Business Networks & Transnational Organizations:

The Role of Coalitions in Reducing Modern Slavery

by

BRYAN GLAVINE

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of Social and Applied Sciences

in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN HUMAN SECUIRTY AND PEACEBUILDING

Royal Roads University

Victoria, British Columbia, Canada

Supervisor: ROBERT HANLON

AUGUST 2020

COMMITTEE APPROVAL

The members of Bryan Glavine's Thesis Committee certify that they have read the thesis titled Business Networks & Transnational Organizations: The Role of Coalitions in Reducing Modern Slavery and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the thesis requirements for the Degree of MASTER OF ARTS IN HUMAN SECUIRTY AND PEACEBUILDING:

DR. ROBERT HANLON [signature on file]

DR. MARY HANLON [signature on file]

Final approval and acceptance of this thesis is contingent upon submission of the final copy of the thesis to Royal Roads University. The thesis supervisor confirms to have read this thesis and recommends that it be accepted as fulfilling the thesis requirements:

DR. ROBERT HANLON [signature on file]

Creative Commons Statement

Abstract

This study asks how coalitions of business networks and transnational organizations can minimize labour exploitation and practices of modern slavery within supply chain networks. Focusing on the Asia-Pacific region, this work offers original insight into how private sector actors are adapting to this emerging non-traditional business threat. Findings are gleaned from a series of semi-structured interviews with experts working within the field of supply chain management. Based on the data gathered, the work offers four main conclusions. First, there is a serious lack of corporate understanding around the concept of modern slavery, why it exists and how to recognize it within a firm's supply chain. Second, there are fundamental shortcomings of the laws and legislation currently in place to address modern slavery in supply chains. Third, business actors understand that modern slavery can pose a significant business risks, such as bad publicity and financial loss, which can serve as a motivator for companies to learn about modern slavery and how to implement organizational change within their networks. Finally, businesses were willing to collaborate and find solutions to modern slavery within their supply chains in a manner that was also sustainable for their companies' bottom line, and can potentially benefit from coalitions that provide training, tools and coaching to address practices in their supply chains.

Contents

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my thesis supervisor, Dr. Robert J. Hanlon of Royal Roads university and Thomson Rivers University, for the endless amount of coaching and mentorship that he provided to me throughout the process of writing this research paper. I would also like to acknowledge Dr. Mary Hanlon of Thomson Rivers University, who not only agreed to be part of my thesis committee but provided exceptional insight and expertise along the way.

Finally, I'd like to thank my friends and family who supported me throughout this process. Over the last two years there have been missed engagements and last-minute cancellations in my efforts to complete this project. There have been friends who willingly read my research to provide feedback, and family members who gave words of encouragement when I felt that I had reached my limits. I couldn't have done this without you, and I will be forever grateful.

Introduction

Although the global abolishment of legal slavery became official in 1981, as Mauritania became the last country to end this practice, slavery has never ended (Johnson, 2014). Today, slavery continues as millions of people are subjected to exploitative labour situations, often involving violence and debt bondage, commonly known as modern slavery (Mekong Club, 2017). A global problem effecting people on every continent, in 2016 an estimated 40.3 million people were living in slave like conditions (International Labour Organization and Walk Free Foundation, 2017). How does such a circumstance continue? One of many reasons is the expansion of global supply chains. Since the 1990s the link between labour abuse and global supply chains has become increasingly clear. Initially, footwear and clothing manufacturing in countries such as China came under scrutiny for links to modern slavery, however, in recent years an increasing number of industries manufacturing and sourcing practices across multiple countries have come under investigation.

This study sets out to understand how coalitions of business networks and transnational organizations can aim to reduce modern slavery within their global supply chains. Analyzing supply chain and procurement practices in the Asia-Pacific, this study asks how regional-based firms adjust policies, business practice, and implement change within their operations that can minimize the risk of modern slavery. Furthermore, the work examines the potential benefits and drawbacks of coalitions between business networks and transnational organizations in relation to reducing modern slavery in supply chains. To build this understanding, interviews were conducted with industry experts who work to reduce such practices within transnational supply chains. Additionally, discourse analysis was applied to public statements from websites, press

releases and reports, as well as available academic research on labour violations, slavery and

modern slavery, manufacturing in the Asia Pacific region, and global supply chains to provide

insight on how to address this issue. The work's guiding research questions ask:

1. What is the business case for ending modern slavery in supply chains?

2. How can coalitions between businesses and transnational organizations support

    this effort?

3. Does controlling the discourse of this issue serve as a motivation for businesses to

    act against modern slavery?

By exploring these questions, insights and recommendations can be drawn on how to

address the issue of labour violations in supply chains. In order to explore these questions, this

study commences with a brief background on global supply chains in the Asia-Pacific region, as

well as definitions that will be essential for the context of this study. This section is followed by

an in-depth literature review and a breakdown of the methodology for this research, proceeded

by the findings of this study, a discussion, and finally a conclusion that will summarize the

findings of this study and provide further recommendations.

In short, this research offers four main conclusions. First, there is a serious lack of

corporate understanding around the concept of modern slavery, why it exists and how to

recognize it within a firm's supply chain. Second, there are fundamental shortcomings of the

laws and legislation currently in place to address this issue in supply chains. Third, business

actors understand that any association with modern slavery can pose a significant business risks,

such as bad publicity and financial loss, which can serve as a motivator for companies to learn

about modern slavery and how to implement organizational change within their networks.

Finally, businesses were willing to collaborate and find solutions within their supply chains in a manner that was also sustainable for their companies' bottom line, and can potentially benefit from coalitions that provide training, tools and coaching to address modern slavery in their supply chains. Considering these findings, this study recommends further research focused on individual countries across the Asia-Pacific region be completed, to better disaggregate the causes of modern slavery in the region and provide the basis for the development of tailored solutions to identify and resolve cases of modern slavery within supply chains. As the Asia-Pacific region is comprised of 36 countries, to conduct further research in a meaningful manner, it is recommended that these studies incorporate ground level investigations into factories and sub suppliers associated with large multinational corporations. India, China and Pakistan have the highest absolute number of people living in modern slavery according the 2018 Global Slavery Index and therefore either would make for a good starting point for further research. Other countries in the region that have a high estimated prevalence of modern slavery, such as Afghanistan, Cambodia, Iran, Mongolia, Myanmar, Brunei Darussalam, Papua New Guinea, Laos and Thailand should also be studied through ground level research methods (GSI, 2018).

Background

Today, global supply chains rely heavily on production in the Asia-Pacific, the worlds largest and most diverse region, accounting for 36 countries and 56 percent of the world's population (GSI, 2018). There are several reasons for the growth of production in this area, including advancements such as technological improvements and upgraded infrastructure, to trade agreements and tariff savings. There are many advantages to this growing reliance. For companies, production in this region is often an affordable alternative to manufacturing

domestically, while countries in the Asia-Pacific region benefit from increased industrialization

and economic development (ILO, 2016). Still, many countries in this region lack the legal

framework and enforcement required to protect fundamental labour rights, leaving violations

within supply chains an on-going problem. Workers are often subject to poor working conditions

with little means of changing their situation. Furthermore, corruption is prevalent in the region.

Referencing results published by Transparency International (2017), Bajada and Shashnov

(2019) stated that police forces and legislatures were generally identified as being amongst the

most corrupt institutions in the area, and that citizens blame their governments for not doing

enough to address corruption in the region (p. 485-6). To add to these challenges, multinational

enterprises sourcing from this region often have limited visibility over their supply chains (ILO,

2016). Multinational enterprises take one of two approaches when sourcing the manufacturing of

their products in the Asia-Pacific. The first is through wholly owned subsidiaries or joint

ventures, a situation in which the company employs locals directly. The second is through

contractual relationships with suppliers. In this approach, companies contract their requirements

with a first-tier supplier to fulfill their production requirements, at which point the supplier may

reach out to a network of sub-contractors to complete the work. As the length between the

company and supplier increases, supply chain visibility decreases making it more difficult to

uncover forced labour and other forms of labour abuse (ILO, 2016).

      Despite forms of modern slavery being commonly found in the private sector, state and

military slavery exist, and are especially present in the Asia-Pacific region (Rynhart, 2020). The

Chinese government, for example, has recently come under fire for what appears to be the re-

establishment of forced labour camps, labelled "vocational education centers," claimed to

"eradicate supposed extremist tendencies by teaching detainees communist doctrine and the

Mandarin language" (Feng, 2018). These camps target minorities, particularly Uighur Muslims,

and specialize in textiles and shoemaking (Feng, 2018). Myanmar also has a history of state and

military slavery. Although the military government began to address this heavily in 2008, with a

commitment to ending slavery throughout the country, much of the problem was found in the

military itself. For many years, it had been enslaving workers from small villages to complete

infrastructure projects, such as the building of roads and bridges, as well as conscripting young

recruits for military campaigns. (Rynhart, 2020). While state and military slavery exist today

within the Asia-Pacific region, this study is focused on the private sector operating in this area.

As such, key themes related to the research include business networks, transnational

organizations, and understandings related to the very concept of modern slavery.

'Business networks' refers to the relationships between businesses that exist across the business

landscape and assumes that businesses do not exist in isolation and are dependent on other

companies within their networks (Ford, Gadde, Haknsson & Snehota. 2011). Specifically, this

study will focus on relationships between business that are working towards a common

objective, as stated by Ford et.al. (2011) "Companies do not achieve change alone, but by

working with others across the business network" (2011, p. 5). For example, the Global Business

Coalition Against Human Trafficking (GBCAT) and the Global Business Network on Forced

Labour and Human Trafficking, which will be covered in greater detail in a later section of this

study, are networks comprised of multinational and domestic companies working towards the

common objective of ending slavery. 'Transnational organizations' or 'translation actors' are

best defined by first understanding the context in which these terms derive. According to Malet

and Anderson (2017), since the early 1900's, increased globalization has led scholars to assert

that non-state actors are growing their presence in world politics. The authors asserted that

"States have delegated authority to nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) with presumed issue

expertise and with transnational private- donor bases whose primary concerns are not necessarily

state interests" (Malet and Anderson, 2017, p.3). At the same time, states have contracted other

responsibilities to private firms. In many cases, NGOs and private firms cooperate when there

are overlapping interests (Malet and Anderson, 2017)

To determine whether NGOs and private firms are transnational, it is important to

understand 'transnationalism'. According to Malet and Anderson (2017), complex

transnationalism refers to the:

> Increasing number, scope, inter-actions, and influence of transnational actors on
>
> diplomatic and governance processes where states have invited as participants, been
>
> forced to respond to, or have become reliant upon the expertise of transnational actors
>
> and where transnational actors increasingly interact directly with each other. (2017, p.5)

This understanding of complex transnationalism provides a clear framework of how states rely

on external actors for expertise, and that these actors not only engage directly with states, but

other actors with similar or varied expertise and objectives. To be considered a transnational

actor in international politics, organizations must be entitled to work through nonstate mobilizing

structures, be entities that are perceived to be beyond the state, and identify as transnational

(Malet & Andrerson, 2017).

Willet (2001) argues the term transnational is often used differently amongst academics

than government officials. This has led to some confusion around the term as diplomats tend to

use it strictly in reference to companies, while academics use it to describe several different

actors (Willet, 2001). For the purpose of this research, 'transnational' will be used in the

academic sense, to cover any private actor which may include corporations, NGOs and others.

