Critiques of the liberal peace: a development model to understand responses to child sexual exploitation in the Philippines

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For the purposes of informing this research further, the following summaries detail the figure and tables used to support this thesis including a breakdown of all the supplementing documents included in the appendices.

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Abstract

Increased global awareness of child sexual exploitation (CSE) and its prevalence in the Philippines has resulted in an influx of donor interest and interventions to protect children. To facilitate this, attempts have been made to understand CSE in the Philippines, investigating victims, perpetrators and risk factors as with most development interventions. However, no attempt has been made to reflect critically on the response itself. Developing an understanding of CSE responses through international and local efforts is vital to protect children. To fill this knowledge gap, this research has interrogated the CSE response in the Philippines.

A case study approach was applied consisting of observations, semi-structured interviews and collection of artefacts with three grassroots non-government organisations to understand the realities of CSE responses. To ensure the research engaged with multiple perspectives, local practitioners across government agencies, academia and international non-governmental organisations were also interviewed. Data was then analysed using thematic analysis. Theoretically, a critical approach was adopted to examine the relationship between international and local actors, using critiques of the liberal peace as a lens. Critiques of the liberal peace emerged to reflect on the failures of international peacebuilding efforts. Proponents argue that one key failure is the inability of international interventions to meet local needs. Taking this as a starting point, this research tests the application of these critiques to CSE responses.

The analysis identifies that a tension exists between international and local actors, arising from the way international donors project their ideas, priorities and processes onto local actors who are expected to deliver programming. Firstly, the international response is driven by the projection of ideas, where international concepts of childhood and characteristics of CSE lack nuanced understandings of the Philippines. Secondly, a projection of priorities also influences the response, with international priorities framing CSE responses. Finally, a projection of processes informs how the response is implemented. The three forms of projection reveal a power imbalance, which resonates with critiques of the liberal peace. However, the research revealed that the relationship is not completely dichotomous. Scholars critiquing the liberal peace have a tendency to romanticise the local without critically engaging with flaws at this level. In addition, Philippine actors are still able to exercise their agency in unexpected ways that influence the CSE responses. While there is scope for international actors to more meaningfully engage with the local, local actors are not powerless. The thesis presents the use of critiques of the liberal peace as a critical lens, using examples from CSE in the Philippines to show that the tension present between international and local actors is not limited to peacebuilding interventions but is also an issue for development.

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Introduction

Global awareness of human trafficking and modern slavery over the last two decades has triggered an influx of financial and technical investment. The international resources provided have supported the implementation of programmes and policies responding to CSE. Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a multifaceted 'complex phenomena involving multiple actors, and requiring a multi-sectoral response' (OHCHR, 2016: n.p.). On the surface, challenges of CSE in the Philippines continue to emerge as a convoluted and complex social problem that requires further cultural understanding in the Philippines. More recently, the global spotlight on the Philippines has amplified interest drawing attention to its volatile political agenda evident from the government's contentious 'War on drugs' agenda (Human Rights Watch, 2021: n.p.). The raised profile of the Philippines has increased awareness around the wider human rights issues that plague the nation.

For the Philippines, most cases of CSE take place in the Philippines, thus responses are implemented by Philippine based agencies or local organisations, managing the situation on the ground. Cases are contained locally where it has been identified that CSE has become rampant in communities across the archipelago. Although Philippine government efforts are in place, responses are left to both international non-government organisations (INGOs) and grassroots non-government organisations (GNGO) to respond to cases of CSE and deal accordingly. The literature indicates that the majority of perpetrators are foreign nationals who travel to the Philippines or engage in online child sexual exploitation (OSEC) that defies geographical boundaries in the form of child sexual exploitation materials (CSEM; also known as indecent images and videos of children) produced in the Philippines. The international community has been increasingly responsive to these activities mainly by supporting law enforcement with reporting and seizing online materials, financial investment and knowledge resources. However, international donors have also supported CSE responses led and implemented by INGO and GNGOs in the Philippines. The inclusion of anti-trafficking efforts as part of the development agenda has led to international interventions and access to funds for international organisations, states and local agencies targeting CSE as a form of human trafficking.

Efforts to combat CSE in the Philippines have seen progress. In 2016, the Philippines moved up in the US State Department's Trafficking in Persons report from a Tier 2 to become and maintain a Tier 1 status. This shows improvements in the responses according to the TIP report criteria set by the US State Department. Despite improvements to the tier ranking, there continues to be a paucity of rigorous research on child maltreatment (Madrid et al. 2013), and on CSE in the Philippines beyond evidence and descriptions of the phenomena from relevant literature. Moreover, there has been a lack of attention to CSE responses in the Philippines at a grassroots level to understanding the prevailing issues on the ground. Supply-side countries need critical academic literature to sufficiently understand the dynamics in responses to CSE and concerns from the frontline practitioners[1]' experiences. A challenge occurs in the scarcity of transferable research that can be exercised practically, academically and politically (Sultana, 2007: 375). Thus, data evidencing the daily realities of practitioners implementing, leading and managing efforts is valuable to understand CSE as 'intense advocacy work of various groups has produced a considerable body of knowledge' (Protacio-Marcelino, 2000:1).

Awareness of CSE and the prevalence of CSE has widely been discussed as an issue pertinent to the Philippines. Based on this, the study was conducted in response to the significant dearth of research on CSE responses and overall research in the Philippines. This thesis sought to investigate CSE responses from the local perspective to garner a more in-depth understanding of the issue. Three case studies with GNGOs were conducted including interviews with academics, government agencies and INGO staff to provide a more holistic lens. Since there has been no critical literature on CSE responses in the Philippines, the study draws from critiques of the liberal peace as a theoretical approach to analyse the dynamics between international actors and local organisations. Critiques of the liberal peace highlight a tension between international interventions in peacebuilding. CSE as a development issue is part of the liberal interventionist project, which draws parallels to the liberal peace. Based on a similar tension observed between international and local actors in the Philippines, this thesis presents evidence from the local perspective to explore the application of critiques of the liberal peace as a theoretical approach. Issues such as poverty, education and inequality are often seen as problems of international development as well as being factors for CSE's

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[1] Practitioners refer to participants in the study, who were neither employed by international non-government organisations or grassroots non-government organisations, these include medical professionals, researchers and academics.

occurrence. Building on this, the thesis will focus on understanding CSE responses in the Philippines including the relationship between international and local actors as well as the issues encountered by practitioners.

Thesis summary

The following summary presents an outline of the forthcoming chapters contained in this thesis. Each chapter is detailed below to introduce the overarching rationale and to act as a guide through the central concepts.

Chapter one reviews existing research on CSE specifically drawing from knowledge on CSE in the Philippines, South East Asia and globally to demonstrate where gaps exist. The chapter critically analyses secondary literature on CSE in the Philippines examining terminology, legislation, enabling and driving factors. Furthermore, the chapter introduces the United States Trafficking In Persons report (TIP) as a significant international policy tool used throughout this thesis to inform the international perspective. Despite the significant dearth in research conducted in the Philippines, this chapter uses relevant literature on CSE to provide a foundation of knowledge acting as a springboard for subsequent chapters.

Chapter two defines critiques of the liberal peace as a theoretical approach to investigate existing tensions between international efforts and the Philippine context. The chapter provides a background to critiques of the liberal peace sharing its origins, application to CSE and the core debates. Based on the central arguments, the chapter explains that parallels exist between critiques of the liberal peace and CSE as an international development issue.

Chapter three explains the methods deployed for this research. Case studies of three grassroots non-government organisations (GNGO) comprising of semi-structured interviews, participatory observations and artefacts were approaches adopted to validate findings. To garner multiple and varied local perspectives, semi-structured interviews were also conducted with practitioners in international non-government organisations, research institutes and government agencies within the field of CSE. The chapter provides a rationale for the methods used to gather sensitive and accurate data detailing the research approach, analysis, ethical considerations and central themes used for the study

Chapter four examines the findings to demonstrate and show how a tension has emerged through a projection of ideas, which is evidenced through the themes of 'characteristics of CSE' and 'child protection.' The chapter uses data from the Philippine

perspective, to argue that universal concepts of childhood and CSE are used as a baseline for interventions in international policy tools like the TIP report. Applying international understandings to the local context has resulted in a tension between the ideas held by international donors and local practitioners.

Chapter five provides evidence on CSE responses in the Philippines demonstrating a projection of priorities to show the tension between international interventions and Philippine actors. Based on the key themes of 'prosecution,' 'international responses – donors' and 'characteristics of CSE – online forms.' This chapter examines how the tension is shown through the prioritisation of online forms of CSE, the criminal justice response and the role of funding in incentivising local responses.

Chapter six presents data to demonstrate a projection of process. The chapter offers an overview of the local turn, explaining that the shift towards localisation has influenced global efforts. Furthermore, the chapter explains that as part of the local turn, international donors providing resources for interventions have sought to develop localised responses by improving engagement with Philippine actors. However, there are still limitations experienced at the local level from practitioners applying international processes and frameworks. The themes of 'prevention' and 'partnerships' from the findings show how the tension has manifested between international processes and local implementation.

Chapter seven discusses the key findings across chapters four, five and six building on the evidence. The chapter will discuss agency and power, acknowledging the limitations in the empirical evidence and unexpected data. The chapter explains that critiques of the liberal peace romanticise the local suggesting that they lack agency and power. However, from the evidence on CSE in the Philippines, contrary to this, GNGOs have more autonomy and power than they are given credit for.

Chapter 1 - Understanding child sexual exploitation in the Philippines

The following section reviews relevant literature on child sexual exploitation (CSE). A systematic approach was adopted to identify literature published from 2000 to 2021 in international academic databases and websites. The systematic method focussed on firstly prioritising peer-reviewed academic articles as a critical international knowledge source. Secondly, grey literature published by non-academic sources like NGO resources, news articles, international agencies and national government reports. The two-pronged systematic strategy sought to remedy the dearth of available knowledge on the topic as well as include multi-disciplinary and globally recognised resources. Literature was scanned for key terms relevant to the subject and commonly used by CSE academics such as child sexual exploitation, online child sexual exploitation, child sex tourism, commercial sexual exploitation of children and child sex trafficking. Articles, reports and grey literature detailing the Philippines as the study site and using variations of these key words were included to reflect differences in syntax. Other variations of CSE terminology referenced child sexual exploitation materials, referring to sexual images and videos of children, which were also included to reflect the technological developments in CSE. The scope of literature excluded any studies directly referencing child sexual abuse unless specific reference was made to sexual exploitation. While conducting the literature review, the dearth of scholarly sources and critical research on CSE in the Philippines was evident. Drawing on a range of other relevant sources to fill the gap, the chapter provides context for the study as far as possible with the limited resources. Using relevant academic and grey literature, the chapter will critically analyse the different forms of CSE including key themes on CSE in the Philippines to frame the discussion in later chapters of this thesis. In particular, the central topics in this chapter focus on terminology, enabling and driving factors[2] of CSE and legislation in the Philippines.

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[2] Driving and enabling factors used in this thesis are defined as: *'Driving factors' refers to the external pressures that drive children into being sexually exploited. 'Enabling factors' refer to external pressures that facilitate children into engaging in CSE.*

Introducing anti-trafficking frameworks: Palermo Protocol and Trafficking In Persons report

Since the early 2000s, global awareness on the issues of modern slavery and human trafficking spurred international donor interest in improving policies and governance worldwide (Wiss, 2013:59). In 2000, the introduction of the United Nation's Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, often referred to as the Palermo Protocol, signified the start of a major movement in global anti-trafficking efforts (Wiss, 2013:59). Creating the Palermo Protocol galvanised a shift as an 'international framework,' which 'impelled a global anti-trafficking movement' (Ezeilo, 2015: n.p). Moreover, as Goździak and Vogel (2020:111) and Touzenis (2010:67) state, the Palermo Protocol reflected the desire of governments globally to address a considerable increase in organised crime. Worldwide, the United Nations Palermo Protocol has had significant implications on development interventions as 'a global and legally binding instrument' central to the progression of present-day anti-trafficking responses (Wiss, 2013:55). Before the Palermo Protocol no universal model existed, which included a definition of human trafficking. The UN (2000:42) Palermo Protocol under Article 3 defines human trafficking as:

> *[t]he recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.*

The Palermo Protocol definition has been crucial in forming a foundation of knowledge for human trafficking legislation, tools and literature. As a prominent contribution, terminology in the Palermo Protocol has enabled agencies, governments and policy makers to align interventions and legislation. For instance, the Philippines on 14th December 2000 signed the Palermo Protocol and ratified it on 28th May 2002. Following both events, Philippine lawmakers introduced the Anti-Trafficking Law in 2003 (Republic Act 9208) and later

revised this law with the Expanded Anti-Trafficking Act of 2012 (Republic Act 10364) to reflect a need for legal apparatus to protect individuals from human trafficking. In both Republic Act (RA) 9208 and RA 10364, the definitions used in the legislation reflect Palermo Protocol's terminology of human trafficking. However, over twenty years since the Palermo Protocol was introduced there have been examples across governments and institutions globally where terminology has been inconsistent. For example, Seideman (2015) investigates the effectiveness of the Palermo Protocol considering significant developments that have emerged in sex trafficking. Seideman (2015:11) articulates that the Palermo Protocol as a universal framework has been less effective. For example, the Palermo Protocol's terminology is critiqued for being too general, and as a result lawmakers have defined human trafficking to reflect their cultural contexts and to focus on the criminalisation of trafficking above supporting survivors (Seideman, 2015:10). WeProtect Global Alliance (2021:3) state that often 'domestic interpretation of the Palermo Protocol means there is wide variation in how trafficking laws are proscribed.' Moreover, reporting has also been inconsistent as 'many countries that do not have compliant definitions for human trafficking actually report full compliance to NGOs, IOs, and governments collecting data for analysis.' This analysis suggests that variations in human trafficking definitions across governments are overtly problematic since terminology shapes how responses are designed and reported at the local level. For example, universal human trafficking efforts continue to face criticism as they 'predominately follow a criminal justice approach' (Bryant and Landman, 2020: 123). According to the Palermo Protocol's definition of human trafficking, child sexual exploitation is importantly captured as human trafficking issue. For children, the human trafficking definition in the Palermo Protocol was adapted to reflect that the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989: n.p), which deems that a child is a person under 18 years old and unable to provide consent (Goździak and Vogel, 2020:110). Some scholars and practitioners explain that the language used in the Palermo Protocol should detail CSE more explicitly. For instance, Jordan (2002: 12) suggests the definitions should be revised to 'ensure that laws do not permit children, under any circumstances, to engage in prostitution or pornography.' More recently, WeProtect Global Alliance (2021:3) argued that a more specific definition of child sexual exploitation is required to reduce any misinterpretation of the terminology used in human trafficking legislation across different jurisdictions. To summarise, inconsistent terminology defining human trafficking following the Palermo Protocol has been an identified issue for CSE practitioners despite the Protocol being a catalyst for universal anti-trafficking efforts.

