I have a status that nobody can tell me what to do because nobody has seen me do anything bad. And so you get to the point where you can even dominate the minds of the police (Trafficker's Report 2017)."

Perhaps his most detailed report was of his own actions when left in charge of a large number of victims.

What I can tell you is that one time I was with a friend on a mountain and we had around 85 girls, and you should've heard all those girls screaming all day. And we were only two people controlling them. So to get them to shut up, we had to grab one, and with the example of just one, they all went quiet. Because we had to do something very bad to her to get them to be quiet. We raped her. It wasn't something that I can be proud of. Psychological, you need to know that, well, I repented recently. But in the moment, it had to be done. The other thing we did is we grabbed sticks and stuck them in their vaginas and took everything out. Do you understand? We would put stick up their anuses or their vaginas and when we took it out, everything that was inside came out.

He also spoke of how he would steal or coerce the women, men, and children of his own neighborhood, his own friends, right under their noses. Then their family members would ask

for his help in finding their missing loved ones, but, “What they didn’t know was that I was the one who had taken them...And knowing that they never got their happiness back, that they never got back anything. Because I destroyed, well, not only is a person destroyed, you have to consider that, that not only is the person destroyed, but also the entire family (Trafficker’s Report 2017).” Yet, he offers blame, not to himself, but to the situation and to the victims themselves, “Beauty is a sin. It’s sin, and it’s a mortal sin (Trafficker’s Report 2017).” He offered such sentiment as cause for their treatment and eventual demise, even while taking specific note of his own hardening, “You don’t feel things. Killing a person is like killing a bug (Trafficker’s Report 2017).” This report, the transcribed result of his interview, provides insights from the perspective of a human trafficker.

Survey Results

As part of the interview process, interviewees, excluding law enforcement, were asked to complete an anonymous survey to gauge public opinion on issues related to human trafficking, the state, and law enforcement. Police officers were not asked due to the law enforcement-specific questions on the surveys. There were 19 questions on the survey, and it was available in both Spanish and English. The questions were labelled A through S, and there were 25 respondents with varying occupations, experience with trafficking, ages, and opinions (see Appendix A for the survey). These surveys were kept anonymous to ensure that respondents were free to answer truthfully. Surveys were done in a safe environment and were completed confidentially and anonymously; however, respondents were allowed to ask for any needed clarification and to respond, in writing or verbally, to any question for further opinion. Surveys were voluntarily completed by the following interviewees: X2 through X4, X6 through X9, X11

through X12, U1 through U3, and U5 through U17 (See Table 11 on page 176 for more information on interviewees, including demographics).

A review of Table 10 shows the complete list of results by survey, with questions A through S on the left, individual surveys across the top (E for English surveys and S for Spanish ones), and answers along the axis. Respondents were asked to answer numerically on a scale of “1” to “5,” with “1” as “strongly disagree,” “2” as “disagree,” “3” as “neither agree nor disagree,” “4” as “agree,” and “5” as “strongly agree.” The measurements of central tendency are displayed to the right of each question for reference.

This survey was very useful in assessing the public opinion and political culture of the interviewees in general, based upon the overall answers to the questions. To further elucidate the survey results, each question will now be expanded upon and analyzed. It is important to be aware that respondents and interviewees were selected based on their experiences and knowledge of the topic, and thus their opinions and knowledge regarding human trafficking may not reflect those of the general public, but rather of knowledgeable and experienced individuals. Respondents were procured through references and snowball sampling from original sources at several NGOs.

Table 10. Survey Results by Question

Questions		E	E	E	E	E	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	Mean	Median	Mode	Stand.D.
A	5	5	4	4	3	4	3	2	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	4	5	3	4	4.1	4	4	0.8
B	2	2	1	4	3	3	3	2	2	5	4	5	4	5	5	4	4	4	4	3.6	4	4	1.1
C	3	2	3	4	3	3	5	3	3	4	4	4	3	5	4	3	4	5	4	3.7	4	3	0.8
D	3	2	5	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	4	4	3	4	3	1	3	5	3	2.9	3	3	1.1
E	4	4	5	5	5	4	5	5	4	4	4	3	5	4	4	4	5	4	5	4.5	5	5	0.6
F	2	3	4	4	2	4	5	3	3	3	4	3	2	3	4	4	4	4	3	3.6	4	4	0.9
G	5	4	3	5	3	4	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	5	2	4	5	4	4	4.2	4	4	0.8
H	1	1	2	3	2	4	5	5	3	4	4	4	2	3	2	4	3	2	5	3.5	4	5	1.4
I	1	1	2	3	1	2	2	1	1	5	4	3	1	1	2	2	3	2	2	2.3	2	2	1.2
J	3	4	2	5	2	3	3	3	1	3	3	5	5	3	2	2	3	3	1	3.0	3	3	1.1
K	3	4	2	3	1	3	4	4	5	3	4	5	5	4	4	4	5	3	4	3.9	4	4	1.1
L	5	5	2	4	4	4	5	1	5	3	4	5	5	5	3	3	4	5	4	4.1	4	5	1.1
M	3	3	2	5	4	4	3	5	4	3	3	2	5	3	2	1	1	4	3	3.3	3	3	1.2
N	3	3	2	3	3	2	3	3	4	3	4	3	4	5	3	3	4	3	2	3.3	3	3	0.8
O	3	1	4	3	2	2	1	3	4	3	3	3	3	2	2	1	4	4	2	2.8	3	3	1.1
P	4	4	4	2	5	4	5	5	5	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	3	5	4.4	5	5	0.8
Q	4	4	4	3	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	3	5	4.4	4	5	0.6
R	4	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	4.8	5	5	0.4
S	5	4	2	2	1	3	4	5	2	3	3	5	5	5	3	3	3	4	4	3.2	3	3	1.2

* English language surveys indicated by "E" and Spanish ones by "S." Both ask the same questions in the same order.

Question A

“Costa Rica is clean, beautiful, and hospitable.”

This question provoked conversation from many respondents, with ten stating in one fashion or another that Costa Rica was indeed beautiful and hospitable, but that “clean” was not appropriate. As a review of Figure 5 shows, respondents varied from “2” to “5” in responses, with the overall average (mean, median, and mode) around a “4,” indicating that the general consensus was agreement with the statement. This supports the notion that Costa Ricans are proud of their country and view it in a favorable manner.

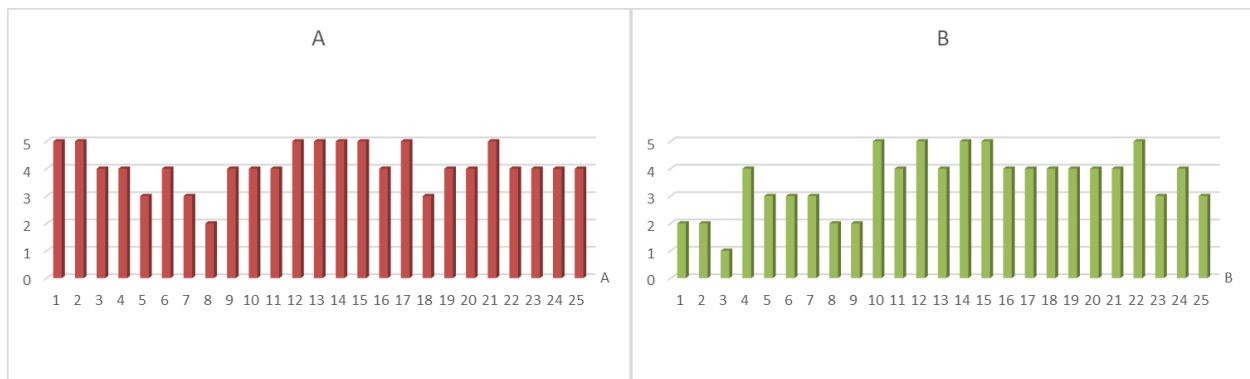


Figure 5: Bar graph showing the survey results for Question A. Mean 4.1, Median 4, Mode 4, Standard Deviation 0.8. **Figure 6:** Bar graph showing the survey results for Question B. Mean 3.6, Median 4, Mode 4, Standard Deviation 1.1.

Question B

“Costa Rica is a safe place to live. ‘Pura Vida’ seems an appropriate slogan.”

While the slogan “*pura vida*” is as much a lifestyle as it is a catchphrase or greeting, many of those interviewed live in the city, namely San José, and reported that the *pura vida* life did exist in the countryside, away from the traffic and the stress of a “nine to five” workweek, but that it had become majorly absent in the city life. Two interviewees argued that “*pura vida*” and Costa Rica being a safe place were not related, that one was a lifestyle choice of relaxation and ease, while the other was the responsibility of law enforcement to protect citizens. A review

of Figure 6 reveals that answers varied widely from “1” to “5” for this question, with measures of central tendency averaging around a “4,” which indicates general agreement. Although reportedly aware of crimes and criminal activity, no respondent expressed active feelings of fear.

Question C

“People who work as domestic servants are there by choice.”

As a review of Figure 7 shows, answers to this question were fairly ambiguous, with many respondents selecting “3,” indicating that they neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. An equal number selected “4,” general agreement with the statement. Several respondents sought clarification of the question, particularly inquiring as to whether the question was specifically referring to Nicaraguan housemaids. One respondent elaborated that these domestic servants were well-treated and protected well by the government of Costa Rica.

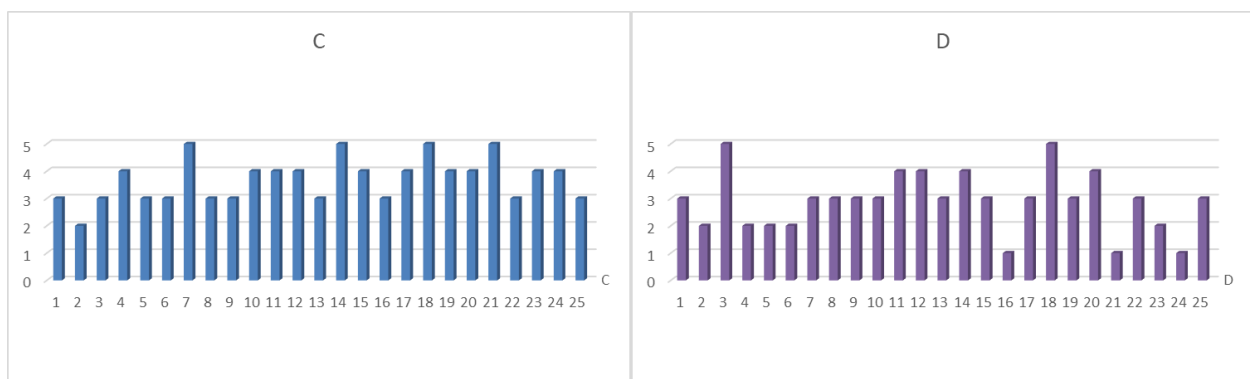


Figure 7: Bar graph showing the survey results for Question C. Mean 3.7, Median 4, Mode 3 & 4, Standard Deviation 0.8. **Figure 8:** Bar graph showing the survey results for Question D. Mean 2.9, Median 3, Mode 3, Standard Deviation 1.1.

Question D

“People engaged in sex work are there by choice.”

This question had no comment from any respondent, merely answers. However, the results of the survey show another fairly ambiguous set of responses, with most selecting “3,”

that they neither agree nor disagree, but with the overall average a “2.9” indicating that disagreement may be slightly more common (see Figure 8). In Costa Rica, where prostitution is not illegal, the discourse on the subject varies widely, as noted during interviews, with many proponents of illegalizing it and as many for keeping it legal. Even among those most closely involved with human trafficking, opinions vary from “1” to “5.” It would seem that consensus on the topic does not exist.

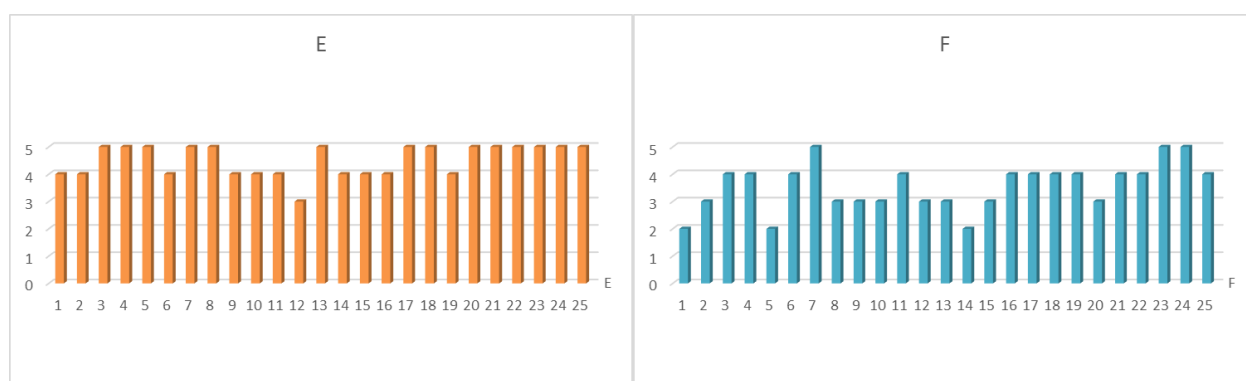


Figure 9: Bar graph showing the survey results for Question E. Mean 4.5, Median 5, Mode 5, Standard Deviation 0.6. **Figure 10:** Bar graph showing the survey results for Question F. Mean 3.6, Median 4, Mode 4, Standard Deviation 0.9.

Question E

“Human trafficking is a problem in Costa Rica.”

One of the most uniformly answered questions, 24 out of 25 respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that human trafficking is a problem in Costa Rica (see Figure 9). This is evidence that, among those who work with human trafficking or are at least knowledgeable about it, the problem is apparent to them. While awareness may not be sufficient for the public, for those who are aware, there is nearly unanimous opinion that Costa Rica is suffering from issues related to human trafficking and that this crime in particular is a problem for the country.

With a mean of “4.5,” both a median and a mode of “5,” and a “0.6” standard deviation, the responses to this question were overwhelming “agree” or stronger.

Question F

“Human trafficking is related to tourism.”

A review of Figure 10 shows that responses to this question were varied. It would appear that there is no ultimate consensus on this topic. While certain interviews revealed very strong beliefs regarding the ties between tourism and human trafficking by some individuals, others were far less sure of such. Nevertheless, this wide range of answers did average more on the “agree” side, with a fair few respondents neither agreeing nor disagreeing. A review of the measurements of central tendency shows that “agree” was reflected in all three.

Question G

“Human trafficking is related to human smuggling.”

Overall, those surveyed expressed an “agree” or stronger opinion regarding the relation between smuggling and human trafficking (see Figure 11). These responses show that many of the individuals who took the survey report an association between smuggling and human trafficking. This could have larger implications as smuggling places blame for the crime on the shoulders of the individual being smuggled, while the individual being trafficking under human trafficking laws is the victim. If the two are related, then deciding where to draw that line and when to label someone a “criminal” or a “victim” could potentially be difficult.

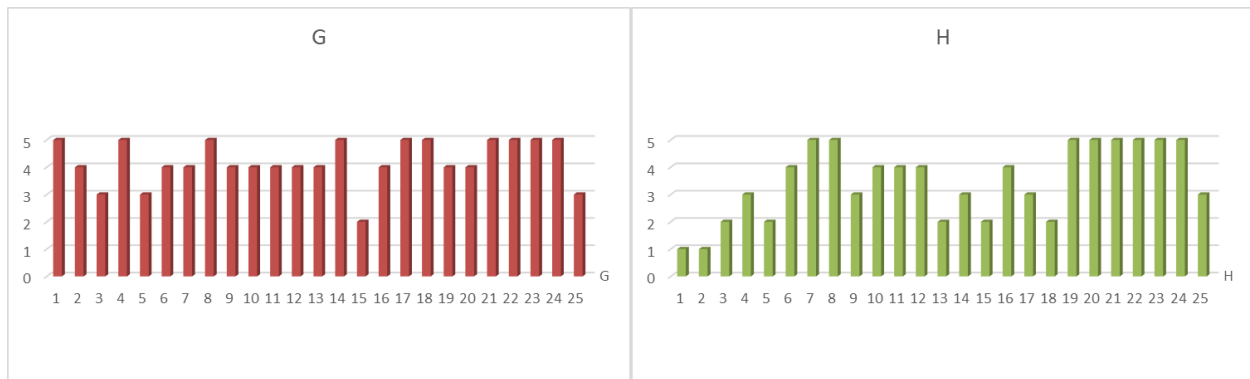


Figure 11: Bar graph showing the survey results for Question G. Mean 4.2, Median 4, Mode 4, Standard Deviation 0.8. **Figure 12:** Bar graph showing the survey results for Question H. Mean 3.5, Median 4, Mode 5, Standard Deviation 1.4.

Question H

“Law enforcement is aware of the problem of human trafficking.”

This statement received a wide array of responses. Several of those surveyed had “strongly agree” opinions while the rest teetered from “1” to “4.” A look at Figure 12 shows these variances. While the mode is a solid “5,” a median of “4” and a mean of “3.5” illustrate why the standard deviation is “1.4,” the highest of any of the questions on the survey. This, in turn, reveals the wide range of responses for a fairly straightforward “Question H.” These differing opinions are quite telling regarding the differing experiences the respondents must have had with law enforcement.

Question I

“The community is aware of the problem of human trafficking.”

The results of this question, as shown in Figure 13, are particularly telling. As respondents who completed the survey were selected due to their knowledge and experience with human trafficking, their own awareness was given. However, when asked to report on the awareness of the community at large, they overwhelmingly “did not agree” with the statement.

With a mean of “2.3” and a median and mode of “2,” even two responses of “5” were not sufficient to counter the number of “1s” and “2s” that were chosen—17 out of 25 responses. Reports by those surveyed clearly illustrate the opinion that more awareness is needed.

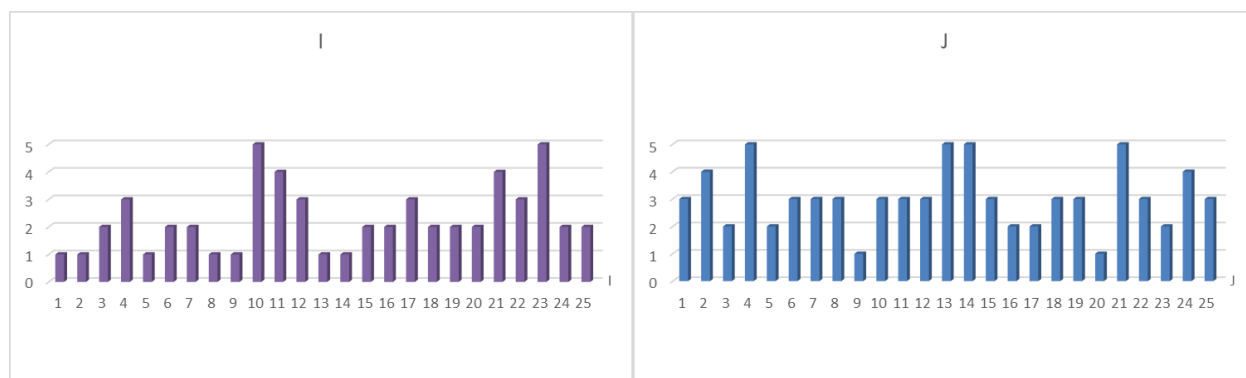


Figure 13: Bar graph showing the survey results for Question I. Mean 2.3, Median 2, Mode 2, Standard Deviation 1.2. **Figure 14:** Bar graph showing the survey results for Question J. Mean 3.0, Median 3, Mode 3, Standard Deviation 1.1.

Question J

“Victims of human trafficking are mostly children.”

With a mean, median, and mode of “3,” this question was overwhelmingly answered with “neither agree nor disagree.” This indicates that, even for those most directly involved with human trafficking, the demographics of victims remains in question. Costa Rica does not have many survivors in shelters nor does it have many ongoing cases, not enough to determine commonalities across victims. Figure 14 shows the results of this survey question, and it shows that nearly half of all respondents chose a “3.”

Question K

“Victims of human trafficking are mostly women.”

While the question concerning children as victims was left mostly neutral, the one concerning women as victims was not. In a country with no shelters for men survivors of human

trafficking, it is not surprising that the common opinion is that women comprise the majority of victims (see Figure 15). Only two of the individuals surveyed indicated a “disagree” or a “strongly disagree.” While Costa Rica has shelters and day programs for women survivors, along with a National Institute for Women (Instituto Nacional de la Mujer—INAMU) that aids in the fight and in the rehabilitation, there are no equivalents for men.



Figure 15: Bar graph showing the survey results for Question K. Mean 3.9, Median 4, Mode 4, Standard Deviation 1.1. **Figure 16:** Bar graph showing the survey results for Question L. Mean 4.1, Median 4, Mode 5, Standard Deviation 1.1.

Question L

“Victims of human trafficking are mostly poor.”