Furthermore, 'transnational organizations' or 'transnational actors' will be used interchangeably

and can be assumed to reference a private firm, corporation, NGO or other organization that

meets the criteria set forth by Malet and Anderson (2017): that they are (1) entitled to work

through nonstate mobilizing structures, are (2) entities perceived to be beyond the state, and (3)

identify as transnational.

'Modern slavery' is somewhat more difficult to define and is one of several terms used

to describe conditions experienced by victims like those who endured slavery in the past (Kara,

2017). Other common terms for modern slavery are 'modern-day slavery' and 'contemporary

slavery' (Kara, 2017). To truly understand the term modern slavery, it is best to start with the

word 'slavery' itself. The first internationally accepted definition of slavery was provided by the

League of Nations Slavery Convention in 1926, "Slavery is the status or condition of a person

over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised." (League

of Nations, Article 1, 1926). As described by Kara (2017), this definition is tied to slavery as a

legal right of human ownership and would represent most instances of slavery before abolition in

1833. As described by Johnson (2014), the global abolishment slavery came much later in 1981

as Mauritania became the last country to abolish legal slavery. That said, slavery continues in the

present day, however, it is done completely illegally. For that reason, there are several views on

how to define it amongst the academic community. Some assert that the term 'slavery' should be

reserved strictly for traditional means of slavery such as chattel slavery, which was legal, or for

cases of characterised by severe violence and control (Kara, 2017, p.7). A second way of

defining modern slavery is by using it more as a catch-all phrase to describe the various

conditions similar to traditional slavery occurring in the world today such as forced labour,

bonded labour debt bondage and human trafficking (Kara, 2017). In fact, many of these terms

are used interchangeably. Modern slavery is commonly known as human trafficking and is

defined by the United Nations as:

> The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of
>
> 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. (UNODC, 2000)

To clarify this definition further, it is important to consider that human trafficking does not have

to include the movement of people across borders. According to Kara (2017), a person can be

trafficked within their own country. Still, the common interchanging use of these terms, whether

by academics, organizations or people in general, can cause confusion. This can also be said

about terms such as 'forced labour' which was defined by the ILO Forced Labour Convention, in

1930 as "All work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty

and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily" (C029 - Forced Labour

Convention, Article 2, 1930). There has been much debate on whether slavery and forced labour

are the same thing. Despite some differences, these terms do generally describe similar practices

(Kara, 2017).

For the purpose of this study, 'modern slavery' will be used as an umbrella term consisting of the multitude of practices currently used throughout the world that resemble conditions similar to slavery or the past. Adopting language from the International Labour Rights Organization, this paper uses 'human trafficking' and 'forced labour' interchangeably with 'modern slavery' (ILO, 2020). The following section will explore the intricate history of slavery and provide a basic framework for understanding modern slavery in its present form.

Literature Review

A complex issue, the following review has been composed to provide critical information required to understand the historical and contemporary context of slavery. The first section explores the history of slavery and the idea of ownership of another human being as an act of violence. This section is followed by an overview of modern slavery as a general concept and what it looks like in society. The literature review then explores this topic further in relation to global supply chains, laws and regulations in place to address this issue, the role of transnational actors and businesses in reducing modern slavery, as well as theory that may be useful when developing strategies to further address the issue. It is important to be aware that due to the complexity of this issue a limited amount of available research was used in this literature review.

Slavery – Violence: History to Modernity

Slavery is one of the oldest forms of violence and oppression. Keane (2004), described violence as the direct enemy of democracy. Referencing his 1996 work 'Reflections on violence', Keane described violence as "any uninvited but intentional or half-intentional act of physically violating the body of a person who previously had lived 'in peace' (2000, p.6).

Furthermore, Keane (2004) explained that when "democracies flourish, they call into question the face-value thinking about violence" (2004, p.9). In short, states determine what is acceptable violence and what is not. The concept of democracy is nothing new and dates to ancient Greece. In that same breadth, slavery has existed and can be traced through centuries to pre-historic societies (Kara, 2017). From the ancient Greeks and Romans, to the Egyptian Aztecs, slavery has been a part of many cultures and time periods. Although the term slavery has been used in many different contexts, it has most often referred to the idea of human property better known as chattel slavery (Kara, 2017). The right to own people as property was enforced by law in many societies, an enslaved person could not cease to be enslaved unless they were granted such permission by their owner. Generally, enslaved people were considered inferior people and were often acquired through military conquests (Kara, 2017). These examples provide a glimpse into the mindset of early leaders who, like many afterwards, believed that the lives of some were more valuable than others; that some were meant to be waited on, while others were meant to serve.

The practice of servitude continued throughout the ages. Drawing on European history, Bates (2001), examined the evolution of violence and discusses the change from privately facilitated violence to state facilitated violence, as increased wealth in communities and towns resulted in increased conflict. For those leading the charge in these conflicts, the key to success was to align their political power with wealthy towns. By this means, leaders were able to use resources to fight their wars and enforce their power (Bates, 2001). With the discovery of the New World and the establishment of the Atlantic trade, both rural and urban areas grew in Europe. This growth led to a boom in agriculture as urban areas relied on rural areas to supply

them with food and other agricultural needs (Bates, 2001). To keep up with this demand,

landowners expanded their operations to include specialists in several areas to improve

productivity and protect their property. This included an increase in labourers who would also

serve as security if ever the need to resolve a dispute over land or conflict arose. These labourers

served in indenture, receiving food and shelter, in exchange for their "service and for the

obligation, when called upon, to fight" (Bates, 2001, p.54). In this way, private households

became militarized, using coercion to protect their land, enhance the use of resources and grow

their wealth. Over the years as conflict arose, some landowners won and some lost. Those who

became more powerful created pacts and bonds between themselves, securing ruling lineages

and growing their political power (Bates, 2001). As the power of lineages grew, they required

more resources to finance their wars and land conquests.

     As described by Bernstein (2000), states, predominately European, in the sixteenth

century needed to find new sources of revenue which led to the looking outside their own

societies. Colonial rule began in the Caribbean and Latin America, and as the quest for riches

grew, so did the impact on the local people (Bernstein, 2000). To keep up with the labour

requirements of sugar plantations, people were enslaved and transported from West Africa to

coastal Brazil as early as 1518, but by the seventeenth century, enslaved African people were

transported to the islands of the Caribbean as well as the southern part of what is now the United

States of America (Bernstein, 2000). Colonialism was evolving and expanding its presence in

North America, as the British continued their activities. According to Shah and Adolphe (2019),

enslaved Africans arrived in what would eventually be the United States of America as early as

1619. In Virginia, the plantation economy consisting of tobacco and cotton became a flourishing

business for the British and heavily reliant on slavery and indentured labour. Although

international trade began to slow down in the latter part of the seventeenth century, the

eighteenth century would see another growth period for Europe. This expansion led to a boom in

the Atlantic slave trade (Bernstein, 2000). Known as the triangular trade, Europe would trade

guns and clothing to African countries enslaved people , those enslaved people would then be

transported to the New World to work on plantations, the products of which were brought to

Europe (Bernstein, 2000). Citing Curtin (1969), Bernstein states that that an estimated 6 million

enslaved people were removed from Africa between 1701 and 1810 (Bernstein, 2000). This

triangular trade method was organized by merchants and the process was making them wealthy.

Due to these benefits, merchants expanded their efforts across Africa and Asia to continue to fuel

the market (Bernstein, 2000). This led to many conflicts as Europe continued to expand. Many of

these conflicts were between Europeans seeking control of the resources in foreign states, while

others were between European colonizers and the inhabitants of the lands they sought to exploit

(Bernstein, 2000). Bernstein (2000) stated that despite often being supported by their respective

states, much of the conflict at this time was undertaken by European merchant companies. In

other words, conflict between European colonizers and the inhabitants of the lands they were

colonizing, was not a state led effort. In order to gain control of resources and increase their

wealth, European merchant companies were willing to engage in violence and impose their way

of life on those who did not comply. These tactics helped build the strength of colonial powers

such as Britain and France (Bernstein, 2000).

      As stated by Bernstein (2000), there were two main factors for the development of the

Atlantic slave trade. The first was the demand for certain products such as tobacco and sugar that

relied on slavery for production. The second was related to the small and resilient populations of indigenous peoples in the New World (Bernstein, 2000). Many Indigenous groups fought to resist enslavement; others died of diseases brought to by colonizers. The populations dwindled and for European merchant companies, the lack of Indigenous people remaining to force into labour led them to import labourers to meet production needs. For plantation owners in the New World, slavery was profitable as long as there was a continued source of cheap labour (Bernstein, 2000). Building the New World relied on what Acemoglu (2015), referencing his prior work, described as extractive economic institutions. These institutions created societies and allowed them to grow in an unequal way by unequivocally benefiting those in power (2015). Barbados in the 17th century, for example, was built up of a population where 80 percent of its inhabitants were enslaved. Meanwhile, approximately 40 families were the largest plantation owners (Acemoglu, 2015). These few families gained the profits from these plantations and became very rich, while most of the society in Barbados gained nothing (Acemoglu, 2015).

The beginning of the end of legal slavery can be traced back to 1807 when Britain passed the Abolition of Slave Trade Act, which outlawed the British Atlantic Slave Trade (Kara, 2017). This was followed by the banning of the slave trade in the United States Congress in 1808 (Nieman, 2020). In 1833, Britain passed the Abolition of Slavery Act, ordering gradual abolition of slavery in all British colonies, and providing compensation for those who would no longer benefit from the servitude of others (Abolition of Slavery Act, 1833). Then in 1865 slavery was banned in United States under the 13th Amendment of the Constitution (Kara, 2017). On an international scale the League of Nations adopted the Slavery Convention, abolishing slavery in

1926 (Kara, 2017), and in 1948 the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal

Declaration of Human Rights which included an article prohibiting slavery, servitude and slave

trade (UDHR, 1948). In 1981, Mauritania became the last country to end the practice of legal

slavery, and the global abolishment of slavery became official (Johnson, 2014).

Modern Slavery

Today, despite the global abolishment of forced labour, over 40 million people continue

to live under conditions of slavery. For perspective, consider the fact that in just short of a 400-

year period, 11.3 million people were taken from Africa for the slave trade and sent to Europe

and the Americas (Mekong Club, 2016). Additionally, according to Bales (2009), the average

cost of a slave over the last 3500 years was approximately 40,000 USD when adjusted to the

current value. No such capital is required today, as a victim of slavery can be purchased for

fraction of that amount, sometimes as little as 100 USD (Bales, 2009). It is important to consider

that this form of slavery, regardless of being implemented differently, is still violent and

exploitative in nature.

If slavery is the enemy of democracy, as stated by Keane (2004), then it seems odd that

today in states where democracy exist, violence such as forced labour often goes unseen and

unpunished. Furthermore, as large multinational corporations based in Western democratic states

are responsible for a large quantity of the demand that leads to labour violations in less

democratic states, how can such crimes go unaddressed? Perhaps it is as Keane (2004) described,

"that a distinctive quality of democratic institutions is their subtle efforts to draw a veil over their

own use of violence" (2004, p.2). Although Keane (2004) was referring to direct actions by the

state, it is applicable to multinational corporations based in democratic societies, as the states in which they reside are at least partly responsible for the rules that govern the actions of these businesses. Considering that it takes economic prosperity for states to flourish, it is possible to see how acts of modern slavery can be overlooked, especially when these violations are happening outside the state itself. That is not to say that multinational corporations and states do not care about these issues, but that they have often gone overlooked in favor of economic growth.