Since the Palermo Protocol's ratification, numerous other anti-trafficking mechanisms have been developed but struggle to capture the complexity and nuances of human trafficking as an evolving phenomenon (Ezeilo, 2015: n.p). Despite this, there has been considerable progress and investment in anti-trafficking efforts and frameworks as a result of the Palermo Protocol. One such anti-trafficking policy tool is the US government's Trafficking In Persons (TIP) report, which seeks to hold governments accountable to effective anti-trafficking interventions. Modelled on the US domestic Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 (TVPA), the US created TIP report has been adopted for the international anti-trafficking response (Chuang, 2014:613). In the TIP report, indicators are used to frame trafficking in relation to a state's development, which often means that developed countries perform better (Kotiswaran, 2019:387). To monitor global anti-trafficking efforts, the TIP report uses the 4Ps paradigm (prevention, protection, prosecution and partnership) to assess each states progress. Although the TIP report is widely accepted as an international human trafficking policy guide, there are also criticisms. According to Horning et al (2014: 257) there is ambiguity on how the 4Ps framework is applied and used to rank states, indicating that there is 'little mention of preventive measures, or how countries' categorisations contribute to rankings.' Concerns have been raised on the lack of transparency suggesting that the TIP report may be attached to US international relations and political influence. Although valuable, the tier system has also been questioned for pursuing US political interests (Gallagher, 2011:382). For example, the US Government has frequently using economic sanctions as a political tool and a 'more humane alternative to military intervention' by pressuring 'governments to comply with the imposing state's interests' (Neuenkirch and Neumeier, 2016:110). In the 2016 and 2017 TIP reports, Sudan was ranked as a Tier 3 state for its 'failure to comply with minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking' (US State Department, 2020:12). The Tier 3 status meant that the US Government was unable to provide Sudan with any 'non humanitarian, non-trade related foreign assistance' that does not meet the standards (US State Department, 2020:12). Neuenkirch and Neumeier (2016:117) evidence the severe impact on states where US economic sanctions are enforced, arguing that US sanctions increase the poverty gap adversely affecting the state's poorest members. As a result, states are compelled to find ways for economic sanctions to be removed. In 2017, the US revoked the economic sanctions placed on Sudan, where an immediate outcome was a change in the country's 2018 TIP ranking to Tier 2 Watch List status. The retracted economic sanctions along with simultaneous changes in the TIP report ranking suggest that the US may have used the ranking system as a leverage to impose reform. Despite these challenges, the

economic sanctions detailed in the Sudan TIP ranking example demonstrates that the TIP report has significant influence on international political order. Moreover, it also shows that the TIP report is one of the most relevant international policy tools actively being utilised by international institutions and governments to navigate a lack of transparency about state human trafficking practices.

Child sexual exploitation: an international development issue

Building on the previous section, understanding why CSE is considered a development issue is important for clarifying the links between the theoretical approach for this thesis, which will be discussed in chapter two. To aid in explaining how CSE as a human trafficking issue falls into the realm of development interventions, the term development should be defined for its use in this thesis. In this thesis, development refers to 'the international activities of aid agencies and non-governmental organisations' (Lewis, 2019:1-2). The relevance of defining development according to its 'international activities,' helps to understand the core objective of international development, which is, to enable 'economic and social transformation' (Lewis, 2019:1-2). A crucial characteristic of development is the transformative element, where the purpose of interventions is to establish economic and social improvements based on modernisation and capitalist ideas of societal progress (Cavalcanti, 2007: n.p.). It suggests that support for local infrastructure and economies will positively influence the overall outcomes of society, leading to it flourishing and becoming more prosperous. Ultimately, by promoting a self-sustaining economy and providing interventions which enable local actors to obtain agency, it is possible 'to achieve a higher quality of life for all people' (United Nations, 2015). For instance, Rapley (2004:350) explains that 'development was understood to mean rising living standards, which would manifest themselves in rising incomes (growth), which in turn would translate into improved health, nutrition, education and personal autonomy'. In other words, development efforts are assumed to create an impact from interventions that foster improvement and prosperity (Molland, 2018:19). Over the last 25 years, development has grown to become an expansive industry, boasting a plethora of actors across different states and industries in order to deliver programmes and projects worldwide (Addison, Nino-Zarazua and Tarp, 2015:1352). Likewise, approaches and methods to measure development have also evolved to match the expansion of programmes and projects. For example, the World Bank provides economic indicators, and the United Nations

Development Programme's Human Development Index has social indicators, which were created to monitor development progress (Rapley, 2004:350). For anti-trafficking efforts, similar shifts in monitoring indicate that CSE as a human trafficking issue falls under the development agenda. As development has evolved, interventions have reflected emerging trends in global politics, state priorities and donor interests. Historically, interventions have focused on economic development but this has progressively moved towards addressing social development issues with an increasing emphasis on sustainability. For example, foreign funders are increasingly interested in providing interventions for social services to support the welfare of vulnerable members of society (McCoy, Chand and Sridhar, 2009:408). The move towards investing in social protection demonstrates that international interventions targeting development are progressing and responding to the lives of marginalised communities (Addison, Nino-Zarazua and Tarp, 2015:1352). Other scholars such as Deneulin & Shahani (2009:3) also recognise that previously the focus of development was centred on economic development, but has since splintered into many different niche areas, human trafficking being one. These acknowledgements of development's progressive agenda highlight that CSE as a form of human trafficking is treated as an international development issue. Based on this, the following section on the Official Development Assistance (ODA) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) highlight international evidence to substantiate the claim that CSE is considered as part of development. Finally, the last section highlights how a lack of critical practice such as do no harm should be considered for CSE as a development issue.

Official development assistance (ODA)

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is an international organisation, which seeks to improve global economic and development issues through policy and the management of foreign aid. Its predominant role is managing aid, referred to as Official Development Assistance (ODA), which is central to the organisation's core purpose as a multinational body for responsible for partnership development and distributing foreign funds. The guidelines of the ODA are managed by the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) to provide foreign aid, but donor states manage their own ODA portfolio of initiatives and projects. The ODA is considered 'as the "gold standard" of foreign

aid' and a longstanding major fund for development aid that 'specifically targets the economic development and welfare of developing countries' (OECD, n.d.). To receive ODA, a country or territory must be on a predetermined list of recipients, which are known to be developing or low-income states. Included as an ODA recipient state, aid is an important resource for the Philippines, which is identified within the category of 'lower middle income countries and territories' (OECD, n.d.). ODA criteria also outline conditions to receive ODA development aid, which are also known as flows. The ODA criteria indicates that efforts to address CSE falls within development, as it fits firmly within the eligibility criteria. In the ODA criteria, CSE is categorised as violence against children citing it as sexual violence. For instance, the guidelines to receive ODA flows consider CSE within their guideline category of 'helping prevent violent conflict,' referring to sexual violence of children and sexual slavery (OECD, 2001: n.p.). Furthermore, there is evidence that CSE is a development problem from following where the flows are spent. One example is the UK Home Office's investment of ODA funds into the 'End Violence Against Children Fund' (EVAC Fund). Financial aid of £40 million was granted to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), to implement responses across different sectors as part of the 'WePROTECT Global Alliance's (WPGA) strategy for national action' comprising 97 countries (UK Home Office, 2020: n.p.). The WPGA is an independent organisation that seeks to stimulate a global coordinated national response, by providing resources to states enabling the creation of preventative tools, generate international awareness and detection, improve reporting of CSE and ensure financial and technical resources are accessible (WeProtect Global Alliance, 2016:12). Therefore, the evidence from the SDGs, the ODA criteria and the WPGA are informative for evidencing that CSE is an international development issue for this thesis.

The 2030 SDG commitment and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, United Nations General Assembly, 1989) emphasise the importance of protecting children from CSE. However, limitations to social services do not allow children to receive adequate protection and thus restrict children's overall wellbeing. As a child protection issue, CSE is based on development as it is underpinned by economic development, where poverty for the Philippines is regarded as the most prominent cause of CSE. Furthermore, taking into consideration the risks, safety and life chances of impoverished children, underdevelopment is not a matter of security but entirely centred on the overall welfare of a vulnerable population. In low income states, access to social workers can be restricted and child protection services have less resources to meet the required needs

of children in the community (Radford, Allnock and Hynes, 2016:47). Kotiswaran (2019: 415) argues that there needs to be a greater emphasis on improving the 'development approach' for trafficking interventions to ensure that civil society is able to bolster local mechanisms and social infrastructure, by providing basic protection for children in the developing world.

The Sustainable Development Goals

An indication of CSE as a development problem is its inclusion in the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In 2015, as part of a fifteen year plan, UN Member States agreed to enforce the SDG agenda, which is comprised of seventeen development goals as a 'universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and improve the lives and prospects of everyone, everywhere' (United Nations, n.d.). In the SDGs, target 16.2 details a universal commitment by the international community to 'end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children' (United Nations, 2015). Target 16.2 has generated awareness of child protection, prompting the global community to prioritise resources to implement projects and programmes tackling child abuse, trafficking and exploitation. With this international target in place, multinational development agencies have prioritised funding and technical expertise to support local responses to combat CSE.

International development and Do No Harm

As development engagement expands to take on new areas of intervention, such as CSE, there is limited critical assessment of development practice. The argument of Do No Harm (DNH) highlights that despite the scarcity of analysis in development, there are issues that exist. This section shows another way the tension between international interventions and local implementation is visible in development efforts.

In locations where international interventions have engaged for a long period of time, practitioners engaged in employing interventions have critiqued the process, delivery mechanisms and tools in attempts to improve foreign assistance. The insights from practitioners have generally led to critiques showing a disconnect between policy and practice, which indicates that applying interventions to the local context has been

problematic. An example of the disconnect would be, 'do no harm,' which has emerged as a critique of how development is executed, but it does not challenge the need for development. DNH is an approach created by Anderson (1999) for development, which has widely been adopted by multilateral agencies and policymakers. DNH's beginnings can be traced back to the Hippocratic Oath, which contains the phrase 'to abstain from doing harm.' However, the origins of a modern day DNH have been linked with the work of physician Thomas Sydenham, where DNH is referred to as a baseline principle adopted by the medical field (Aid Re-imagined, 2020; Smith, 2005: 373). The DNH concept 'exposed how aid, despite its good intentions, can exacerbate conflict' (Aid Re-imagined, 2020). Therefore, in applying DNH to development, donors need to take into consideration the potential harms and concerns both directly and indirectly caused to the local context from their intervening (OECD, 2010:3). For development, this has meant donors scoping the local context to generate 'a sophisticated understanding of political processes, patterns of state-society relations and sources of legitimacy in the countries where they are operating' (OECD 2010: 28). In theory, it is thought that by accommodating local differences, contextually specific complexities and building awareness, that the risk of harm can be minimised. However, in practice this is not necessarily the case. Arguments critiquing the DNH doctrine exist, including its limited perceptions of local engagement and everyday life aside from 'basic emergency and narrow security terms' (Richmond, 2010:666). Furthermore, the baseline assumptions that underpin development and DNH have been questioned and thought to be problematic, as in some circumstances aid interventions may not be in the best interests of under-developed states (Aid Re-imagined, 2020). Two major assumptions arise from the critique, which suggest that DNH is less effective. Firstly, it is presumed that 'action will (and should) be taken' and secondly, 'that minimising harm can be guaranteed' (Aid Re-imagined, 2020: n.p.). The purpose of development as a process of transformation positions foreign intervention as a moral duty and a necessary element to improving situations of instability and conflict. It also confirms the perspective that 'non-intervention is synonymous with 'allowing' nasty things to happen' (Chandler and Heins, 2007:10). Thus, to take no action would bring into question the moral consciousness of international actors and may potentially risk further harm (Anderson, 1999:n.p).