Answers to this question were fairly consistent, with a mean of “4.1,” a median of “4,” and a mode of “5.” However, there were a few low “dips” in responses, with one “1,” one “2,” and four “3s.” Overall, respondents reported the opinion that individuals in poverty were more likely to be trafficked and exploited (Figure 16). During the interviews, these views were elaborated upon in many cases, where interviewees reported that poverty led to deprivation, which led to higher chances of exploitation, such as human trafficking, both by external trafficking rings and by desperately impoverished parents.

Question M

“Human trafficking operates illegally and is separate from legal industries.”

As seen in Figure 17, responses for this question were stratified across the board, with a fair number of all answers and an average of “3” by all measures of central tendency. This indicates that those surveyed did not have a strong opinion about the matter overall, once aggregated. Opinions on this subject varied widely, and there were many comments on this subject matter during the interviews to support these varying viewpoints.

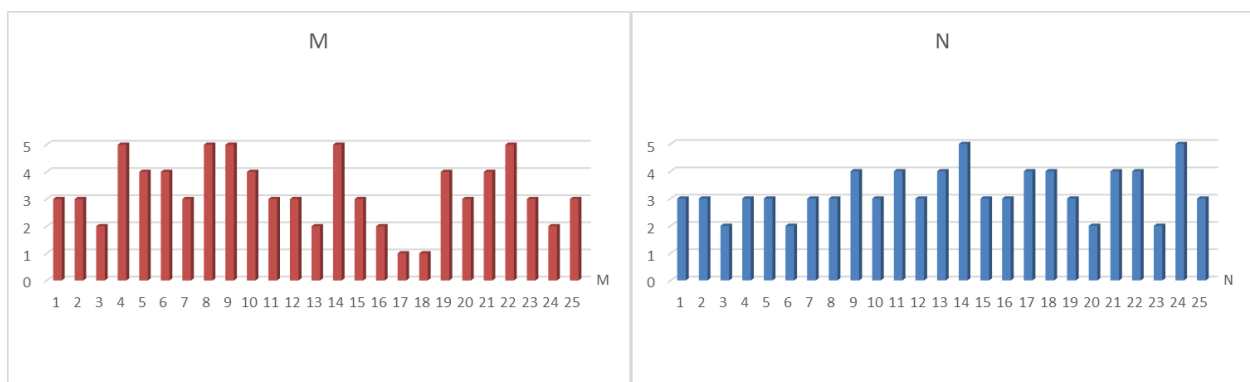


Figure 17: Bar graph showing the survey results for Question M. Mean 3.3, Median 3, Mode 3, Standard Deviation 1.1. **Figure 18:** Bar graph showing the survey results for Question N. Mean 3.3, Median 3, Mode 3, Standard Deviation 0.8.

Question N

“Human traffickers are men.”

This particular question is intriguing, as regional studies have shown that Central America has a disproportionate number of female trafficker when compared to other regions and globally. Thus, Figure 18 shows that those surveyed may be aware of this fact, as all measures of central tendency indicate that “neither agree nor disagree” was the preferred choice. While awareness campaigns often focus on women and children as victims and men as perpetrators, it would appear that those surveyed in Costa Rica do not ascribe to this perception.

Question O

“Human trafficking is a result of Western (USA and Europe) influence.”

As shown in Figure 19, the responses to this question remained ambiguous, with a fairly consistent “neither agree nor disagree.” This question was to gauge the respondents’ opinions regarding the origins of the issue of human trafficking. While the majority responses regarding the ties between human trafficking and tourism (Question F) were indicative of agreement, the overall opinion was not supported that this phenomenon originated from Western influences, although the vast majority of tourists in Costa Rica originate from Western nations.

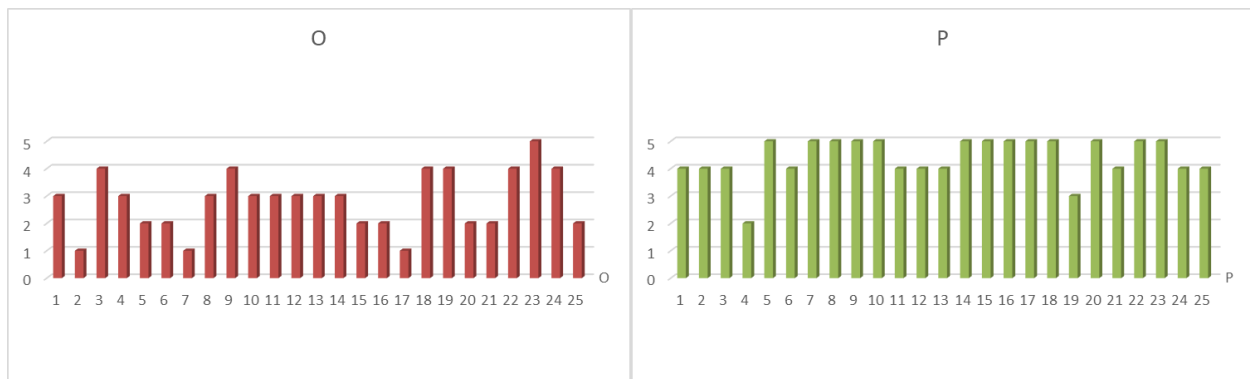


Figure 19: Bar graph showing the survey results for Question O. Mean 2.8, Median 3, Mode 3, Standard Deviation 1.1. **Figure 20:** Bar graph showing the survey results for Question P. Mean 4.4, Median 5, Mode 5, Standard Deviation 0.8.

Question P

“It is the government’s job to rescue victims of human trafficking.”

Overwhelmingly the collective opinion of those surveyed was “agree” or higher, with 23 of 25 selecting “4” or “5” as the response (see Figure 20). This suggests that, of those involved in trafficking efforts, both governmental and non-governmental, it is the perception that the responsibility of the rescuing of victims rests on the shoulders of the state. While prosecutions and convictions remain low, the number of victims rescued is much higher. This might suggest

that the major breakdown in combatting this crime resides in the prosecution system rather than in law enforcement and rescue efforts. Either way, the individuals surveyed make it clear that the state should be the primary responsible party in this matter.

Question Q

“It is the government’s job to rehabilitate the survivors of human trafficking.”

Interestingly enough, results from the survey question regarding rehabilitation were even higher than the one regarding rescue (see Figure 21). Not a single respondent answered that it was not the government’s job to rehabilitate survivors despite the fact that the government has very few rehabilitation resources and relies heavily on NGOs to fulfill this particular niche in the process of combatting human trafficking.

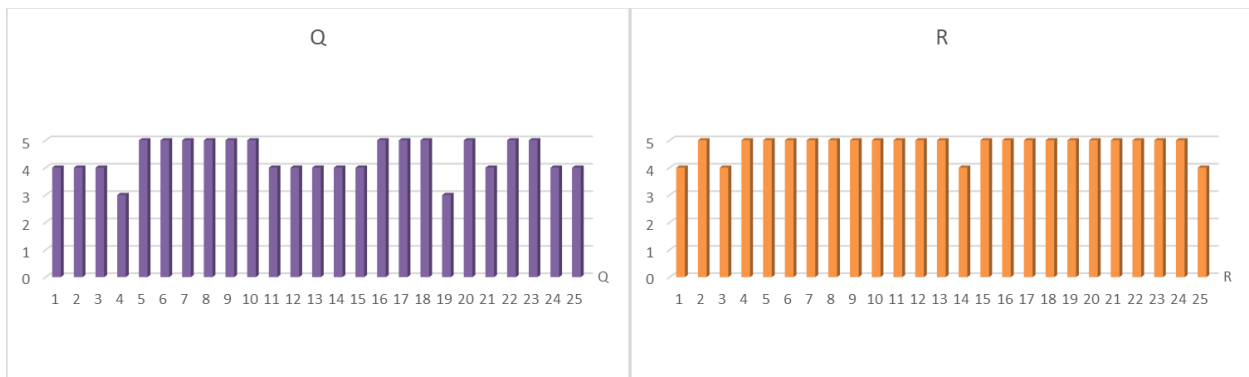


Figure 21: Bar graph showing the survey results for Question Q. Mean 4.4, Median 4, Mode 5, Standard Deviation 0.6. **Figure 22:** Bar graph showing the survey results for Question R. Mean 4.8, Median 5, Mode 5, Standard Deviation 0.4.

Question R

“It is the government’s job to prosecute the criminals in human trafficking cases.”

The most agreed upon question of all, illustrated by Figure 22, was nearly unanimous that prosecution of criminals rests in the hands of the state. With a median and mode of “5,” a mean

of “4.8,” and a standard deviation of “0.4,” respondents showed a clear and universal opinion regarding the responsibility of government in this matter.

Question S

“The government is doing a good job protecting the people in Costa Rica.”

Despite the opinions expressed in questions “Q” and “R” of the responsibilities of government, the results of question “S” regarding the actual work of the government to protect those in Costa Rica was not as positive (see Figure 23). The average answer was once again “neither agree nor disagree” and the range of answers varied from “1” to “5,” making it clear that opinions on the matter depended on experiences and positions. Three respondents asked if “people in Costa Rica” included non-citizens or just citizens, because, as one stated, “Costa Rica does not do much for its non-citizens (PI, U12, Migration Department official, June 12, 2017).”

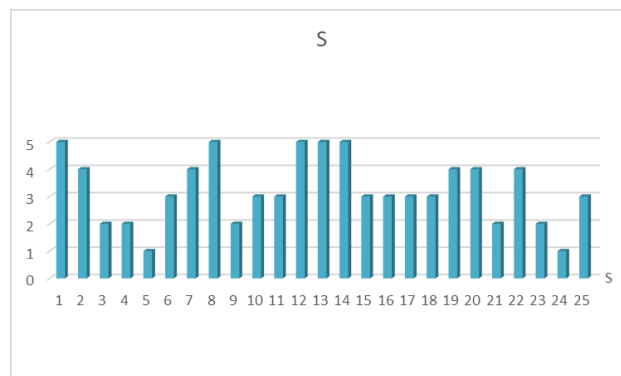


Figure 23: Bar graph showing the survey results for Question S. Mean 3.2, Median 3, Mode 3, Standard Deviation 1.2.

Overall, the surveys showed that those selected for surveys, the stakeholders in Costa Rica, were aware a human trafficking problem. They reported that human trafficking is related to human smuggling and tourism, that the poor and women are disproportionately at higher risk of being victims. They also concluded that the government and law enforcement are aware of the problem but that the public in general is not. Furthermore, the results of the surveys show

that while respondents report that it is the government's job to rescue and rehabilitate survivors and to prosecute traffickers, they were far from unanimous in reporting that the government is succeeding in its duty.

The findings from the documentation, transcripts, audio interviews, and surveys are thus concluded here. Further results of this study will be continued in the following chapter which analyzes the interviews and provides the qualitative backing for the other data. Finally, Chapter 7 will provide the conclusions for all the research in this study.

Chapter 6—Results/Outcomes—Interviews

As explained in Chapter 4, the interviews were conducted semi-structured and in a safe environment. Individuals were selected based on knowledge, experience, and position. Initial contacts with NGOs fighting human trafficking led to interviews, further references, and snowball sampling of other stakeholders. A total of 51 official interviews were completed with these individuals. They ranged in age from 20s to 70s, included 29 males and 22 females, and were 44 Costa Rican nationals, two from the United Kingdom, four from the USA, and one from Nicaragua. Their occupations included 20 individuals involved in law enforcement, 12 in social services, six in justice or other government positions, six in tourism or the service industry, and four in higher education (see Table 11). Some of the individuals selected had direct experience with human trafficking, rescuing victims, rehabilitation efforts, and the legal system; they are indicated by a “U” in their code names. Others were less directly involved but provided insights regarding tourism, life in Costa Rica, NGO work, and other valuable perspectives; they are indicated by an “X” in their code names. Finally, the third group was comprised of street level law enforcement, either Municipal, Fuerza Publica, or Transit; they are indicated by a “P” in their code names. Overall, interviews averaged 45 minutes to one hour in length. Most were audio recorded, provided that the interviewees permitted it. The interviews were then transcribed and translated during the analysis phase of the study in order to use the data collected for the purpose of this research. Some interviews instigated follow-up interviews, phone calls, or emails for further information or details.

Table 11. Code Names, Demographics, and Occupational Data for Interviewees

Interviewee	Gender	Age Decade	Occupation	Employer	Nationality
X1	F	70	Professor	N/A	CR
X2	M	60	Educator	College	CR
X3	F	60	N/A	N/A	CR
X4	M	50	Professor	University of Costa Rica	CR
X5	M	70	Law Enforcement	University of Costa Rica	CR
P1	M	20	Law Enforcement	Transit	CR
P2	M	20	Law Enforcement	Transit	CR
U1	F	50	Social Services	Alianza por tus Derechos	CR
U2	M	40	Social Services	Casa Milagro	USA
U3	F	50	Social Services	Alianza por tus Derechos	CR
X6	F	20	Justice	Inter-American Court Human Rights	CR
P3	F	20	Law Enforcement	Municipal	CR
P4	M	30	Law Enforcement	Municipal	CR
P5	M	20	Law Enforcement	Municipal	CR
P6	M	20	Law Enforcement	Municipal	CR
P7	M	30	Law Enforcement	Fuerza Publica	CR
P8	M	40	Law Enforcement	Fuerza Publica	CR
X7	F	60	Professor	University of Costa Rica	CR
U4	M	30	Law Enforcement	US Embassy	CR
X8	M	40	Social Services	Casa Milagro	UK
X9	F	40	Social Services	Casa Milagro	UK
P9	M	30	Law Enforcement	Municipal	CR
P10	M	20	Law Enforcement	Fuerza Publica	CR
U5	M	30	Law Enforcement	OIJ	CR
U6	F	20	Law Enforcement	OIJ	CR
X10	F	50	Church Worker	Catholic Church	CR
U7	F	40	Justice	OIM	CR
U8	F	50	Justice	OIM	CR
U9	F	60	Professor	University of Costa Rica	CR
U10	F	30	Social Services	PANI	CR
X11	M	40	Social Services	Education Plus	CR
P11	M	60	Law Enforcement	Municipal	CR
P12	M	20	Law Enforcement	Transito	CR
P13	F	20	Law Enforcement	Transito	CR
U11	F	30	Attorney	N/A	CR
P14	M	20	Law Enforcement	Municipal	CR
P15	M	20	Law Enforcement	Municipal	CR
U12	F	30	Social Services	Migration Services	USA
U13	F	30	Attorney	State	CR
U14	F	20	Social Services	CONATT	CR
U15	F	40	Social Services	Face of Justice	USA
X12	M	50	USA Official	US Embassy	USA
U16	F	40	Social Services	INAMU	CR
X13	M	40	Service Industry	Service Industry	CR
X14	M	40	Tour Guide	Service Industry	CR
X15	M	60	Service Industry	Service Industry	Nic
X16	M	20	Manager	Hotel	CR
X17	M	40	Tour Guide	College	CR
X18	M	60	Service Industry	Service Industry	CR
P16	M	30	Law Enforcement	Fuerza Publica	CR
U17	F	30	Social Services	Paniamor Foundation	CR

The interviews represent a large collection of qualitative data on the subject. While support for the hypotheses of the research question will be left for Chapter 7, here the interview content will be arranged thematically based on common themes present throughout the interviews. These themes were extracted from the interviews via content analyses based on prevalence (see Table 12 for numbers). While the interviewees represent a wide range of individuals, positions, and experiences, the information that they delivered quite frequently crossed and overlapped with that of others. A review of Table 12 shows that these themes were selected as important due to their quantity as well as their quality. As the chart shows, the least discussed of the most prevalent themes was NGOs, with this one present in 17 of the 51 interviews. The most prevalent was Police & Crime, present in 41 of 51 interviews. The others fall somewhere in between. Unsurprisingly, the more knowledgeable the individual (those with a “U” category), the more themes that were present in the interviews. Also, law enforcement had little to say regarding NGOs and Tourism. Overall, these themes were quite widespread and discussed at length by the interviewees. Furthermore, four law enforcement interviewees declined to discuss any information of relevance. The summation of the interviews is categorized here in this chapter in the following ten themes which emerged from the interviews: Exceptionalism, Image, Laws & Definitions, Tourism, Non-Governmental Organizations, Police & Crime, Prostitution, Globalization & Modernization, Awareness, and Political and Social Culture.

Table 12. Thematic Prevalence

	Exceptionalism	Image	Laws & Definitions	Tourism	NGOs	Police & Crime	Prostitution	Globalization & Modernization	Awareness	Political & Social Culture
X1	X	X		X		X	X			X
X2	X			X		X		X		
X3	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X
X4	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X
X5	X	X		X			X			X
X6			X			X				
X7	X		X		X	X		X		X
X8	X	X		X		X		X	X	
X9				X		X			X	X
X10										
X11	X	X		X		X	X	X		X
X12			X	X	X	X	X			X
X13				X		X	X			
X14				X		X		X		
X15	X	X						X		X
X16				X		X				
X17	X	X								
X18						X			X	
U1	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
U2	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
U3	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
U4	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
U5	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
U6					X		X		X	X
U7		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
U8			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
U9	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
U10	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
U11	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
U12	X	X	X	X	X		X			
U13	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
U14	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X
U15	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
U16	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
U17	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
P1										
P2										
P3		X	X			X	X	X		
P4		X	X			X	X	X		
P5		X	X			X		X	X	X
P6		X	X			X			X	X
P7	X	X				X				
P8		X				X			X	
P9	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	
P10		X				X	X	X	X	X
P11			X			X				
P12		X				X		X		
P13		X				X		X		
P14										
P15										
P16			X			X				
Total	26	33	27	29	17	41	27	29	25	28

Exceptionalism

In Chapter 3, the notion of Costa Rica as an “exceptional” colony of Spain and then an “exceptional” Central American state was introduced. Despite evidence to the contrary that Costa Rican history has been framed in such a way as to perpetuate this myth, even learned and experienced individuals in Costa Rica offered this perception as reality. One interviewee described Costa Rica as focusing on art, modernization, progress, nature, and peace. He stated that it is a nice, quiet place to live and to relax (PI, X5, law enforcement, May 31, 2017). When asked to explain this position, he replied that the country has amazing nature, such as volcanoes and beaches and tropical forests; it is a green country of friendly *Ticos*. Another interviewee reiterated the framed history of the “easy” transition to Independence by mail and that there were hardly any indigenous in the area (PI, X7, professor, June 5, 2017). She also mentioned that after independence, the nobles were left in Costa Rica and that the country has had long-standing, good relations with Spain (PI, X7, professor, June 5, 2017). More interviews continued in the same fashion, with blanket statements about Costa Rica’s superiority, its independence by mail, its lack of racial tensions, its finite end of slavery around 1821-23, and about how Costa Rica leads Central America in many political and social ways (PI, X17, tour guide, June 18, 2017).

Yet, the true exceptionality, according to one interviewee, came after the 1949 reformation and revolution, which finally gave Jamaicans full citizenship and allowed them to leave Limón, thus ending all racial inequalities and gave black railroad workers the same citizenship status as Asian and Indian Costa Ricans (PI, X17, tour guide, June 18, 2017). As usual, it was mentioned in a positive way that the country has no army (PI, X5, law enforcement, May 31, 2017). Several interviewees praised the “good democracy” and the manner in which the

country has handled issues of slave labor, health, pesticides, building standards, and such (PI, X12, US Embassy official, June 14, 2017). It was reported that Costa Rica has not changed because the state is very secure; ever since 1948, there has not been a takeover or an overthrow (PI, X5, law enforcement, May 31, 2017). One subject of the study even assured that all places have issues with security, but Costa Rica is better than most (PI, X5, law enforcement, May 31, 2017). Other areas of praise included the education system, the universities, and overall superiority to other neighboring states (PI, X2, educator, May 30, 2017). One noted that, while remittances are the primary industry of Central America, Costa Rica sends them out to other countries (PI, X7, professor, June 5, 2017; PI, X12, US Embassy official, June 14, 2017). Finally, the interviews showed that some report that the government does an exceptional job with its social programs; “it is the best.” These perceptions are not surprising for the average Costa Rican, as the image of “exceptionalism” is very pervasive.

However, this perception of exceptionality is not the norm among those educated and knowledgeable people selected for this study. The majority reported that the Costa Rican people are xenophobic and racist because they still believe in Costa Rican exceptionalism; the people believe in a dream based on an old reality of development, of exceptionalism, of *pura vida*, but today, reality is different, reported one source (PI, X4, professor, May 31, 2017). Today, it faces many of the same problems as other Central American countries such as crime, gangs, and corruption, he continued (PI, X4, professor, May 31, 2017; PI, U7, OIM/IOM, June 8, 2017). He even stated bluntly that “Costa Rican peace is a lie (PI, X4, professor, May 31, 2017).” He continued, “Everyone wants to come to Costa Rica because everything is better, like the economy and crime, but in reality this is not true. They live in a fantasy (PI, X4, professor, May 31, 2017).” Another stated that the indigenous in the mountains still live the *pura vida*, but in

the city it is gone. “The indigenous take care of each other, they all share their resources, and they don’t hurt each other (PI, U4, law enforcement, June 5, 2017).”