Bales (2009) explored many of the social constructs that allow slavery to prevail in modern times. When describing slavery today, Bales (2009) stated:

Slavery is not always easy to recognize, sometimes because the outer "shell" of slavery hides its inner reality. But what is the basic reality of slavery? It is a simple yet potent truth that slavery is a relationship between (at least) two people…The outcomes of slavery are exploitative: theft of labor resulting in economic gain for the slaveholder, use of the enslaved person as an item of conspicuous consumption, and the possible sexual abuse of an enslaved person. Any particular slave may fulfill one, some, or all of these outcomes for the slaveholder. (2009, p.9)

Bales (2005) began his book by providing real life examples of people that he had spoken with who are or were trapped in modern slavery in India. One man named Baldey, he explained, was a third generation bonded-labourer. Baldey, was born into slavery. His father and his grandfather before him had been enslaved against a debt that has been passed down through the generations (Bales, 2005).

Bales (2005) stated that loans and debt are a large factor in the prevailing of modern slavery today. When families take loans, they are trapped and will struggle to pay off their debt:

When a person borrows from a landlord, that person, his or her family, and all the work that all of them are capable of is simply collateral against the loan. Until the debt is repaid, the moneylender owns the family and everything they grow or produce. (2005, p.2).

As Bales (2005) points out, if the money lender has ownership over all of the output of those indebted, then it becomes impossible for someone to repay and gain their freedom (2005). Because the debt is never repaid, it gets passed down through generations or becomes the responsibility of another family member once the original owner of the debt is deceased (Bales, 2005). To clarify, this practice is illegal. Those who are bonded in this fashion have no legal requirement to repay their debt, however, because they are living in the rural countryside, have limited or no access to media or the internet, are often illiterate and have lived a life of systematic oppression, they lack awareness of the laws that should protect them (Bales, 2005).

Referencing Baldey's story again, Bales (2005) explains another phenomenon: once someone is freed, they may in fact choose to return to servitude. Despite eventually paying off his debt, Baldey was concerned with the uncertainty of life and risks such as crop failure and government extortion. Eventually he returned to his previous master and asked if he could return as bonded plowman. In this case he did not take on anymore debt but would return to a similar lifestyle to what he had before he had gained his freedom (Bales, 2005). Bales provided further exploration into the mindset of some victims of modern slavery who have been enslaved their entire lives, by describing the impact and reinforcement of inferiority throughout their lives can

have on them. Bales (2005) stated "The bonded worker is more likely to see resisting the

landlord as an act that will threaten the livelihood of his or her family than as an act of

liberation" (2005, p. 4). For those who were once free and then became enslaved, Bales (2005)

described a different challenge, that of overcoming the "crushing violence, the stunned shock, of

the total control over their lives" (2005, p.4). Through this example, the lasting impact of

conditions of modern slavery are highlighted.

Although much of this depiction of present-day slavery seems congruent with slavery of

the past, Bales (2005) does provide three ways in which modern slavery differs. The first

difference, he remarked, is that slavery is much cheaper than it has ever been (Bales, 2005, p.9).

This has led to a disposability factor; owners of enslaved people no longer see it as a major

expense and when they are done with them, they simply discard them (Bales, 2005). This brings

us to his second point which is the reduction in time that enslaved people are generally held. In

modern slavery, ownership is not necessarily for a lifetime, often it is for months or a few years

(Bales, 2005). Third, Bales (2005) described slavery as 'globalized': people enslaved today are

being used for similar purposes around the world.

What is different today, is how the enslavement of people is regulated. In the past,

slavery was similar to any other binding contract and created a relationship under the law (Bales,

2005). Nation-states determined the rules around slavery and when slavery was abolished, so too

were the laws that regulated it. Since abolition, however, slavery has continued in the shadow

economy (Bales, 2005). Bales (2005) asserts that slavery "emerges when economic vulnerability

combines with sufficient population and a lack of regulation or control over the use of violence"

(2005, p. 113). Furthermore, as people enslaved today are often kidnapped and trafficked, they

are treated as an illegal commodity. For this reason, slaveholders and traffickers will often go

through great lengths to conceal their operations (Bales, 2005). The work of Bales (2005) is

powerful as it provides contemporary examples of how practices of slavery exists post-abolition.

Despite laws in place to protect vulnerable people, illegal actions are taking place and preying on

vulnerable people.

Modern Slavery and Supply Chain Management in the Asia Pacific

Now that a clear understanding of modern slavery has been established, it is important to

understand how this issue is exists with the context of supply chains, specifically in the Asia-

Pacific. Supply chain management can be defined as:

> …a set of approaches utilized to efficiently integrate suppliers, manufacturers,
>
> warehouses, and stores so that merchandise is produced and distributed in the right
>
> quantities, to the right locations and at the right time in order to minimize system-wide
>
> costs while satisfying service level requirements of the customers in the entire supply
>
> chain. (Mehta, 2004, p.842)

Understanding this definition is important as slavery plays a role in the production and

distribution of goods on a global scale. That is not to say that it is being used intently by supply

chain management experts, however that it is an issue that manifests within supply chains and

therefore is a reality that supply chain management experts must consider in the development of

their strategies.

Although there are different forms of modern slavery, forced labour exploitation

accounted for 24.9 million people entrapped in slavery in 2016, 16 million of which are

exploited by the private sector (ILOWFE, 2017). Forced labour includes victims in the private

sector, public sector, and in forced sexual exploitation (ILOWFE, 2017). Although men are susceptible to modern slavery practices, women and girls are disproportionately victimized and accounted for 71% of the 40.3 million people living in modern slavery in 2016 (ILOWFE, 2017). Modern slavery appears to be concentrated in regions with poor economic development, repressive regimes and conflict. Africa, Asia and the Pacific Region are listed as areas where forms of modern slavery is most prevalent (ILOWFE, 2017).

According the Global Slavery Index (GSI) (2018), Asia and the Pacific accounts for 56% of the global population, of which 24.9 million people in 2016 were estimated to be living in conditions of slavery. Approximately 4 out of every 1000 people are subject to forced labour exploitation in this region and debt bondage accounts for over half of all forced labour exploitation (GSI, 2018). Although many countries in the regions have populations affected by modern slavery, China, along with India and Pakistan have the highest absolute number of people living under conditions of modern slavery (GSI, 2018). For example, 2.8 out of every 1000 people in 2016 were victims of modern slavery in China. The Chinese Ministry of Public Security (MPS) reported investigating 1,004 cases of human trafficking in 2016, of which 45 were forced labour cases (GSI, 2018). In that same year, 19 individuals were convicted of labour trafficking, while 1,302 others were convicted of exploitation; however, the type of exploitation is unclear (DOS, 2017).

Much of China's forced labour can be attributed to the country's economic development in the last 50 years, where it has become a leader in fabricating products that are exported globally. In recent years, the electronics sector has gained notoriety with forced labour reported in factories supplying major brands such as Apple and Acer, among others (GSI, 2020). The

Taiwanese firm Hon Hai, better known as Foxconn, for example, is the world's largest electronics manufacturer and largest private sector employer in China (Hillie, 2019). The company is perhaps most widely known as the main manufacturer of Apple's iPhone. Foxconn and Apple came under scrutiny in 2010 after 18 migrant workers attempted suicide at Foxconn facilities in and near Shenzhen, resulting in 14 deaths (Pun et.al 2016). The workers had been subject to excessive overtime and poor labour conditions, a common reality for migrant workers who are often deprived of fundamental rights and receive little labor protection (Pun et.al 2016). Apple has since implemented more stringent monitoring procedures to reduce this type of work environment; however, Apple is only one of several companies putting pressure on Foxconn and similar suppliers to provide mass manufacturing of electronics quickly and cheaply (Pun et.al 2016). As the global demand for electronics increases, the conditions in which electronics are manufactured becomes an increasingly relevant and important topic.

Other industries have also gained attention for poor labour practices. In the sugarcane industry, for instance, many of the 50,000 illegal Vietnamese workers in China's southern Guangxi province are presumed to have been smuggled into the country and forced to work. Despite these examples, the issue of slavery in China is possibly worse than it appears as there are data limitations in the region (Economist, 2017).

Gold, Trautrims, and Trodd (2015) stated that industries such as agriculture, mining and textile manufacturing, among others within developing countries, are susceptible to practices of modern slavery, and many commodities sold in wealthy states are a product of supply chains that have been affected by forced labour. These are not simply one-off instances of labour abuse, India's massive brickmaking industry for example relies on whole families working in bonded

labour (Economist, 2018). Furthermore, modern slavery is difficult to detect in supply chains, not only due to the complexity of supply chains, but because perpetrators are reaping the profits and therefore making strong efforts to conceal the origins of commodities made through forced labour (Gold et al., 2015). The authors claimed that these commodities are often mixed with commodities that are free of forced labour resulting in increased difficulty in the identification of products affected by slavery (Gold et al., 2015).

In addition to the challenges of identifying modern slavery in supply chains, the authors argued that insufficient research and potential neglect share the blame for this continued practice (Gold et al., 2015). Gold et al. (2015) concluded that a new theory in supply chain management is needed to address modern slavery along with new indicator systems that consider cultural and geographical context. Furthermore, the authors argued that these practices are likely to continue until the legal and reputational risks to companies associated with modern slavery increase.

Hanlon (2018) also identified human trafficking as a neglected issue that has only recently gained industry attention (p. 5). Despite this, in his assessment of human trafficking and the mitigation of business risk in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, Hanlon (2018) argued that "globalization has placed new pressures on companies to address serious human rights issues in their supply chains" (2018, p. 5). Furthermore, Hanlon (2018) argued that businesses who fail to take human rights issues seriously, risk negative impact to their bottom line. To address the issue of human trafficking in the MENA region, Hanlon (2018) stated that a multi-stakeholder approach of government, business, and civil society is required (2018, p. 11).

Laws to Combat Modern Slavery

Citing a 2017 survey by the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply, the Economist (2018) reported that "only 6% of managers at British firms were certain their supply chains are untainted by modern slavery" (para. 6). This is an alarming statistic and demonstrates the severity of this issues. That said, despite such a bleak report, there is proof that significant efforts have been made by some countries to further address this issue from a legal perspective. Since 2010, two pieces of legislation have been passed, one in the United States and one in the United Kingdom, which have set an example for other countries to follow and have had a ripple effect on global supply chains.

The first is the California Transparency in Supply Chains Act of 2010, which went into effect in January 2012. This Act requires any retailer or manufacturer that operates in the state of California, with an annual worldwide gross receipts exceeding $100 million, to complete and post a disclosure statement on their website outlining the company's efforts to eliminate slavery from its supply chain for tangible goods offered for sale (Lupo, Bruno, Pulliam, 2012). As stated by the State of California Department of Justice, to be considered compliant:

…a company must disclose to what extent, if any, it:

1. Engages in verification of product supply chains to evaluate and address risks of human trafficking and slavery. The disclosure shall specify if the verification was not conducted by a third party.

2. Conducts audits of suppliers to evaluate supplier compliance with company standards for trafficking and slavery in supply chains. The disclosure shall specify if the verification was not an independent, unannounced audit.