For development, although DNH is a widely used guideline, these assumptions reiterate that clear gaps between policy and practice require further exploration. Furthermore, both assumptions are problematic to the DNH approach, highlighting that while the purpose

of international assistance is positive, efforts can in fact worsen conditions in contexts of instability. The DNH argument should be interrogated further, as it emphasises the need to ask critical questions of foreign development aid and its impact on local societies. Often international donors have set criteria for evaluating interventions decided on by decision makers who may lack contextual knowledge. As a result, criteria and expectations for international interventions may unintentionally cause harm from their interference. Applying development interventions to a local context is complex, and evaluations of performance need to be assessed more objectively. Another critique is that donors and their interventions are rarely challenged for their contingency plans. In cases where donors intervene, there is a lack of recognition and attention on improving interventions because outcomes are often unfavourable or ineffective (Aid Re-imagined, 2020). As the field of international development has evolved, the increased transparency of interventions, robust evaluations and relevant literature provide evidence that interventions are 'just as likely to cause more harm than good' (Aid Re-imagined, 2020). There has also been little evidence showing that development interventions actually work and improve the local contexts that they seek to develop.

The reality of DNH is that there needs to be a greater understanding of local cultures and societies, taking into consideration the alternative approach of refraining from intervening if this is projected to be the most beneficial approach. DNH calls for a more objective and nuanced response to development, which requires a holistic re-evaluation of interventions centred on contextual sensitivities to 'mitigate potential negative effects on the social fabric, the economy and the environment' (Charancle and Lucchi, 2018:16). However, the heavy focus on transformative interventions restricts progress for local contexts.

The terminology dilemma

Literature on CSE has identified problems with the terminology since the 'boundaries between child sexual abuse and child sexual exploitation are blurred' (ECPAT Luxembourg, n.d.). The terms used carry significant weight as the 'phenomena we look at are bounded by the act of definition' [becoming] 'social problems only by being so considered' (Ryan, 1971 in Leon-Guerrero & Zentgraf, 2009:9). Therefore, understanding the core definition of CSE,

which will be used for this thesis is central to examining the phenomena in its entirety and depth. Definitions provide clarity in determining the nature of CSE, which has direct implications on its understanding within the Filipino context. In contrast, not having a commonality of language is detrimental to the effectiveness of being able to address the problem (Zafft & Tidball, 2010: 5). Whether an issue of semantics, clarifying terminology is essential to the protection of children. The inconsistent utilisation of terms for CSE has problematic connotations in relation to adopting a multidisciplinary approach. For instance, Protacio-Marcelino (2000:31) argues that the 'inconsistent use of phrases and terms – 'prostitute,' 'prostituted,' 'sexually abuses'; 'victim' or 'survivor'; 'perpetrator' or 'abuser,' to name a few – [...] obscures the reality of commercial sexual exploitation of children and confuses the process of identifying common approaches and measuring the scale of the problem.' Reflecting on this as an ongoing debate, the intention of this literature review is to recognise the multiple terms used to define CSE in present literature, whilst clarifying what is meant by CSE for the purposes of this thesis. As most literature uses different definitions for CSE, which it has assigned to certain forms of CSE but with little consistency in the terminology.

In the secondary literature, characteristics of CSE and child sexual abuse (CSA) often intersect, which semantically speaking makes distinctive terms difficult to establish (Luxembourg guidelines, 2016; Miller-Perrin & Wurtele, 2017). Moreover, across governments, the development sector and amongst professionals there continues to be longstanding debates over the inconsistency of terminology (Gerassi, 2015; Jordan, Patel & Rapp, 2013; Protacio-Marcelino, 2000; Reid, 2010). If definitions of CSE in the Philippines are explored further, the challenge of defining this phenomenon becomes more evident. For example, UNICEF (2014:4) uses the term 'sexual violence,' which encompasses both CSE and CSA within its definition, such as 'child prostitution, sexual slavery, sexual exploitation in travel and tourism, trafficking for purposes of sexual exploitation (within and between countries), sale of children for sexual purposes and forced marriage'. The term 'sexual violence' used by UNICEF (2014:4) for the Philippines, offers a broader definition acknowledging the role of violence in relation to 'sexual activities imposed by an adult on a child against which the child is entitled to protection by criminal law' (UNICEF, 2014:4). De la Cruz et al, (2000)[3] states the use of different terminology for forms of CSE and CSA

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[3] in Velayo, 2006:199

creates 'difficulties in delineating abuse and discipline.' In fact, there will always be 'considerable overlap between them (CSE and CSA), and that, semantically, the distinction will probably never be completely clear' (Luxembourg guidelines, 2016: 25). Therefore, for the purposes of this thesis, terminology to distinguish what is meant by CSE will be explained. Seigfried-Spellar and Soldino (2020:1203) articulate that 'CSE is a form of child sexual abuse, which as a broad category includes various forms of offenses toward children (both online and offline), such as commercial sexual exploitation, online sexual solicitation, and child sexual exploitation material.' Based on this definition of CSE, in the Philippines, terms such as 'child sex trafficking' and 'commercial sexual exploitation' were used for commercial forms of CSE (Miller-Perrin & Wurtele, 2017:126-127). Other scholars such as Orndorf (2010:792) state that the popularity of the Philippines as a tourist destination has fed into the prevalence of 'child sex tourism,' where perpetrators travel to the locations like the Philippines to pay for sex with children. For online forms of CSE, terminology is more inconsistent possibly reflective of an increased awareness of OSEC in the Philippines in recent years. For instance, terms used to articulate CSE in the Philippines includes 'cybersex', 'webcam child sex tourism' (Terre Des Hommes, 2013:4) 'online sexual exploitation of children' (UNICEF, 2016: n.p.) and 'sexual exploitation and abuse of children online' (SEACO) (Hernandez et al, 2018:305) are used throughout relevant literature on the Philippines. What is transparent across the different forms of CSE is that 'exploitation is arguably applicable to all victims of abuse in the sense of exploiting the vulnerability of a child' (Luxembourg guidelines, 2016:25).

The inconsistent terminology is widely recognised problem amongst child protection experts, in attempts to address the issue a Subgroup Against the Exploitation of Children (SAEC) was composed by the UN NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child (2005:7). The SAEC (2005) articulated the importance of aligning definitions on child sexual abuse and exploitation, identifying the difficulty of analysing progress in tackling CSE where definitions are universally misaligned and misinterpreted internationally. Moreover, the report identifies that 'legislation can reflect large loopholes and protection gaps, while responses can suffer from a misunderstanding about prevalence, practice and perception' (SAEC, 2005:7). Recognition of such gaps is widely acknowledged and accordingly, efforts to respond in addressing and disseminating universal language on CSE have been made internationally from the introduction of the Luxembourg guidelines. In 2016, the Luxembourg guidelines sought to map the deviations in terminology, and harnessing a forum

of experts, draws out universal explanations in order to inform on variances in the definitions presented. This task was undertaken in recognition of the risks that:

> *changes to existing terms (especially established legal terms) might cause*
> *confusion or lack of understanding, and even hinder the effective*
> *prevention and elimination of CSE, unless this change comes about in a*
> *joint and concerted manner by a broad set of child protection actors*
> *(Luxembourg guidelines, 2016:V).*

The Luxembourg guidelines are the most comprehensive analysis of terminology to date, aligning a diverse range of practitioners and scholars specialising in CSE work globally. The guidelines provide a systematic assessment of all existing terminology across institutions, agencies and civil society demonstrating a comprehensive analysis of best terms based on practitioners' feedback and critiques. For CSE, the guidelines ensure a complete and universal understanding of all definitions to ensure that this research captures all relevant forms of CSE. Based on the analysis of CSE in the Luxembourg guidelines (2016:25) the definition explains that:

> *A child is a victim of sexual exploitation when she/he takes part in a sexual*
> *activity in exchange for something (e.g. gain or benefit, or even the promise*
> *of such) from a third party, the perpetrator, or by the child her/himself […]*
> *"Exploitation" in this context is thus a key term, the meaning of which*
> *marks its difference from sexual violence and sexual abuse of children.*

The definition of CSE in the Luxembourg guidelines will be used to guide the terminology for this study. As Laird et al., (2022:2) argues that 'there appears to be a degree of uncertainty as to what CSE embodies.' Where other works have failed to articulate consistent definitions across cultures, governments and agencies, the Luxembourg guidelines remedies this gap by thoroughly evaluating terminology. At present, numerous variations of terminology are interchangeably used across grey and academic literature, which pose a challenge to this study where a singular recognised definition is important to develop an in-depth understanding of CSE in the Philippines. To resolve any confusion, utilising the Luxembourg guidelines as a frame of reference for this research ensures that the study's definition of CSE is a universally agreed upon by child protection experts.

According to the Luxembourg guidelines, a fundamental component that differentiates CSE from other forms of CSA and maltreatment is the exploitative element (Luxembourg guidelines, 2016:25). The focus on exploitation often is linked to 'the power

imbalance between a perpetrator and young person' and how this inequality is abused for perpetrators gain (Laird et al., 2022:2). Alternatively, some scholars focus on the commercial implications of individuals under 18 years old where a sexual transaction is made for gifts, money or basic needs for survival (Moynihan et al., 2018:441). Other definitions have been made visible to reflect how other nations interpret CSE. For example, in Bangladesh CSE is considered as a form of labour exploitation rather than a standalone phenomenon. For instance, Shoji and Tsubota's (2021:101) work investigates CSE in Bangladesh by examining 'working conditions of child sex workers.' What is evident from the study are the commercial implications on CSE, where children in Bangladesh are considered commodities for pimps and owners where they can earn low wages (Shoji and Tsubota, 2021:102). Another example of how other countries interpret CSE is the transactional element in Rwanda, where children engage in a sexual activity for financial means to survive, education, employment 'or various gifts that will boost one's status among one's peer group' (Williams et al., 2012:355). Williams et al., (2012:355) goes on to articulate that awareness of 'transactional sex' as a form of CSE is prevalent in the region of sub-Saharan Africa but that depending on the country the problem manifests differently to reflect the context and culture. Whilst there are numerous qualitative studies capturing the nature, dynamics and enabling factors of CSE the literature review uncovered less quantitative research understanding prevalence. For instance, in a study using meta-analysis Stoltenborgh et al., (2015) details the prevalence of CSA including CSE as a more specific form impacts 12.7% of children worldwide. Simon et al., (2020:7) builds on these findings articulating that research often focuses on affluent countries and there continues to be a scarcity of survivor services. Based on this, there is a crucial need to make progress in developing global representation of all children and build on interventions for CSE survivors (Simon et al., 2020:7). The literature highlights that beyond terminology the issues for the different forms of CSE are similar under the CSA umbrella where representation of children worldwide, measuring the issue and interventions for victims require significant improvement. To understand CSE in more detail, the following sections discuss the nature of CSE in the Philippines based on the definition of CSE discussing both online and offline forms.

The legacy of conflict: child sex tourism

Literature on South East Asia emphasises that child exploitation is rife in the region as a well-known destination for child sexual offenders travelling to engage in CSE activities (ECPAT International, 2016; Montgomery, 2008). For example, McGregor Perry and McEwing (2013:139) state that human trafficking is still a major issue, specifically the 'exploitation of women and children easily accounts for the greatest proportion of global human slavery.' In the region, concerns for child welfare have been recognised but research into sexual exploitation in South East Asia has tended to focus on women rather than children (Jeffrey, 1999; Reid & Jones, 2011). O'Connell Davidson (2005: 3) articulates that there are often attempts to establish a distinction between the prostitution of adults and children. In reality, this is more complex as it 'does not reflect the realities of sex commerce' (O'Hara, 2019:114-115) as an economic and political phenomenon (Outshoorn, 2004:267). The following section presents contributing factors to child sex tourism and CSE more broadly specifically the legacy of World War Two and the Vietnam War, and the normalisation of prostitution.

Scholarly work examining historical factors of CSE in the Philippines, which draws attention to South East Asia being widely recognised as a hub for commercial sexual exploitation and sex trafficking (Blackburn et al, 2010; Rahamathulla, 2021; Roby & Ward, 2004; Van Hasslet et al, 2013). Historical factors around the treatment of women and children have and continue to plague perceptions in South East Asia as 'massive prostitution industries have developed in response to the large US military presence in Saigon, Thailand and the Philippines' (Enloe, 1983, Sturdevant and Stoltzfus, 1992 in Jeffrey, 1999: 186-187). For instance, many studies cite the influences of World War Two as a distinct period relating to the rampant rise of the sex trade industry, which has had enduring consequences in the Philippines (Zafft, 2010; Trinidad, 2005; Bagley, Madrid, Simkhada, King & Young, 2017:2). During World War Two, US military bases were established in the Philippines to manage threats from Japan. Prostitution emerged from the US military's presence, as women reaped economic benefits whilst children were sexually exploited to meet the needs of US servicemen based in the Philippines (Jeffrey, 1999:186-187). Following World War Two, the Vietnam War and sustained US military presence in the Philippines, Taiwan and Thailand has been argued to be the origins of child sex tourism in these countries (Orndorf, 2010:792). US military personnel visiting the Philippines for duty would visit local establishments such as 'local bars and massage parlours frequented by underage prostitutes' (Orndorf,

2010:792). The displacement and utilisation of the Philippines for purposes of war generated sex-driven economies in areas surrounding the US military bases. Whereby the prospect of financial gain trumped the overall safety and wellbeing of women and children resulting in 'social tolerance or ignorance' of prostitution and sexual exploitative activities involving children (Zafft, 2010:18). Post the Vietnam War, South East Asian governments embarked upon encouraging tourism industries seeking to capitalise on the 'sex trade infrastructure,' further promoting child sex tourism by ignoring risks posed to children (Orndorf, 2010:792). More recent developments in 2006 sought to hold US servicemen accountable for sexual misconduct and exploitation. However, incriminating military personnel for sex crimes turned out to be difficult 'due to their status of impunity and the challenge of invoking jurisdiction' (Protection Project, 2007 see in Zafft, 2010:16). As a result, the legacy of prostitution continues to have an impact on children with little responsibility for the normalisation of CSE. The legacy of sex tourism has continued with disastrous consequences for children as 'government policies, such as for the promotion of tourism […] may have indirectly encouraged the growth of prostitution and sale and trafficking in children' (Steinman, 2002:56). The focus on sexual exploitation through the channel of tourism, particularly in the Philippines is deeply linked to increased international travel (Jeffreys,1999; Blackburn et al., 2010). Financially, child sex tourism has long been a lucrative business providing local communities with a source of revenue even becoming integral to the 'development strategy' in impoverished areas (Sassen, 2007:75). Local facilitators of child sex tourism perceive the benefits from stronger international currencies being brought into the economy as outweighing the consequences.