While many report seeing the reality of the situation regarding this illusionary exceptionalism, it still represents the national perception. As such, there are repercussions. For example, one interviewee noted that because of this perception, there was little to no money and no international foundations to help certain causes (PI, U1, NGO official, June 1, 2017).

According to one interviewee, even though Costa Rica was described over and over as a “route” or a “bridge” for drugs and other crimes, the notion of exceptionalism hinders efforts to stop these crimes (PI, X7, professor, June 5, 2017). Costa Rica does not get a lot of support like developing nations, but it also is not developed enough to handle everything on its own or as well as developed nations (PI, U17, NGO official, June 19, 2017). Immigration and migration are huge in Costa Rica, while the system of “peace and security” allows for a lot of people to pass across the very open border; with estimates of 700,000 Nicaraguans 300,000 Colombia in a total Costa Rican population of 4.8 million (PI, X7, professor, June 5, 2017). These numbers are far higher than the official estimates; nearly double for Nicaraguans. Without an army, one reported, there is less opposition force against outside “forces” (PI, X7, professor, June 5, 2017). These opinions, despite any exaggerations in numbers, coincide with the literature and statistics provided in previous chapters.

Several interviewees mentioned the notion of “exceptionalism.” One stated that commoners think that Costa Rica is superior, and that human trafficking could not happen here, not like in other Central American countries (PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017). There is a common notion for Costa Ricans that, “human trafficking happens in other places, not Costa Rican, not the land of *pura vida*...” (PI, U4, law enforcement, June 5, 2017). Another reported

that “Guanacaste is falling;” there is too much crime and too much tourism for the society (PI, X13, service industry employee, June 16, 2017). Reports do not paint a picture of exceptionalism. Instead, as one interviewee reported, sex tourism on the beaches with girls of all ages is rampant, and there is wide-spread poverty all over the country (Personal Interview [PI], X13, service industry employee, June 16, 2017). Another region, Limón is reported as poor, dangerous, dirty, and a place where tourists need to take special care (PI, X17, tour guide, June 18, 2017).

One critic of governments, of both Costa Rican and others around the world, stated that they need to mind the people; he stated that, “*plata es más importante que personas para el gobierno*” (money is more important than people for the government) (PI, X15, service industry employee, June 17, 2017). He continued with, “*el poder es con la plata*” (money is power) (PI, X15, service industry employee, June 17, 2017). In effect, he was noting the increased neoliberal economic system and reiterating the claims by such scholars as Hall (1994) and Bernstein and Shih (2014). Some argue that the state is making bad economic decisions now; there are many taxes, but the government is not delivering the services it could with such money (PI, U4, law enforcement, June 5, 2017). One ongoing issue is that of racism. One interviewee stated, “Racism is the worst, very stupid. We are all human beings and we need to understand that! Learn to unite as human beings. No one is less than anyone else. We are messing up this planet (PI, U4, law enforcement, June 5, 2017).” While another bluntly stated that Costa Rican exceptionalism is a lie, a facade (PI, U12, Migration Department official, June 12, 2017).

Other subjects were able to give more specific criticisms. For example, one American citizen from the Department of State noted that the education and healthcare institutions are showing weaknesses, as demonstrated by the recent protests and growing dropout rates (PI, X12,

US Embassy official, June 14, 2017). This same interviewee noted that Costa Rica “has learned to need” cheap labor from Nicaragua and other countries, especially in the areas of labor intensive work, domestic services, and seasonal agriculture (PI, X12, US Embassy official, June 14, 2017). Another interview resulted in the response that the notion of “exceptionalism” breeds racism and other stereotypes (PI, U12, Migration Department official, June 12, 2017). This was supported by racists comments regarding immigrants by those interviewed who reportedly believed in the notion of exceptionalism.

When specifically asked about the issue of human trafficking, one government official, a high ranking official with CONATT, the trafficking coalition, replied that there are just so few cases in Costa Rica, that it is not a major issue (PI, U14, CONATT representative, June 14, 2017). She continued to adamantly stress that the reason for a less than excellent history of TIP rankings, of low convictions, and few cases is due to the fact that there is no specific state-run trafficking shelter; however, she vehemently stressed that there are simply not enough cases to be worth it economically (PI, U14, CONATT representative, June 14, 2017). There are no shelters, she stated, because Costa Rica does not need them; they have other places to send the few survivors, such as PANI for minors, INAMU for women, and OIM finds somewhere for men to go, even if it is simply paying for a hotel or hostel. This perception, though aligned with actual numbers of cases and convictions, stands in opposition to global estimates, the report by the trafficker, and general consensus by the active NGO leaders operating in Costa Rica.

While some argue that corruption is rampant across all of Central America, there are those who argue that Costa Rica is an exception. Several interviewees argued that corruption is shut down, or at least that corruption is not systematized, that it really is only a problem in the municipalities where it is used to get the slow government working again (PI, U14, CONATT

representative, June 14, 2017; PI, X12, US Embassy official, June 14, 2017). These same individuals state that the courts are “slow but clean and honest” and that citizens have confidence in the institutions (Personal Interview [PI], X12, US Embassy official, June 14, 2017). After all, Costa Rica has a strong government and thus a weak civil society because the people are not outraged, they do not take to the streets in protest because everything is “pretty okay” (PI, X12, US Embassy official, June 14, 2017). While occasionally a particular issues might get people going, there is nothing fundamentally wrong to build up a reformist or revolutionary civil society, even though the government encourages such involvement (PI, X12, US Embassy official, June 14, 2017). These views were mainly obtained from the US Embassy official, a citizen of the United States, and from the representative of CONATT. However, one NGO official did agree at least in part by stating that Costa Rica belongs to many international organizations and has made a name for itself as “exceptional” (PI, U17, NGO official, June 19, 2017).

Image

While the image of Costa Rica is one of the main aspects being studied in this research, questions regarding it invariably sparked different replies. For some, “*pura vida* is the life here (PI, P9, Municipal Police, June 5, 2017; PI, X5, law enforcement, May 31, 2017).” One elaborated, saying, city life is a little crazy, but country life with nature is better (PI, X5, law enforcement, May 31, 2017). Others shared this mentality and noted that crime is not a big problem here, so long as one is careful and uses good judgement, noted one police officer (PI, P9, Municipal Police, June 5, 2017). Thus, human trafficking is not a problem in Costa Rica, noted the same interviewee (PI, P9, Municipal Police, June 5, 2017). The only type of crime which was mentioned on numerous occasions was drugs. This same subject continued to say

that drugs are a minor problem because the country is a bridge for smuggling, but only as a transit country, he was quick to add (PI, P9, Municipal Police, June 5, 2017). The police handle it, and Costa Rica is better than other countries, more beautiful, said one (PI, X5, law enforcement, May 31, 2017). While, this sentiment was conveyed by another from OIM/IOM, who stated that Panama and Costa Rica are better and more popular in Central America, most of those who expressed this opinion were members of law enforcement (PI, U8, OIM/IOM, June 8, 2017). Others were not convinced, stating that “*pura vida*” hides the dark side of the country; it is a lie to hide the reality (PI, U2, NGO official, June 1, 2017; PI, U3, NGO official, June 1, 2017). This is consistent with arguments by scholars such as DeLuca (1999) and Hall (1992).

The importance of image was made clear throughout the interviews. Yet, the remark was made that the image is true because it is truly better than other Central American countries; it suffers no worse crimes, such as money laundering, drugs, or human trafficking, than London (PI, X8, NGO official, June 5, 2017). This subject continued to say that corruption is not too bad and is actually getting better; it used to be worse (PI, X8, NGO official, June 5, 2017). Another interviewee noted that the country’s image of a safe, beautiful Costa Rica, in places such as Guanacaste, where beaches and mountains are close by, really sells the country to travelers. With good prices for everything, most all of which is legal, including prostitution, the country is doing well (PI, U5, OIJ, June 7, 2017). The representative from CONATT was certain that Costa Rica had less cases of human trafficking than neighboring countries, stating “There are cases, but not in the same magnitude (PI, U14, CONATT representative, June 14, 2017).” After all, this interviewee argued that Costa Rica had less poverty and fewer gangs than the northern triangle—Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras. She continued to say that narco trafficking is less as well and that it is being fought better (PI, U14, CONATT representative, June 14, 2017).

One way to tell that Costa Rica's image is true, she argued, is to look at how few migrants from Costa Rican go to other countries, and the few who go to the USA stay legally (PI, U14, CONATT representative, June 14, 2017). Overall, her assessment was that the TIP rankings were upsetting because they were far too subjective and unfair (PI, U14, CONATT representative, June 14, 2017).

However, other perspectives on the image of Costa Rica were more prominent. One interviewee argued that no one wants to face reality, and the government does not push for it because Costa Rica is still viewed as the best place in Central America, but people want to migrate and to visit as tourists based on an expired set of expectations (PI, X4, professor, May 31, 2017). Another said that Costa Rica is home to an infamously world-known public park that is a hotspot for sex work and for sex with minors (PI, U12, Migration Department official, June 12, 2017). One subject stated that Costa Rica has the same problems as other Central American countries, but much is not covered by the news, and the rise of violence is not being met with proper force due to denial (PI, U3, NGO official, June 1, 2017). This would seem consistent with the reported perceptions by government officials during this study. As well, government websites can be misleading, since the one about OIJ says 45 people work in the office to combat trafficking, but really it is probably closer to three, added another (PI, U3, NGO official, June 1, 2017). In reality, the office has seven investigators, according to one of the investigators (PI, U5, OIJ, June 7, 2017). None argued that image is not powerful, and that the image of this country as a paradise for Costa Ricans and for tourism is based on some notions, such as democracy, education, and the environment, that are maintained as positives (PI, U8, OIM/IOM, June 8, 2017). It is marketing for "paradise," said one interviewee (PI, U7, OIM/IOM, June 8, 2017).

One NGO leader stated that image is too important to the country to risk more than lip service and empty words (PI, U1, NGO official, June 1, 2017). To make this clear, she continued that no politicians care to fight the crime of human trafficking, although many have been approached. Some have paid lip service to the fight to boost image but have been uncooperative in moving along awareness or in working with the active NGOs (PI, U1, NGO official, June 1, 2017). Another interviewee agreed, stating that one congresswoman said that she was going to investigate why so little is being done, but refused to respond to any emails or calls after the initial, and then she never did anything; the same exact situation happen again later with a different politician (PI, U2, NGO official, June 1, 2017). A third stated that politicians do not care (PI, U3, NGO official, June 1, 2017). No politician answered requests to participate in this study.

While human trafficking is worse in other countries, one NGO leader stated, other countries and NGOs recognize their issues and have more resources; thus the problem in Costa Rica is that no one will recognize the issue (PI, U2, NGO official, June 1, 2017). One interviewee reported that the University of Costa Rica made an educational video based in Guatemala with victims from all over Central America, except Costa Rica (PI, U9, professor, June 8, 2017). One subject of this study noted that, “There was a 90s ‘boom’ against crime and a ‘boom’ in the 2000s after Palermo against trafficking—there were laws, the creation of an office, and such—but it has since fizzled out and does not do much. In reality, nothing much was ever done except to look good in international eyes (PI, U1, NGO official, June 1, 2017).” Another interviewee stated that everyone wants to keep it all hidden away for the sake of the image of the country (PI, U3, NGO official, June 1, 2017).

The interviews produced a common theme regarding image as portrayed to the Costa Rican people and from them. More than ten different interviewees all specifically reported that the people of the country would prefer to pretend that human trafficking does not exist, as the government will not threaten changing the image of the country (PI, U2, NGO official, June 1, 2017; PI, U3, NGO official, June 1, 2017; PI, U11, attorney, June 10, 2017). This is illustrated by the media when the news is only interested in showing the election candidates, complained one source (PI, U3, NGO official, June 1, 2017). Even when human trafficking and other related crimes do make the news, they tend to be the areas everyone already knows about, such as Jacó and the *Zona Roja* in San José, where girls dress like women and prostitution is rampant. After all, as one interviewee commented, tourism needs a good image; if the tourists really found out the prevalence and severity of the issues, it would hurt tourism and thus the country (Personal Interview [PI], U2, NGO official, June 1, 2017). This is aligned with the literature on tourism by Hall (1994). One interviewee noted that there is no national protocol regarding human trafficking and it is preferable to hide it and other crimes rather than face them (PI, X11, NGO official, June 9, 2017). Perhaps it is as one interviewee stated, image is the reasons that there can be no admission of a problem or else there would be consequences (PI, U11, attorney, June 10, 2017).

One interviewee did offer a defense of the country's image by saying, "Todo no es malo" (Everything is not bad); the image of Costa Rica and its strengths is real—the industry, its open borders for immigrants, flourishing tourism, diversification of exports, and more (PI, U7, OIM/IOM, June 8, 2017). There are benefits to the country's advancements, this particular subject furthered, but it also comes with the same issues that come with advancement everywhere, such as exploitation, casinos, massage parlors, and other less amenable

establishments. Yet, another source reported that the cost was too high, that *pura vida* was no longer being lived, it was being sold (PI, X11, NGO official, June 9, 2017). This one continued to say that there is the thought that all *gringos* are good and have money and that all visitors are beneficial for the country, and so the various nationalities, immigrants, and tourists are welcomed, a bit naively, with open arms (PI, X11, NGO official, June 9, 2017). This commoditization is argued by Hall (1994) as one of the negative consequences of tourism, by Nagle (2008) as one of the indicators of globalized neocolonialism, and by Shelly (2010) as one of the factors in the human trafficking trade.

The issue with human trafficking within this particular theme influences much. Many victims will not denounce their kidnappers or their traffickers, and, according to one source, it is necessary to have such a “*denuncia*” and victims’ support in adult cases (PI, U8, OIM/IOM, June 8, 2017). This was a common belief expressed among interviewees, although it does not appear anywhere as a requirement in the Ley (Law) 9095 itself. However, sources agreed that such is the same with violence against women. Many who are undocumented are afraid to stand up and have a voice (PI, U8, OIM/IOM, June 8, 2017). There is a lack of confidence. Another interviewee stated that the problem has to do with mindset—not with laws—and the implementation and enforcement; the culture of machismo has to be changed, forcefully if necessary (PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017). The political image of no problems and no gangs, only peace is a perfect culture for crime and human trafficking specifically (PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017). Shelly (2010) would seem to agree with that statement.

Laws & Definitions

As evidenced by the review of the written law concerning human trafficking, Costa Rica’s working definition is somewhat different from both the one used by the United Nations

and the one from the United States. This law and its various chapters set the standard in Costa Rica. However, respondents from the interviews supplied additional information related to the law and the definition of human trafficking in the country.

When asked to define human trafficking, one gave the UN definition and stated that Costa Rica is a huge transit country and that it struggles with its own domestic issues as well (PI, U1, NGO official, June 1, 2017). Since 2000, she continued, there has been a “*red de trata*” (trafficking ring) with many foreigners exploited and many victims between 14 and 17 (PI, U1, NGO official, June 1, 2017). While trafficking in persons is commonly referred to as “*trata*,” “*tráfico*” is smuggling. This same source defined “*trata*” as “el movimiento forzado para realizar diferentes actividades—como sexual, domesticos y obreros” (the forced movement of individuals for purposes of different sexual, domestic, and work-related activities) (PI, U1, NGO official, June 1, 2017). Another source stated that it was best to follow the UN’s definition despite it being too big and too broad, with too few people knowing what it actually means (PI, U3, NGO official, June 1, 2017). One source mistakenly affirmed that in Costa Rica trafficking does not need movement; many are trafficked in their own homes (PI, U2, NGO official, June 1, 2017). Due to Costa Rica’s differing law than the UN, trafficking actually does require movement or displacement as part of it (PI, U5, OIJ, June 7, 2017; PI, U16, INAMU official, June 15, 2017). However, as one source put it, there is no limit defined in the law as to how far that movement need be (PI, U14, CONATT representative, June 14, 2017). One interviewee defined it simply, “It is slavery, like the UN says (PI, X6, justice official, June 1, 2017).”

The interviewees reported issues with the various definitions and even the wording itself. One stated that “*trata no significa nada en español...no tiene poder y no tiene definición*” (trafficking does not mean anything in Spanish...it has not power and no definition) (PI, U2,

NGO official, June 1, 2017). Some were unaware that organ trafficking is also covered according to the law (PI, U5, OIJ, June 7, 2017). One subject argued that the concept of human trafficking is often misused and confused, but even more than that, it is incorrectly categorized criminally (PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017). This same informant stated that the lines between smuggling and trafficking are blurred. Another noted that the description of law makes it easy to defend against it, that it is both too specific and too detailed to be particularly useful (PI, U16, INAMU official, June 15, 2017).

The common theme across the interviews was the agreement that too few people understand what human trafficking is (PI, U1, NGO official, June 1, 2017; PI, X8, NGO official, June 5, 2017). This was made clear from responses. Two law enforcement officers agreed that it is when kids from other countries are forced to be prostitutes (PI, P3, Municipal Police, June 1, 2017; PI, P4, Municipal Police, June 1, 2017). Another stated that it is girls being forced into prostitution (PI, P9, Municipal Police, June 5, 2017). One interviewee from OIJ summarized by saying that police on the streets do not know what trafficking is or how to look for it (PI, U5, OIJ, June 7, 2017). This same source indicated that one issue is the difference between similar crimes, such as smuggling, trafficking, pimping (*proxenetismo*), and *rufianería*¹⁶ (PI, U5, OIJ, June 7, 2017). It is up to investigators to figure out and interpret what is what (PI, U5, OIJ, June 7, 2017). While these crimes are all different, they are all related, yet often confused and mistakenly interchanged (PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017).

One source indicated that this problem of finding which crime fits is only one issue among many that hinders the fight (PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017). Another suggested the problem was that law enforcement does not pursue the clients, only the traffickers, because

¹⁶ It is defined as someone who economically profits from the forced prostitution of another.

demand for exploited individuals is “normalized” by the social and economic system of exploited persons (PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017). Furthermore, there is a cycle of human trafficking within families; families get stuck in it, and traffic a new generation (PI, U2, NGO official, June 1, 2017). This is consistent with the general understanding of human trafficking, of its self-perpetuating nature (Clearwater/Tampa Bay Area Task Force on Human Trafficking 2016). Mothers and fathers trafficking their own kids, yet this is not labeled trafficking in most cases (PI, U2, NGO official, June 1, 2017). This is a problem, argued one, because this use of the term does not match the international one (PI, U8, OIM/IOM, June 8, 2017). Furthermore, in instances of family and friends and even in some stranger relations, some victims do not want to denounce their trafficker because they love them or it is a member of their family (PI, U10, PANI official, June 9, 2017). In this instance, often there is no case. As one officer put it, “the problem is the laws—too soft and too rigid (PI, P11, Municipal Police, June 9, 2017).” Another interviewee argued that the 2013 law made human trafficking a little clearer, but almost too clear (PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017). A review of the law does show very specific parameters regarding what does and what does not qualify as trafficking, yet specific details remain undefined, such as the distance required to fulfill the “movement” requirement.

The law itself was the topic of many interviews. One professor stated that the 2013 law was right within the normal timetable for new legislation; it passed once the “boom” was over and there was no real traction for or against it, now that no one really cares about the topic (PI, U9, professor, June 8, 2017). Law enforcement officers were not convinced of its utility either, with statements such as to do a good job, you need better laws, laws are a barrier to justice, or laws are too soft and prosecutions do not happen like they should (PI, P5, Municipal Police, June 1, 2017; PI, P6, Municipal Police, June 1, 2017). One source reported his position that police

seek traffickers of drugs but no one attacks the issues of poverty and desperation or deprivation that lead to exploitation and drug use and human trafficking (PI, U4, law enforcement, June 5, 2017).

The 2013 law changed the Palermo understanding. One government official claimed that it was intended to “look to the future.” When asked to elaborate, he mentioned the exit tax, the response team, and CONATT (PI, U5, OIJ, June 7, 2017). The money resources are there, he continued, but it has been difficult and slow to use the money, particularly because so many agencies work in part with trafficking and thus can submit requests for the money. However, other areas, such as personnel resources, are low, very low (PI, U5, OIJ, June 7, 2017). OIJ has only seven investigators for human trafficking for the entire country. Besides, as several sources pointed out, it is so complicated and limited to use the money because each department and agency can submit projects to CONATT; there are so many obstacles (PI, U8, OIM/IOM, June 8, 2017; PI, U16, INAMU official, June 15, 2017). The quick response team for emergencies was also created as part of the law to rescue and help victims (PI, U5, OIJ, June 7, 2017; PI, U16, INAMU official, June 15, 2017). This team leads investigations (PI, U14, CONATT representative, June 14, 2017). One decision made was to have only one member interview victims to minimize negative effects; this person would determine eligibility and assign accreditation as a victim in order to give the victims services. CONATT was also created from this law, and it includes 20 organizations, includes the Ministry of Tourism (PI, U14, CONATT representative, June 14, 2017; PI, U10, PANI official, June 9, 2017). The governing entity is the Gestion de Trafico Illicito de Migrantes y Trata de Personas de la Direccion General de Migracion y Extranjeria (PI, U14, CONATT representative, June 14, 2017). One representative from this office stated that many times traffickers must be tried for different crimes instead of

trafficking to assure that they get convicted, but that then the victims are not able to get the same services as those from bona fide trafficking cases (PI, U14, CONATT representative, June 14, 2017). The Trafficking in Persons Report notes this particular issue by stating “not all 53 were ‘verified’ as trafficking victims under Costa Rican protocols (U.S. Department of State 2017, 138).”