3. Requires direct suppliers to certify that materials incorporated into the product comply with the laws regarding slavery and human trafficking of the country or countries in which they are doing business.

4. Maintains internal accountability standards and procedures for employees or contractors failing to meet company standards regarding slavery and trafficking.

5. Provides company employees and management, who have direct responsibility for supply chain management, training on human trafficking and slavery, particularly with respect to mitigating risks within the supply chains of products. (California Legislature, 2010)

Although the Act requires businesses to disclose their efforts to eradicate slavery for their supply chains, it does not require businesses to stop operations with suppliers that have been connected to human trafficking or slavery. Additionally, injunctive relief, a court order which requires an organization to refrain from doing a specified act, is the sole penalty outlined for those who fail to comply (Lupo et. al, 2012).

The second influential law since 2010 is the UK Modern Slavery Act of 2015. This Act includes a provision on transparency in supply chains and demands that any company conducting business in the UK, with global turnover of £36 million pounds or more, must publish a statement on their website that outline the steps the company has taken to ensure that there is no slavery in their supply chain (Parliament of the United Kingdom, 2015). The Modern Slavery Act 2015 does not dictate exactly what a statement must include (Parliament of the United Kingdom, 2017). That said, it does provide a list of what companies should aim to include:

5.2 A statement should aim to include information about:

a. the organisation's structure, its business and its supply chains;

b. its policies in relation to slavery and human trafficking;

c. its due diligence processes in relation to slavery and human trafficking in its

business and supply chains;

d. the parts of its business and supply chains where there is a risk of slavery and

human trafficking taking place, and the steps it has taken to assess and manage

that risk;

e. its effectiveness in ensuring that slavery and human trafficking is not taking

place in its business or supply chains, measured against such performance

indicators as it considers appropriate;

f. the training and capacity building about slavery and human trafficking available

to its staff.

5.3 The organisation should paint a detailed picture of all the steps it has taken to address

and remedy modern slavery, and the effectiveness of all such steps. (Parliament of the

United Kingdom, 2015)

Similar to the California Transparency in Supply Chains Act, the UK Modern Slavery Act does

not require businesses to make change, as long as it completes the statement, it remains

compliant. If a company fails to publish a statement, the Secretary of State may seek an

injunction through the High Court; however, legal compliance has no bearing on how well or

detailed the statement is written. A company is within their rights to state that they are making no

efforts to address slavery. Under the section labelled 'Failure to Comply' it states that "It will be

for consumers, investors and Non-Governmental Organizations to engage and/or apply pressure

where they believe a business has not taken sufficient steps" (California Legislature, 2010).

Whether current legislation against forms of modern slavery is having the desired effect is challenging to determine. The impact of the UK Modern Slavery Act for example may be felt differently across sectors. For the grocery businesses the impact has perhaps not been as powerful as had been expected (Tatum, 2020). Although some within the industry have stated that the Act has brought more awareness to the issue and has resulted in some retailers publishing a human right policy for the first time; others, have asserted that not all retailers fulfilling their duties (Tatum, 2020). Quoting a member of Anti-Slavery International, Tatum (2020) revealed that two thirds of businesses are not fully complying with the Act. Furthermore, citing an independent review "the potential victims identified in the UK had more than doubled since the legislation was passed, from 3,266 in 2015 to 6,993 in 2018 (Tatum, 2020). The California Transparency Act has endured similar issues. Koekkoek et. al (2017), explained that despite a generally high level of basic compliance to publish information about action or inaction against labour issues in their supply chains, the quality of information provided varies by company and is often is vague. Furthermore, there is little evidence to show that consumer purchasing habits have changed as a result the new measures (Koekkoek et. al, 2017).

Measuring the impact of these Acts outside of the UK and United States is difficult as well. According the 2018 GSI, the methodologies and expanded data sources make comparing past result to present result challenging. For example. in the 2016 GSI, 18.3 million people were estimated to be in slavery on any given day in India. However, the 2018 GSI used a different measure and estimated the number of people in slavery over a five-year period. This resulted in a much lower number of eight million people (GSI, 2018).

Transnational Actors and Business Coalitions against Slavery

Despite the obstacles described above, there are many companies committed to reducing

modern slavery. The Global Business Coalition Against Human Trafficking (GBCAT), with

offices in North America, Europe and Asia, for instance, is made up of prominent multinational

corporations including Google, Microsoft Corp., The Coca Cola-Co., and others (GBCAT,

2018). The companies in this coalition have made a commitment to change and, in some cases,

have dealt with issues of slavery and labour violations themselves. For example, in 2010, the

New York Times reported that Microsoft supplier KYE Systems Corp., was found in violation of

labour laws, as young employees were being forced to work excessive overtime in two Chinese

factories. An investigation by Microsoft into factories came as a result of reports from a U.S

labour rights group that claimed the factories had been hiring underage workers and subjecting

them to abusive labour standard for years (Barboza, 2010). It is unclear whether this event is

directly related to Microsoft's decision join GBCAT. In any case, Microsoft's action to

investigate aligns well with the coalition which was formed in 2010 and has a stated mission to

"harness the power of business across all sectors to prevent and reduce modern slavery, and

support survivors, through collaboration, guidance, and shared resources" (GBCAT, 2018).

Through a collaboration with transnational organizations such as Alliance 8.7, the International

Organization for Migration - UN Migration, the International Labour Organization, the

Responsible and Ethical Private Sector Coalition against Trafficking (RESPECT), and others,

GBCAT has developed a research map for businesses that tracks emerging anti-slavery

initiatives and consolidates available resources for businesses Furthermore, in 2017, GBCAT

announced the appointment of Business for Social Responsibility (BSR) as their new Secretariat

(GBCAT, 2018). BSR is a global non-profit organization that conducts research and provides

consultancy services to companies around the world (https://www.bsr.org). In a statement

released by BSR Director Peter Nestor, the organization identified three main objectives: 1)

Provide space for companies to share best practices; 2) Generate cross-industry case studies; and

3) Provide a platform for public engagement and awareness raising (Nestor, 2017).

Another example of business and transnational organizational collaboration is the Global

Business Network on Forced Labour and Human Trafficking, established by the International

Labour Organization (ILO). Created in response to corporate requests, this network aims to

provide essential data, training programs, and other tools to assist businesses in their efforts to

reduce forced labour and human trafficking (ILO, 2017). This network reaches 187 countries and

brings together a global network of governments, worker, and employee organizations (ILO,

2017). One initial focus of this organization will be to ensure fair recruitment by expanding the

"fair recruitment corridors" initiative created by the ILO and partner organizations in South Asia

and the Middle East (ILO, 2017).

Coalitions such as these demonstrate the desire for businesses, governments,

nongovernmental organizations, and industry experts to work together to reduce slavery. From

anti-slavery initiatives formed combine business knowledge and address key challenges, to

training programs and tools created by international organizations in response to corporate

requests, coalitions have already made efforts towards creating change and addressing modern

slavery.

Theory: Professional Networks and Coalitions

To gain an understanding on the effectiveness of these coalitions, Henriksen and

Seabrooke's (2016) theory on transnational organizing and issue-control can be utilized.

Henriksen and Seabrooke (2016) explored the competition and coordination between

professional and organizational networks in the attempt to control issues. Providing a case study

on issue-control and network management in relation to transnational environmental

sustainability certification as a form of market governance, the authors claimed that

"transnational organizing takes place within professional and organizational networks that are

analytically distinguishable and productively thought of as operating at two levels with room for

cross-level interactions" (Henriksen & Seabrooke, 2016, p.723). Furthermore, they introduced

the term "issue professionals," identifying these actors as subject matter experts that move

between professional and organizational networks. The authors claimed that issue professionals

hold considerable influence over how issues are treated and are more important than

organizational mandates (Henriksen & Seabrooke, 2016). In subsequent research, the authors

further explored the concept of issue control and examined several transnational cases to gain

perspective on how professional networks attempt to define and control transnational issues

(Seabrooke & Henriksen, 2017).

The importance of issue professionals and networks has not been overlooked by scholars

focused on labour issues. From interviews with four experts on tackling slavery in the grocery

industry, Tatum (2020), identified internal subject matter expertise as a means of mitigating risk.

These subject matter experts, the author stated, would be different than other internal ethical

trade managers, who oversee thousands of suppliers, as they could be focused on working with

external specialists and setting company priorities. Tatum also addressed the importance of

collaboration. According to one expert, if companies really want to reduce modern slavery in

their supply chains, they must collaborate and put aside the desire to compete (Tatum, 2020).

Modern Slavery as a Violent Social Construct

Based on this selective literature review, it is clear that modern slavery is a violent social construct and that it remains a prevalent issue that will require a collaborative effort to reduce and ultimately eliminate. In reviewing the history of slavery, this literature review sought to provide context and understanding of the violent nature of ownership of people. Despite the end of legal slavery, more people than ever are living in slave like conditions and the use of global supply chains to service the needs of consumers are a major contributor to this issue, especially in the Asia-Pacific region. Although consumers have come to demand more from the brands they purchase and certain laws have been passed to address modern slavery, the issue is far from resolved, as the ability to detect labour abuse and enforce change remains limited. Multinational corporations are growing more aware of modern slavery and the need to address it in their supply chains but the motivation to act and strategies to create change are still far from resolving this issue completely. When businesses partner with transnational organizations to leverage expertise, however, they are better equipped to become advocates for the elimination of modern slavery and address labour violations in their supply chains. For that reason, the methodology for this study was built on exploring further the potential of these partnerships and asking experts for their input on what the next steps towards eliminating modern slavery throughout Asia might be.

Methodology of Study

Overview

The purpose of this discourse analysis is to explore and understand how coalitions of business networks and transnational organizations can aim to reduce slavery by addressing this

issue in global supply chains in the Asia-Pacific region. Initially, when deciding on the scope of

this research, it seemed practical to focus on individual countries in the Asia-Pacific region in

order to create a more focused study. However, after commencing this research, it became

apparent that disaggregating modern slavery issues in supply chains by specific countries would

be challenging and futile. Instead, focusing on networks was a more reasonable approach for the

purpose this study and to focus on regional trends.

To grasp the size and scope of supply chains in the Asia Pacific region, consider that in

2014, approximately 70% of the world's container freight traffic, passed through ports is this

region (Hong et. al., 2014). Due to advancements in manufacturing, communications

technologies and the evolution of international trade agreements such as the North American

Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and trading blocs such as the European Union, the Association

of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC),

world markets have become increasingly globalized (Banomyong, 2010). As a result of the

evolution from local and national markets to globalized markets, companies have more

competition than ever before. McMullen (1996) explained that companies are constantly striving

to maximize their return on investment to remain competitive. To achieve this there are many

factors that companies need to consider, one of which is how to reduce costs while increasing

efficiency within their supply chains (McMullen, 1996). At the same time, managers and

procurement specialists within these companies face pressure to balance costs with service and

quality levels. Therefore, managers must make strategic decisions to ensure they create the best

value for the companies they work for (McMullen, 1996). Despite the age of this article, the

requirement for companies to compete remains true. This feeds into the appeal of sourcing and

manufacturing in countries in the Asia Pacific region, as many of these countries are recognized as high quality, low cost providers (Banomyong, 2010).