Another driver into child sex tourism in rural areas of the Philippines is that 'local manufacturing and agriculture can no longer function as sources of employment profits' (Sassen, 2007:75); as a result there has been growth in sex-driven economies to develop an alternative source of income. But this is at the cost of Filipino children being exploited with 'demand for child prostitution' increasing to the extent that locals are 'turning a "blind eye" to the dangers of child sex tourism' (Orndorf, 2010:792) because of the 'profitability' (Jeffreys, 1999:191). The financial lure of prosperity from sexual exploitation as an industry, despite not being the only driving factor, has had huge implications on the problem growing. For example, it is difficult to trace the causes that compel CSE, most especially in the Philippines 'because the families and the community value financial opportunity more than the physical, social, and emotional stability of the abused children' (Zafft & Tidball,

2010:18). Moreover, there are reported cases where communities have been engaging in CSE activities operating as pseudo gangs consisting of 'foreign and local pimps, neighbours, relatives, and even the parents of children involved' (Terre Des Hommes, 2016:12). Children encounter difficulties, as the facilitators involved in their exploitation and abuse are often familial and known by the child. In a report investigating 'webcam child sex tourism' in the Philippines, Terre Des Hommes (2013:13) found that 'children are often coerced or encouraged to sell webcam sex shows by parents, family members, or other community members.' Considering this evidence, it seems that there are more complex factors that drive and enable CSE, which need further exploration in the Philippines. For instance, there is literature that states child sex tourism is 'shielded by societal tolerance or the denial of the problem, all the while being fuelled by an escalating and seemingly insatiable demand' (DeMarco, 2004; Fang, 2005; Hughes, 2005; Whitehead, 2008 in Reid & Jones, 2011:2). Scholars such as Kosuri & Jeglic (2017:208) argue that alongside impoverishment, lax implementation of law enforcement and child protection policies, the prospect of exploiting children where nations are undeveloped lure perpetrators to exploit the poor child protection and legal systems. Likewise, the widespread use of English in the Philippines demonstrates the ease at which perpetrators can engage with children travelling for child sex tourism (Terre Des Hommes, 2016: 15). Newman et al., (2011:119) expresses that the global community acknowledges its duty to reprimand people travelling to exploit children, but concerns continue to persist in prosecuting individuals. For example, there remains issues with 'governments […] enforcing laws directed at crimes committed abroad,' 'variability in the policies and procedures of different nations' and 'victims and evidence being located in another country' among others, which can result in delayed prosecutions and inefficient investigations (Newman et al., 2011:119). Newman's study demonstrates that significant progress is yet to be made across countries to align investigative and prosecution practices that take into consideration victims from other countries beyond a nation's own jurisdiction. Later in this chapter, legislation will be discussed in more detail specific to the Philippine context.

Children and Filipino culture

Representation of Filipino children exploring how cultural factors influence CSE is scarce within literature. Most references tend to treat culture separate from the phenomenon lacking critical analysis of how culture may correlate with enabling factors of CSE. The following section considers Filipino cultural practices of children and their family to investigate the implications of the cultural context in relation to CSE.

Patterns and overriding enabling and driving factors found in literature, which act as routes into exploitation are presented below. The predominant theme throughout has been the major role of poverty as an underlying factor in CSE. (Jeffreys, 1999; ECPAT, 2016; Steinman, 2002; Orndorf, 2010; Bagley et al, 2017; Hernandez et al, 2018). Environmental factors such as 'poverty, family breakdown and dysfunction, poor parenting and supervision of children are pervasive in the Philippines' (Gill, 2021:152-3), factors that have been linked to the prevalence of CSE and OSEC. According to Pells (2012: 570), poverty is perpetuated through the family as a generational issue because 'children and families living in chronic poverty have fewer resources to cope with risks or adverse events.' For CSE, this also means children from poor families are open to greater risk. Children from families in dire situations of poverty are exposed to being 'manipulated into giving up their children to recruiters to make ends meet when faced with bleak economic opportunities' (Derks et al. 2006; Leung 2003 in Blackburn, et al, 2010:108). Alampay (2014:109-10) states that Filipino children are viewed to have complete dependence on and duty to their parents, when they grow up children are expected to contribute to the family financially if poor or by taking on household responsibilities. Steinman (2002:56) sheds light on the principal influences being 'poverty, materialism and consumerism, consumer demand, dysfunction and sexual abuse, gender discrimination, and the Internet.' Furthermore, Estes (2001:1) summarises enabling factors that have been identified as key elements contributing to CSE. The main themes include 'survival sex', 'former prostitution industries,' 'previous sexual abuse,' 'poverty,' 'gang membership,' 'influence of parents, older siblings and boyfriends,' 'organised crime recruitment and illegal trafficking' (Estes, 2001:1). Applicable to the Filipino context, these themes resonate with the challenges faced in addressing CSE from existing literature, but the principal insight suggests that enabling factors are complex because of the context (Curley, 2014:313).

Despite heavy emphasis on poverty as a major driving factor for CSE, scholarly literature looks elsewhere to challenge the singular view that poverty is the biggest threat to children at risk of being sexually exploited. Orndorf (2010: 792) states that the reality of CSE is that it is not restricted to 'poor societies' as propagated, because 'many poor societies do not have a high incidence of prostitution of children.' Developing the argument further, Orndorf (2010:792) articulates that poverty is not the only explanation for CSE, but that the reason goes beyond financial gain. For instance, George & Panko (2012: 67-68) elaborate on the role of societal institutions recognising that government agencies and organisations can act as indirect facilitators to the effective organisation and facilitation of sexual exploitation. In reality, the circumstantial influences lend themselves to generating the right context for potential perpetrators to engage with CSE. George & Panko (2012:68) share a model, which identifies that even if an individual is not recognised as a paedophile, that the 'situational factors' and 'unique psychological factors' can contribute to a form of 'elective paedophilia'. To elaborate further, it is suggested that the context within which the individual exists whether online or physically can be an enabling factor, increasing the likelihood of CSE occurring as opportunities to sexually exploit children have become normalised in the Philippines. For example, the previous section discussing historical factors specifically the legacy of conflict in the Philippines is considered a correlating factor, which has contributed to the normalisation of prostitution and sexual exploitation.

In other studies, examining other forms of CSE, Selvius et al (2018:63) identify two comparative studies that analyse commercial child sexual exploitation (CSEC) and CSA victims. The study documents that CSEC victims experience more significant trauma than CSA because children display over-sexualised and problematic behaviours related to substance misuse as well as encounters with law enforcement (Selvius et al, 2018:63). Furthermore, in cases of CSEC, there is often a greater number of perpetrators who sexually violate children, and as a result, children experience greater amounts of trauma (Selvius et al, 2018:63). Together with psychological trauma, children are also vulnerable to risks involving their sexual and reproductive health such as sexually transmitted diseases (Gill, 2021:153). There is also growing concern for sexual health risks posed to children related to CSE spurred by the rise in teenage pregnancy in the Philippines. To date, several studies have investigated teen pregnancy in the Philippines, which has one of the highest rates amongst other South Asian countries (Salvador et al., 2016:174; United Nations Population Fund, 2020:1). One reason as Gill (2021:153) observes is that in the Philippines 'rapidly changing

patterns of sexual activity, existing sociocultural norms, and a lack of evidence-based programmes, among other issues, result in other poor SRH (sexual and reproductive health) outcomes such as teenage pregnancies, HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections, and sexualised violence against children' are factors. Gill's (2021:154) work on teen pregnancies in the Philippines articulates a gap in responses to victims, which is under addressed in literature. However, one limitation with this study is that does not explain other factors related to teenage pregnancy in the Philippines. For instance, arranged child marriages attach to religious and cultural traditions are known practices in South East Asia (UNESCO Bangkok, 2018: n.p.). In addition, UNFPA and UNICEF (2018:2) detail that 'rapid transformations shaped by global forces, increasing urbanisation, media and technology' has also impacted teenage sexual behaviours and activity in the region. These considerations should also be made in relation to teenage pregnancy rates beyond CSE.

Most literature on CSE in the Philippines has been influenced by gendered ideas of victimisation, where victims are women and girls. However, there is a relatively small and increasing body of literature that is concerned with boy and male victims of CSE. A systematic review by Moynihan et al (2018: 441) evaluated the state of literature on sexually exploited boys internationally, concluding that 'similar rates of sexual exploitation have been reported among boys and girls.' Furthermore, Moynihan et al (2018: 450) argue that more research on CSE and gender is crucial to ensure adequate representation of issues related to both boy and girl CSE victims so that responses are better informed and reflective of victim's needs. In Cambodia, girls are particularly vulnerable because of rigid cultural norms and female roles, which 'perpetuate gender inequality and discrimination, the feminisation of poverty, religious beliefs that females are born as a result of bad karma, early marriage and divorce, violence and disparities in educational attainment […] which values investing in boy's education rather than girls' (Rafferty, 2007:413-414). For Cambodian families, often the eldest girl is most at risk of sexual exploitation especially in cases where there is a lack of financial support to help other family members (Rafferty, 2007:413). Similar to other South East Asian nations like Cambodia, the Philippines shares a collectivist mentality where Filipino families retain the idea of preserving family interests above the individuals themselves. (Alampay & Jocson, 2011:164). Triandis (1995:2) defines collectivism as a 'social pattern consisting of closely linked individuals who see themselves as part of one or more collectives (family, co-workers, tribe, nation)' Culturally the Filipino family and role of children presents an interesting dynamic in understanding the issue as 'family is seen as the

one entity in almost all cultures that outsiders do not intervene upon very easily' (Crews & Crews, 2010: 27). Crews & Crews (2010: 27) argue that familial collectiveness protects family who exploit their own children from external inspection and intervention. The internalised value system of the Filipino child is also fashioned upon the family's circumstances, reflective of its stability and ability to adequately provide for their needs. If these elements become stressed then family values can become distorted to the extent that 'justifying grooming or pressing their children' into being sexually exploited especially in cases of OSEC can become a reality (Terre Des Hommes, 2016:15). Children are responsive to such demands as Filipino children are considered in relation to the family collective prioritising the family above themselves.

Present day Filipino families base their values on traditional family roles but changes to the family structure are increasingly common. For example, labour migration as a result of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) has impacted on children who are left behind with relatives while primary caregivers most often the mother and father move abroad for work (Bernardo et al., 2018:904). Similarly, for Filipino children, religious morality linked to traditional family structures centred on strict male and female roles is a dominating element in the perceptions of childhood. For children in the Philippines, culturally formed ideas of childhood are often formed in parallel to adulthood and shaped notions of being prospective adults (Jones & Welch, 2018:123). Filipino anthropologists state that the overarching focus of Filipino youth studies often lean towards more 'moralistic and emotional' childhood representation linked to serving political and religious means rather than expressing the social realities encountered by children (Lanuza, 2004: 362). For children this can result in victims becoming 'inhibited by shame/stigma' as a result of idealistic cultural and social norms, which risks silencing children from reporting CSE (Rafferty, 2016:162). These feelings of stigma and shame combined with cultural values such as 'utang na loob,' which means that when a child is born, they automatically 'incur a debt of gratitude to their parents' for giving them life (Domingo, 1994:178). For children, such values as well as stigma can present difficulties as 'social norms and family values encourage a culture of silence and acceptance' (UNICEF, 2016:1). In other words, children are silenced as a result of the pressure to be socially accepted and to avoid being a burden to their family, but especially their parents and elders. Thus, in Filipino families, there can be 'sense of tolerance' to not report CSE within communities since there is stigma related to 'disgust and shame,' which ensures children,

families and communities remain quiet (Ramiro et al, 2019:12). Building on this, Ramiro et al (2019:12) states that Filipino culture and social interactions between Filipinos are based on valuing harmony by avoiding the confrontation and humiliation of others.

Child protection policies in the Philippines recognise children and their networks according to an 'ecological' model (Roche, 2018:10). 'The child is viewed foremost in the context of their family, followed by the political and cultural unit of the barangay, and then the institutional and social influences of schools, organisations and civil society' (Roche, 2018:10). For example, children are seen to develop into future contributors rather than present as 'participating members of adult society' (Polakow Suransky, 1982:6). Children are also often understated in their current role and position within society. They are considered comparatively inferior to adulthood perceived rather as 'future adults with a place in the social order and contribution to make to it' (Corsaro, 2018:6) often seen as largely passive cultural agents (Matthews & Limb, 1999:70). Roche (2018) distinguishes that children are viewed as 'becomings' or 'future social actors' (Roche, 2018:4) rather than perceived as 'beings' in and of themselves. Furthermore, stating that there are evident contradictions in how childhoods are portrayed in Filipino policies and childhood is measured against adults' principles reiterating an inability to express a level of autonomy and ineptness (Roche, 2018:4). Children as 'becomings' rather than beings places futuristic plans and expectations on children for their potential adulthood. Therefore, the emphasis remains heavily on adulthood expectations narrowing the perspective of children to their potential societal contributions rather than ensuring children are protected at present. Further discussions exploring the implications of this will be discussed in chapter four.