The creation of the trafficking department in OIJ corresponded with the ratification of Palermo around 2000 (PI, U5, OIJ, June 7, 2017). Total for the country, when combined with the 18 investigators in Migration, there are 25 investigators (PI, U5, OIJ, June 7, 2017). They also handle sex crimes, smuggling, and disappeared people (PI, U5, OIJ, June 7, 2017). Once a status as victim of human trafficking is established, the survivors are given three choices—refugee status in Costa Rica, they can return to their country of origin if foreign, or they can receive assistance in being sent to another country (PI, U5, OIJ, June 7, 2017). Yet, repeatedly interviewees noted that it is difficult to define crimes as trafficking, but it is much easier to use laws for other crimes, such as sexual exploitation and pimping (PI, U8, OIM/IOM, June 8, 2017). The 2017 TIP Report also showed a knowledge of this, noting that many cases were tried under other laws, such as forced servitude, aggravated pimping, and coerced pimping (U.S. Department of State 2017, 137). One source stated that care must be taken, and processes and definitions must be exactly according to the parameters, or the cases are thrown out (PI, U8, OIM/IOM, June 8, 2017). Adults have to have a “declaration” for a case to go to the judge (PI, U10, PANI official, June 9, 2017). More than one source argued that intent is not enough for the courts; there must be a criminal act to make and arrest (PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017; PI, U16, INAMU official, June 15, 2017; PI, U9, professor, June 8, 2017; PI, U11, attorney, June 10, 2017).

Several sources criticized the focus on laws. One attorney argued that laws are not the solution, a change in mentality is, and thus a change in implementation (PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017). She continued to say that there are tons of laws not being upheld. A worker at INAMU told of the mentality that needed changing by using the example of the law regarding statutory rape prior to 1999. She reported that there was a “corruption” law in place that said that sexual acts with minors could only be criminalized if the child was not corrupt (still a virgin), otherwise, the child was already spoilt (as in already sexually active) so it did not matter (PI, U16, INAMU official, June 15, 2017). She argued that the norms of the society still need to change from this type of mentality. The representative at CONATT argued against many of the claims made by other sources, stating that if victims do not denounce, they still get services, and that there is no minimum movement in the law (PI, U14, CONATT representative, June 14, 2017). As one NGO leader noted, according to the law, if any element of trafficking is found, there can be a case; she reported feelings of dismay at the lack of knowledge about this law and this crime (PI, U15, NGO official, June 14, 2017). This is understandable, as most of those interviewed, even officials working in the government, incorrectly reported the need for a *denuncia*.

Tourism

The impacts of tourism on Costa Rica have already been documented prior in this study, as well as the stance on tourism by the government of the country. Furthermore, the interview results showed that many of the subjects chosen for this study were also well-versed in the effects of tourism, while others remained more optimistic about the enterprise. They nearly all agreed that tourism is a “big deal” in Costa Rica, that it is a growing business with ever more influence (Personal Interview [PI], X5, law enforcement, May 31, 2017; PI, U4, law

enforcement, June 5, 2017; PI, X8, NGO official, June 5, 2017; PI, X9, NGO official, June 5, 2017). One noted that many tourists are from the US and Canada, among other places (PI, X2, educator, May 30, 2017). Some argued that it was the largest industry; others gave it second place (PI, U4, law enforcement, June 5, 2017; PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017). This is an understandable dilemma as the magnitude of the tourist industry varies from first to second place depending on whether both direct and indirect or only direct contributions are counted (WTTC 2017). One interviewee is the owner and operator of a health tourism company, and she noted the increase in business over the years (PI, X9, NGO official, June 5, 2017). One source noted that the growth of tourism has resulted in the growth of sex tourism as well (PI, X12, US Embassy official, June 14, 2017). Another agreed by saying that sex tourism is growing and tourists want more and more types, ages, and ethnicities; it is all about the customer (PI, U12, Migration Department official, June 12, 2017). This interviewee also noted that police do not care about prostitution as long as it brings the country money. Another added that tourism is a major problem, both with sex tourism and sex work (PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017). According to the literature, ten percent of all tourists in Costa Rica engage in sex tourism (Casa Milagro 2016). With 2.66 million visitors annually (Dyer 2016), that would equate to 266,000 tourists for the sex industry each year. One interviewee in Limón argued that tourism controls everything in Limón, and in Costa Rica also—it is powerful throughout the whole country and demands are met however they need be (PI, X16, hotel manager, June 17, 2017).

Tourism has everything to do with internal trafficking, one source noted, such as sending kids to the tourist areas for services; sometimes they even have buses to send them places such as Guanacaste (PI, U9, professor, June 8, 2017). Sex tourism is a huge business, and it is all about the clients and their wishes, stated another (PI, U12, Migration Department official, June 12,

2017). This could not be collaborated with statistics or official data, as none are available on the subject. One interviewee elaborated on the current issues, stating that sex tourism in the 1990s was obvious because it happened in bars and such, but today it happens in secret, through phones and the internet (PI, U1, NGO official, June 1, 2017). This is a clear indicator of the argument of negative impacts of “modernization” by Hall (1994). Plus, this NGO leader continued, tourism needs a good image; if the majority of tourists found out about the country’s issues, it would hurt the tourism and economics of the country (PI, U1, NGO official, June 1, 2017). Thus, added another NGO leader, human trafficking and sex tourism are now more hidden, and business is conducted via the internet (PI, U3, NGO official, June 1, 2017). Tourism has a direct influence on human trafficking, argued another source, due to the demand for labor and for prostitutes, especially young, attractive ones (PI, U5, OIJ, June 7, 2017). This is collaborated by the Trafficker’s Report (2017), wherein he noted that “Beauty is a sin.”

In regards to this demand, one investigator from OIJ mentioned the tourist packages known as “complete packages” or “*servicios completos*.” In these package deals, tourists are able to bundle purchase hotels, cars, beach access, flights, and *chicas* (girls); these packages are always geared toward men, even in the cases where boys are advertised instead of girls (PI, U5, OIJ, June 7, 2017). For \$3,000 to \$4,000 a tourist can purchase a complete package for a week. This can be confirmed with a simple Google search for “adult vacation Costa Rica” or “erotic vacation Costa Rica” which pulls up pages of results offering such packages. The investigator stated that, more often than not, these *chicas* are underage and often victims of trafficking (PI, U5, OIJ, June 7, 2017). He also continued to say that tourism not only exploits sex work, but it also includes slave labor, such as in the hotel kitchens and grounds (PI, U5, OIJ, June 7, 2017). Another source concurred, stating that tourism causes a lot of internal trafficking, especially

from poor areas to tourist areas for work; Guanacaste is a growing market for this (PI, U9, professor, June 8, 2017; PI, U17, NGO official, June 19, 2017). Furthermore, drugs are tied to tourism, but, “As long as it brings business, the hotels and other tourism agencies won’t call in to see if the prostitutes are victims or not (PI, U12, Migration Department official, June 12, 2017).” According to Shelly (2010), this is a symptom of high demand and of the expendability of marginalized peoples. Also, another interviewee added that there is an underground for kids and all manner of women from other countries to fill the client-centered orders (PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017). Casinos and massage parlors are other areas that are heavily linked to sex work and illegal activities of all kinds (PI, U7, OIM/IOM, June 8, 2017). The representative from CONATT argued that the “sexual paradise” label associated with sex tourism is being actively fought in accordance with the 2013 trafficking law and the Code of Tourism, since Costa Rica does not want the image or reputation of “*zonas calientes*” (PI, U14, CONATT representative, June 14, 2017). However, she continued, there needs to be a change of mindset as human trafficking is not just sexual exploitation (PI, U14, CONATT representative, June 14, 2017)

This idea that hotels and other tourist agencies can help fight trafficking made its way into several interviews. One source stated that there are organizations working with hotels to change conduct and create a better tourist environment that is not about exploitation; it is called a “Certificate of Sustainability” (PI, X11, NGO official, June 9, 2017). The airports have signs about child sex being illegal, but nothing specific about human trafficking (PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017). Paniamor works with hotels on the code of conduct to stop sex tourism, which one representative said is a huge problem in Costa Rica (PI, U17, NGO official, June 19, 2017). This NGO creates curricula for training on child prostitution. Another source stated that human trafficking is a problem all over, but it is especially prevalent in tourist areas (PI, X16, hotel

manager, June 17, 2017). One argued that hotels turn a blind eye to criminal activity because whatever makes money and brings tourists must be allowed (PI, X13, service industry employee, June 16, 2017). A concurring opinion was that Jacó, an area known for sex tourism, is a hot spot for human trafficking, as evidenced by the copious amount of surgery on victims rescued from there (PI, U12, Migration Department official, June 12, 2017). This interviewee noted that many of these victims are forced to undergo plastic surgery to augment their bodies for reasons of “hypersexuality” and to change identities. Bernstein and Shih (2014) and Carrier-Moisán (2015) support such notions in their works. One interviewee simply stated, “we need to redefine the type of tourism we want here (PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017).”

There were a few interviewees with dissenting opinions on the matter of tourism and its ties to human trafficking. One stated that tourism is not much of a problem, due to the code of tourism conduct for hotels and such, because the tourist agencies know to look for signs of sexual exploitation (PI, U16, INAMU official, June 15, 2017). Others argued that the country is moving toward sustainable tourism, or “community tourism,” and that this move does not exploit the people (PI, X14, tour guide, June 17, 2017). The Limón province is a tourist area, but one source there stated that human trafficking is only an issue in the capital (PI, X15, service industry employee, June 17, 2017). The representative from Paniamor accessed the fake website unforgettablecostarica.org, set up in 2015 to deter criminal sexual activity with minors, and stated that she believes it has been effective (PI, U17, NGO official, June 19, 2017). She continued to say that tourism is too important to the economy, and that families depend on tourism to survive. However, sometimes parents and grandparents will exploit their own children to earn a living, both through sex work and manual labor (PI, U17, NGO official, June

19, 2017). Thus, she stated that ending poverty is the key to combatting this crime, not attacking tourism. Tourism is just a symptom, a crutch to combat poverty.

Non-Governmental Organizations

The impact of NGOs at work in Costa Rica is profound, as mention earlier in this study. There are several NGOs that work directly to combat trafficking, to rehabilitate and restore survivors, to champion the cause, and to combat the contextual situations that create a system of exploitation, some of these include Fundación Rahab, Casa Milagro, Face of Justice, Alianza por tus Derechos, Boy with a Ball, Paniamor, and Education Plus, just to name a few of the most notable ones. Their work and their perspectives tell an interesting story about the situation of human trafficking in Costa Rica.

Several notable NGOs were a part of this study and were able to share their work. Alianza por tus Derechos deals with victims, educates about rights, and combats violence; they are the only organization to combat child pornography (Personal Interview [PI], U1, NGO official, June 1, 2017). They also have an initiative to assist those of various sexual orientations to come to terms and to educate their families. There are no laws against nor to protect homosexuals, although one leader in the organization noted that the culture of machismo in Costa Rica is generally homophobic (PI, U1, NGO official, June 1, 2017). Other NGO leaders stated that the goal of all NGOs is to help here and there, wherever they can, such as through efforts to make and disseminate public service announcements (PI, U2, NGO official, June 1, 2017; PI, U3, NGO official, June 1, 2017). Education Plus has been active for 23 years helping impoverished children go to school and stay out of jail (PI, X11, NGO official, June 9, 2017). Although not directly involved with human trafficking, this organization is combatting the contextual factors that create both victims and perpetrators. Face of Justice has been on the

streets for nearly a decade with the foci of intervention, prevention, and restoration (PI, U15, NGO official, June 14, 2017). Other NGOs, like Casa Milagro and Fundación Rahab, do the same (PI, U15, NGO official, June 14, 2017; PI, U2, NGO official, June 1, 2017). Some NGOs offer training to the community and law enforcement (PI, U15, NGO official, June 14, 2017). However, due to bad past experiences of mistreatment by staff, only a handful of NGOs are allowed by the government to house survivors (PI, U15, NGO official, June 14, 2017). This licensing comes from PANI, as well as funding per child for each child under NGO care. The TIP Report noted this as well (U.S. Department of State 2017, 138). Another foundation, Paniamor, promotes the rights of minors, and has been active for 30 years (PI, U17, NGO official, June 19, 2017). It offers gender and sex education, a Tecnobus that travels around country to promote safe internet use, social inclusion and citizenship, and programs to prevent exploitation (PI, U17, NGO official, June 19, 2017). Fundación Rahab is a center for rescued women survivors, but no representative was available for an interview despite numerous attempts at communication (PI, U15, NGO official, June 14, 2017). Some of the NGOs work with other NGOs and share tools to rehabilitate, but many do not, and instead act competitively with one another. The role of the NGOs in Costa Rica was summed up by one leader who stated that NGOs need to be here to serve, not to take over (PI, U15, NGO official, June 14, 2017).

After all these years of activity in Costa Rica, the NGO staff has a very useful knowledge regarding the country, the crimes, the cases, and their specific areas of focus. One source argued that Costa Rica is a transit country, as demonstrated by the “official” website and agency for Filipinos to get visas back in 2000 that turned out to be a trafficking ring (PI, U1, NGO official, June 1, 2017). This case was confirmed by sources at CONATT and INAMU. Since the 1990s, this NGO source continued, and beginning in clubs, women from different countries, like

Colombia and Haiti, were trafficked to meet demand (PI, U1, NGO official, June 1, 2017). One source, an attorney who has worked for various NGOs, explained the difference between what is and is not human trafficking according to the law. She gave the case of a 12-year-old with 5 younger brothers, a product of her mother's rape, raised by an alcoholic mother. At age nine, a neighbor of 70 years wanted her sexually, and for three years her mother prostituted her to the same man each weekend; in exchange he would pay the bills (PI, U11, attorney, June 10, 2017). Another case was of a 14-year-old who left home. A man of 40 convinced her to spend the night with him at a hotel. Afterward, she began a life of prostitution with him as her pimp; he would dress her "as a woman" and make her work from seven at night until two in the morning for three months until she got sick and was discovered by PANI workers and identified as one of the missing children (PI, U11, attorney, June 10, 2017). According to this source, the first case was trafficking, while the second was not due to the consensual movement and age of the minor.

While the stories and examples the NGOs can provide are useful, knowing their own backgrounds can be just as insightful. For example, Fundación Rahab has a strained relationship with the other trafficking NGOs due to Rahab's goal of "rescuing victims of prostitution." However, they are the only Costa Rican NGO which receives financial aid from the U.S. government (PI, U1, NGO official, June 1, 2017; PI, U9, professor, June 8, 2017). An official at OIJ confirmed that Rahab works closely with the Costa Rican government (PI, U5, OIJ, June 7, 2017). Rahab receives criticism for its work by other NGOs for being closed and unwilling to share resources. Also, the founder of Rahab reportedly believes that God specifically told her to open her foundation. She does a lot of work for victims, but she faces prejudice from the more secular agencies and organizations (PI, U9, professor, June 8, 2017).

The other major NGO, Alianza por tus Derechos, also has a history. Formerly, there was a Casa Alianza that operated at the beginning of the new millennium, and was run by a man named Bruce Harris. He worked diligently against human trafficking, often confronting the state apparatus. He was married to a woman from Paniamor, and they were a very strong and forceful entity for change. However, all of the efforts to combat trafficking took a hit when he was involved in a sex scandal with a young Honduran man. He was forced to leave the country and return to his home in the UK, and Casa Alianza fell apart and was reborn as Alianza por tus Derechos with new leadership (PI, U9, professor, June 8, 2017). The scandal and history was confirmed by news articles from local newspapers. With the scandal, so much changed; even the prosecutor stepped down. According to one source, the whole scandal killed the anti-trafficking movement (PI, U9, professor, June 8, 2017). However, some of Harris's efforts, such as getting hotels to take an active stand against human trafficking and against the "complete packages," have continued with the Marriot and Hilton (PI, U9, professor, June 8, 2017). Still, these examples show that there is a lack of unified force across time and between NGOs and the government (PI, U9, professor, June 8, 2017).

Despite scandalous pasts and a lack of cohesion, NGOs have worked with the government and Inter-Governmental Organizations (IGOs), such as the UN and OIM/IOM, to make some serious impacts. While many victims are not aware of the resources available to them, NGOs are working to begin to talk with social groups to spread this awareness and to enable more "*denuncias*" against this hidden crime (PI, U7, OIM/IOM, June 8, 2017). UNICEF has a presence in Costa Rica, especially through its Blue Heart awareness campaigns, and works with NGOs (PI, U9, professor, June 8, 2017). The US helps fund research by Fundación Rahab and their victim support programs, which focuses on removing women from prostitution and

finding them alternative work (PI, U9, professor, June 8, 2017). Rahab focuses on victims of sexual exploitation and looks for economic projects for survivors, but the foundation is not politically active (PI, U9, professor, June 8, 2017). Unfortunately, while women and children often get rescued, it is rare for cases to be brought against the trafficker and the clients, according to one source (PI, U15, NGO official, June 14, 2017). Of the 12 girls who have stayed in one shelter, only two or three had active cases, and none were under “human trafficking.”

One official at the Inter-American Court of Human Rights stated that Costa Rican officials and law enforcement should and would handle human trafficking cases (PI, X6, justice official, June 1, 2017). Yet, according to local NGO leaders, the government is ineffective, ill-prepared, unable, and unwilling to handle this issue. One interviewee stated that there are some NGOs helping now, but the government does little (PI, X7, professor, June 5, 2017). When asked about its involvement in human trafficking, the Catholic Church official reported that the Church is not involved in trafficking; it would be the responsibility of PANI, INAMU, and other state agencies (PI, X10, Catholic Church, June 7, 2017). One NGO leader criticized the government for inaction and also for its false image. He argued that there are no international NGOs working to fight the problem, no international aid, and not funds because the government claims that it is not needed, that all is under control (PI, U2, NGO official, June 1, 2017). The interview with the representative from CONATT would support this claim. However, the state has no safe houses for victims of human trafficking, by its own admission; one representative stated that all the trafficking-specific safe houses are run by NGOs (PI, U10, PANI official, June 9, 2017). One subject ran a safe house in San José for several years; it was a religious institution (PI, U11, attorney, June 10, 2017). However, more than one safe house has had to close due to a lack of survivors. Another NGO leader claimed that NGOs play an important role in

investigating and in giving tips and conducting interviews (PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017).

Another source stated flatly that there are no real programs to change circumstances at home for victims (PI, U15, NGO official, June 14, 2017).

The NGO representatives involved in this study each had a piece of advice or a warning to give. One noted that Fundación Rahab is the only organization to get money from the government and from the US, but that it is often criticized for its interest in publicity rather than policy (Personal Interview [PI], U1, NGO official, June 1, 2017). This same source noted that one individual from Paniamor was grossly unaware of the definition of human trafficking, believing it to be “human treatment.” One NGO volunteer stated that there is a major lack of cohesion between government, organizations, and the community, especially with major issues such as human trafficking (PI, X8, NGO official, June 5, 2017). Another stated that all is just so disorganized, and that institutions do not work together well (PI, U9, professor, June 8, 2017). One interviewee argued that a major problem is negligence and a lack of care by parents, coupled with poverty that leads to exploitation (PI, U11, attorney, June 10, 2017). This same source noted that the system in Costa Rica is long and bureaucratic with complicated laws, full of excuses, with rampant corruption, and a naive belief in the innocent nature of tourists and *Ticos* (PI, U11, attorney, June 10, 2017). One source reported disgust that the only government action was through Fundación Rahab, that the government had no shelters of its own for survivors (PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017). According to one source, a government official actually claimed that the state was not set up to fulfill its own laws, but that, “The NGOs are fulfilling those laws (PI, U15, NGO official, June 14, 2017).” This source agreed that “NGOs and the community need to fill in to implement these laws (PI, U15, NGO official, June 14, 2017).” This is apparent from the pamphlets and educational materials at PANI and OIM/IOM,

which offer NGO shelters as the appropriate course for human trafficking shelters and rehabilitation. According to Kaplan (2011) and Joireman (2011), this is a classic case of NGOs taking on the burden of governance from an absentee government. The representative from Paniamor claimed that there is an “island concept,” that others might be doing the same thing in the same community, but no one knows it because they do not talk to one another; they do not communicate or share resources (PI, U17, NGO official, June 19, 2017). One leader spoke about her concern for the situation of NGOs with good information and good contacts because they cannot rescue, they cannot prosecute, and they cannot lose rapport on the streets (PI, U15, NGO official, June 14, 2017). Again and again, poverty and lack of money and resources were blamed as the reasons for exploitation and for having an at-risk population (PI, U2, NGO official, June 1, 2017).