This research sought to examine the potential role of business actors in reducing slavery by focusing on organizations working within the Asia Pacific region, whether they be intergovernmental organizations, private sector organizations, or international non-governmental organizations working, with a mandate of improving labour conditions and reducing labour violations. This thesis research draws on Cheek's (2004) definition of discourse analysis:

> Discourse analysis uses "conventional" data collection techniques to generate texts able to be analyzed discursively from a particular understanding of discourse analysis and driven by a certain theoretical frame. These texts could be interview transcripts, newspaper articles, observations, documents, or visual images. These would need to be justified in terms of why they were chosen, how they were collected, and so on. (Cheek, 2004, p.1145-6).

Selecting this definition of discourse analysis was important for two reasons. First, due to the time limitations and possible scope for this research project, it was necessary to pair firsthand research, such as interviews, with available academic literature and public statement in order to provide a wholistic study. Second, one objective of this study is to better understand discourse control as it relates to slavery in supply chains. Analyzing how this subject is represented through multiple methods of data collection provides a better representation of the importance of discourse control and the motivational factors for companies to control the discourse around the labour violations as they relate to their business dealings.

Data Collection

The data for this study was collected through empirical research, qualitative documents and qualitative interviews. Empirical research for this study included the gathering of literature such as peer-reviewed articles and theoretical frameworks available on slavery and the means of addressing this issue. This helped to establish a clear picture of the current situation and potential avenues for future research. Next, qualitative interviews were conducted with six industry experts who have worked directly with businesses that have taken steps towards ending slavery. Additionally, qualitative documents, such as public statements released by corporations and non-governmental organizations, were analyzed to support the findings of the interviews and provide additional insight into the current challenges and potential solutions for addressing slavery in supply chains.

Creswell and Creswell (2018) stated that the purpose of qualitative research is to "purposefully select participants or sites (or documents or visual material) that will best help the researcher understand the problem and the research question" (2018, p. 185). This was particularly important for the interview portion of this research. As the purpose of this research was to understand the business case for ending slavery in supply chains; how coalitions between businesses and transnational organizations can support this effort; and how controlling the discourse around this issue can motivate businesses to act, it was imperative to identify research participants who are able to speak to the strategies available to companies faced with supply chain challenges related to slavery.

For the purpose of this study, semi-structured interviews were utilized to avoid limiting the scope of findings as slavery is an ever-evolving issue. A semi-structured interview takes places when one person attempts to elicit information from another through verbal exchange.

Although a list of questions is generally prepared by the interviewer to guide the discussion, there is a significant amount of space left open for participants to explore areas and issues that they feel are most relevant to the topic of discussion (Clifford et al., 2016). Semi-structured interviews are often referred to as informal or conversational interviews and fall in the middle of the spectrum of interviews: structured, semi-structured and unstructured (Clifford et al., 2016). As described by Dunn (2005) "this form of interviewing has some degree of predetermined order but still ensures flexibility" (2005, p.80). For these reasons, semi-structured interviews are very popular and have been noted as the most common interview technique used in qualitative research (Taylor, 2005). As stated by Kallio, Pietila, Johnson and Docent, when referencing Gallette (2012):

> One of the main advantages is that the semi-structured interview method has been found to be successful in enabling reciprocity between the interviewer and participant, enabling the interviewer to improvise follow-up questions based on participant′s responses. (Kallio et al., 2016)

Kallio et al. (2016), offer a systematic methodological review to develop a semi-structured interview guide framework with the intention of improving the reliability of qualitative research. According to this review, semi-structured interviews consist of a main theme and follow-up questions. Generally, all participants are questioned on the main theme, often starting with an icebreaker and then progressing to issue-related questions that are both familiar to the participant and central to the study (Kallio et al., 2016). Follow-up questions are then asked to help clarify main theme questions, or dive deeper into a participant's response. These questions can be pre-designed or spontaneous and can consist of both verbal and non-verbal probing techniques.

According to the findings of this study, when constructing an interview guide, the interviewer should strive to achieve balance between main theme and follow-up questions. A key factor to achieving this balance is focusing on main theme questions and using follow-up questions sparingly to avoid leading participants (Appendix B).

The number of interview participants for this research was also an important consideration. The original aim was to conduct between 10 qualitative interviews with participants who represent businesses or business networks that have already taken steps to reduce modern slavery within their supply chains. Selecting this sample size was important as it needed to be large enough to provide multiple perspectives, while still being manageable within the timeframe allotted to complete this study. Additionally, convincing business professionals to agree to such interviews was challenging as many declined based on interest or time to participate. Therefore, it made sense to expect that only a small number of the potential participants contacted would agree to be interviewed. Upon commencing this research, connecting with transnational organizations or ethical consultancy groups for additional insight proved to be a more attainable strategy. This approach provided robust insight into the challenges that businesses face when addressing slavery in their supply chains, and the growing but still limited set of solutions available to them. In the end, 6 participants were interviewed for this study. This was challenging to achieve. Over the course of five months in 2019, over 20 potential participants were contacted via LinkedIn, email, and website contact inquiries. Although the professionals interviewed in this study were eager and willing to get involved, many other requests were met with no reply or polite decline. For those who did agree to be part

of this study, some chose to remain anonymous. For those participants, necessary identifiers were removed that could have left the them exposed.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Data analysis was a non-linear process. As this research included data collection from interviews, documents and relevant available research, analysis was ongoing throughout the research and writing process. During the interview phase of this research, information was collected and then compared to information found in qualitative documents to obtain a holistic understanding of what the organization's participants represented and provide additional context to the information they provided. Furthermore, by comparing these findings with available research already completed on this topic, trends and commonalities were identified to further assist in answering the research question.

Throughout the research process, considering potential ethical issues was important, not only to protect the participants and the companies and organizations they represent, but to protect the integrity of the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Of the data collected for this research, it was the qualitative interviews which presented the most likelihood of encountering ethical issues. As outlined in Royal Roads University's *Research Ethics Policy*, it was vital to ensure that research activity conformed to three main guiding principles: 1) Respect for Persons, 2) Concern for Welfare, and 3) Justice (Royal Roads University, 2011). When approaching potential participants, the objective of this study was clearly represented, and appropriate consent was obtained when a participant volunteered information, as outlined in the *Research Ethics Policy*. During the interviews, participants were encouraged to speak freely, and data was collected in its raw form. Data from participant interviews was stored in a secure location using

encryption and password protection. Finally, all data collected during this research will be destroyed within seven years of completion of this study.

Findings

This research offers four main findings. First, there is a serious lack of corporate understanding around the concept of modern slavery, why it exists and how to recognize it within a firm's supply chain. Second, there are fundamental shortcomings of the laws and legislation currently in place to address forms of modern slavery in supply chains. Third, business actors understand that slavery can pose a significant business risks, such as bad publicity and financial loss, which can serve as a motivator for companies to learn about this issue and how to implement organizational change within their networks. Finally, businesses were willing to collaborate and find solutions to modern slavery within their supply chains in a manner that was also sustainable for their companies' bottom line, and can potentially benefit from coalitions that provide training, tools and coaching.

To understand where these findings come from, it is first important to grasp the entwined factors of addressing forms of modern slavery in supply chains that industry experts interviewed for this research identified. For the purpose of this study, these factors have been divided into the following sections: 1) corporate understanding of modern slavery; 2) shortcomings of laws and legislation 3) business risk as a motivation for change; 4) coalitions for change.

Corporate Understanding of Modern Slavery

In order to address the issue of modern slavery in supply chains in the Asia-Pacific region, businesses must first recognize its existence and understand what qualifies as forced

labour. Interviewees noted that businesses are often unaware of labour practices and conditions

associated with modern slavery and how they should monitor their supply chains to identify

these issues. This lack of understanding, participants explained, can be attributed to multiple

factors but perhaps starts with the varying, sometimes vague definitions of terms such as

'modern slavery' and 'forced labour.' Of the six participants interviewed, three identified

language as an obstacle for businesses. Ambere Porter of Action Coalition on Human

Trafficking (ACT), a Canadian organization focused on education, advocacy, agency

collaboration and victim assistance, highlighted that it is the absence of consistency around terms

in both legal and informal use that cause problems, and suggested not using the term modern

slavery at all as definitions vary by country (A. Porter, personal communication October 7,

2019). Instead, Porter suggested sticking to a more common and accepted term such as 'human

rights,' as businesses can agree that civil societies and court systems are necessary for businesses

to be successful. This suggestion aligns with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human

rights, which state that "Business enterprises should respect human rights. This means that they

should avoid infringing on the human rights of others and should address adverse human rights

impacts with which they are involved" (OHCHR, 2011, p. 13). Another expert, who will be

referred to as 'Anonymous Interviewee 1' and works directly with companies to build

sustainability strategies and supply chain improvement programs in Southeast Asia, stated that

businesses are searching for the 'line in the sand' (Anonymous Interviewee 1, personal

communication, October 9, 2019). The challenge for companies, the participant described, is

defining what constitutes forced labour, and what exactly companies should be looking for in

their supply chains. This challenge, the participant asserted, is more prevalent among 2nd and 3rd

tier companies, that despite being large multinationals, do not have the dedicated resources necessary to understand and address the issue fully (Anonymous Interviewee 1, personal communication, October 9, 2019). This is made even more difficult, as forced labour is rarely described well enough in the laws of the exporting countries for the companies importing to know what, if any, action to take (Anonymous Interviewee 1, personal communication, October 9, 2019).

In addition to language, this participant asserted that senior managers of large companies rarely see the factory floor of their suppliers (Anonymous Interviewee 1, personal communication, October 9, 2019). This is an important challenge to overcome, the participant asserted, as the synthesized reports that senior managers receive keep them disconnected from what is really taking place in factories (October 9, 2019). Additionally, this raises the question of how much information is flowing from the factory floor to the purchasing company. If senior management does not have a clear understanding of the issues, addressing these issues is difficult (Anonymous Interviewee 1, personal communication, October 9, 2019). How much information is flowing down to the factory floor from headquarters is also important. As stated by Tatum (2020), policies need to be understood throughout a company. Key employees need to understand their roles in preventing labour violations. It is one thing for a decision to be made headquarters, however, Tatum (2020) asserted that the strategy must be communicated properly, and training provided to make change at the ground level.

Beyond the basis of understanding, Porter asserted that companies are unsure of their responsibilities to address these issues in their supply chains. This is not just from a legal sense, but also in terms of what is society deems acceptable, or in other words, what is the

responsibility to be ethical (A. Porter, personal communication, October 7, 2019). Another

participant who will be referred to as 'Anonymous Interviewee 2' and is a director at an

intergovernmental development organization that specializes in factory efficiency and

productivity improvement, argued that despite it being possible for businesses to take

responsibility for the entirety of their supply chains, consumers are not demanding it, and

without that pressure it is unlikely that businesses will go that far (Anonymous Interviewee 2,

personal communication, November 6, 2019). This participant explained that there is more

pressure to be ethical now than in the past, and this is reflected in the surge of Corporate Social

Responsibility (CSR) initiatives launched by companies. That said, CSR departments are often

working with a limited budget and with so many competing buzz issues, companies are

balancing priorities. For that reason, companies sometimes end up dropping the ball on labour

issues in their supply chains (Anonymous Interviewee 2, personal communication, November 6,

2019). For those companies whose CSR teams remain focused on forced labour in their supply

chains, if these ethical principles are not reflected in a company's procurement practices, then the

impact is limited (Anonymous Interviewee 1, personal communication, October 9, 2019). As

Anonymous Interviewee 1 explained, procurement teams are always seeking new places to

source products, with a focus on quality and low pricing (personal communication, October 9,

2019). Depending on the size and scope of the company though, buyers are often limited to

simply asking factories whether they use forced labour, as they do not have the resources to visit

the factories in person (Anonymous Interviewee 1, personal communication, October 9, 2019).