Online forms of child sexual exploitation

For CSE, international agencies are acknowledging the complex nature of globalised networks and the use of technology, which has driven the international development community towards developing responses to online sexual exploitation of children (OSEC). UNICEF (2016b: n.p.) reported that the Philippines is 'the global epicentre of the live-stream sexual abuse trade' with OSEC being the leading form of cybercrime in the Philippines, making up half of reported cases. In the Philippines, CSE has become a pressing issue where the nation has been rendered a hub for OSEC. Based on law enforcement data,

the US State Department (2020:409) reported the Philippines as one of leading sources of OSEC, highlighting that 'traffickers sexually exploit children, individually and in groups, in live internet broadcasts in exchange for compensation wired through a money transfer agency by individuals most often in another country, including the United States, Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom.' Technological advancements have increased accessibility to children through online platforms, including the spread of high-speed internet, which has fuelled a surge in Filipino children at risk of sexual exploitation. The added challenge of OSEC is that perpetrators do not physically need to be in the same location as victims, which complicates investigations and the consequent response.

A UNICEF report puts into perspective the scale and impact of the issue by highlighting the number of rising cases but low conviction rates of OSEC and online abuses against children (2016: n.p.). This report signals the importance of preserving the values specified in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations, 1989), which enforces the right for children to be protected. Furthermore, the global call in 2015 to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, specifically target 16.2, indicates another step towards progress in the protection of children, whereby a unified global initiative to 'end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence and torture against children' has generated momentum (United Nations, 2015:n.p.). The recent Disrupting Harm study comprehensively assesses the status of OSEC in the Philippines evaluating internet usage and penetration of twelve to seventeen year olds including places of internet access (ECPAT, INTERPOL & UNICEF, 2022:27). From the findings, the study estimates that 20% of internet using children aged twelve to seventeen year olds were victims of OSEC, scaling this percentage to the population the study found that approximately 2 million children are being exploited every year (ECPAT, INTERPOL & UNICEF, 2022:8). Greater awareness of OSEC has erupted and the Philippines in particular has been documented as a principal source for the production of online child sexual abuse materials (Hernandez et al, 2018: 306). Meltzer (2014; 96-97) outlines that governments play a crucial role in the protection and management of online data and information. Their role is not only to restrict and monitor information but also to educate internet users especially families in protecting themselves from exploitation. On further examination, Meltzer (2014; 96-97) suggests that governments should take on more of an expansive role not limiting the demand response to the nation where child sexual exploitation materials (CSEM; also known as indecent images and videos of children) is produced. Instead, Meltzer (2014:100) proposes for a prioritisation of 'cross-border data

flows,' sharing access across borders should be comprehensively investigated by governments as a viable option. The harnessing of a global response has yet to evolve and is not only a concern for the Philippines alone but requires a transnational approach (Johnson, 2011: 75). As a phenomenon, the transition from offline forms of CSE to online is a progression linked to the nation's problematic history with child sex trafficking and prostitution (Estes & Weiner, 2001; Reid & Jones, 2011). Hernandez et al (2018:310) state that OSEC has been 'perceived to be more prevalent in areas known for sex tourism,' which would suggest that previous child victims of sexual exploitation continue to be at risk. Likewise, it would also insinuate a transition into a different format of sex tourism or prostitution, that the context and means by which children are sexually exploited is thus reflective of modernisation.

As it currently stands, the latest materials around sexual exploitation of children focus on OSEC and the protection of children (UNICEF, 2016; Terre Des Hommes, 2013; 2016). For Southeast Asian nations, the modern dimensions of technology have added further complexity in protecting children from sexual exploitation due to the increased accessibility and lack of education around web-based exploitation (Curley, 2014; Terre des Hommes, 2013). Exploiters in the Philippines often perceive OSEC as a way to make 'easy money' as it uses minimal resources and is considered less traumatic for children especially with live streamed content, since there is no contact between the child and the perpetrator. The financial incentive seemed to be central to teenagers and older children engaging in OSEC, especially when it was considered socially acceptable. Among older children, evidence from a study conducted by Ramiro et al, (2019:7) detailed that a common enabling factor was 'found to be peer influence,' where participants explained that they were more comfortable engaging in exploitation with peers. Hernandez et al (2018:310) states that OSEC has been 'perceived to be more prevalent in areas known for sex tourism', which poses risks to children in cosmopolitan cities and communities near beaches. In cases of OSEC, offline forms of CSE tend to also influence the prevalence of online forms. One possible explanation is the Philippines historical links with prostitution and the treatment of women and children have and continue to plague perceptions around sexual exploitation in South East Asia, which has generally led to more normalised sexualised behaviours (Jeffrey, 1999; Reid & Jones, 2011). Another reason is that often adults who engage children in online forms of sexual exploitation, perceive OSEC to be less harmful to children since there is no physical contact involved (Ramiro et al, 2019:9).

Online behaviours of children have direct implications on how OSEC can be understood better for deterrence purposes. For example, research specific to internet and social media technology in relation to OSEC is especially relevant given the 'huge transformation in the range and speed of communication' associated with globalisation (Stafford et al., 2011). However, only recently in the Disrupting Harm study has there been exploration of the impact technological transformation and increased connectivity has had on OSEC in the Philippines (ECPAT, INTERPOL & UNICEF, 2022). Another insight from the agency We Are Social's digital report, shows the Philippines as the leading country for social media usage in their index, where Filipino users aged sixteen to sixty-four are averaging four hours and fifteen minutes everyday (Kemp, 2020). To put the Philippines' social media usage in perspective, the worldwide average is two hours and twenty-five minutes, which is almost half of Filipino social media usage showing a significant difference. These behaviours demonstrate a growing need to understand online users' behaviours in their internet and social media technologies usage and how this intersects with indicators of OSEC. Furthermore, social media engagement is a crucial platform for perpetrators of OSEC, and with We Are Social's report not capturing younger children the full extent of children who are directly engaging in social media and therefore at risk remains unknown. However, to date there is a distinct lack of critical research into how online and technological practices in the Philippines shape and influence children's experiences of sexual exploitation. Instead, most literature tends to focus on detailing characteristics of OSEC and providing case studies of survivor's experiences.

Technology presents a distinct platform of opportunities and challenges; for the application of child protection it demonstrates risks of significant proportion to the welfare of children. Clearly, understanding the scale of the issue is difficult to grasp as online activities continue to be an area of mystery and uncertainty for the majority of users. Additionally, the dark web and underground syndicates ensure that the activities remain hidden. More recent literature (Terre Des Hommes, 2016: 14-15) shifts the attention to more organised approaches to OSEC citing that 'drug usage' and the perception of 'easy money' within communities has contributed to the issue. In addition, 'the popularity of online social networks and messaging applications' has increased child pornography production and distribution; developing nations also have increased access and there is high demand worldwide for such materials (Terre des hommes, 2018:13). Atkinson & Newton (2010: 112) express the importance of

'social networking and user-interactive services' and these exist at the forefront of the 'technical evolution,' which is popular among children. Thus, individuals seeking to exploit children possess increased capability to gain access to children undetected and with ease as 'data can cross many borders without the knowledge of the sender or the recipient' (Meltzer, 2014; 92). Technology has given rise to new forms of CSE and a new sense of access to global avenues of opportunity. Furthermore, the ease in which children can access technology provides another dimension; children are adept to new technologies and often surpass adults in their technical capabilities (Atkinson & Newton, 2010:110), presenting a challenge for adults regulating a child's access and gadgets. For example, results from the Disrupting Harm survey conducted in the Philippines stated that 'on average, only 28% of caregivers said they knew more about the internet than their child, with stark differences between older and younger caregivers' (ECPAT, INTERPOL & UNICEF, 2022:40). These technological challenges around usage show gaps where responses need to improve safeguarding mechanisms implemented by adults and caregivers to protect children from perpetrators.

Demand-side responses

Relevant literature pinpoints that the arrest and prosecution of foreign nationals for crimes of a sexual nature against children happen recurrently, evidencing that CSE is an ongoing international issue. A disconcerting idea is the fact that there is momentous demand for children to be utilised for sex and sexually explicit materials. For example, 16.9 million reports of suspected CSEM were received by NCMEC in 2019 from 153 electronic service providers (ESP) amounting to 69.1 million videos, images, and files (Guerra & Westlake, 2021:2). Understanding the behaviours of sexual abusers on the Internet and on social media platforms has advanced knowledge about the perpetration of child exploiters (Hackett et al. 2013, 2014; Finkelhor et al, 2000; Taylor and Quayle, 2003; Kloess, Beech, Harkins, 2014; Cruz, Sajo, 2015). Scholars such as Cotter (2009) and Reid & Jones (2011) investigating demand have highlighted the dearth of empirical research on the demand of sexual abuse and exploitation of children especially the extent of growth and knowledge around reduction to safeguard potential victims (Cotter, 2009; Reid & Jones, 2011). Such studies highlight the disproportionate focus on source side countries rather than on the demand side.

In terms of demand, Reid & Jones (2011: 214) recognise the trend of younger children progressively becoming at risk of CSE including demand for prepubescent children. The commodification of children has had dire consequences on the treatment of children, where actions perpetrated on children to create pornographic images has become increasingly violent (DeMarco, 2004; Hughes, 2002, 2005 in Reid & Jones, 2011: 214-215). Furthermore, Reid & Jones, (2011:214-215) highlight the disturbing reality of consumer demand that 'the declining age of child pornography victims is a chilling signal that the average age of child-victims forced into prostitution will likely continue to fall' (Reid & Jones, 2011:214-215).

For demand-side countries such as the UK there is also need for robust legislation to prosecute perpetrators especially those consuming, engaging in the creation and directing forms of OSEC such as live-streaming. Fouladvand (2017:13) states that in current studies, the UK has adopted a stricter criminal justice response for human trafficking. Fouladvand (2017:13) highlights significant development in the UK criminal justice responses but other agencies working in OSEC argue that further progress is needed. In 2020, International Justice Mission published a white paper claiming that demand-side sentencing was not reflective of the domestic sentencing in the UK for sex offenders. The white paper argues that stronger sentencing is required to prosecute, and convict UK perpetrators engaged in OSEC offences in the Philippines. The white paper's recommendations concluded that UK perpetrators were not being 'convicted of sexual exploitation charges' in line with the Sexual Offences Act 2003, in comparison, Filipino facilitators of OSEC had faced longer sentences in the Philippines (International Justice Mission, 2020:10). Despite this literature, there continues to be a scarcity of data available about perpetrators and research to evidence trends around foreign prosecutions especially around preventative mechanisms for those foreigners engaging with online exploitation or alternatively visiting the Philippines to engage in sexual exploitation in person.

Child sexual exploitation: legislation in the Philippines

Over the last 30 years, increased international legislation has signified how the UNCRC has impacted the safeguarding of children worldwide (Simon et al., 2020:6). In the Philippines, the overt response to CSE has been legislative, focusing on establishing legal apparatus to enable stringent law enforcement practices and the prosecution of perpetrators (US State

department, 2020:409).   The Philippines nationally fosters one of the most robust legal systems comparatively speaking with other ASEAN nations (Johnson, 2011: 74). In addition, the Philippines was the first South East Asian nation to bring into effect the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act in 2003 (Wiss, 2013:55). Legislative responses to CSE have been progressive in the creation and amendment of laws reflecting risks posed to children. For example, the Anti-Child Pornography Act (Republic Act 9775) created in 2009 addresses technological risks and the specification of laws reflective of the national concerns involving children in the Anti-trafficking in Persons Act of 2003 (Republic Act No 9208) around child sex tourism further evidences the measures taken by legal systems.   This law defines trafficking in numerous ways making the following illegal:

> *recruitment, transportation, transfer or harbouring, or receipt of a person,*
> *with or without the person's or victim's consent, within or across national*
> *borders for the purpose of exploitation such as sexual exploitation, forced*
> *labour services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, and removal or sale*
> *of organs or other similar acts (Save the Children, 2011:44).*

The legal framework to respond to CSE has been progressive and active in making adequate amendments to protect children legally, including online forms of CSE. For example, a key piece of legislation is the Republic Act No 7620 (RA 7620) - Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination Act in 1992, which has been a standard law used in responses to cases of CSE. Likewise, Anti-trafficking in Persons Act of 2012 (Republic Act No 10364) and Anti-Cybercrime Law (Republic Act No 10175) have also been used in cases identified as child trafficking and for online child protection. These legal tools allow for effective prosecution responses to protect children from CSE.