Police & Crime

This study included a large percentage of law enforcement officers as study participants. As such, many participated fully and shared their opinions and experiences regarding Costa Rica, crime, and the life of law enforcement. However, four would not speak at all once they found out the topic to be studied and the origins of the research (Personal Interview [PI], P1, Transit Police, May 31, 2017; PI, P2, Transit Police, May 31, 2017; PI, P14, Municipal Police, June 10, 2017; PI, P15, Municipal Police, June 10, 2017). Others were more forthcoming. Many agreed that salaries for law enforcement are too low, the hours too long, and the time away from family too excessive (PI, P12, Transit Police, June 9, 2017; PI, P13, Transit Police, June 9, 2017; PI, P3, Municipal Police, June 1, 2017; PI, P4, Municipal Police, June 1, 2017; PI, P5, Municipal Police, June 1, 2017; PI, P6, Municipal Police, June 1, 2017; PI, P7, Public Force, June 3, 2017; PI, P8, Public Force, June 3, 2017). There was also general agreement that drug trafficking is the major,

and really only, issue affecting Costa Rica today, and that the country is a bridge, or *punte*, for such activities (PI, P3, Municipal Police, June 1, 2017; PI, P4, Municipal Police, June 1, 2017; PI, P5, Municipal Police, June 1, 2017; PI, P6, Municipal Police, June 1, 2017). While some indicated drugs in general as an issue, others were certain that Costa Rica was a transit country only, that the Costa Ricans were not drug users (PI, P7, Public Force, June 3, 2017; PI, P8, Public Force, June 3, 2017). One countered that the job of policing was political, that people want to feel safe, so police have to go after the crimes that matter to everyone, such as drugs (PI, P10, Public Force, June 5, 2017).

Some law enforcement officers were very inclusive in their estimations of the issues in the country, despite any politics. One stated that both narcotrafficking and human trafficking are problems facing Costa Rica, just like other countries in the region (PI, P11, Municipal Police, June 9, 2017). Another added that even though the police are always walking in sight, crime is growing; Costa Rica has become a bridge for crime due to too much migration, immigration, and tourism (PI, P11, Municipal Police, June 9, 2017). One law enforcement officer argued that narcotrafficking is a major problem and gangs too; gangs are from Mexico, and they bring drugs and human trafficking (PI, P10, Public Force, June 5, 2017). Also, the Chinese mafia is at work here, the officer added (PI, P10, Public Force, June 5, 2017). Regarding salaries of both police and the general public, two stated that as the economy rises, so too does the cost of living, but not salaries (PI, P3, Municipal Police, June 1, 2017; PI, P4, Municipal Police, June 1, 2017). One gave a figure of \$700 a month (PI, P9, Municipal Police, June 5, 2017). This is far lower than the officially reported lowest police salary of \$850 a month (*The Costa Rican News* 2013). Comparing Costa Rica to Panama, one noted that Panamanian police get paid better (PI, P5, Municipal Police, June 1, 2017). This is an intriguing statement as a report on the salaries of law

enforcement of Panama put their salaries around \$520 a month (NewsOK 2009). Two interviewees spoke concerning crime; they argued that Costa Rica was no longer exceptional, that it is no different than other Central American country, especially not recently (PI, P5, Municipal Police, June 1, 2017; PI, P6, Municipal Police, June 1, 2017). There is so much corruption, and so few resources to fight crime, they added (PI, P5, Municipal Police, June 1, 2017; PI, P6, Municipal Police, June 1, 2017). Another commented that laws are soft, pay is low, and resources are needed for drug trafficking (PI, P10, Public Force, June 5, 2017). Other officers assured that crime is not a problem (PI, P7, Public Force, June 3, 2017; PI, P8, Public Force, June 3, 2017). While others were more convinced that corruption is a big problem, and that it is getting bigger. One indicated that that is why the resources and money disappear (PI, P10, Public Force, June 5, 2017). One investigator stated that he gets few tips, works long cases, has few people working with him, that it can take five years for a case to reach a judge, that he often has to have victim cooperation, and that corruption is a major issues (PI, U5, OIJ, June 7, 2017). One officer in Limón, when asked about his knowledge on human trafficking, state that OIJ handles that sort of crime, that there is a branch not far away, and that they must handle it (PI, P16, Public Force, June 18, 2017). There is no OIJ branch in Limón that is human trafficking trained. Overall, although police responses varied widely, the general consensus prevailed that there is a rising rate of criminal activity, and the police do not feel adequately prepared or resourced to handle it.

While police have varying opinions regarding a variety of criminal issues, the other interviewees had widely varying opinions regarding law enforcement and their capabilities and attitudes. Some stated that police work hard, and that they are always out (PI, X18, service industry employee, June 18, 2017). Others agreed that police are good and can be trusted (PI,

X2, educator, May 30, 2017). One noted that police are respectful, but like all police, they can take their time and do not always show a lot of interest (PI, X9, NGO official, June 5, 2017). However, the more popular opinions were that police just drive around or walk around; they do not care (PI, X16, hotel manager, June 17, 2017). Police are untrained, and they do not know the laws (PI, U15, NGO official, June 14, 2017). One stated that the police are lazy. He added, “All they do is walk the same streets and sit in the same spots. They are only worried about narcotrafficking. They do not receive enough money to pursue any issues. They do not have good coverage. They are not visible, and they are not helpful. If you call them, they come, but they don’t do much (PI, X4, professor, May 31, 2017).” Another stated that police are not informed (PI, U3, NGO official, June 1, 2017). Police need more money and more awareness, said one (PI, U2, NGO official, June 1, 2017). Several commented on salaries. They are low, argued one, like \$700 to \$800 a month, and that is one-third the salary of a US Embassy security guard (PI, U4, law enforcement, June 5, 2017). Law enforcement would seem to agree with many of these claims.

A common argument was of training and education. One interviewee reported that law enforcement officers are receiving better training than before in the past, but it is not enough; many are young and do not know the extent of the problems (PI, U4, law enforcement, June 5, 2017). Another continued, they have no education, they ignore problems, and they do not do anything except give excuses about their salaries and working hours (PI, U11, attorney, June 10, 2017). One NGO leader reported being shocked that even the investigators did no undercover work and relied mostly on tips (PI, U12, Migration Department official, June 12, 2017). Another source argued that the focus on protecting privacy is overkill; as such, the whole system is reactive, not proactive (PI, X12, US Embassy official, June 14, 2017).

Confidence in the police and in law enforcement in general was low, as indicated by the surveys from the previous chapter. Bribes were mentioned several times. One source from the embassy stated that a report by a police chief admitted that “1/3 of my officers have taken bribes” (PI, X12, US Embassy official, June 14, 2017). One NGO leader stated that police only care about drugs (PI, U1, NGO official, June 1, 2017). She continued to say that when confronted with possible sex trafficking, a normal police response is “*Las putas quieren ser...*” or “Whores want to be whores” (PI, U1, NGO official, June 1, 2017). Since the police frequent the clubs where illegal sexual acts take place, she has no confidence in them (PI, U1, NGO official, June 1, 2017). Another NGO leader agreed, stating that human trafficking and other such crimes are not priority or pivotal to the force. There is no money in police budgets to truly investigate the cases like they need to, even if they wanted to, and they do not get paid enough to want to anyway (PI, U3, NGO official, June 1, 2017). They do not have months to investigate to truly work on the issue; the lack of money and resources hurts everyone (PI, U3, NGO official, June 1, 2017). She continued to say that if prostitutes are ignored by the police, then human trafficking victims are never discovered because, as an example, no one asks how minors get involved in prostitution (PI, U3, NGO official, June 1, 2017). Another source, an attorney, reported that authorities do not do much in general (PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017). Besides, she continued, the capacity of public officials is lacking. She gave an example, stating that during interviews, law enforcement may ask uneducated questions such as, “Are you a victim of human trafficking?” or, “Do you like what you do?” When the responses are, “No, I am not” or, “I like when I do,” then law enforcement accept it and move on (PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017). Even in the United States, many law enforcement officers have not received the proper human trafficking training to learn how and what to ask potential victims; it would appear that

even fewer Costa Rican officers received such training (Clearwater/Tampa Bay Area Task Force on Human Trafficking 2016; Matarrita-Cascante 2010).

Perceptions on crime in the country and reasons for it were reportedly similar. While one or two interview subjects reported feeling secure, stating that crime is not a major concern, others were not convinced (PI, X2, educator, May 30, 2017). Some responses were that all the crime is related and a major concern, such as drugs and human trafficking (PI, U1, NGO official, June 1, 2017; PI, U3, NGO official, June 1, 2017). One source reported that resources are not allocated for involved crimes, that there needs to be prevention programs and there are not any at present. He continued that there needs to be programs to fight crime, drug use, and other major social and political issues, and that police need better training (PI, U4, law enforcement, June 5, 2017). He also noted that cartels from Mexico are operating in Costa Rica now, and they are causing more street crime and more organized crime such as drug and human trafficking (PI, U4, law enforcement, June 5, 2017). Another source argued that Costa Rica is very open, and that it receives a lot of immigrants and transit peoples from places such as Cuba, Haiti, and Africa. There are big waves of migration from places such as this, he continued, and it is getting worse. At the same time, there are spikes in crime, with these migrants as victims of crime (PI, X4, professor, May 31, 2017). This is confirmed by the OSAC report on crime and safety, which states that crime has seen a 20 percent increase in Costa Rica from 2014 to 2015—a total of 566 homicides per year (2016). “The murder rate was approximately 11.5 per 100,000 inhabitants by the end of 2015, surpassing the threshold of 10 per 100,000 that the World Health Organization considers to be an endemic level of homicide (OSAC 2016).” Other crimes on the rise from the OSAC report include theft, organized crime, and sex tourism (2016). About the criminals themselves, one interviewee stated, “The Internet makes it easier to hide crimes and illegal

transactions. They don't need to expose themselves because you've got the Deep Web...you can find anything there (PI, U4, law enforcement, June 5, 2017)."

Security is a rising concern for many of the interview sources. You need to live in a gated community to feel safe, said one, but the crimes are usually petty (PI, X8, NGO official, June 5, 2017). He continued to say that law enforcement are respectful, but not very active (PI, X8, NGO official, June 5, 2017). Gangs are on the rise, according to many of the sources, but one was quick to note that gangs are a manifestation of social unrest, and that they are a sign and a symptom of changing times and of failings in society (PI, U4, law enforcement, June 5, 2017). Narcotrafficking is a big deal, reported one, and Costa Rica is the perfect land bridge (PI, X11, NGO official, June 9, 2017). This was confirmed by a member of CONATT who added that Costa Rica has only two official border points on each border, and that the rest of it is kilometers and kilometers of completely permeable border (PI, U14, CONATT representative, June 14, 2017). One attorney argued that some of the issues surrounding crime has to do with mindset, with machismo, such as the attitude of the police and other officials that "Men have a right to prostitutes (PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017)."

Specifically regarding the crime of human trafficking, those involved in this study shared their particular experiences and knowledge. The situation in Costa Rica is reportedly not dissimilar from other trafficking experiences in other countries, the US included. Traffickers often use promises of work or pretend to be boyfriends to lure individuals (PI, U3, NGO official, June 1, 2017). Sometimes, these relationships can even lead to marriage, which makes the case even more complicated (PI, U10, PANI official, June 9, 2017). Traffickers, most especially those involved in large-scale operations, have money for lawyers (PI, U10, PANI official, June 9, 2017). There are plenty of powerful networks in the country (PI, U7, OIM/IOM, June 8,

2017). Often the focus is on prosecuting traffickers instead of clients (PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017). Minors are getting killed, very real and horrible deaths (PI, U3, NGO official, June 1, 2017). The borders are soft, allowing for easy movement of international victims (PI, U4, law enforcement, June 5, 2017; PI, U7, OIM/IOM, June 8, 2017; PI, U12, Migration Department official, June 12, 2017). While human trafficking is a problem, it is often not the focus of attention because it is a quiet crime, not like violent crimes and drugs that affect more people and are more dramatic, said one source (PI, U4, law enforcement, June 5, 2017). Trafficking is both local and international, and often the local cases involve families. These are often more difficult to find and to prosecute, and thus these cases are underrepresented (PI, U8, OIM/IOM, June 8, 2017). However, as one source reported, of the 30 girls exploited who came into a shelter over an 18-month period, 29 were victimized by their own parents for Costa Rican clients (Personal Interview [PI], U2, NGO official, June 1, 2017).

While there are some NGO shelters, many are choosing to focus on programs and prevention as well, resources for the homeless and lost children, and programs for adolescents about rights, LGBTQ status, and others as there are no programs from the Costa Rican government to deal with these types of issues (PI, U2, NGO official, June 1, 2017). Human trafficking is linked to other crimes, such as drug trafficking, and to poverty (PI, U12, Migration Department official, June 12, 2017; PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017). Even at the “good” hospitals, organ trafficking is a growing concern (PI, U14, CONATT representative, June 14, 2017). Many sources criticized the system for not treating victims in accordance with best practices (PI, U12, Migration Department official, June 12, 2017). For example, every victim is brought to San José for services despite any other factors. While the professionals attest that Nicaraguan workers are cared for and treated well by the government (PI, X1, professor, March

3, 2017), others argue that there are undoubtedly Nicaraguans here against their will, enslaved as domestic servants (PI, U12, Migration Department official, June 12, 2017).

Corruption was another major issue discussed during interviews regarding police and crime. Most reported that corruption was a major issues (PI, U15, NGO official, June 14, 2017; PI, U3, NGO official, June 1, 2017; PI, U4, law enforcement, June 5, 2017). Some offered a more optimistic perspective, saying that corruption has not yet reached the same levels as other Central America countries, that it is no worse than anywhere else in the world, and that the police are less likely to take bribes than in Nicaragua, for example (PI, U3, NGO official, June 1, 2017; PI, X9, NGO official, June 5, 2017; U 13). However, as one source stated, with no army and more money for law enforcement than neighboring countries, “*Quién sabe adónde va la plata, porque la policía no la recibe...*” (No one seems to know where the money goes, because the police are not getting it in their salaries) (PI, U3, NGO official, June 1, 2017). Even the homeless population on the street openly sells drugs with police nearby, and when questioned, one replied that the police do not get paid enough to bother with it. One source stated that it made the news that police were called to a crime scene and were caught on video stealing from the victims (PI, X8, NGO official, June 5, 2017). Another interviewee argued that organized crime has a lot of money, and that breeds corruption. This investigator continued saying that Costa Rica is not yet as bad as Mexico and Guatemala (PI, U8, OIM/IOM, June 8, 2017). However, one subject did report that politicians run on clientelism, and that even Nicaragua has a faster arrest rate and higher convictions when it comes to opposing crimes (PI, X11, NGO official, June 9, 2017). This was confirmed by the interview with the investigator from OIJ (PI, U6, OIJ, June 7, 2017). One attorney reported that US clients really cannot be extradited

because of so much impunity, and Costa Rica would not pursue arresting tourists (PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017).

Repeatedly throughout the interviewing process, the mafia and other organized crime rings continued to resurface as a recurring topic (PI, U1, NGO official, June 1, 2017; PI, U7, OIM/IOM, June 8, 2017; PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017). One source stated that Costa Rica now has issues with the mafia that they never had before; they bring people from abroad, such as China, illegally and sometimes against their will (PI, X4, professor, May 31, 2017). Another noted that, while the low men in the drug and trafficking rings are Costa Rican, the bigger ones are often foreign (PI, U3, NGO official, June 1, 2017). An investigator from OIJ stated that the mafia is active in the country, especially the Chinese mafia. He continued to say that they cause a lot of human trafficking because there are a lot of Chinese people here with money, and they have operations that are not legal (PI, U4, law enforcement, June 5, 2017). Organized crime is all interconnected, stated one source (PI, U7, OIM/IOM, June 8, 2017). Gangs from Mexico and El Salvador are involved in narco and human trafficking, and gang-related drugs are a major concern for the country (PI, X9, NGO official, June 5, 2017; PI, U7, OIM/IOM, June 8, 2017). Since organized crime has so many resources, including very good lawyers, they are careful with the crimes they commit; they know the laws and what punishments are harsher and which are not (PI, U8, OIM/IOM, June 8, 2017; PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017). Thus they are able to finagle their way out of the harsher crimes, such as human trafficking, based on technicalities.

From the interview process with the selected knowledgeable subjects, there were several notable cases and lessons which were shared to educate and explain. For example, one source shared that a few years ago, a Russian girl was killed in Guanacaste trying to escape from forced prostitution at a hotel, but there was never an investigation (PI, U1, NGO official, June 1, 2017).

The interviewee suggested that there was no investigation due to a lack of resources and a culture machismo (PI, U1, NGO official, June 1, 2017). Another prior case involved a women who brought her daughter to Costa Rica from Nicaragua to sell her in prostitution because Nicaragua would not allow it. The child died shortly after, with the mom claiming that she drowned. There was no investigation (PI, U1, NGO official, June 1, 2017). One lesson that an attorney provided was that each branch of Costa Rica's legal and social service system has its own confidential policy, which makes it hard to share cases and resources (PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017). This was confirmed by the representative from PANI (PI, U10, PANI official, June 9, 2017). The attorney also stated that due to the difficulties of actually getting a human trafficking conviction, often prosecutors will elected to charge for lesser crimes to ensure conviction and jail time because it is more important to get them behind bars than to fight for the real crime (PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017). This is congruent with the TIP Report's country narrative on types of cases (U.S. Department of State 2017). One NGO leader reported that the state seems to have a standard that it will not prosecute against mothers, as such there is no example of a punished mother who trafficked her child (PI, U15, NGO official, June 14, 2017). She continued by saying that one case could set precedent and make an example. Yet, prosecutors continue to throw out cases, stating that "This is not *trata*. It is not in our backyard, not here in Costa Rica."

Prostitution

In Costa Rica, which has a constitutional civil code system based on the French Napoleonic Codes, prostitution is decriminalized, neither prosecuted nor legal and regulated (PI, U5, OIJ, June 7, 2017). This topic was a recurring one during the interviews, with many unaware of the government's position, some aware and accepting, and others acutely aware of it and wishing to change it. One interviewee reported that prostitution has been legal for the last 30

years, and it requires licensing and screenings, but these are not enforced (PI, X5, law enforcement, May 31, 2017). Another source noted that the central parks are the places for homosexual prostitution from younger men to older ones, men willing to trade sex for food and shelter for the night (PI, U2, NGO official, June 1, 2017). Another interview subject reported that parents often push girls to look for men on the tourist beaches and other tourist hotspots, such as in Jacó, Guanacaste, and San José. It is a way of life to dress as prostitutes, and look for men, many of whom will pay good money for “*chicas*” (PI, U11, attorney, June 10, 2017). A stroll through San José’s downtown any night of the week proves this claim. While prostitution remains legal in Costa Rica, the law on trafficking makes a clear correlation between human trafficking and prostitution, thus the numerous related crimes, such as pimping. As mentioned prior, hotels offer “packages” to tourists which include the week’s prostitute (PI, U11, attorney, June 10, 2017). One source from the embassy disagreed with the majority opinion, claiming that pimping is not legal, so when the pimps are arrested, the investigators can determine exploitation at that point. After all, he continued, prostitution is not going to go away if it is made illegal (PI, X12, US Embassy official, June 14, 2017). Another stated flatly that men are the clients of prostitutes, and men make laws, indicating that change will be difficult (PI, U16, INAMU official, June 15, 2017). According to human trafficking experts, criminalizing prostitution will not end it, but it does create more potential opportunities for victims to come into contact with law enforcement (Clearwater/Tampa Bay Area Task Force on Human Trafficking 2016).