Additionally, as the reward systems in place for procurement teams are often tied to saving

companies money versus achieving ethical goals, further investigation into the labour practices

of factories is limited (Anonymous Interviewee 1, personal communication, October 9, 2019).

Furthermore, even if training is provided to improve procurement practices, getting buy-in from

staff can be challenging for companies if proper reward systems are not in place (Anonymous

Interviewee 1, personal communication, October 9, 2019).

For larger companies with resources to complete in-person assessments with their

primary suppliers or potential suppliers, other challenges arise. One challenge as described by

Anonymous Interviewee 1, is that assessment professionals, when choosing factories to partner

with, have a limited number of options to choose from and have the burden of defining what

qualifies as forced labour (Anonymous Interviewee 1, personal communication, October 9,

2019). Because there is pressure to identify suitable factories so that production can begin, there

is potential for skewed assessments, as to achieve their own targets, assessors are incentivized to

find suitable suppliers (Anonymous Interviewee 1, personal communication, October 9, 2019).

Additionally, even when companies assess their primary suppliers, there is still the question of

sub-suppliers. This ties back to the earlier question of "what is the responsibility to be ethical?"

As this participant explained further, if this question is asked to NGOs the answer is likely that

companies should be responsible for the whole supply chain (Anonymous Interviewee 1,

personal communication, October 9, 2019). This poses a problem for businesses, not only due to

the above-mentioned challenges, but because ethical supply chain management is not their sole

priority. From a business perspective there are always other pressing matters to address

(Anonymous Interviewee 2, personal communication, November 6, 2019).

Aside from procurement practices, there are also fundamental challenges that exist at the

supplier level that may not be a direct result of the clients they serve. Anonymous Interviewee 2

stated that the reality is simply that many factories are poorly run (Anonymous Interviewee 2, personal communication, November 6, 2019). This participant explained that this is often caused by inexperience running productive factories or a lack of understanding around the metrics and management requirements for factories to be efficient. These factories are more prone to issues of forced labour and exploitation as they are trying to address low profitability (Anonymous Interviewee 2, personal communication, November 6, 2019). That said, according to Anonymous Interviewee 2, even in the case of well-run factories, problems can arise. For these factories, the issue is usually related to the recruitment of labour, which often comes from third-party recruiters. Third-party recruiters, the participant stated, often hold passports or charge workers high fees for finding them jobs, leaving these workers in a situation of bonded labour (Anonymous Interviewee 2, personal communication, November 6, 2019). Tatum (2020), found similarities when interviewing field experts, who stated that recruitment agencies can be the weak spot in supply chains, especially those who require fees from workers. Ideally, recruitment agencies would have to commit to not charging fees to workers looking for job, however, experts stated that due to multiple agents, language barriers and informal payment methods, enforcing such a commitment is complex (Tatum, 2020).

Tied to the procurement practices and priorities of large multinationals is the effect of their decisions on suppliers. Sarah Carpenter of Assent Compliance, a data management company that specializes in supply chain transparency, stated that buyers put pressure on suppliers to discount pricing, suppliers then must find that discount in their supply chain - the result often hits workers directly (S. Carpenter, personal communication, April 19, 2019). Why are workers so heavily effected? The reason as one participant explained, is that for many

factories, overhead is mostly defined by the clients they serve (Anonymous Interviewee 2,

personal communication, November 6, 2019). This means that often the cost of producing a good

is not within a supplier's control. The result is that suppliers squeeze labour costs as it is one of

the only factors they can control. Furthermore, many factories with low margin buyers may only

be able to make money if they keep labour costs down (Anonymous Interviewee 2, personal

communication, November 6, 2019).

There are other challenges that arise due to stakeholder pressure, or absence thereof. One

challenge is the lack of enforcement around labour compliance requirements. As one participant

explained, factories do not generally make change unless there is pressure from the brands they

serve (S. Carpenter, personal communication, April 19, 2019). Compliance is often buyer driven.

If decisions at the client level do not encourage fair labour practices and provide reasonable

margins, factories in foreign countries are often at a disadvantage and will have to find cost

savings where they can, which in turn impacts workers directly (S. Carpenter, personal

communication, April 19, 2019).

Another form of stakeholder pressure is that which companies receive from NGOs

advocating for change in the way businesses operate their supply chains. As described by Porter,

NGOs need to understand what speaks to businesses if they want to inspire change (A. Porter,

personal communication, October 7, 2019). As another participant explained, NGOs need to

understand the reality of factories and businesses and the pressures they face (Anonymous

Interviewee 2, personal communication, November 6, 2019). According to Matt Freidman of the

Mekong Club, an association focused on engaging, inspiring, and supporting the private sector to

lead in the fight against modern slavery, the difficulty for NGOs is that they don't come from a

business background and therefore often do not know how to make the necessary changes to

reduce modern slavery but expect companies to be responsible for the full length of their supply

chain (M. Friedman, personal communication, September 17, 2019). Abigale James of LIFT

International, a New Zealand based anti-trafficking organization that works to strengthen law

enforcement and judicial capabilities in Southeast Asia, pointed to the need for NGOs to have

more quantifiable results if they are going to be effective in advocating companies to make

change (A. James, personal communication, October 28, 2019).

Shortcomings of Laws and Legislation

As mentioned in the introduction to this section, the challenges of addressing modern

slavery in supply chains are interconnected. One important piece, that has yet to be covered in

this section, is perhaps the most glaring issue, the law. According to the UN Guiding Principles

on Business and Human Rights, it is the responsibility of states to "protect against human rights

abuse within their territory and/or jurisdiction by third parties, including business enterprises"

and that a failure to do so may put the state in breach of their international human rights law

obligations (OHCHR, 2011, p. 3). Still, all participants of this research identified some of the

fundamental shortcomings of the laws and legislation currently in place to address slavery in

supply chains. Although this research study has already covered this topic in a prior section, it is

important to consider the perspective of experts working in this field. Additionally, as the experts

sampled in this research work across Southeast Asia and North America, it is important to

remember that their opinions and interpretations of laws and legislation are primarily based on

their experience in their region.

From an international law perspective, one shortcoming identified was that the regulations which have been adopted by the international community rely heavily on disclosure statements from companies purchasing and importing their products. The issue is that companies do not have to show that they are addressing issues in their supply chain and are required to provide very little information to remain compliant (S. Carpenter, personal communication, April 19, 2019). The work of Koekkoek et. al (2017) corroborated this perspective in reference to the California Transparency Act when they stated that the legislation does not require companies to take measures to address labour abuses in global supply chains and that companies "confined themselves to publishing general information, making it difficult for consumers and NGOs to truly understand efforts taken to counter labour rights abuses" (2017, p. 527).

National laws were also described as inadequate by several participants. In the Canadian legal context, prosecutors are often forced to settle for lesser charges in human trafficking cases in order for there to be a reasonable prospect for conviction (A. Porter, personal communication, October 7, 2019). Part of the issue is that getting a conviction for human trafficking is difficult and that the parameters around issues such as modern slavery are not clearly defined in Canadian law; therefore, it is more likely for the accused company to receive a lesser charge related to labour exploitation (A. Porter, personal communication, October 7, 2019). Another national level issue identified, was the lack of resources where they are needed to enforce regulations. This research found that some customs and border agencies do not have the resources to enforce laws concerning the production origins of goods. This is changing, however, as these agencies are finding innovative ways to increase enforcement (S. Carpenter, personal communication, April 19, 2019).

Business Risk as a Motivation for Change

Interview participants of this research study, in addition to describing the many

challenges of addressing modern slavery in supply chains, also provided insight into the

motivational factors that would appeal to businesses. Of all the reasons that businesses are

motivated to make changes in their supply chains, interview participants identified business

risks, such as bad publicity and financial risk, as the most pressing motivations for change.

As one participant described the situation, businesses are often motivated to address

issues in their supply chain when they are in trouble or have put themselves in a position of risk

(Anonymous Interviewee 1, personal communication, October 9, 2019). Freidman pointed to

business risk as the main motivation for companies to act (M. Freidman, personal

communication, September 17, 2019). When addressing this risk, he stated that historically

'naming and shaming' businesses was the approach used to motivate action. Businesses are

concerned about bad publicity and how it will affect their reputation as well as their bottom line,

he explained, however 'naming and faming', not 'naming and shaming' is the path forward.

Porter, of ACT, also pointed to the requirement of knowing what appeals to businesses and

suggested public relations as a key motivator to act. Businesses, as Friedman described, are

increasingly motivated by potential business risks to address issues in their supply chains,

however, historically businesses have avoided any connection whatsoever to terms like 'modern

slavery' and 'human trafficking' which led to less willingness to address the issue.

Publicity is another business risk factor that motivates businesses to change. Another

motivator, described by interview participants of this research, was financial risk. Financial risk

can come in several forms, one of which is stakeholder pressure. Stakeholder pressure such as

that of investors, can put a company over the edge, explained Carpenter (S. Carpenter, personal communication, April 19, 2019). The law is not the only thing that prevents companies from committing human rights violations, there is also reputational risk (S. Carpenter, personal communication, April 19, 2019). If a company, for example, finds itself on the United States Customs and Border Protection Agency list for a human right violation, potential and current clients can access that list and this could result in a loss of business (S. Carpenter, personal communication, April 19, 2019). In addition to investor pressure, employees of importing companies can put pressure on their employers to act as many want to work for a company with strong ethics (S. Carpenter, personal communication, April 19, 2019).

Coalitions for Change

As stated above, the historical avoidance of business risks such as financial loss and bad publicity, encouraged companies to avoid addressing issues that might connect them to modern slavery or human trafficking. That said, there are organizations working to change this narrative by working directly with businesses to help them address slavery in supply chains. The Mekong Club for example, set out to provide a safe space for businesses to come together and collaborate with experts to resolve common problems (Mekong Club, 2019). By encouraging this type of collaboration, Friedman stated, companies provide more contribution to solving the issue (M. Friedman, personal communication, September 17, 2019). Bringing companies together to address issues is cost effective and allows them to find solutions to common problems. Furthermore, despite being competitors, companies in shared industries are willing to come together and work to resolve these issues. One reason for this, Friedman explained, is that there is a feeling among companies that if one gets into trouble others may be implicated (M.

Friedman, personal communication, September 17, 2019). A separate participant stated

something very similar, that companies find some security in being involved in associations for

these issues, as they might feel nervous when they must make decisions in isolation around these

topics (Anonymous Interviewee 1, personal communication, October 9, 2019). Pointing to the

improvements in factory conditions in China over the past 30 years, Friedman stated that

businesses are best positioned to be the primary change makers of supply chain practices (M.

Friedman, personal communication, September 17, 2019).

Interview participants advocated for the need for more accessible training and tools for

companies and factories to be effective in addressing slavery in their supply chains across Asia.

Although limited, training and tools do exist and many of the participants of this research study

are working with organizations dedicated to advancement in this area. This is one area where

several participants pointed to the ability for NGOs, consultants and businesses to collaborate.