Overall, Government legislation has been active in passing effective laws strengthening prosecution towards protecting children based upon the Filipino 1935 and 1973 Constitution. In response to the Constitution, the Government created the Council for the Welfare of Children, with the aim 'to serve as the lead agency in coordinating the formulation, implementation, and enforcement of all policies, programs, and projects for the survival, development, protection, and participation of children' (Save the children, 2011:31). Although there are legal components in effect, there are challenges based on the implementation of legislation to address CSE, namely around law enforcement (UNICEF, 2016:72). It was highlighted by The Committee on the Rights of the Child specifically that 'law enforcement authorities lack the capacity to apply child-sensitive investigation

procedures or do not systematically do so' (UNICEF, 2016: 72). For the Philippines, there is a scarcity of literature investigating the reasons why the Philippines may be less effective in implementing legislation. For instance, the is recognition of robust laws in the Philippines but the systematic employment of such laws has been difficult on the ground (ECPAT International, 2016:23). One reason as Aronowitz (2010:493) states is that 'the lack of political will, inexperience in conducting investigations and prosecutions or corrupt practices contribute to minimal successes in the prosecution of traffickers.' In other words, legislation can only be effective where the context is able to be politically and practically receptive. Similarly, Simon et al., (2020:6) argues that 'the adoption of policies does not itself reveal the quality of their implementation nor the resources allocated to their enforcement.' When applied to the Philippines, it could be argued that although legislation may be comprehensive the employment of legislative tools and sufficient resources are crucial to ensure effective CSE legislation. Another contextual challenge is issues related to the age of consent where laws may increase risks to children (Newman et al., 2011: 119). Filipino legislation only recently raised the minimum age of sexual consent from twelve to sixteen years old. The concern herein lies with 'the vulnerability of children to prostitution and pornography' (UNICEF, 2016: 72), especially for the experience of the child navigating the legal process. Such arguments highlight that legislative tools are still lacking in the Philippines and there is significant progress required not only in CSE specific laws but also in intersecting legislation relevant to child safeguarding and welfare.

Conclusion

A review of the literature on CSE in the Philippines highlighted the scarcity of critical resources and scholarly materials. Clandestine by nature, CSE presents numerous hurdles to understand the phenomena even for researchers. One example being the difficulties of defining CSE and lack of consistent terminology used across organisations, governments and contexts. Based on the findings in this chapter, the definition of CSE framed on the Luxembourg guidelines (2016) offers this study direction to investigate the varying forms of CSE reflective of the intersecting terms used in the literature. One of the recurring trends is that the various definitions and understandings are inconsistent and could cause confusion during fieldwork. Despite some clarity from the literature, there are still presenting inconsistencies that will need to be taken into consideration with this research.

This study intends to build upon the content within this literature review, using the debates from this chapter as a foundation for data gathering and discussion. Research on forms of abuses against children in the Philippines have been limited in their examination of the context, often focussed on the 'incidence and prevalence of different types of child maltreatment,' as a result 'cultural, gendered and social dynamic' have been neglected (Roche, 2017: 114). There have been little to no scholars who have been able to draw from local data (Roche, 2017; Madrid et al, 2012). Similarly, the reliability and availability of data has been problematic in non-Western countries as has been argued that such research is a 'waste of time and money' as well as the preference for 'statistical and formal research methods' (Hertel, 2009: 305). Hence, critical gaps remain from the dearth of contextual evidence on child maltreatment as a means of framing the issue of CSE. There are several explanations for this, that other than grey literature, there is little published evidence from the local perspective supporting contextual understandings of CSE. Another possible explanation could be the lack of donors' appetite for understanding in-depth local behaviours, as they do not easily fit within Westernised concepts of child protection, nor is such research able to demonstrate a familiarity that the global community can relate to. Likewise, without international funding any efforts to conceptualise CSE in the Philippines are impossible. Reflecting on this, it is clear that there is a distinct need for critical research in the Philippines to understand the local perspective and conceptualise the gaps shown in present literature. The next chapter will build on the literature to further develop the body of knowledge by providing a comprehensive theoretical approach for the rest of the thesis.

Chapter 2 – Critiques of the liberal peace: a theoretical approach for CSE

This chapter will explain the theoretical approach adopted for this research, justifying how critiques of the liberal peace can be applied to CSE responses in the Philippines. The chapter will introduce critiques of the liberal peace as an appropriate approach given its parallels with development. A tension found in critiques of the liberal peace between international interventions and locally based actors is also indicated to be present in the Philippines, which forms a central part of the argument used in this thesis. The dearth of critical research on CSE has been an ongoing issue in the Philippines, and as the problem has become more prevalent, there is an increased need to provide robust research to understand efforts from the Philippine perspective. Therefore, for this thesis, critiques of the liberal peace will be used as a theoretical framework to understand the relationship between international interventions and local actors. The critiques provide a unique theoretical lens with which to examine CSE, and a contribution to the wider development that has been a neglected and overlooked area of study.

International efforts to support and monitor the impact of human trafficking have become a crucial element for improving global responses to child sexual exploitation (CSE). Online sexual exploitation of children (OSEC) in particular, has gained attention as a prevalent form of CSE, where the international agencies such as UNICEF, International Justice Mission among others propose that the technological and international dimensions of this issue pose threats to the safety and wellbeing of children. Over the last five years, OSEC in the Philippines garnered attention through international media and policy. This has resulted in an influx of foreign resources to confront the issue and enable more effective responses, such as reforming and improving local mechanisms. International assistance has been a source of financial and technical provision, playing a pivotal part in enhancing efforts on the ground implemented by Filipino actors including national and local government agencies and Philippine based non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

The liberal peace is also built on an international intervention and local agencies implementation model similar to CSE responses, where international resources support efforts to deliver peace to war-stricken countries. Because of these parallels, this thesis adopts critiques of the liberal peace as a theoretical lens to examine the challenges in the response to CSE, particularly the tension between international and local priorities. It also tests the

applicability of this critique beyond peace and security to the wider liberal interventionist project. The chapter will examine assumptions that underpin liberal interventions in order to focus on a tension between international interventions and Philippine that is also evident in the data collected for this study. Using critiques of the liberal peace as a theoretical framework, the chapter will expose social and power relations between the international and local and explore what this means for CSE responses and victims in the Philippines. To do this, the following sections of this chapter will discuss CSE as a development issue, expanding on the critiques of the liberal peace. The discussion will then justify the application of the critiques to the data gathered in the Philippines. Later sections will then demonstrate why the critiques of the liberal peace is a suitable theoretical approach for CSE data in forthcoming chapters.

International relations theory and the foundations of the liberal peace

Peace and state security have been at the forefront of the global agenda to ensure the protection and safety of human beings. Following the First and Second World Wars, and subsequently the Cold War, the creation of international institutions and organisations to ensure global peace was recognised as a priority. The establishment of the League of Nations by the United States (US) President Woodrow Wilson marked a significant point in international history and for liberalism in international relations. Founded on liberalist ideas, the League of Nations was set up to monitor, support and promote international peace between states. To understand liberalism, it is vital to look at the theoretical foundations of liberalism in international relations (IR) theory and the liberal peace agenda, which are linked to Immanuel Kant. Richmond (2005:4) articulates that war and peace discussions and how these have been framed are reflective of Kant's work in *Perpetual Peace*. Kant's deliberations on peace discussed how states who embrace liberal ideas should be against engaging in conflict with other nations (Gold and McGlinchey 2017:4). Proponents of the liberal lens within IR theory believe that individuals are 'innately good', maintaining the ideal that peace is attainable and to be sought after (Gold and McGlinchey, 2017:4).

After the League of Nations collapsed, and during the Second World War, realism emerged as a contrasting political ideology within IR theory. Its basis was formed on the shortcomings of liberalist thinking to explain why World War II occurred (Gold and McGlinchey, 2017:4). Liberalism and realism are considered core theories in the field of IR,

which 'offer prescriptions of state behaviour and its possible effects on peace in-between nation states' (Jehangir, 2012: para.2). In comparison to liberalism, realism in IR theory, according to critics, presents as a more cynical perspective of state behaviour disputing the perspective held by liberalists. As an opposing view, traditional realists argue that world politics are fundamentally 'anarchic' and that states are engaged in ensuring their own protection and security (Hyde-Price, 2008:30). States act in their own self-interests, not bound by any law and inevitably end up in situations of conflict and turmoil where there is 'relentless security competition with the possibility of war looming in the background' (Mearsheimer, 1994:9). Ultimately, human nature and the ability to act freely and immorally without bounds or a greater power is central to realist thought in IR (Hobbes, 1985; Morgenthau, 2006; Jehangir, 2012). The differences between liberalism and realism show opposing views of international conflict, consensus and peace, demonstrating differences in how sovereign states should govern their citizens; through domination from a realist lens or by an approach centred on individual freedoms from a liberal perspective. Recognising the differences between both theories provides an idea of the central areas of thought within IR. However, given the purpose of this thesis on critiques of the liberal peace agenda, the rest of the chapter will build on liberal thought.

Following the Cold War period from 1985 to 1991, the dissolution of the USSR signified a political shift of power towards a superior and prosperous West, which had implications on IR and foreign policy where there was a notable move towards interventionism and promoting democracy. The post-Cold War period was seen to be a time of reform, where numerous states recently liberated held elections and international institutions began to show preference to states with liberal values (Paris, 2010: 340). Overall, it was believed 'that political and economic liberalism offered a key to solving a broad range of social, political and economic problems from under-development and famine, to disease, environmental degradation and violent conflict' (Paris, 2010: 340). The push towards liberalist thinking was supported by international organisations, as many democratic states upheld the view that liberal democracy equated to a more peaceful society. The liberalist thought continued to attract scholars on the belief that if countries were to thrive this was because they were prioritising 'the protection of individual freedom, the reduction of state power, and the conviction that power is legitimate only if it is based on consent and respects basic freedoms' (Hoffmann, 1995:160). Affluent Western states like the United States among others promoted liberal values and saw it as their inherent obligation to mediate and lead

interventions fostering peace for developing and illiberal countries (Mac Ginty 2008; Matambo, 2020). Liberal peace advocates also utilised this as an opportunity to promote global democracy and economic interests (Paris 2010:388). Liberal states sought to uphold democratic principles and their perceptions of freedom, as a way 'to unite the world under a hegemonic system that replicated liberal institutions, norms, political, social and economic systems' (Richmond 2011:1). Peacebuilding has acted as an important hegemonic vehicle enabling Western states to promote their ideals of democracy and values as causal to instilling peace (Bellamy and Williams, 2005; Richmond and Franks, 2007; Roberts, 2012). Roberts (2012: 366) states that peacebuilding is a 'sanctioned intervention to force change peacefully on hundreds of millions of people' as a 'means of achieving the Liberal peace'. Other critics like Hawthorn (1999:152) state that international interventions for peace are 'a function of the power' that promote liberal values rather than addressing the need for peace based on the contextual needs. Both scholars highlight that international interventions to secure peace for war-torn countries are not only based on delivering peace, but also act as an ideological imposition of liberal thought. This indicates that whilst interventions are concerned about supporting peace efforts, international involvement is tied to liberal and Western beliefs and ideas of how peace can be achieved regardless of context.

Critical IR theory

To understand the liberal peace agenda, critical approaches to IR theory have formed an important basis to explore the assumptions and foundations of the liberal peace critique. The critical lens is important as it 'takes the global configuration of power relations as its object and asks how that configuration came about, what costs it brings with it and what alternatives remain immanent in history' (Devetak, 2012:169). According to Richmond and Mac Ginty (2014:174), earlier peace scholars have also disputed the structures of international order, the functionality of power in IR and the norms adopted to confront peace. Reflecting on Foucault (2003), these areas of inquiry made by earlier peace academics engage with epistemological discussions to debate against prescribed norms and power dynamics of global systems and order (Richmond & Mac Ginty, 2014:174). The critical approach interrogates the taken for granted relationships and structures at the centre of IR that are often disregarded or ignored.

A key critical IR scholar, Robert Cox, writes about the differences between critical and problem-solving theories. Cox (1981:129) defines problem-solving theory as the

maintenance of existing social and power relations; by preserving present systems and structures it ensures 'relationships and institutions work smoothly by dealing effectively with particular sources of trouble'. In other words, problem-solving theory does not question the existing social and power structures but maintains taken for granted norms to ensure stability. Yalvac (2015:2) summarises Cox's (1981:129-130) definition of critical IR theory clearly, stating that critical theory is 'self-reflexive, criticises the existing system of domination, and identifies processes and forces that will create an alternative world order'. According to Linklater, critical IR theory also considers Kant and Marx as important contributing thinkers who both have 'the desire for a universal society of free individuals, a universal kingdom of ends' (Linklater, 1982: 159). However, for Linklater, Marx's emphasis on social class and how it can marginalise members of society is too limited, but it does provide important foundations for forming critical IR theory (Devetak, 2012:171). Furthermore, 'broader notions of power' which are applied to the liberal peace critique look beyond Marx's theory (Richmond and Mac Ginty, 2014:179). A major proponent for critical IR theory is Linklater, forming the fundamental basis of thought for transformation, which underpins the liberal peace critique and development. According to Linklater (1998:3), the political community is influenced by a 'triple transformation'. The transformation is recognised as 'a progressive recognition that moral, political and legal principles ought to be universalised, an insistence that material inequality ought to be reduced and greater demands for deeper respect for cultural, ethnic and gender differences' (Devetak, 2012:180). The triple transformation shows how critiques of the liberal peace have emerged, highlighting how liberal thinking through Western politics has influenced the foundations of the international interventionist agenda including the liberal peace.

Critical IR theorists who interrogate the foundations of the liberal peace agenda such as Richmond and Mac Ginty (2013; 2015), Chandler (2004; 2006; 2010; 2014), Pugh (2005) and Duffield (2001; 2010), have adopted a critical approach to question the issues and problems that have arisen from both the perspectives of policy and practice. The acute nature of the critiques, which have emerged from the liberal peace agenda, interrogate and investigate the basic assumptions that are often accepted as truth (Paris, 2010: 339). For critics of the liberal peace agenda, the disparities between 'the liberal West and the non-liberal Other cannot be bridged through Western policymaking' (Chandler, 2010:155). In other words, the projection of a liberal values through policy onto other contexts where there

is conflict will continue to fail, since there continues to be a disjuncture between liberal thinking on how to attain peace and the reality on the ground.