As such, due to Costa Rica’s laws, prostitution is legal, and many tourists come to Costa Rica for all kinds of “needs,” according to one source. Although legal, prostitution has everything to do with illegality, such as underage prostitutes, illegal immigrants prostituting, and human trafficking, this professor continued (PI, X4, professor, May 31, 2017). Another source

added that police will not investigate problems with prostitutes because it is legal (PI, U1, NGO official, June 1, 2017). She continued to say that if prostitutes are ignored by the police, then human trafficking victims of forced prostitution will not be discovered (PI, U1, NGO official, June 1, 2017). This problem, according to another source, is due to machismo and false premises that prostitutes want to be prostitutes (PI, U3, NGO official, June 1, 2017). This sentiment was shared by most of the interviewees. One added that Costa Rica must change the mindset of prostitution in the eyes of the police and the public; legal prostitution makes it hard to find victims, especially since Costa Rica is a “prostitution paradise” (PI, U6, OIJ, June 7, 2017). Another argued that prostitution is bad, in general, and exploitative and needs to be illegal if Costa Rica is to truly “advance” (PI, U7, OIM/IOM, June 8, 2017). Yet another stated that its legalization makes it harder to find victims of all types of related crimes (PI, U8, OIM/IOM, June 8, 2017). One stated that if Costa Rica would make prostitution illegal, then there would be more cases of human trafficking, and it would be easier to find victims (PI, U10, PANI official, June 9, 2017). One interviewee with CONATT lamented that prostitutes have no rights; it is not illegal, she said, but it is not regulated either (PI, U12, Migration Department official, June 12, 2017). One attorney attested that prostitutes have no rights, and that there is a change needed in the government to criminalize clients, who currently face no repercussions under the current law on prostitution (PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017).

Globalization & Modernization

Globalization and modernization are both present in Costa Rica, as in many economies and societies around the globe. According to one interviewee, due to Costa Rica’s push to modernize, everything from trash and garbage pick-up, to a growing population, immigration concerns, telecommunications, increased automobiles and traffic, new technology, and an

increase in internet users, all bring their own problems (PI, X4, professor, May 31, 2017). This trend and phenomenon has changed the heart and soul of the country and continues to massively change the people and the country in new ways.

One area that many interviewees reported as affected by this movement was the notion of *pura vida*. As one source noted, *pura vida* was alive and well in the 80s and 90s, but it has declined since (PI, X4, professor, May 31, 2017). Today, crime is growing, the people live behind locked doors and gates. As noted prior, the OSAC “Costa Rica 2016 Crime & Safety Report” supports this claim (2016). “The new Costa Rica” is one that exists behind bars, and those with money live in their own little castles, safe from trouble, continued the source (PI, X4, professor, May 31, 2017). Another source added that the country once known as a leader in human rights is struggling, said one interviewee, and human trafficking is just one of the examples. All victims of such crimes lose their human rights; plus, it hurts the economy, spreads STDs, hurts minors, and hinders development (PI, U3, NGO official, June 1, 2017; PI, U16, INAMU official, June 15, 2017). This spread of negative crimes and issues is confirmed by Anders (2017). One subject lamented the growing loss of trust among *Ticos* (PI, U4, law enforcement, June 5, 2017). Another sources noted that today’s politicians do not get much done because they are too busy worrying about elections (PI, P10, Public Force, June 5, 2017). One worker at INAMU reported that women are still fighting for basic rights and respect in Costa Rica and that having a woman president did not magically fix these long-term issues (PI, U16, INAMU official, June 15, 2017). She concluded by shrugging and saying that the world needs to calm down and live *pura vida* again, but everywhere and everyone is too focused on money.

Since Costa Rica accepts more migrants than any other Central American country, many of the interviewees had strongly voiced opinions on migrants and immigrants (PI, X4, professor,

May 31, 2017). One source argued that a lot of problems are blamed on migration and immigration for good reasons, such as the influence of international mafias, international gangs, international drug and human trafficking rings, just to name a few of the negative impacts (PI, X7, professor, June 5, 2017). Since migration swelled, problems have grown, she concluded. According to one source, 20% of Costa Rica's population is foreign (PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017). Some of these are refugees to Costa Rica from warring countries and those with political issues, such as Venezuela (PI, U14, CONATT representative, June 14, 2017). After all, according to the representative from CONATT, Costa Rica may be expensive, but with no army, good education, and strong democracy, it is worth it. Victims of human trafficking in Costa Rica are foreign, she continued. Many are from the Dominican Republic, Colombia, and Nicaragua, while others, mostly the male labor victims, are from Asia (PI, U14, CONATT representative, June 14, 2017). One source from the US Embassy stated he believed that legal flows of immigrants are related to illegal flows, which relate to the transit of human trafficking victims (PI, X12, US Embassy official, June 14, 2017). He also stated that the border is "totally open" (PI, X12, US Embassy official, June 14, 2017).

As in so many other countries, the widespread use of the internet has begun to reshape certain aspects of Costa Rican society. According to one NGO leader, back in the 1990s, there were plenty of clubs that served as platforms for illegal activity, but with the expansion of modernity and the internet in the 2000s, the illegal activity has moved online and is even harder to find and combat; they are now invisible issues more than ever (PI, U1, NGO official, June 1, 2017). A few others noted that the internet is part of modernization and globalization, both the "good and the bad" (PI, U4, law enforcement, June 5, 2017; PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017). This is in alignment with Shelly's theory of human trafficking and the factors that facilitate it

(2010). Child pornography is a growing concern for NGOs and Interpol, as the internet makes crimes quicker and easier (PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017). One attorney stated that, despite evidence to the contrary, the solution is actually to get more global, more integrated in the modern ways to fight modern crime. She continued to say that Costa Rica, with its blind eye toward its darker side, is a perfect location for such crime (Personal Interview [PI], U13, attorney, June 13, 2017). Another interview subject agreed, stating that modernization and globalization are making it increasingly easier for pedophiles and other criminals to commit their crimes. The internet is the perfect medium to fake promises of jobs as well (PI, U14, CONATT representative, June 14, 2017). While there are advantages with increased connectivity, the negative effects are not being successfully combatted.

While modernization and globalization continue to shape Costa Rica, many of the perceptions by those interviewed were not positive. One noted that industry is changing, tourism is taking over, and factories are closing down (PI, X2, educator, May 30, 2017). Another simply stated that no one can fix these problems; the world is just getting worse all over (PI, X3, May 30, 2017). One professor elaborated, saying that problems of modernity include violence, crimes, drug trafficking, and gangs (PI, X4, professor, May 31, 2017). Another source argued that, “Modernism, like marijuana, abortion, and loss of values, is killing the country and changing the people. Modernism has changed the values of Costa Rica. It all has to do with values (PI, X11, NGO official, June 9, 2017).” This NGO leader continued to say that it used to be a big deal to find someone with some drugs, now it is only a big deal if they are caught with a half ton (PI, X11, NGO official, June 9, 2017). This idea of a loss of values and a changing culture is aligned with the literature by authors such as Hall (1994), Lea (1988), and Bernstein and Shih (2014). The high costs of labor and high price of imports creates a high cost of living

that is unmanageable with current salaries, said one source (PI, X12, US Embassy official, June 14, 2017). Costa Rica is fairly globalized, as a member of the WTO and plenty of free trade agreements (PI, X12, US Embassy official, June 14, 2017). Perhaps the worker at the US Embassy said it the most profoundly, “Human trafficking, the duration of slavery, is a testament to the falsity of modernization (PI, U4, law enforcement, June 5, 2017).” This is an example of the neocolonialism argued by Mathieson and Wall nearly 30 years ago (1982).

One aspect of a modernized world and a globalized one is the profound effect on the economy and the influence of the market on politics and society. Even the law enforcement officers interviewed noted that everything is increasing in price except salaries, and many jobs are either going away or closing down (PI, P5, Municipal Police, June 1, 2017). Another interviewee reported that a lot of money is made in Costa Rica, yet it does not seem to reach the lower classes (PI, U4, law enforcement, June 5, 2017). This is apparent in the diminishing Gini index. According to INEC (*Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos*; National Statistics and Census Institute), Costa Rica has gone from a .453 measurement in 1990 to a .515 in 2016, a .062 loss in equality (2017). This interviewee continued to say that US President Donald Trump is threatening to take jobs back to US and away from Costa Rica, but that it would only hurt both economies (PI, U4, law enforcement, June 5, 2017). Another source countered this perception, arguing that Costa Rica is stable and productive and economically doing well. She claimed that there are so many exports, not like 50 years ago when there was only coffee. Now Costa Rica is number one in pineapple and other fruits, he said (PI, X7, professor, June 5, 2017). While this is confirmed by reports from the World Bank (2016), rising costs of imported finished goods cannot compete with the export prices of raw materials, such as fruits (O’Neil 2013). Many North Americans and Europeans come for health services, such as heart operations and plastic

surgery, continued the source. There are many foreign companies, such as Intel, along with a booming health equipment business and baseball factories. Costa Rica has, according to her, “Very stable politics. Development is very good here, and Costa Rica is always bettering itself (PI, X7, professor, June 5, 2017).”

Another source disagreed, stating that the service industry, such as telemarketing, foreign businesses, and call centers, is the primary industry in the country, and that it is not one which offers development and careers (PI, U4, law enforcement, June 5, 2017). After all, he continued, Costa Ricans get paid less than half of those doing the same work in the US, so there are many facilities in Costa Rica from the US (PI, U4, law enforcement, June 5, 2017). When asked about crime and human trafficking in particular, he concluded, “It all has to do with supply and demand. If we get rid of the demand, through programs and education, then we get rid of human trafficking and drugs and many other crimes (PI, U4, law enforcement, June 5, 2017).”

One attorney would seem to agree, stating that poverty leads to exploitation (PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017). Exploitation is easily seen through conversations with taxi drivers, hotel employees, and other tourist industry workers, as expressed by the commonly held attitude, “If they want to work like that, it makes money—they like it, the tourists like it, and everyone is happy (PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017).” One NGO leader stated that jobs in government are the best paying with the best benefits, but many government employees lack passion for justice; they also receive no training and little real education (PI, U15, NGO official, June 14, 2017). She argued that, “They want money and to climb the career ladder, not to make a difference (PI, U15, NGO official, June 14, 2017). Another source confirmed that import prices are high, as is the cost of living, despite that government programs and social security services (PI, X12, US Embassy official, June 14, 2017). After all, as one elderly Nicaraguan immigrant in Limón

stately flatly, the world is about paying and getting paid, and tourism is all about money, not peace, not nature; this new Costa Rica takes better care of its animals than its people (PI, X15, service industry employee, June 17, 2017). This statement shows the painful and realized results of this study's conceptual framework, of the power of economic incentives, of the negative impacts of capitalistic neoliberalism, of exploitation of marginalized individuals, and of structural constraints designed to limit humanity in a system of supply and demand (Lutya & Lanier 2012; Hunt, Logan, & Walker 2009).

Awareness

While human trafficking is a global concern, awareness of the crime, its definition, and combat efforts remain varied across different states and cultures. In Costa Rica, the stakeholders selected for this study provided insight into the awareness of the Costa Rican people, government, and themselves. Some of those interviewed, including some law enforcement officers, claimed that human trafficking is not a problem in Costa Rica (Personal Interview [PI], X2, educator, May 30, 2017; PI, P7, Public Force, June 3, 2017; PI, P8, Public Force, June 3, 2017). These same individuals were unable to correctly define it. Others argued that it is not a big problem; it exists everywhere, but it is no worse in Costa Rica and is not a major issue (PI, P5, Municipal Police, June 1, 2017; PI, P6, Municipal Police, June 1, 2017). Others argued, like the literature suggest, that human trafficking is a problem because of globalization, poverty, desperation (PI, X4, professor, May 31, 2017). Trafficking is a major problem, said one, but not one that is being fought well, and it does not get the attention it needs (PI, X7, professor, June 5, 2017). Another agreed with this position, stating that human trafficking may not be as big of a deal as in neighboring countries, and thus the police are not focused on it, but it is also not as obvious a crime and not as much in the limelight (PI, U4, law enforcement, June 5, 2017). One

stated that it is an unknown because there are no good statistics, no cohesive force, no awareness, and no education on the topic (PI, X9, NGO official, June 5, 2017). This statement is certainly supported by the findings of this study. One law enforcement officer claimed that in Costa Rica there are too many kids forced to be prostitutes (PI, P10, Public Force, June 5, 2017). Another source said that organ trafficking is a growing concern, but drug trafficking is the major focus of police efforts because of gangs from other countries and so many immigrants (PI, X3, May 30, 2017). Another officer claimed that men traffic kids and exploit the poor, sometimes from other countries, because Costa Rica is a bridge for crime, for drugs, and for human trafficking (PI, P10, Public Force, June 5, 2017).

Human trafficking, as provided earlier in this study, has a very precise definition according to the law, and so it was necessary and important to gauge the understanding of the people on this definition. A review of the interviews gives pause. The source at the Inter-American Court of Human Rights had to explain to another worker there what trafficking was during the interview (PI, X6, justice official, June 1, 2017). As another source stated, people do not know what “*trata*” is, or if they do, they are not very interested (PI, X7, professor, June 5, 2017). Three officers questioned replied bluntly that they did not know anything about human trafficking (PI, P12, Transit Police, June 9, 2017; PI, P13, Transit Police, June 9, 2017; PI, P16, Public Force, June 18, 2017). One offered the definition of smuggling (PI, P16, Public Force, June 18, 2017). Another two interviewees, both of whom worked in the tourist industry, claimed to have no knowledge of human trafficking either (PI, X14, tour guide, June 17, 2017; PI, X18, service industry employee, June 18, 2017). As one NGO leader stated, there seems to be “a total lack of awareness (PI, U17, NGO official, June 19, 2017).” Another claimed that awareness is limited to a group of NGOs, government offices, and international organizations, but that the

greater society lacks understanding and awareness (PI, U8, OIM/IOM, June 8, 2017). The representative from PANI agreed, stating that there is no awareness for the public about what is or is not trafficking; prevention would be better if people knew (PI, U10, PANI official, June 9, 2017). She continued saying that there is prejudice against prostitutes and people who cross illegally looking for work, but so little true understanding (PI, U10, PANI official, June 9, 2017). However, a few of the interviewees had a slightly different take, offering that the fault of awareness is due to a lie that “it happens elsewhere” which leads to blindness of the issue (PI, X11, NGO official, June 9, 2017). Also, added another source, key people do not push hard enough, and cases do not make it to court, and no one is spreading the word because no one wants to acknowledge it exists, despite so many cases (PI, U15, NGO official, June 14, 2017). Another interviewee offered that there is, “...some awareness, but not much. Still, the people understand what is and is not human trafficking. They just don’t want to see it (PI, X12, US Embassy official, June 14, 2017).” These perceptions support the hypothesis of this study, that inaction has allowed the problem to fester without proper awareness or reaction.

Awareness campaigns spread awareness of an issue, and in Costa Rica, according to one source, there are no awareness campaigns (PI, X4, professor, May 31, 2017). The public cannot know about the problems it is not told about, this university professor continued (PI, X4, professor, May 31, 2017). While awareness is limited to certain offices, the United Nations has recently implemented its Blue Heart awareness campaign in Costa Rica, as evidenced by the posters up at OIJ and PANI. Yet, another NGO leader and his volunteer confirmed that there are no true awareness campaigns (PI, U2, NGO official, June 1, 2017; PI, X8, NGO official, June 5, 2017). Another NGO hopes to get television spots soon to educate, the representative reported (PI, U1, NGO official, June 1, 2017). As per the hypothesis and the literature by Kaplan (2011)

and Joireman (2011), this would shoulder more responsibility onto NGOs. One OIJ investigator added that he knows awareness is extremely limited, but, he added, the UN is helping with Corazón Azul (Blue Heart), and even the local news is now reporting on some cases. He requested that, as part of this research, the television news should be watched the day following the interview, but no story about trafficking appeared on the news. The investigator also noted that there are 40 to 50 active cases per year, but that only a small percentage of these cases will result in a court case and even less in conviction (PI, U5, OIJ, June 7, 2017). Another investigator added that Corazón Azul has posters and pamphlets in other agencies too, such as PANI, but that it is just really beginning (PI, U6, OIJ, June 7, 2017).

Interviewees at OIM/IOM also spoke of Corazón Azul and its hopes to spread awareness (PI, U7, OIM/IOM, June 8, 2017; PI, U8, OIM/IOM, June 8, 2017). However, even these interviewees noted that awareness is, so far, only for specific groups, not for all of society (PI, U7, OIM/IOM, June 8, 2017). Awareness is very limited, stated another UCR professor (PI, U9, professor, June 8, 2017). According to one NGO representative, the news media sometimes “hits on it hard one case at a time, but there is no systemic initiative to combat the roots of the issues (PI, U17, NGO official, June 19, 2017).” Awareness needs to change mindsets because “sex tourism” needs to be labelled “sexual exploitation;” it should not be a part of the tourism lineup, such as “adventure tourism” and “environmental tourism,” she continued (PI, U17, NGO official, June 19, 2017). One attorney vehemently argued that the country needs more awareness, to educate about laws, to share resources for victims, and to overcome barriers to interagency cohesion in order for the situation to change (PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017). As evidence of the limited awareness and lack of governmental support, one hotel manager on the Caribbean

coast provided the number to Casa Milagro rather than any official government entity when asked about human trafficking and efforts to stop it (PI, X16, hotel manager, June 17, 2017).

For those interviewed who did have an understanding of the issue and were well aware, they offered insights regarding the type of information that needs to be disseminated. For example, one stated that there needs to be more awareness regarding the psychological damage to human trafficking survivors (PI, U3, NGO official, June 1, 2017). She also stated that people need to know that there are large numbers of both domestic and international victims, and that traffickers take documents, use physical methods of restraint, and other methods, such as posing as boyfriends, to coerce (PI, U3, NGO official, June 1, 2017). Also, traffickers tend to be Costa Rican men and women when it is a small operations of one or a handful, but larger operations are carried out by internationals (PI, U3, NGO official, June 1, 2017). One source from CONATT argued that Costa Rica has so many different but similar crimes that it looks bad on the reports because the U.S. only looks specifically at human trafficking cases (PI, U14, CONATT representative, June 14, 2017). This statement is incorrect according to the TIP Reports, which state that, “In addition to article 172, officials used trafficking-related offenses, including prohibiting holding a person in servitude (article 189) or aggravated pimping (article 170) or coerced pimping (article 171) to prosecute cases (U.S. Department of State 2017, 137).”

Awareness campaigns need to increase, said numerous sources (PI, U1, NGO official, June 1, 2017; PI, U2, NGO official, June 1, 2017; PI, U3, NGO official, June 1, 2017; PI, U6, OIJ, June 7, 2017; PI, U15, NGO official, June 14, 2017). The methods to do this might include spreading pamphlets to other locations for the public besides PANI and OIJ (PI, U6, OIJ, June 7, 2017). Institutional cooperation between the government and its agencies and NGOs is needed (PI, U9, professor, June 8, 2017). The US could offer enough resources and trainings to help (PI,

U13, attorney, June 13, 2017). The policies regarding intent need to be made clear—intent is not enough to prosecute (PI, U15, NGO official, June 14, 2017; PI, U5, OIJ, June 7, 2017). Also, this same source added, anyone can and should make a “*denuncia*” to get law enforcement out and working cases (PI, U15, NGO official, June 14, 2017). After all, although cases do not have to have the cooperation of the victims and witnesses technically, it is rare for one to see fruition and actually prove human trafficking without such support (PI, U16, INAMU official, June 15, 2017). One source at INAMU reports that it has been working to protect trafficking victims since 2004, but that it still is working on new initiatives to spread awareness, bring justice, and prevent this crime (PI, U16, INAMU official, June 15, 2017). One source noted that there needs to be an awareness movement to bolster a civil society to confront this crime on a systemic level rather than the reaction to isolated incidents that has been happening (PI, U17, NGO official, June 19, 2017). Finally, according to one source, one area that desperately needs increased awareness is the fact that trafficking can be international, but it can also be families trafficking their own children for money (PI, X7, professor, June 5, 2017). These suggestions are well developed and could certainly use implementation and evaluation to assist awareness efforts, yet none are currently in the works.

Political and Social Culture

Of all the themes to emerge from the interview process, none was discussed more than political and social culture. In some instances, this was the sharing of a certain viewpoint, a certain socio-political understanding about the country and its problems. In others, it was an ambition and a call to change the current one, to reach a level of development that could transcend older issues, such as gendered crimes, homophobia, and macho culture. While opinions varied, the overall perspective was a need to create a new political and social culture,

one which would make the public aware of the criminal, social, political, and economic issues that create human trafficking and which could lead to greater understanding and a more active and educated civic culture.