As one participant explained, consultants and NGOs often build training programs together to

train buyers on forced labour in their supply chains. (Anonymous Interviewee 1, personal

communication, October 9, 2019). The Mekong Club for instance, offers courses that provide

clarity for businesses on what modern slavery is, why it is relevant, and how to address it

(Mekong Club, 2019). Trainings and tools come in the form of e-learning kits, a risk assessment

matrix for manufactures to help identify the safest places to source from, and typologies for

financial crimes that work as guide for finance professionals to show what transactions related to

human trafficking might look (Mekong Club, 2019). Additionally, the Mekong Club is

leveraging technology to create a smart phone app triage tool to help identify victims of modern

slavery as well as using blockchain to show the link between recruiters, workers and factories

(M. Friedman, personal communication, September 17, 2019).

For companies who are not members of associations such as the Mekong Club, there are

other tools that exist. Carpenter suggested the *Responsible Sourcing Tool* as one example. This

tool is for "companies, federal contractors, federal procurement and contracting professionals,

advocates, investors, consumers and others to rid supply chains of human trafficking" (RST,

2019). Additionally, there is the Social Responsibility Alliance (SRA), an initiative focused on

providing companies with open source tools and resources. This initiative is responsible for the

Slavery & Trafficking Risk Template (STRT) "a free and open-source industry standard template

used to assist companies in their efforts to comply with human trafficking and modern slavery

legislation and improve their supply chain-related public disclosures" (SRA, 2020). Another

participant stated that organizations such as the International Labour Organization (ILO) are

making efforts to create factory efficiency tools that can more easily be distributed to factories.

These types of tools help reduce issues such as forced labour as they provide factories with other

means for enhancing productivity (Anonymous Interviewee 2, personal communication,

November 6, 2019). The recurring issue, however, is that the tools that do exist are for the most

part only accessible to companies with money and resources to invest. As one participant

explained when referring specifically to factory level tools, the current models are too expensive

for all factories to implement (Anonymous Interviewee 2, personal communication, November 6,

2019).

Discussion

When discussing the business case for reducing and ultimately eliminating modern slavery with interview participants of this study, two themes were prevalent in most conversations. The first, was the lack of corporate understanding around the concept of modern slavery and how to recognize its existence in supply chains; the second, was the business risk associated with types of modern slavery when found in their supply chains, such as negative publicity and financial risk such as a loss of investor confidence or fines. It is important to note that these themes are not independent of one another. For companies to develop strategies and take appropriate action that is both ethical from a human rights stance, and responsible when considering profit margins and shareholder value, they must fully understand the issue of modern slavery. As highlighted in this study, understanding this issue can be challenging for companies for several reasons, including a lack of clarity around the definition of the term and a clear line in the sand that companies can stick to. As suggested by one participant of this study, companies might benefit from the use of a common term such as human rights, which is possibly easier to define and agree on (A. Porter, personal communication October 7, 2019). This of course does not resolve issues such as the lack of financial resources that 2nd and 3rd tier companies have available to invest in supply chain monitoring, nor does it address the gaps and variance in legal definitions on a national and international scale. It does, however, provide those companies who are aware that such labour violations could exist with a starting point to begin reflecting on their own understanding of their supply chains. If senior level managers were more connected to the ground level of their supply chains, they may rely less on synthesized reports. This would address the loss of information that occurs between the factory floor of a manufacturing facility

in the Asia-Pacific region and the office of senior management at a company headquarters potentially located in Europe or North America. Companies who are far removed from the origin of their products need to understand what is happening in their factories so they can make informed business decisions and adjust procurement policies and practices as necessary. Still, many multinational enterprises sourcing from the Asia-Pacific region have limited visibility over their supply chains (ILO, 2016).

This leads into the second theme, business risk. As covered previously this study, when companies are found to have issues related to modern slavery in their supply chains, they can endure a large amount of bad publicity which can ultimately affect the strength of their brand. Businesses that rely on the sale of products and services to achieve revenue targets, put themselves at risk when they have not vetted their suppliers properly and this can result in a breach of trust with consumers. In the past, as pointed out by one interview participant, shaming companies was a way to motivate a change in their behavior (M. Freidman, personal communication, September 17, 2019). Today, however, promoting the work a company is doing to address ethical issues in their supply chains is a real motivation to act. This is an interesting concept and one that lends well to the business case for reducing modern slavery. If companies want to be good corporate citizens, no longer must they veer away and distance themselves from issues related to modern slavery, instead they need to address them head on and take action to reduce the occurrence of these issues or ideally eliminate them altogether.

According to the findings of this research, this strategy can also reduce other financial risks, not just from a drop-in sale of products and services, but from investors as well. Reputational risk from bad publicity does not only affect the end-consumer's desire to purchase a

product or service from a company but can shake the confidence of investors as well. As described in this study, if a company fails to address issues of slavery in their supply chain there are ways that investors can become knowledgeable of this information. If a company, for example, finds itself on the United States Customs and Border Protection Agency list for a human rights violation, potential and current clients can access that list and this could result in a loss of business (S. Carpenter, personal communication, April 2019).

Although a complete business case for reducing slavery in supply chains has not been established through this research, a starting point has. For companies to plan and strategize for risk, they need to have a thorough understanding of their supply chains. Furthermore, to address issues as they arise and limit the financial impact on revenues and maintain investor confidence, companies can benefit from understanding what constitutes as a human rights violation, better equipping them to take the necessary actions to address problems as they arise and mitigate risk.

How can coalitions with non-profits and other transnational organizations support companies in their effort to reduce slavery? The answer according to the findings of this research appear to be grounded in aiding companies in their efforts to uncover gaps and mitigate risk. To aid companies in risk mitigation requires that coalitions address the challenges that companies are facing. One such challenge, as highlighted above, is understanding the issue. Organizations highlighted in this research study, such as the Mekong Club for example, are already playing a role in enhancing training and tools for companies. By providing courses on modern slavery and other human trafficking related topics, this member-based organization is building knowledge and capacity within companies that is crucial to their efforts of addressing potential problems in their supply chains. Furthermore, this organization has created a safe space for businesses within

industry sectors to come together and discuss the challenges they are facing and share best practices on how to address these challenges.

Other organizations are providing consulting services directly to businesses and working with non-profits to build capacity through training programs that train buyers and other procurement specialists on identifying forced labour in their supply chains (Anonymous Interview 1, personal communication, October 9, 2019). As mentioned previously in this study, regardless of the efforts of corporate social responsibility teams, if ethical supply chain policies are not reflected in a company's procurement practices, the impact will be limited. This is another area where coalitions between consultants, non-profits and companies can help mitigate risk.

For those responsible for assessing factories, tools such as the triage app developed by the Mekong Club can be very beneficial to identify instances of forced labour. For companies that assess factories directly, tools like this can bolster assessment capabilities. Furthermore, other organizations are working directly with factories in the Asia-Pacific region to improve productivity and efficiency, which can in turn reduce the number of instances of labour violations. Although this coalition is at the supplier level and not with large multinational corporations, in the end this type of partnership could positively affect the companies who are sourcing from these suppliers and lower the risk of violations.

The areas of risk mitigation outlined above are just a few of the ways that coalitions between business networks and transnational organizations can support the efforts of companies to reduce slavery in their supply chains. This research did provide other valuable takeaways as to how non-profits and consultancy groups can contribute to reducing modern slavery in supply

chains; however, many of these were related to capacity building with law enforcement and judicial bodies. As these solutions do not relate directly to businesses, they have been excluded from this section.

The final question posed for this research was whether controlling the discourse around slavery in supply chains served as a motivation for businesses to take action. Although this question was not asked directly to interview participants of this research, the question can be answered through some of the key findings and results of this study. As discussed, business risk was highlighted by several participants as main consideration for businesses to take measures to reduce modern slavery within their supply chains. As public image is major factor of the business risk described by the interview participants of this study, it stands to reason that there is a significant motivation for businesses to control the discourse around the issue of slavery in supply chains, especially discourse directly related to their specific activities in reaction to issues or violations found within their supply chains. As described earlier in this study, practices of modern slavery are synonymous with violence. As profit of multinational companies is tied to public perception, distancing themselves from acts that are perceived as exploitative and violent appears to be a required strategy for growth.

Conclusion

The purpose of this discourse analysis was to explore and understand how coalitions of businesses, business networks, and transnational organizations can aim to reduce modern slavery by addressing this issue in global supply chains. In order to achieve this, the following questions were used as the basis for this research:

1. What is the business case for ending modern slavery in supply chains?

2. How can coalitions between businesses and transnational organizations support this effort?

3. Does controlling the discourse of this issue serve as a motivation for businesses to act against modern slavery?

To answer these questions, this research paper began by presenting an overview of slavery throughout history and how it has evolved to what is now known as modern slavery. This overview primarily focused on slavery in the context of European history, examining colonial rule in the sixteenth century onwards and the development of the Atlantic slave trade. By examining this history, this research paper sought to provide a clear understanding of the growth and decline of legal slavery. The concept of legal slavery is important in the effort to understand modern slavery, as today all slavery is considered illegal but more people than ever before in history are enslaved. Today, modern slavery is not legal and despite the laws fighting against it, it persists in part due to the lack of protection for vulnerable people.

Next, this paper examined how large multinational corporations based in Western democratic states are responsible for a large quantity of the demand that leads to modern slavery, highlighting the parameters for which violence is accepted and normalized. Additionally, it examined the failures of laws to protect vulnerable populations from becoming victims of modern slavery, but how societal pressures have led to the creation and implementation of new laws and legislation to begin tackling this issue. As described in this study, societal pressure can come from a large group of stakeholders including consumers, investors, NGOs and other advocates. Additionally, companies have recognized the risk associated with being linked to

modern slavery and many have committed to coalitions as well as other corporate social responsibility initiatives in the effort to address this problem.

By speaking with experts, this study dug deeper into the challenges that companies face in addressing modern slavery and pursued avenues to understand how transnational organizations can support businesses in their goals to address ethical issues in their supply chains and eliminate such practices. The findings of these interviews identified that there is a lack of corporate understanding around the concept of modern slavery, how it can be recognized in supply chains, as well as the business risks associated with it.

The experts interviewed in this study pointed to increased education and training for corporations, and the construction of more affordable tools to identify forms of modern slavery within supply chains, as areas that non-profits and consultancy groups could work with businesses directly to provide support. Furthermore, this study revealed that there is a significant motivation for businesses to control the discourse around the issue of modern slavery in supply chains, as a key business risk is publicity damage that in turn can lead to financial loss. A prime example of this is the work conducted by Mekong Club in Hong Kong, where despite being competitors, companies in shared industries are willing to come together and work to resolve issues related to such forms of exploitation. This type of collaboration allows companies to contribute directly to solving issues in a way that also makes sense for their businesses. Additionally, bringing companies together to address issues is cost effective and allows them to find solutions to common problems. This finding aligns well with the work of Henriksen and Seabrooke (2016), where the authors explored the competition and coordination between professional and organizational networks in the attempt to control issues. In the case of the

Mekong Club, companies are working together in partnership with this association not only to resolve issues for ethical reasons, but to better manage business risk such as harmful publicity that could result in financial loss. Keeping this in mind, it stands to reason that businesses may not only benefit from coalitions in their efforts to address modern slavery directly in their supply chains, but also from partners that can provide coaching on how businesses can present the efforts and actions they have made to address modern slavery to stakeholders such as consumers and investors.