The Liberal Peace

The liberal peace is derived from the dominance of Western or Northern liberal countries globally and 'the persistence of liberal peace solutions' to develop post-conflict states (Richmond and Mac Ginty, 2014:171). The focus on improving post-conflict nations manifested through international interventions and policy responses, seeking to establish peace in situations of war and instability. For the international community, developing global civil society was prioritised at the end of the Cold War, which also signified a new approach to politics and the establishment of 'moral-political communities' (Chandler, 2006:3). These communities were formed on the belief that 'liberal-democratic societies are inherently more peaceful than other kinds of societies' (Hameiri, 2014:319). Propagated by liberal states, interventions have become widely accepted as an international resolution to issues of conflict in the developing world by policy makers, international agencies and Western states (Hameiri, 2014:319). As a result, the underlying ideas of the liberal peace agenda are behind the delivery of aid, peacebuilding and interventions to transform illiberal states and societies into democratic states in the belief that this sustains peace and diffuses any future conflict (Duffield, 2001:11). This perception has been the driving force behind institutions such as the League of Nations as highlighted earlier, and the UN, who have adopted the liberal ideology through its peace agenda as a leading response to peacebuilding and peace making since the 1990s (Mac Ginty, 2010:391; Richmond and Mac Ginty 2014:178). In particular, the UN's Agenda for Peace in 1992 is arguably based on liberal international responses to peace, which evidences the adoption of liberal thought by a leading and influential global organisation (Selby 2013; Richmond and Mac Ginty 2014). Richmond & Mac Ginty (2014:178) go further to suggest that evidence exists that supports the notion that liberal principles are entrenched in most post-Cold War treaties, agreements and peacebuilding policy reports specifically referring to the Agenda for Peace (1992) and the New Deal (2011) among other international agreements.

For the international community, liberal thought on state behaviour has framed and informed approaches to conflict and international intervention, especially for developing

countries in crisis. Countries in situations of conflict are supported through international peacebuilding efforts to aid 'countries emerging from conflict, reducing the risk of relapsing into conflict,' by 'laying the foundation for sustainable peace and development' (United Nations, 2010:5). Since its inception, international peacebuilding has sought to transform the structures and institutions that make states more prone to conflict. As peacebuilding has evolved, processes and approaches have become more bureaucratised to meet the requirements of interveners but have been challenged for their ineffectiveness. Despite the need for peacebuilding and interventions, the liberal peace agenda has come under significant critique.

Critiques of the Liberal Peace

Academics, practitioners and policymakers highlight numerous shortcomings in liberal based international interventions and implementation (Doyle and Sambanis, 2007; Richmond and Mac Ginty, 2014). Many critics highlight that international interventions have been inadequate in achieving stability and resolving conflict, as many states often deteriorate, fall back into war and are unable to maintain sustainable peace (Richmond and Mac Ginty, 2014). Likewise, there have been minimal examples documenting the successes of international peace interventions from practitioners and local implementers. To understand the critiques better, Tellidis (2012:432) consolidates Chandler's (2010) summary of the liberal peace critiques well, stating that these can be segregated into two disputes: 'power-based (self-interests of the interveners)' and 'ideas based (discrepancy between liberalism and the non-liberal context where it operates)'. The 'power-based' perspective challenges the liberal bias of international interveners, institutions and liberal economies, stating that liberal ideas are prioritised ahead of local needs specific to the context, and thus sustainable peace cannot be achieved (Richmond, 2011:6). Critiques highlight that the international community is concerned with the 'territorial and institutional securitisation of the post-conflict state' rather than actually 'delivering tangible results in the spheres of social justice, community development, and everyday life' (Tellidis, 2012:430). This implies that the international focus on collective security has greatly influenced how the liberal peace agenda has been shaped. For example, the international legal framework indicates that 'state-based collective security concerns' undermine the 'individual rights posited in the liberal peace thesis' (Chandler, 2007: 60). It indicates that a disconnect exists between the intentions of international

interveners and the implementation of efforts within post-conflict states, demonstrating that the agenda behind the liberal peace is to promulgate Western and collective liberal security interests.

The other dispute, known as the ideas-based critique, suggests that liberal states impose liberal policies onto non-liberal contexts. Central to the critique is the 'assumption that the liberal peace approach has sought to reproduce and impose Western models' (Chandler, 2007:137). Critics state that this fundamental bias has been a barrier to sustainable peace, as international efforts do not accurately reflect the context where they intervene. It challenges the imposition of liberal ideology, questioning the assumption that liberal state values and their approaches will gain sustained peace. A notable element of the critique is that there has been little evidence to prove that the liberal peace agenda is effective in achieving peace. Instead, the assumption that the liberal peace agenda will achieve peace is based on the impression made by Western liberal states that their approaches are legitimate and effective. However, in reality, 'the self-image of the West is being projected where it cannot work' and policies that may seem effective in liberal states cannot be expected to produce the same impact in non-liberal states (Chandler, 2010:155). However, the ideas-based critique can be debated and undermined by liberal interveners in favour of their perceptions of transformation (Chandler, 2010:155). For example, if liberal interveners encounter difficulties or are incapable of implementing peace efforts effectively, they may interpret that the issue lies in the local context being unprepared to accommodate 'liberal frameworks of governance' (Chandler, 2010:155). There is also an underlying presumption that all states and especially post-conflict states cannot be anything other than striving towards liberal state values. Thus, the liberal peace is positioned as a desirable form of state behaviour.

A shared consensus exists across critics of the liberal peace, who question why interventions have been less effective. They argue that prescribed ideas of what is deemed effective or impactful have been 'so liberal,' that it has been problematic for non-liberal states to demonstrate progress towards achieving peace (Chandler, 2010:144). This tension within the liberal agenda emphasises that the international interventions lack contextual relevance and understanding of the local cultures and societies where peacebuilding efforts take place. Therefore, it is important to explore why this occurs and understand the agendas that underpin the local and international disjuncture. Chandler (2010:148) captures a key

discussion point providing an explanation for why this tension may exist. Chandler (2010:148) writes that:

> *External interveners have had much more status quo aspirations, concerned with regulatory stability and regional and domestic security, rather than transformation. Rather than imposing or 'exporting' alleged liberal Western models, international policy making has revolved around the promotion of regulatory and administrative measures which suggest the problems are not the lack of markets or democracy but rather the culture of society or the mechanisms of governance. Rather than promoting democracy and liberal freedoms, the discussion has been how to keep the lid on or to manage the 'complexity' of non-Western societies, usually perceived in terms of fixed ethnic and regional divisions. The solution to the complexity of the non-liberal state and society has been the internationalisation of the mechanisms of governance, removing substantive autonomy rather than promoting it.*

Chandler (2010) emphasises how international responses have created a divide, which highlights a lack of attention on providing for local needs; instead responses perform to maintain hegemony. In reality, the solutions adopted to manage the complicated nature of local contexts have become more bureaucratised and governance focussed, indicating a deviation from the emancipatory core values of the liberal peace. Moreover, the existing state of interventions suggest that international responses are becoming increasingly detached. Therefore, it is important to take into consideration the closeness of Western liberal policy makers who often create intervention strategies in 'places that are far removed in distance and worldview from illiberal states' (Ghunta, 2018: n.p.).

The failures of the liberal peace have demonstrated an ongoing crisis within the liberal peace agenda and as a result, academics and practitioners such as Chandler (2010; 2014), Richmond and Mac Ginty (2013; 2014) and Duffield (2001;2010) among others have sought to explore potential avenues to improve liberal approaches and frameworks. Despite the problems of the liberal peace agenda, it continues to be prevalent. As Mac Ginty (2010:396) states 'the liberal peace is pervasive, shaping international structures and the language of peacemaking, and amassing immense material power in service of its preferred notions of peace and development'. Therefore, the task is to improve rather than change liberal approaches, built on acknowledging the pitfalls of the liberal peace agenda rather than to change it entirely (Paris, 2010:362). For example, Richmond and Franks (2007: 45) explain that liberal peacebuilding is assumed to be effective, as it conveys 'technical and

normative legitimacy' with prescribed Western processes, set procedures and strategies to attain peace. However, this leaves little room to accommodate 'local configurations of power, knowledge, resources and institutions' or to consider other approaches, which may be better suited to post-conflict contexts (Richmond and Franks, 2007:44).

The local turn and hybridity in responses

Amongst the critiques of the liberal peace agenda, peace scholars and practitioners have recognised that local actors are forming hybrid versions of peace. Mac Ginty (2010) explains that when international interventions are adopted by local implementers that a hybrid form of peace may occur. This hybridity is constructed by local actors familiar with the context, and who thus modify responses to effectively engage with the local cultures and social order. The critiques and difficulties experienced by practitioners have progressed to consider a 'local turn' or a 'rediscovery of the local' (Mac Ginty, 2015:841). The 'local turn' has sought to deliver transformative liberal outcomes, more in line with the local context but has unintentionally been included as an 'add-on item to liberal peace interventions' (Öjendal and Ou, 2015:930). This has mobilised an increased local response, which has been a factor in 'the relative deepening of peace in society' (Öjendal and Ou, 2015:930). Moreover, as geographical boundaries have diminished, hybrid peace captures the globalised influences on societies and suggests that local actors have more autonomy to 'resist, ignore or adapt liberal peace interventions' (Mac Ginty, 2010: 391).

Peacebuilding scholars consider the 'local turn' or hybridity as a 'normative project,' employing it as a 'top-down' critique of interventions and advocacy 'with local, everyday, non-state-based identities, traditions and practices to achieve more emancipatory outcomes' (Hameiri 2017:55). Therefore, the 'local turn' and hybrid responses is an area where knowledge is developing for peacebuilding approaches and scholarly critique, which recognises the evolving nature of local culture and emphasises the 'fluidity of human societies' (Mac Ginty, 2010:397). Furthermore, critiques of the liberal peace as a conceptual lens engage with existent realities and tensions that influence human existence at all levels of society and across nations (Richmond and Mac Ginty, 2014:173). The local turn provides a more comprehensive outlook on critiques of the liberal peace to balance claims that more is being done to improve international efforts and bridge the disparity between international

interventions and the context. For this thesis, the 'local turn' and hybridity are vital concepts to examine frontline Filipino responses gained through a case study approach, which provides evidence from the local perspective.

Applying critiques of the liberal peace to child sexual exploitation: creating a development model

Critiques of the liberal peace outline a critical approach to examine liberalist ideology and its impact on the formation of 'global developmental processes,' suggesting that liberalist thought has been contributory in forming development interventions (Ikenberry 2006: 146). The influence of liberalist beliefs indicates that international interventions are therefore not limited to post-conflict states, but also encompass development and social justice issues. In light of this, the following section will explain why CSE is located within development, suggesting that development has become part of the liberal interventionist project, and thus, draws parallels with critiques of the liberal peace. The parallels highlight the interrelated relationship between development and the liberal peace agenda indicating that critiques of the liberal peace can be applied to CSE.

The role of liberalism in shaping the peace agenda and its dominance across international organisations suggest that development is included in the liberal interventionist project. As mentioned earlier, the Cold War indicated a turning point in IR history, showing a change in political attention towards the 'spread of democracy and respect for human rights to all states and peoples,' as well as the increased responsibility of international organisations in such matters (Jahn, 2013:1). International organisations were receptive and willing to adopt liberal state ideas, which upheld values rooted in the 'idea of elections, constitutional limits on governmental power, and respect for civil and political rights' (Paris, 2010: 340). As a result, liberalism has permeated the global vision shaping foreign interventions not just for peace but also development. International organisations such as the UN have led the global development response and composed the benchmark for how international development interventions should be framed and achieved by states. Acting as a form of international governance, international organisations promote a universal standard for how development interventions should present and perform according to the underpinning liberalist ideology. States are called to adhere to the requirements of development

interventions fashioned on the foundations of liberalism demonstrating a 'commitment to the norms of family, civil society, state and the system of states' (Frost 1997:21). Jahn (1998: 640) builds on the discussion, further emphasising that 'not any kind of family, civil society, state, or system of states will do,' but rather, it is assumed that Western models should be 'conformed' to.

For development, international frameworks act 'as a liberal design of power,' where interventions are seen to provide freedom and protection to everyone (Sorensen 2010: 31-32). However, this can be problematic as Western liberal models have dominated and formed the baseline in shaping universal concepts of development, which may not capture cultural nuances at a local level. Overall, universal approaches can limit development interventions, as they can overlook details and struggle to incorporate specific cultural characteristics, minimising the potential impact of targeted efforts. Although there is no context specific rationale for utilising a conflict-security model, other than the critiques of the liberal peace provides a robust theoretical framework to examine the relationship between the international and local where this tension is also present. The critiques of the liberal peace is also a reputable model for development, where no existing tool is available to critically analyse CSE responses in the Philippines.

The dominance of liberal states in directing efforts at an international level has been recognised by scholars and non-liberal states. The liberal assumptions that underpin development policies and approaches have often been overlooked as liberal states continue to be 'largely unchallenged' (Jahn, 2013:1). Development policy and approaches have been built on the premise of endorsing 'positive change' (Hart, 2001:650) and maintaining stability. Thus, developed states have seen international interventions as a vital response, even a duty, to support at-risk societies and protect vulnerable populations. Over the past twenty years, scrutiny of the liberal peace agenda has been at the forefront of IR theory, but development has not received the same level of critique to move knowledge on the subject forward. The emphasis on foreign aid and international interventions, 'has become more closely linked with security and immigration' rather than on other forms of development (Lewis, 2019: 1970). As the field of development is expanding, CSE reflects a more recent area of development, where there has been minimal critical academic input, reflecting a need for increased empirical evidence informing the critique of development. Liberal peace interventions and international development donors provide resources aligned to international

priorities and Western ideas of how responses should look to improve a state's situation from conflict or instability (Roberts, 2012: 367). Instead, interventions should consider studying the context to develop more specific interventions to meet needs on the ground.