The notion of national identity and culture was of specific concern. One source argued that Costa Rican national identity is being eroded from all sides (Personal Interview [PI], X3, May 30, 2017). One law enforcement officer agreed, stating that immigrants and tourists are coming from everywhere; everyone wants to live in Costa Rica, and it is changing the country (PI, P9, Municipal Police, June 5, 2017). A professor at UCR had a different version of the change in national identity. She claimed that there is an impasse between the old and the new national identities, with young people fighting for rights in a changing world, but the government is so slow to change (PI, U9, professor, June 8, 2017). She also noted the change in politics to a multi-party system due to the destruction of the bipartisan system at the hands of corruption (PI, U9, professor, June 8, 2017). One NGO leader who has been working on the streets for nearly 20 years added that the air of change was at hand, but that the worst barrier—poverty—still remained and kept all development tools out of the hands of those wanting to make a difference (PI, X11, NGO official, June 9, 2017). He continued to say that the national identity of Costa Rica, one based on education and exceptionalism, is foundering from the influence of affluence on educational opportunities, to the rising drug trade, to forced prostitution and other manner of exploitation (PI, X11, NGO official, June 9, 2017). In the rural areas, one source noted that local police are police, judge, jury and implementers—they “handle it all” (PI, X14, tour guide, June 17, 2017). Another agreed that one problem is that the central government controls everything, and the outer areas and the rural communities are often separate from the Costa Rica that is San José (PI, U17, NGO official, June 19, 2017). There needs to be a new identity for Costa Rica, a

new vision, said one source (PI, U17, NGO official, June 19, 2017). Because, added another, without hope, the people will lose themselves, as well as the soul of Costa Rica (PI, X11, NGO official, June 9, 2017). While sources disagreed on the cause, there was a strong reported belief that Costa Rican political and social culture has indeed changed recently.

Fear of change, lack of understanding, and a continued mentality of “exceptionalism” have all contributed to some very strong beliefs regarding the political and social culture of the nation. One source, when asked about issues facing Costa Rica today, replied that Donald Trump is right; Costa Rica should also stop immigration and get rid of so many immigrants from China and Nicaragua and Haiti and other places less deserving (PI, X3, May 30, 2017). “Los mejores van a los EEUU, pero el resto que no puede entrar a los EEUU, la basura, ellos vienen a Costa Rica,” (The best go to the US, but the rest that cannot enter the US, the trash, they come to Costa Rica) she continued (PI, X3, May 30, 2017). They are the threat to national identity, the reason for the country’s problems because they are not smart, do not work hard, and bring their problems from their home countries, she concluded (PI, X3, May 30, 2017). One officer explicitly agreed stating that too many migrants are the main problem (PI, P9, Municipal Police, June 5, 2017). One professor reported being very much aware of this mentality. He countered such claims by arguing, “In Costa Rica the blame is placed on immigrants for major issues, and the popular thought is that if the immigrants would leave, everything would ‘be great again.’ But they are living a dream. They actually believe in Costa Rican ‘exceptionalism,’ like this country is ‘white,’ had no indigenous people, and that it is better than Nicaragua or El Salvador. They were taught it in school, and they believe it (PI, X4, professor, May 31, 2017).” His perspective is aligned with the research completed for Chapter 3 of this study, the one focused on Costa Rican history and development.

Several interviewees noted the presence of prejudice, while others noted the cultural aspects that hinder implementation of laws. Sometimes trafficking starts with smuggling, and then there is much prejudice, noted one attorney in her interview (PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017). If there is any case for “She went on her own,” whether it is a smuggling, trafficking, or pimping case, then the victim is made as culprit, added the representative from INAMU (PI, U16, INAMU official, June 15, 2017). The mentality and beliefs of the people are much more important than any laws, she continued, if law enforcement believes “she likes what she is doing,” then there is little hope of a rescue (PI, U16, INAMU official, June 15, 2017). One NGO representative added that it all depends on the culture, and in Costa Rica many people do not know or care about the laws, what they are supposed to do, or how they should be a part of it all (PI, U17, NGO official, June 19, 2017). People do not trust the government, she concluded.

Another recurring theme among the political and social culture was that of machismo and the gendered nature of the crime of human trafficking. One NGO leader reported that many victims are transited from the Philippines and Russia, but no investigations take place. She blames this on the culture of machismo, demonstrated by the words of one officer of the law, “*A las putas les gusta*” (The whores like it) (PI, U1, NGO official, June 1, 2017). She and others also argued that homophobia is a big problem due to machismo (PI, U1, NGO official, June 1, 2017; PI, U2, NGO official, June 1, 2017; PI, X7, professor, June 5, 2017; PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017). This was evidenced by signs across the campus of the University of Costa Rica, fighting both for and against homosexual rights. The social science building displayed a large rainbow flag in support of homosexual rights despite signs of protest elsewhere. One UCR professor noted that women are often victimized at the hands of men; this is also part of the culture (PI, X7, professor, June 5, 2017). Another added that machismo is a problem in Costa

Rica, as even ex-presidents have been found with young girls and gotten away with it (PI, U9, professor, June 8, 2017).

One attorney noted that gender rights, human rights, and human trafficking are all connected, along with the cultural acceptance of machismo (PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017). She continued to say that this allows for “acceptable problems,” such as prostitution, Chinese laborers working outside the law, and in putting the “fault” of those who get trafficked on the victims. Representatives of institutions and officials in the government have asked her “Why do victims want to be victims? They often go back to it after being rescued (PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017).” Clearly they have much to learn, she noted. It is difficult to fight a crime when the demand is still so present and normalized (PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017). Again, culture is at play. She says that in Costa Rica, if a 70-year-old is sexually engaged with a child, it is normalized as part of a “guy’s right” (PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017). At INAMU, there is agreement, as one representative noted that trafficking and domestic violence share many of the same characteristics and traits (PI, U16, INAMU official, June 15, 2017). It is a culture of exploitation, with women as objects, like other resources, the INAMU worker continued. Machismo is a way to see the world that deals in exclusion, vulnerability, inequality, and where the value of a woman is less than a man (PI, U16, INAMU official, June 15, 2017). The representative from Paniamor agreed, stating that family exploitation is common, and gendered, and it is all part of the machismo society, the man’s world (PI, U17, NGO official, June 19, 2017). These perspectives and experiences are aligned with the theoretical foundation on feminization of human trafficking and exploitation by Shelly (2010).

Another aspect of political and social culture which was mentioned often was the treatment of survivors. An investigator from OIJ noted that survivors from other countries

receive the statuses of refugees (PI, U5, OIJ, June 7, 2017). Also, according to multiple sources, Costa Rica is highly centralized, and for survivors, this means that victims are moved to San José upon rescue (PI, U14, CONATT representative, June 14, 2017; PI, X14, tour guide, June 17, 2017). According to CONATT, this is to provide the best services, and it is easier for the emergency response team. However, other sources were less assured of the positive treatment of victims. One investigator at OIJ noted that the state has no human trafficking shelters, and that survivors must be assisted by a variety of organizations, INAMU and Fundación Rahab for women and PANI and various NGO shelters for children (PI, U5, OIJ, June 7, 2017). Also, many cases are dropped by victims due to long delays; yet, according to one source at OIM/IOM the reintegration and rehabilitation process needs help, because there is no program that lasts four to five years, the average length of a case (PI, U7, OIM/IOM, June 8, 2017). Furthermore, according to all sources, there are no shelters or programs for men at all (PI, U8, OIM/IOM, June 8, 2017; PI, U10, PANI official, June 9, 2017; PI, U15, NGO official, June 14, 2017). There is a lack of long term care and programs, and many do not want to continue with the process of prosecution or rehabilitation because they have to find work and livelihood; they cannot stop to get better (PI, U8, OIM/IOM, June 8, 2017). Sometimes victims drop cases because of emotional issues, psychological stress, or they may simply disappear (PI, U10, PANI official, June 9, 2017). Although children's cases can still be heard if a representative is there to act on behalf of the child. However, if there is no victim present in an adult case there is no case at all, one worker at PANI stated (PI, U10, PANI official, June 9, 2017). These experiences are supported by facts from the Clearwater/Tampa Bay Area Task Force on Human Trafficking (2016).

In Costa Rica, it seems normal for the public to see young prostitutes and Chinese workers working long hours, said one investigator (PI, U5, OIJ, June 7, 2017). While this looks “normal,” added another, the police and the public need to realize that these could be victims of human trafficking (PI, U6, OIJ, June 7, 2017). Several sources agreed that while human trafficking continues to be portrayed as forced prostitution of children and women from foreign lands at the hands of international trafficking rings, in reality, family exploitation is the most common (PI, U8, OIM/IOM, June 8, 2017; PI, U11, attorney, June 10, 2017). However, the news media gives greater publicity when big international trafficking networks are busted.

In some ways, the issues impeding a decisive and comprehensive justice for victims are fairly similar to the rest of Central America. For example, one source argued that quite often the left hand does not know what the right hand is doing in the government (PI, X9, NGO official, June 5, 2017). There is a total lack of coordination and cohesion between so many institutions, added another source (PI, U10, PANI official, June 9, 2017). One law enforcement officer noted that everything is incredibly slow, and often criminal cases are dropped due to it (PI, P11, Municipal Police, June 9, 2017). The court system is slow and lazy, taking four or five years to decide a case, complained one investigator (PI, U5, OIJ, June 7, 2017). He continued, saying that the 13 different police departments hardly work together at all (PI, U5, OIJ, June 7, 2017). Another source agreed that cases must go through a hard process to get conviction; they must be exactly done in accordance with the law (PI, U8, OIM/IOM, June 8, 2017). There is also a mistrust of certain agencies by others. For example, several sources indicated a mistrust of PANI. According to one source, they have 50 years of doing a bad job; PANI has lost its passion (PI, U9, professor, June 8, 2017). Besides, said one, the big trafficking networks have plenty of money and lawyers to look for loopholes; they know the laws (PI, U10, PANI official, June 9,

2017). As an example of the slowness of the process, the trafficking law of 2013 allotted money to a fund to fight human trafficking, but it took four years for any of it to get distributed (PI, U14, CONATT representative, June 14, 2017). It is easy to blame the “other” for the country’s problems, said one source, but continued another, it is obvious that good countries can do bad things under bad leadership and guidance (PI, U4, law enforcement, June 5, 2017; PI, X4, professor, May 31, 2017). The TIP Reports have historically noted Costa Rica’s slow system of law and cited it as a factor in the country’s tier placement (2015; 2016; 2017)

In every interview where political and social culture was a topic of discussion, the interview subjects declared a need, a call to change. Several argued that poverty was to blame. As noted earlier, Costa Rica continues an ongoing struggle with a poverty rate over 20 percent, an unemployment rate of nearly 10 percent, and a continued rise in extreme poverty. One source said that poverty pushes people to engage in risky behavior to survive, such as trying to get smuggled across the border. Then, coyotes and others take advantage of desperate people (PI, X4, professor, May 31, 2017). Another claimed that without poverty there would not be anyone to exploit (PI, X11, NGO official, June 9, 2017). Others argued for more training for law enforcement, officials, and the public. There are new courses for police now, and new ones are being created all the time, said one, but every officer needs to take them (PI, U5, OIJ, June 7, 2017). These courses are needed for everyone, not just OIJ or Migration (PI, U5, OIJ, June 7, 2017). Within the current system officers do not enforce laws because they do not know them, said one interviewee (PI, U17, NGO official, June 19, 2017). This is evidenced by interviews with street-level law enforcement.

Other calls for change were more systemic. One source criticized, saying that the Costa Rican people and government will not self-criticize, and so they cannot better themselves and

cannot change (PI, X4, professor, May 31, 2017). Another stated that the entire notion of ranking states according to trafficking efforts is purely a political move (PI, U1, NGO official, June 1, 2017). One argued that there was far too much compartmentalization, too many departments doing similar work (PI, U7, OIM/IOM, June 8, 2017). One argued for more instruction and awareness within the tourist industry (PI, U8, OIM/IOM, June 8, 2017). Several criticized the plethora of various crimes (*proxenetismo*, *rufianería*, child pornography, etc.) and their various definitions (PI, U10, PANI official, June 9, 2017; PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017). One member of PANI also argued that some fault lies with the normalization and legalization of prostitution (PI, U10, PANI official, June 9, 2017). As well, she added that allowing so many guilty to walk free due to technicalities is awful (PI, U10, PANI official, June 9, 2017). One interviewee argued that adults should not have to testify in order to have a case (PI, U11, attorney, June 10, 2017). Another noted that human trafficking is cyclical, both for victims and for traffickers; there needs to be a way to stop demand to end the cycle (PI, U13, attorney, June 13, 2017).

The inability to find victims, rescue survivors, and prosecute criminals and clients made several interviewees very passionate about a need for change. One noted the lack of resources for labor victims (PI, U14, CONATT representative, June 14, 2017). Another criticized the fact that men, boys, and labor victims were all overlooked often and not properly cared for (PI, U16, INAMU official, June 15, 2017). PANI received criticism as understaffed, poorly trained, and inadequate (PI, U15, NGO official, June 14, 2017; PI, U9, professor, June 8, 2017; PI, U1, NGO official, June 1, 2017). They often listen to parents over the child or question the child with the parents in the room, said one source. There are good people in the government, urged one NGO leader, but most are untrained and are just doing a job (PI, U15, NGO official, June 14, 2017). It

is hard for law enforcement to go after clients because they do not know how, this source continued (PI, U15, NGO official, June 14, 2017). Cultural change is more important than new laws, added the representative from Paniamor, and there is a need for analyzing the legal system and for focusing on people-centered programs, as a start (PI, U17, NGO official, June 19, 2017). There are advances, but there is still a long way to go, concluded another source (PI, U16, INAMU official, June 15, 2017).

Chapter 7—Conclusions

Introduction

This chapter presents a final summary of the study and important conclusions drawn from the data and research presented in Chapters 5 and 6. This chapter demonstrates the utility of the study and its usefulness in educating and in knowledge building. It provides a discussion of the implications for action and recommendations for future study.

Summary of the Study

Overview of the Problem

This research case study on human trafficking was conducted on the small Central American country of Costa Rica. It was selected due to its history of fluctuation between the U.S. Department of State's Tier 2 and Tier 2 Watch List status on the Trafficking in Persons Report over the last ten years. As mentioned in Chapter 1, this ranking average indicates that it is one of the worst performing Central American states in efforts to combat trafficking in person. This finding breaks with Costa Rica's traditional placement as one of the best performing Central American countries in other areas and indices, such as GDP, Human Development, Happiness, and Corruption, to name a few. While trafficking in persons, or human trafficking, is a global issue, with modern-day slaves outnumbering any previous historical records, Costa Rica struggles to meet minimum standards as set forth by the United Nations and monitored by the United States.

Purpose Statement and Question

The purpose of this research was to explore the reasons why Costa Rica leads Central America in numerous international measurements of success, yet remains equal to or below other

Central American countries in its fight to combat human trafficking. The research question was as follows: Given a higher level of development, relatively better trained police, and less corruption compared to its Central American neighbors, why is it that Costa Rica has so few cases of human trafficking prosecuted each year and a negligible number of cases leading to conviction?

The following two proposed hypotheses were developed as possible answers to this research question: First, although Costa Rica ranks better on the previously mentioned indices that compare countries, it lags behind in efforts to combat human trafficking mainly due to its economic ties to and reliance on tourism. This reliance on tourism is associated with choices made by government officials for inaction. Second, another reason for low levels of prosecutions and convictions is due to the state's reliance on NGOs to shoulder the responsibility for combatting human trafficking.

Review of Methodology

This study was conducted as a mixed-methods case study on the human trafficking situation in Costa Rica. A mixed-methods, quantitative/qualitative general inquiry study provided a holistic picture through field research, observations, surveys, interviews, and an analysis of written documents. Stakeholders in Costa Rica were sought as the subjects of interviews and surveys. These individuals were able to provide their perspectives and insights in order to better understand this issue. This study was focused on policies and laws and implementation of those policies and laws by the Costa Rican government. This case study of Costa Rica was national, with three specific cities for research (San José, Puerto Limón, and Liberia) as well as other regions around the country. The sample selection was convenience sampling due to the nature of the study and the various categories of interviewees sought for

their information and perspective. This method used chain referral sampling from one interviewee to another. Access was gained through honest transparency and a promise to share results to assist in moving toward fuller compliance with minimum standards. This type of sampling was necessary due to the hard-to-find and hard-to-study population. The interviews were conducted semi-structured and in a safe environment.

Major Findings

The first hypothesis, which implicated a strong correlation between a reliance on tourism and diminished human trafficking efforts and a link between government actions and the advantages of tourism, is supported by the findings of this study. A review of the documentation, surveys, and interviews appears to support the theory that tourism and its variation of development have resulted in a ceding of the country and of the people. There is a huge influence of tourism on industry and culture. While the development of Costa Rica as a tourist paradise, a land historically known for peace and safety, has encouraged more and greater tourism, the notion of a *pura vida* lifestyle has arguably been replaced by one focused on “success” and the need to make money. Ironically, tourism and the human trafficking it brings are reshaping Costa Rica, replacing the very political and social culture which initially attracted tourists to the Costa Rican shores. While some costs of focusing on “success” include environmental damage and a growing neo-colonial enclave economy, other costs include human exploitation. Where there is a demand, there is a supply. According to those studied for this research, as the demands of tourists continue to evolve into more elaborate and sometimes darker desires, there will be industries in Costa Rica to meet them. The overwhelming majority of those interviewed for this study reported that there is a causal link between tourism and human trafficking, that tourism begets human trafficking. This assertion is supported by human

trafficking theories in the literature, such as those by Louise Shelly (2010), and by other studies on the exploitative nature of tourism, such as those by Colin Hall (1994), John Lea (1988), and Brett Matulis (2017). While tourism as a means for development remains a contested topic, some, like the state, argue for its beneficial qualities and others for its exploitative characteristics and the loss of the country's classical way of life that it brings.

The second hypothesis also appears to be supported by a review of the data and findings of this study. This one suggested that NGOs are a dominant presence in Costa Rica, that they fight for human rights and humanitarian progress, that they are often willing and able to intervene in trafficking situations, and that the government of Costa Rica can thus maintain a passive position, allowing NGOs to shoulder the responsibility for trafficking efforts. This supports theory and literature by Kaplan (2011) and Joireman (2011) on the effects of NGOs as a substitute for government. This is clearly seen in the fact that Costa Rica has no shelters for human trafficking victims that are not run by NGOs. Even the Trafficking in Persons Report noted that the only shelters were NGO-run, and that, "A quasi-governmental agency continued conducting trainings on combating child sex tourism for members of the tourism industry (2017, 138)." According to CONATT, the government's anti-trafficking organization, the majority of the programs for rehabilitation are also run by NGOs (PI, U14, CONATT representative, June 14, 2017). Both documentation and interviews showed that the government even pays the NGOs to care for rescued children to alleviate the burden placed on its own agency, PANI (U.S. Department of State 2017, 138; PI, U17, NGO official, June 19, 2017). NGOs are also the main source of training for law enforcement, are initiating the only country-level awareness campaigns besides the one from the United Nations, and are the main actors involved in street-level initiatives to counter poverty, homelessness, and other factors which lead to human exploitation.

Aside from the specific state-run anti-trafficking departments, such as OIJ and Migration, the NGO interviews revealed a far superior understanding of the legal system, the definition of human trafficking, and the law and its workings, than other interviewees, even including police officers and college professors. Individuals at government offices, hotels, and churches redirected questions concerning human trafficking to NGOs rather than the government.

Other Findings

Although the major findings of this research study do appear to support the hypotheses, there were other findings that were also impactful in comprehending possible explanations of the research question. These findings assisted in supporting the research hypotheses; however, as this study was initiated with the purpose of educating and elucidating, these other findings should also be presented, as they facilitate a complete understanding of this situation in Costa Rica and can help to formulate a solution to this problem of human exploitation.

First, the human trafficking law in Costa Rica is very specific, but it does not exactly correspond with the Palermo Protocol nor does it match the parameters of the TIP Report. For example, in Costa Rica, movement is required as a necessary component of human trafficking. As such, cases of familial abuse and exploitation where the victim does not leave his or her home would not be considered human trafficking. As well, the law is very specific in that there must be three stages for there to be trafficking. These include movement, force/fraud/coercion, and exploitation. All three must be present for a case to be a human trafficking case. Furthermore, as prostitution is legal in Costa Rica, crimes associated with prostitution are difficult to prosecute and to prove. Finally, Costa Rica has several similar crimes, such as pimping, that are often confused with human trafficking. They are also easier to prosecute, and thus are sometimes substituted for the harsher crime of trafficking. Cases are often thrown out if the victim is not

willing to stand as a witness and testify. All of this is complicated by the fact that investigations and cases can often last four to five years before making it to court.

The 2013 trafficking law thus signifies limitations rather than advancement. Throughout the interviews, it became apparent that the restrictions and formalities in the law made trafficking cases difficult to prosecute and to convict. OIJ investigators and lawyers reported that many cases were thus brought to the courts via other laws and other crimes for fear of losing a trafficking case. This is fully corroborated by the stories of the survivors at the shelter, many of whom have a claim for trafficking, none of whom have an active case as a trafficking victim. Thus, the law which was intended to better codify and solidify the state's position against trafficking in persons has, in fact, created new barriers to fighting human trafficking for law enforcement and prosecutors.

Second, awareness of human trafficking is severely lacking. Current awareness campaigns are limited to a few pamphlets and posters displayed in government offices by OIM/IOM and the United Nations. In general, the public is unaware of the crime of human trafficking, often confusing it with forced prostitution or smuggling. Even some of those chosen for interviews were unaware of the specifics of the law. Many law enforcement officers gave partial definition, and most were sure that it was not an issue in Costa Rica. The prevalence of the crime is completely unknown. Official records place 40 cases or so a year, yet there are only 10 or less cases brought to court per year. Other sources indicate that familial trafficking is very common, but no one investigates it. Overall, every interviewee gave different estimates and all reported believing that their estimates were low.