    As this study was limited in its scope, as noted in the methodology section, it recommends that more focused research be completed which consider individual countries across the Asia-Pacific region to better disaggregate the causes of modern slavery in the region. Research such as this could then be used to inform the construction of training and tools to better address the issue of modern slavery in global supply chains.

References

Acemoglu, D. (2015). Why nations fail? *Pakistan Development Review*, *54*(4), 301–312.

Apple's labor practices in china scrutinized after foxconn, pegatron reviews. (2013). *Forbes.com, 12/12/2013, P2.*

Allen, T., & Thomas, A. (2000). *Poverty and development into the 21st century*. Oxford: Open University in association with Oxford University Press.

Bajada, C., & Shashnov, M. (2019). The effects of economic development and the evolution of social institutions on the level of corruption: comparing the Asia-Pacific with other regional blocs. Asia Pacific Business Review, 25(4), 470–500. https://doi.org/10.108 0/13602381.2019.1589768

Bales, K. (2009). Winning the fight: eradicating slavery in the modern age. *Harvard International Review, 31*(1), 14–17.

Bales, K. (2005). *Understanding global slavery: a reader*. University of California Press.

Barboza, D. (2019, April 19). Chinese suppliers to Microsoft cited for labor violations. Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/20/technology/20soft.html

Bates, R. H. (2001). *Prosperity and violence: The political economy of development*. New York: W.W. Norton.

Banomyong, R. 2010. Supply Chain Dynamics in Asia. ADBI Working Paper 184. *Tokyo: Asian Development Bank Institute*. Available: http://www.adbi.org/workingpaper/2010/ 01/07/3427.supply.chain.dynamics.asia/

Bernstein, H. (2000). Colonialism, Capitalism, Development. In T. Allen and A. Thomas (Eds.). *Poverty and development into the 21st century*. OUP Oxford, second edition, 2000.

Booth, W., Colomb., G, & Williams., J. (2008). *The craft of research (3rd ed.).* Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.

Brett, E. A. (1996). The classification of posttraumatic stress disorder. In B. van der Kolk, A. McFarlane, & L. Weisaeth (Eds.), *Traumatic stress: The effects of overwhelming stress on mind, body and society* (pp. 17–128). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

California Legislature. (2010). *The California Transparency in Supply Chains Act*. Retrieved from https://oag.ca.gov/SB657

Cheek, J. (2004). At the margins? discourse analysis and qualitative research. *Qualitative Health Research, 14*(8), 1140–1150.

Creswell, J., & Creswell, J. (2018). *Research design*: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches (Fifth ed.). Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications.

Daily Chart: Supply chains based on modern slavery may reach into the west. (2019, July 19). The Economist. Retrieved from https://www.economist.com/graphic-detail/2018/07/19/supply-chains-based-on-modern-slavery-may-reach-into-the-west

Eyob, E., & Tetteh, E. G. (Eds.). (2012). *Customer-Oriented Global Supply Chains: Concepts for Effective Management*. IGI Global. http://doi:10.4018/978-1-4666-0246-5

Feng, E. (2018). Forced labour emerges in china camps. *Financial Times, 4,* 4-4.

Ford, D., Gadde, L., Hakansson, H., Snehota, I. (2011). *Managing business relationships (3rd ed.).* Chichester, West Sussex: J. Wiley.

Galletta, A. (2012). *Mastering the semi-structured interview and beyond: from research design to analysis and publication* (Ser. Qualitative studies in psychology). New York University Press. http://site.ebrary.com/lib/berkeley/Doc?id=10698621.

GBCAT. (2018). *About gbcat.* Retrieved from https://www.gbcat.org/overview-history

GSI. (2018). Asia and the Pacific. Retrieved from https://www.globalslaveryindex.org/2018 /findings/regional-analysis/asia-and-the-pacific

Gold, S., Trautrims, A., & Trodd, Z. (2015). Modern slavery challenges to supply chain management. *Supply Chain Management, 20*(5), 485.

Hanlon, R. (2018, March). Human trafficking and the issue of slavery in supply chains. In Boulby, M. & Christie, K. *Migration, Refugees and Human Security in the Mediterranean and MENA* (pp.177-198). doi:10.007/978-3-319-70775-4

Henriksen, L., & Seabrooke, L. (2016). Transnational organizing: Issue professionals in environmental sustainability networks. Organization, 23(5), 722-741. doi:10.1177/1350508415609140

Hillie, K., (2019). Foxconn: why the world's tech factory faces its biggest tests. *Financial Times.*

   Retrieved from https://www.ft.com/

Hong, S., Kwon, I., & Kwon, O. (2014). Supply chain management in asia pacific. *Supply Chain*

   Forum: An International Journal, 15(2), 2-3. doi:10.1080/16258312.2014.11517337

International Labour Organization. (2017, June 02). *Global business network: ILO establishes a*

   global business network on forced labour and human trafficking. Retrieved from

   https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_556159/lang--

   en/index.htm

International Labour Organization. (2016). *Global supply chains in Asia and the Pacific and the Arab*

   States. Retrieved from https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok

   /documents/publication/wcms_534370.pdf

International Labour Organization and Walk Free Foundation. (2017). *Global estimates of*

   modern slavery: forced labour and forced marriage. Retrieved from

   https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups

   /public/@dgreports/@dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_575479.pdf

Johnson, C. (2014, March 11). *Mauritania; United Nations: Plan to end slavery expected.*

   Retrieved from Library of Congress website: https://www.loc.gov/law/foreign-

   news/article/mauritania-united-nations-plan-to-end-slavery-expected/

Kara, S. (2017). *Modern slavery: a global perspective.* Columbia University Press.
https://doi.org/10.7312/kara15846

Keane, John (2004). *Violence and Democracy* (Ser. Contemporary political theory). Cambridge
University Press, 2004.

Koekkoek, M., Marx, A., & Wouters, J. (2017). Monitoring forced labour and slavery in global
supply chains: the case of the California act on transparency in supply chains. *Global
Policy, 8*(4), 522–529. https://doi.org/10.1111/1758-5899.12512

League of Nations. (1926). *Slavery convention, Geneva, September 25th 1926*. Geneva: League
of Nations Retrived from: https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ ProfessionalInterest/
Pages/SlaveryConvention.aspx

Lupo, A. V., Bruno, S. L., & Pulliam, E. J. (2012). The california transparency in supply chains
act of 2010. *Computer and Internet Lawyer, 29*(4), 13–14.

Malet, D., & Anderson, M. J. (Eds.). (2017). *Transnational actors in war and peace : militants,
activists, and corporations in world politics*. Georgetown University Press.

Mehta, J. (2004, July-August). Supply chain management in a global economy. *Total Quality
Management, 15*(5-6), 841–848. doi:10.1080/14 783360410001680279

McMullan, A. (1996). Supply chain management practices in asia pacific today. *International
Journal of Physical Distribution & Logistics Management, 26*(10), 79-95.
doi:10.1108/09600039610150479

Nestor, P. (2017, February 23). Re: Collaborating to eliminate modern slavery: Global Business

Coalition Against Human Trafficking [Blog comment]. Retrieved from

https://www.bsr.org/ en/our-insights/blog-view/eliminate-modern-slavery-global-business-

coalition-human-trafficking

Nieman, G. (2020). Promises to Keep. Oxford University Press. doi: 10.1093/oso/97801

90071639.001.0001

Parliament of the United Kingdom. (1833). *Slavery Abolition Act, 1833.* Retrieved from

http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1833/act/73/enacted/en/print.html

Parliament of the United Kingdom. (2015). *UK Modern Slavery Act 2015.* Retrieved from

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/30/contents/enacted

Pun, N., Shen, Y., Guo, Y., Lu, H., Chan, J., & Selden, M. (2016). Apple, Foxconn, and Chinese

workers' struggles from a global labor perspective. *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies, 17*(2), 166-

185. doi:10.1080/14649373.2016.1170961

Royal Roads University. (2011). *Research Ethics Policy: Royal Roads University Policy.*

Retrieved from: http://policies.royalroads.ca/policies/research-ethics-policy

RST. (2019). *About this tool.* Retrieved from https://www.responsiblesourcingtool.org/pages

/partnerinfo#partners

Seabrooke, L., & Henriksen, L. F. (2017). Professional Networks in Transnational Governance.

United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.

SRA. (2020). *About.* Retrieved from https://socialresponsibilityalliance.org/strt/

Tatum, M. (2020). Why the modern slavery act hasn't worked: The complex food and drink

supply chain is an easy target for human traffickers - and grocers can be complicit. the

modern slavery act sought to tackle this, so why, after five years, has it not succeeded?

Grocer, 36. Retrieved from https://ezproxy.royalroads.ca/login?url=https://search-

proquest-com.ezproxy.royalroads.ca/docview/2379994123?accountid=8056

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2011). *Guiding principles*

on business and human rights: Implementing the United Nations "Protect, Respect and

Remedy" framework.

United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime. (2000, November 15). *United Nations Convention*

against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols Thereto. Retrieved from

https://www.unodc.org /unodc/en/organized-crime/intro/UNTOC.html

UN General Assembly. (1948, December 10). *Universal Declaration of Human Rights.*

Retrieved from: https://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/

University of Waterloo. (n.d.). *Guideline for researchers on securing research participants'*

data. Retrieved from University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Human research guidelines and

policies website: https://uwaterloo.ca/research/office-research-ethics/research-human-

participants/pre-submission-and-training/human-research-guidelines-and-policies-

alphabetical-list/guideline-researchers-securing-research-participants-

data#datasecurityproc

United States Department of State. Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Person (2017, July). *Trafficking in Persons Report: China Country Narrative* (p. 127). Retrieved from https://www.state.gov/documents /organization/271341.pdf.

UPS. (2017). *On the leading edge: UPS 2017 corporate sustainability progress report.* Retrieved from https://sustainability.ups.com/media/ups-pdf-interactive-2017/index.html

Waiting to make their move: Asia's looming labour shortage. (2017, February 11). *Economist*. Retrieved from https://www.economist.com/news/asia/21716584-there-obvious-solution-asias-looming-labour-shortage

Willets, P. (2001). Transnational Actors and International Organizations in Global Politics. In J. B. Baylis and S. Smith (Eds.). *The Globalisation or World Politics* (pp. 356-383). Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, second edition, 2001.

Appendix A

Interview Participant	Title	Company or Organization	Country
Abigale James	Partnership Development	LIFT International	New Zealand
Ambere Porter	Director of Organizational Development	Action Coalition on Human Trafficking	Canada
Anonymous Interviewee 1	Consultant	Sustainability Management Group	Hong Kong
Anonymous Interviewee 2	Director	Intergovernmental Development Organization	Thailand
Matt Friedman	Chief Executive Officer	Mekong Club	Hong Kong
Sarah Carpenter	Manager, Business & Human Rights	Assent Compliance	Canada

Appendix B

Interview Questions
1. Can you begin by telling me about your organization, your role, and the services you provide?
2. What are some of the resistance factors you have encountered from businesses that you have worked with to taking action to reduce modern slavery in their supply chains?
3. What are some of the motivations for businesses to address modern slavery in their supply chains?
4. What are some of the successes you have seen for companies who have taken initiative to address modern slavery in their supply chains?
5. Where are some areas of improvement that you see that make it easier for companies to address this issue moving forward?