While actual numbers of human trafficking are unknown, an ongoing and widespread awareness problem persists. Through surveys and interviews, as well as through documentation

and narratives, it is clear that Costa Rica, like other countries combatting trafficking, has fallen into the “sex trafficking trap.” Even among those in Costa Rica who are most involved with this issue, the stakeholders, attention and awareness continues to center on sex trafficking and female victims. This is evidenced by the shelters and programs run by NGOs and the departments in the government which handle cases. Women and children are the assumed victims, with INAMU and PANI respectively harboring responsibility for sheltering and rehabilitation. NGO programs and shelters focus on sexually exploited victims, particularly women and girls. Costa Rica has a complete lack of support for men victims and minimum awareness and efforts for anyone suffering from labor exploitation. Even the stakeholders were unsure about any possible correlation between the massive numbers of domestic workers, particularly females from Nicaragua, and possible labor trafficking.

Third, the perceptions of those interviewed told quite a tale. Although many survey responses were heterogeneous, a few were not. For example, the vast majority agreed that Costa Rica was beautiful and hospitable. They also mostly agreed that human trafficking was a problem, but that the community is not aware of it. Some responded that the police are aware while others did not agree. However, they did generally agree that poverty was related to human trafficking. This topic also came up during the interviews on numerous occasions. For a country known for its regionally low poverty rate, the subjects of this study reportedly were very concerned with poverty in the country.¹⁷ In general, the majority of those interviewed also reported strong feelings toward law enforcement, like that police are generally lazy, underpaid,

¹⁷ As mentioned earlier, Zach Dyer (2015) noted that poverty exists in pockets in Costa Rica, that the Central Valley area does comparatively better than the rest of the country, but that both urban and rural poverty are both extreme and growing. The World Bank (2016) and a study by Booth, Wade and Walker (2015) confirm this. Costa Rica’s own INEC (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos; National Statistics and Census Institute) shows that poverty outside the Central Valley is twice as high as inside of it.

corrupt, untrained, uneducated, and without a passion for justice. Finally, they also nearly universally agreed that it was the government's job to rescue victims, rehabilitate survivors, and prosecute criminals, despite evidence to the contrary that the government is not achieving these goals.

This finding would seem to show that, in several key areas, there is a consensus on major problems and barriers. The stakeholders interviewed reported on their perceptions, knowledge, and experiences. Thus their combined foci illustrate the stance of their cohort, of those involved in the matter. The areas of contention between them show the weaknesses in their team effort. Studies on human trafficking prevention, prosecution, protection, and rehabilitation have suggested that a unified and educated force is necessary to combat this crime and overcome the barriers to rehabilitation; however, stakeholders in Costa Rica cannot universally agree on matters of importance, such as if domestic servants and sex workers are linked to trafficking, if law enforcement is aware of the issues, or if the government is doing a good job in prosecuting and protecting.

Fourth, the image of the country as exceptional is strong, and those opposed to believing it reported feelings of dismay at the lack of understanding. While this study assumed that image was important in regards to tourism on an international setting, the results seem to indicate that this image of an exceptional country of *pura vida* life and of green forests and laidback life, is also domestically ingrained. There appears to be a battle between the more progressive-minded individuals in the country who wish to face the reality of crime, modernization, and "development," and the more classically-minded *Ticos* who prefer to reiterate the exceptional status of the country and remember the 1949 reforms and to relish the status of having no army, good public healthcare, and a high literacy rate.

While this study cannot gauge the overall status of the country on all matters, the thorough historical review, the analysis of the current affairs of state, and the in-depth case study on human trafficking in Costa Rica suggest that the “age of Costa Rican exceptionalism,” whether it be based from colonial time or as a result of the 1949 Constitution and reformation, is declining. The increased extreme poverty rates, the rising inequality between the rich and poor, the gender inequality, the heavy reliance on tourism as development, and the reliance on NGOs to govern in certain areas point to a tourism-based enclave economy and an exploited neo-colonial society.

Lastly, the results of this study point to a political and social culture in turmoil, where Costa Rica is experiencing, as a country, a type of dissonance. The culture of machismo, of classic Central American heritage, is incongruent with political, social, and economic changes affecting the country. The call from the majority of those interviewed was for a new political and social culture that better fits with the currently developing world—one of civic engagement, human rights, and efficacy. However, the reality is an odd amalgamation of new-age laws and more historically gendered enforcement and implementation. This seems a likely reason that the country as a whole is struggling to combat this issue of human trafficking at the appropriate level.

Connection to Theory

As explained earlier by the conceptual framework, both theoretical and methodological tools were used to research and synthesize a system of meaning for issues of human trafficking in Costa Rica. Factors of social, cultural, economic, and political impact were combined to create a comprehensive lens by which this research could be fully studied and the research question answered. By building upon the works of authors such as Luty and Lanier (2012),

Matarrita-Cascante (2010), Hunt, Logan, & Walker (2009), Fisanick (2010), Shoaps (2013), Duong (2012), Lobasz (2009), Hodge (2014), McNiel, Held and Busch-Armendariz (2014), and Shelly (2010), this case study was able to connect with the literature and the theories of human trafficking to provide further evidence to support such theories as forwarded by the authors above. The evidence in this study supports the view that human trafficking must be viewed through a wide lens of conditions, which include migration, economic disparities, the role of government, capitalistic neoliberalism and its supply and demand focus on profits, feminization of poverty and exploitation, marginalization of members of society, the impacts of and growth of tourism and sex tourism, global transit and transportation, and political and social culture.

The United Nations and the United States have focused on prevention, prosecution, and protection associated with human trafficking around the world since the Palermo Protocol in 2000. This study provides evidence to support the view that human trafficking remains a cheap, profitable, and easily replenishable business that harms individual victims as well as the very principles of democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and countries as a whole. Like Carrier-Moisan's (2015) study in Natal, Brazil, this case study of Costa Rica noted the use of hypersexualized bodies in the sex industry and tourism. As well, in alignment with Countryman-Roswurm and Bolin's (2014) research in human trafficking, this study identified human trafficking factors. This research also incorporated the role of NGO's like the study by Bernstein and Shih (2014). The results of this study further the theory of the effects of tourism, a "hospitable tourist environment," and a tourist-based economy for human trafficking efforts. As well, data presented here support the theory that tourism-dependent countries cannot risk harming this "backbone" industry, even giving way to a "touristization" of the economy, much in agreement with the work regarding image on Costa Rica by from Frohlick and Johnston (2011).

In reviewing the situation in Costa Rica and analyzing it in light of the notions of “sexscapes” (Brennan 2004) and “tourismscales” (Lyon & Wells 2012) from the literature, data from this study would seem to suggest that both of these labels would be appropriate for Costa Rica. “Sexscapes” would include areas in Costa Rica, such as Limón, Jacó, and the *Zona Roja* in San José, where sex tourism is a major industry that shapes the area. The entire country could easily assume the label of “tourismscale,” where sex tourism, ecotourism, and community tourism control “development.” Society in Costa Rica certainly appears to yield to the demands of tourists (Mathieson & Wall 1982). After all, twelve percent of the total population works in tourism (Dyer 2016).

As evidenced and mentioned throughout, the factors of tourism, NGOs, and image were impactful on the research. Data suggest a causal link with human trafficking, as developed in the literature review. Furthermore, the themes of Exceptionalism, Image, Laws & Definitions, Tourism, Non-Governmental Organizations, Police & Crime, Prostitution, Globalization & Modernization, Awareness, and Political and Social Culture are of importance for further research on Costa Rica and for other countries struggling with suppressing human trafficking. The theory furthered by this particular study is in alignment with the general literature on the pervasive and destructive impact of human trafficking and with research on tourism “development” and the role of NGOs in governance.

Conclusions

This study has provided insights and information regarding the situation of human trafficking in Costa Rica. By providing the findings of the research, this study has also managed to pose plausible answers to the other questions proposed in Chapter 1. Why are more cases not found? Why do cases not result in conviction? They are as follows: What are the root causes of

human trafficking in Costa Rica? What role does an increased reliance on tourism play in human trafficking, if any? How do Costa Rica's position, role, and country image in Central America affect its capacity to comply with minimum standards for suppressing human trafficking?

A review of Chapters 5 and 6 and of the results above seems to answer the research question, as well as other broader questions, through the data collected, the insights gained, and the comparison of perspectives with research and statistics. The situation in Costa Rica is affected by many factors, from a heavy reliance on tourism, to the power and influence of NGOs, to a lack of awareness, the legalization of prostitution, the image of "exceptionalism," a culture influenced by machismo, and a political and social culture in turmoil. All of these work in concert to produce a less than exceptional TIP Report and a less than exemplary effort to combat human trafficking.

Implications

After a careful examination of the data, this study applied theories of human trafficking, economics, and tourism to the Costa Rican trafficking situation. It was necessary to provide evidence that indicates an economic advantage to promoting tourism over human rights and which shows that NGOs, and not the government, are currently leaders in the fight against human trafficking in Costa Rica. This particular study will help to bridge the gaps in the literature and in other research. This study and its findings will be published for public access. Furthermore, participants will receive a digital copy of this study sent to them directly so that they may benefit from its educational purposes and utilize its findings, as per the Belmont Report (1979). This particular type of case study on human trafficking has not previously been completed. This study has synthesized the data in support of a causal link between the aforementioned factors, tying human trafficking efforts by Costa Rica to the tourist industry, to

political inaction, to NGOs and their activities and responsibilities, as well as to political and social culture and a number of other factors. Prosecutions and convictions remain low, and efforts to fight modern-day slavery remain below the minimum standards as established by the United Nations and the United States Department of State.

Thus, it is the implication of this study that the notion of Costa Rica as exceptional, as a leader across Central America, at least in this case, is merely an image. In reality, Costa Rica is caught between opposing political and social cultures, between Western capitalism, classic machismo, and Costa Rica's own *Pura Vida*. The solution to successfully fighting the crime of human trafficking would be to mitigate the influence of tourism, have the state take on more responsibility in trafficking efforts, spread awareness, come to terms with the changing society, admit to the criminal challenges faced by the country, and overcome barriers to equality and inclusivity, such as gendered crimes and homophobia.

Furthermore, a review and analysis of both the Trafficker's Report and the audio of interviews with victims illustrated the severity and inhumanity of these crimes. Through these data in particular, narratives and interviews of those victimizing and those being victimized, this study was able to reach beyond the numbers and the laws to investigate all the way down to the lowest, closest level. This allowed for this particular research to analyze Costa Rica and its ability to combat human trafficking and rescue and rehabilitate survivors through a thorough investigation which spanned multiple levels.

Suggestions for Future Research

This most recent year (2017), Costa Rica scored a Tier 2 ranking on the TIP Report, which should indicate a rising effort to combat human trafficking. However, Costa Rica has

reached this level previously and fallen back down to the Watch List on two previous occasion since 2008. As such, this should not be taken as a lasting indicator of success.

In order to accurately gauge success, it is the recommendation of this study that another case study should be conducted in five years' time to ascertain any improvements. This study should be repeated as time goes on to continually check on progress in Costa Rica. Such a timetable might even help to bring attention to the issue, which is one of the missing factors in combatting the crime of human trafficking.

Furthermore, it is recommended that other sister studies should be completed in other Central American countries to determine continuity of issues as opposed to differences in suppression efforts. Particularly noteworthy would be a study in Panama of a similar type, as the two are often compared as Central America's leading nations. Such studies across Central America could offer perspectives, insights, and a greater understanding than the TIP Report can offer at this time. As the TIP Report is the only report of its kind today, studies such as this one, once compiled, would aid in determining the objectivity and utility of the TIP Report in gauging countries' efforts.

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Appendix A

Survey Instrument (English and Spanish)

(English)

Please circle the answer to the questions (A-S) based on your own opinion and understanding of the situation here in Costa Rica. Questions should be answered according to the following 1-5 scale:

1-Strongly Disagree 2-Disagree 3-Neither Agree Nor Disagree 4-Agree 5-Strongly Agree

A. Costa Rica is clean, beautiful, and hospitable.

1 2 3 4 5

B. Costa Rica is a safe place to live. “Pura Vida” seems an appropriate slogan.

1 2 3 4 5

C. People who work as domestic servants are there by choice.

1 2 3 4 5

D. People engaged in sex work are there by choice.

1 2 3 4 5

E. Human trafficking is a problem in Costa Rica.

1 2 3 4 5

F. Human trafficking is related to tourism.

1 2 3 4 5

G. Human trafficking is related to human smuggling.

1 2 3 4 5

H. Law enforcement is aware of the problem of human trafficking.

1 2 3 4 5

I. The community is aware of the problem of human trafficking.

1 2 3 4 5

J. Victims of human trafficking are mostly children.

1 2 3 4 5

K. Victims of human trafficking are mostly women.

1 2 3 4 5

L. Victims of human trafficking are mostly poor.

1 2 3 4 5

M. Human trafficking operates illegally and is separate from legal industries.

1 2 3 4 5

N. Human traffickers are men.

1 2 3 4 5

O. Human trafficking is a result of Western (USA and Europe) influence.

1 2 3 4 5

P. It is the government's job to rescue victims of human trafficking.

1 2 3 4 5

Q. It is the government's job to rehabilitate the survivors of human trafficking.

1 2 3 4 5

R. It is the government's job to prosecute the criminals in human trafficking cases.

1 2 3 4 5

S. The government is doing a good job protecting the people in Costa Rica.

1 2 3 4 5

(Spanish)

Por favor circule la respuesta de las preguntas (A-R) de su propia opinión y comprensión de la situación aquí en Costa Rica. Las preguntas deben ser contestadas de acuerdo con la siguiente escala de 1-5:

1-Totalmente en Desacuerdo

2-En Desacuerdo

3-Ni de Acuerdo ni en Desacuerdo

4-De Acuerdo

5-Totalmente de Acuerdo

A. Según su parecer, Costa Rica es limpio, hermoso y hospitalario.

1 2 3 4 5

B. Costa Rica es un lugar seguro para vivir. Le parece apropiado el lema “pura vida.”

1 2 3 4 5

C. Las personas que trabajan como sirvientes domésticos están por su voluntad.

1 2 3 4 5

D. Las personas quien trabajan en trabajo sexual están por su voluntad.

1 2 3 4 5

E. La trata humana es un problema en Costa Rica.

1 2 3 4 5

F. La trata humana está relacionada con el turismo.

1 2 3 4 5

G. La trata humana está relacionada con el contrabando de seres humanos.

1 2 3 4 5

H. La policía es consciente del problema de la trata humana.

1 2 3 4 5

I. La comunidad es consciente del problema de la trata humana.

1 2 3 4 5

J. Las víctimas de la trata humana son en su mayoría niños.

1 2 3 4 5

K. Las víctimas de la trata humana son en su mayoría mujeres.

1 2 3 4 5

L. Las víctimas de la trata humana son en su mayoría pobres.

1 2 3 4 5

M. La trata humana opera ilegalmente y está separada del comercio de las industrias legales.

1 2 3 4 5

N. Los tratantes de seres humanos son hombres.

1 2 3 4 5

O. La trata humana es el resultado de la influencia occidental (EE.UU. y Europa).

1 2 3 4 5

P. Es la responsabilidad del gobierno rescatar a las víctimas de la trata humana.

1 2 3 4 5

Q. Es la responsabilidad del gobierno rehabilitar a los sobrevivientes de la trata humana.

1 2 3 4 5

R. Es la responsabilidad del gobierno perseguir a los criminales en casos de la trata humana.

1 2 3 4 5

S. El gobierno hace un buen trabajo en proteger a la gente/la población en Costa Rica.

1 2 3 4 5

Appendix B

Interview Question Guide (English and Spanish)

(English)

PI: Timothy Adam Golob

Title: Hidden: A Case Study of Human Trafficking in Costa Rica

Potential Interview Questions (basic questions that can be tailored per interviewee)¹⁸

1. What is human trafficking?
2. What kind of problems does human trafficking create here in Costa Rica?
3. How has it affected your life? In what ways?
4. How does human trafficking differ from smuggling?
5. Why might law enforcement and the community as a whole not be aware of this crime?
6. Who are victims of human trafficking?
7. What are some of the reasons victims may be reluctant to try to escape or report the crime?
8. In what businesses or industries within your community might trafficking be occurring?
9. Why is awareness so limited?
10. What ways can you assess your community for signs of human trafficking?
11. Who are the traffickers?
12. Why do they traffic?
13. What methods are used by the traffickers to control their victims?
14. Costa Rica is seen as clean, beautiful, and hospitable. Is that your opinion?
15. Does tourism affect human trafficking? In what ways?
16. Are you aware of any NGOs in the area who help fight human trafficking or who help survivors?
17. What methods do traffickers use to recruit?

¹⁸ Some of these questions were borrowed from the International Association of Chiefs of Police and their handout on human trafficking. <http://www.theiacp.org/>

(Spanish)

PI: Timothy Adam Golob

Title: Hidden: A Case Study of Human Trafficking in Costa Rica

Potential Interview Questions (basic questions that can be tailored per interviewee)¹⁹

1. ¿Qué es la trata humana?
2. ¿Qué tipo de problemas crea la trata humana aquí en Costa Rica?
3. ¿Cómo ha afectado tu vida? ¿De qué maneras?
4. ¿Cuál es la diferencia entre la trata humana y el contrabando humano?
5. ¿Por qué la policía y la comunidad en su conjunto no pueden ser conscientes de este crimen?
6. ¿Quiénes son víctimas de la trata humana?
7. ¿Cuáles son razones de que las víctimas no escapan y a veces no informen del crimen?
8. ¿En qué empresas o industrias dentro de su comunidad podría estar ocurriendo el tráfico?
9. ¿Por qué la conciencia es tan limitada?
10. ¿De qué maneras puede usted evaluar a su comunidad en busca de signos de trata de personas?
11. ¿Quiénes son los traficantes?
12. ¿Por qué existe la trata humana?
13. ¿Qué métodos utilizan los traficantes para controlar a sus víctimas?
14. Costa Rica es visto como limpio, hermoso y hospitalario. ¿Estás de acuerdo?
15. ¿El turismo afecta la trata humana? ¿De qué maneras?
16. ¿Sabes de alguna ONG en el área que ayude a combatir trata humana o que ayude a los sobrevivientes?
17. ¿Qué métodos utilizan los traficantes para reclutar?

¹⁹ Some of these questions were borrowed from the International Association of Chiefs of Police and their handout on human trafficking. <http://www.theiacp.org/>

Appendix C

IRB Approval Letter



RESEARCH INTEGRITY AND COMPLIANCE
Institutional Review Boards, FWA No. 00001669
12901 Bruce B. Downs Blvd., MDC035 • Tampa, FL 33612-4799
(813) 974-5638 • FAX (813) 974-7091

4/24/2017

Timothy Golob
School of Interdisciplinary Global Studies
3004 Ave K NW
Winter Haven, FL 33881

RE: **Expedited Approval for Initial Review**
IRB#: Pro00029679
Title: Hidden: A Case Study of Human Trafficking in Costa Rica

Study Approval Period: 4/20/2017 to 4/20/2018

Dear Mr. Golob:

On 4/20/2017, the Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed and **APPROVED** the above application and all documents contained within, including those outlined below.

Approved Item(s):

Protocol Document(s):

[Summary Version 1.. 2-3-17.docx](#)

Consent/Assent Document(s)*:

[IRB Consent ENG Version 1.docx.pdf](#)

[IRB Consent SPA Version 1.docx.pdf](#)

*Please use only the official IRB stamped informed consent/assent document(s) found under the "Attachments" tab. Please note, these consent/assent documents are valid until the consent document is amended and approved.

It was the determination of the IRB that your study qualified for expedited review which includes activities that (1) present no more than minimal risk to human subjects, and (2) involve only procedures listed in one or more of the categories outlined below. The IRB may review research through the expedited review procedure authorized by 45CFR46.110. The research proposed in this study is categorized under the following expedited review category:

(5) Research involving materials (data, documents, records, or specimens) that have been

collected, or will be collected solely for nonresearch purposes (such as medical treatment or diagnosis).

(6) Collection of data from voice, video, digital, or image recordings made for research purposes.

(7) Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

As the principal investigator of this study, it is your responsibility to conduct this study in accordance with IRB policies and procedures and as approved by the IRB. Any changes to the approved research must be submitted to the IRB for review and approval via an amendment. Additionally, all unanticipated problems must be reported to the USF IRB within five (5) calendar days.

We appreciate your dedication to the ethical conduct of human subject research at the University of South Florida and your continued commitment to human research protections. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please call 813-974-5638.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kristen Salomon', followed by a horizontal line.

Kristen Salomon, Ph.D., Vice Chairperson
USF Institutional Review Board