Chandler's (2010:148) critique suggests that international peace interventions have become less concerned with pursuing the true essence of liberal peace values and principles of the ideology. Instead, the focus has been on maintaining power relations and international order rather than seeking local emancipation. The emphasis on bureaucracy suggests that interveners are paying lip service by proposing governance mechanisms as a response to peace, rather than providing adequate tools and assistance to enable local forms of peace to thrive. Chandler's (2010:148) views are critical of the liberal agenda arguing that the role of Western frameworks are mostly self-interested and limited in the execution of international peace interventions. However, it also indicates a vital area of investigation for the Filipino CSE response, shedding light on the tensions encountered by local implementers and why this may be the case. To explore Chandler's critique further, the US created TIP report (US State Department, 2020) which acts as an important framework for human trafficking will be used to highlight international assumptions for approaches to CSE. The international response is a predominant factor for CSE responses in the Philippines and forms the basis for how efforts are implemented according to specific criteria outlined in the TIP report, which provides indications of international inventions and donors attitudes contributing to the tension experienced on the ground.

Most studies on CSE in the Philippines only focus on understanding the victimhood and driving and enabling factors in order to improve the response. In other words, 'the spotlight is on the victims of abuses, rather than their potential saviours in the West' (Chandler, 2004:64). This is evident from the current grey literature available, which is used to amplify the victims' experiences, highlighting local institutional failures to eradicate CSE and emphasising the realities of political, social, cultural and environmental factors that heighten risks to CSE. Conversely, the narratives contained in grey literature are often supported financially by international funding and so frequently never reflect on the failures or limitations of international interventions. Likewise, discussions of the local tend to continuously migrate into explanations highlighting the importance of 'how state building and international assistance can assist local communities to achieve security and well-being' (Mac Ginty and Richmond, 2013:765). Simply put, there is a lack of critical self-reflective

practice by international actors and a narrow view of how to improve the effectiveness of international resources. In the same way, the local is treated as 'a near empty space, willingly subservient to Northern models and interests' (Mac Ginty and Richmond, 2013:765). As a result, there is limited knowledge and understanding of the local structures, cultures and social world actually being included in shaping the international response.

The application of the liberal peace critique intends to highlight tensions that, according to the evidence, exist in the application of development interventions to the Filipino context. Moreover, the case studies conducted as part of this research provide evidence from the local perspective, which forms a significant contribution, as it provides culturally relevant examples and discussions that Chandler (2010:153) identifies as an essential element because 'the critique is not essentially of power or intervention but the limited knowledge of liberal interveners.' The ideas-based critique suggests that an inherent power dynamic exists in the promulgation of the liberal peace agenda to non-liberal states. At the centre is a global disposition, which sustains that Western knowledge and power is superior, reflecting a world order comprised of injustice and maintaining a disparity between states (Comaroff and Comaroff, 2012; Richmond and Mac Ginty, 2014). There has long been a promulgation of power and knowledge migrating from the West to non-Western nations, which is a continued system that depreciates local knowledge, principles and ideologies (Chant & McIlwaine, 2009:12). These ideas of a dualism between 'modern versus traditional, Western versus non-Western, legal-rational versus ritualistic-irrational,' have cultivated social and political theories that similarly are reflected in the disjuncture between the international and local (Mac Ginty, 2010:397). However, the discussion is more complex, because boundaries are blurred, reflecting the complex reality of our social world progressing beyond binary understandings of the social, cultural and political landscape.

Hybridity has become an essential aspect of the liberal peace agenda, as it provides scope to understand in-depth the autonomy of local implementers and how interventions are starting to evolve (Richmond, 2011:105). It demonstrates the capacity of local efforts to transform the liberal agenda by using and adapting international interventions to meet local needs. The 'local turn' and hybrid efforts are a significant area of contribution to the field of development as it moves the discussion beyond the liberal and non-liberal state binary or local and international differences by focussing on the data (Paffenholz, 2015: 868). As a developing area of knowledge, applying the ideas-based critique highlights the importance of

hybridity and local responses, to understand how local implementers have formed local hybrid responses for CSE. Furthermore, it provides a crucial area of investigation to understand how Filipino efforts are bridging the social and cultural differences between international interventions and local efforts. Therefore, utilising the critiques of the liberal peace agenda, local ownership and hybrid responses can be examined more fully to see how the local turn is realised at the local level. In reality, applying the critique seeks to present the realities of the Filipino context by providing a different lens to CSE from a bottom-up approach. By questioning the 'distribution of power (top-down, bottom-up and all locations in between) and its focus on the perspectives of emancipation from everyday at the local scale,' which offers a more robust understanding of CSE shifting the discussion beyond the current emphasis on characteristics of CSE (Richmond and Mac Ginty, 2014:179). Likewise, the critical perspectives of the liberal peace critique will inform why there are tensions that occur and how these can be improved to develop responses in the Philippines.

The Liberal peace and parallels with development

The responses to CSE in the Philippines are located as a development problem, as explored earlier. Using the parallels outlined within this section, the following discussion proposes that critiques of the liberal peace, when applied to CSE, contribute to expanding knowledge in the field of development.

International policy agendas informing government and international agency interventions were shaped by a fusion of security and development interests following the Cold War period (Chandler, 2007:362). Global events such as September 11th have been pivotal influences on the development agenda becoming increasingly orientated towards global security interests and interventionist policies. There has also been a prevailing focus on prevention indicating a 'rejection of Cold War policies of containment for more interventionist policies' (Chandler, 2004:74). Within policy spheres, a close relationship between the liberal peace and development has grown, as they have become increasingly interrelated and inseparable. For Western states, development and security are considered to be interdependent, in that improving '"their" development, we simultaneously improve 'our' security' (Duffield, 2010b: 25). Likewise, the interlinked nature of development and peace suggests that development lessens the risk of conflict (Hegre, 2000:25). The shared consensus

across most scholars critiquing the liberal peace, is that international interventions are essential to aid countries in conflict, and that the ultimate aim of interventions is to achieve the liberal objective of emancipation (Begby and Burgess, 2009:96). International development, like the liberal peace, is also assumed to have similar liberal emancipatory objectives based on the assumption that external interventions to assist local issues are necessary in supporting development.

Liberal ideas have created the 'landscape of international peace and development' forming global norms and agendas like the SDGS (Mac Ginty, 2010: 395-396). At the source of both development and the liberal peace agenda are the inherent liberal biases of Western thought. However, the underpinning values and preconceived ideas that maintain a global order of dominance and power are a shared consensus across both development and the liberal peace. The transformative purpose or the intention to produce 'social transformation' through interventions is a shared parallel between development and the liberal peace (Duffield, 2001:10). In theory, development objectives avoid preserving existing social and power relations, seeking 'not to reform institutional development practice, but to transform society' (Leal, 2007: 546). However, critiques across development from DNH and the liberal peace agenda emphasise that liberalism permeates the overall global international agenda.

An essential parallel for this thesis is the relationship between international interventions and local efforts. Critics of the liberal peace and development indicate that local identities are undervalued across international interventions. Practitioners have critiqued the foundations of development, indicating that there is a need to adapt foreign aid policies and practices to be more reflective of local identities and everyday needs from experience on the ground. For the liberal peace, local needs are often overlooked or largely ignored because 'only international agency is deemed capable of making peace' (Richmond, 2010:26). International agencies are seen to be legitimate and valid, possessing the resources to implement their ideas of development and peace. Some scholars and practitioners argue that international interventions are carried out in a superficial way as interventions are still shaped on the ideas of what international actors deem as important. States in receipt of external interventions want foreign aid to target economic and social issues and provide preventative support, but some practitioners dispute that 'if Western powers were so concerned with people's rights to protection' why would they not address recognised issues of developing states (Chandler, 2004:66). As highlighted throughout this chapter, the lack of local

understanding by international actors minimises the capability to form effective responses demonstrating the best interests of local implementers. Richmond (2011: 105) discusses that a sustainable and legitimate post-liberal peace should be formed on a local everyday level that calls for an adjustment of international agencies to the local context.

Human rights: differentiating CSE from the liberal peace

Whilst parallels exist between the liberal peace and CSE, CSE continues to be part of the wider human rights debate. This chapter has shown parallels between the liberal peace agenda and responses to CSE; however, the human rights debate distinctly separates both subjects. Furthermore, this reiterates that the liberal peace agenda and CSE are standalone complex subjects, which come with their own discussions and disputes.

Across academic and policy spheres, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948 has been a part of an enduring major argument between universalists and cultural relativists. The universalist view maintains that the 'same legal enforcement mechanisms of human rights exist everywhere,' whereas cultural relativism claims that there are a multitude of ways 'to interpret and to use or abuse human rights' (Le, 2016:203). Donnelly (1984) reflects on the debate, exploring the spectrum of positions on the continuum between cultural relativism and universal human rights perspectives referring to 'radical' and 'weak' positions.*'* According to Donnelly (1984), moral judgements based on human dignity are considered as universal, whereas cultural relativism is 'strongly supported by notions of communal autonomy and self-determination' (Donnelly, 1984:400). Donnelly (1984: 418) concludes that some of the rights contained in the UDHR are 'best viewed as interpretations, subject to much greater cultural relativity.' When applied to CSE, the universal view is often criticised for promoting an idealised perception of children or childhood formed on a 'universal western concept of childhood as the definitive childhood' (Khan, 2010:105). Instead, cultural relativists argue that a universal model such as the UNCRC is up for interpretation, as diverse cultural beliefs and perceptions of childhood representation are not always accommodated by a global benchmark (Crews & Crews, 2010; 32). However, the universalism and cultural relativism debate is an unresolved global tension that maintains varying perspectives on human nature and dignity.

For CSE, the tension can also be linked with the disjuncture between the local and the international. As Khan (2010:101) argues, applying international models of the universal child to local contexts is problematic and has been a matter of debate because 'no singular version of childhood representation exists but many and holding up a prescribed model has direct implications on the effectiveness of policy at a local level' (Khan, 2010:101). At the core of CSE as a human rights issue is the cultural relativist and universalist debate, which highlights a predominant tension. Although the universalist and cultural relativist debate draws similarities with the liberal peace critique, it is expressed differently, in that it highlights the tension between international blueprints and the local context. Liberal ideas of international intervention are opposed to the cultural relativist ideas of the issues at a local level. Therefore, concerns about the local-international are not a new discussion in relation to human rights but a long-standing tension.

Conclusion

The liberal peace critique provides a theoretical framework to explore the relationship and assumptions between international responses and Philippine efforts to combat CSE. Based on this, the thesis will utilise the evidence to explore the tension that occurs between international responses and local implementation, in order to understand why this tension exists and how this may be problematic, using the 'power' and 'ideas' based critiques of the liberal peace (Chandler, 2010:144). The theoretical footing of both the 'power' and 'ideas' based critiques provide an effective lens to interrogate the underlying social, cultural and political forces that maintain international order. The 'power-based' critique is insightful, as it explores the relationship and agendas of external interveners from frontline experiences, which is a neglected area of investigation. This critique places a spotlight on international funders and their influence on local implementers by interrogating assumed behaviours and beliefs that legitimise the existing processes and approaches.

The liberal peace presents an important framework to investigate issues around power and agency linked to the critiques to understand how this is reflected in the data. Moreover, the critique of the liberal peace as a theoretical approach will aid in understanding the underpinning forces that frame social and power relations of donors and Filipino implementers. To assess if the same issues arise in development, the power and ideas-based

critiques will be used as a basis to interrogate the empirical evidence. The theoretical approach will help to unpack the relationship between international donors and local implementers from the local lens, which is largely ignored. Thus, the nature of this study and in-depth approach from using case study methods lends itself to exploring the contextual relevance of interventions from a local lens. As a bottom-up approach has been adopted for this thesis, the data will reflect a more localised lens understanding localised responses and the reality of people's experience. Likewise, the local turn and hybrid responses will also contribute to moving the theoretical discussion for development literature forward.

Richmond and Mac Ginty (2014: 171) assert that critiques of the liberal peace continue to be an enduring and relevant debate to IR theory indicating the significance of applying the critique to CSE. Furthermore, the application of the liberal peace critique to the complexity of CSE in the Philippines will be a unique academic contribution to development and CSE. For CSE responses, the critiques of the liberal peace highlight the value of local knowledge and how universal responses can misjudge and be too rigid to the needs at a local level.

Chapter 3 - Methodology

This chapter contains an account of the selection, decision-making process and application of research methods to investigate, analyse and conceptualise the data for use in the succeeding chapters. For this research, a case study approach has been adopted, which will achieve an insight into how local actors respond to CSE (child sexual exploitation) within the Filipino context, through interviews, observations and examination of grassroots non-government organisations (GNGO) records, information and policies. The case study approach was considered appropriate to explore the Philippine context and responses to CSE first-hand, whilst answering the research questions. Furthermore, multi-agency semi-structured interviews were also conducted as part of the case study with practitioners based in international non-government organisations (INGO), research institutes and government agencies to bolster findings. Adopting a case study approach allows access to practitioners' everyday experiences, offering a deeper insight into the realities of local mechanisms and relationships. This works to build an argument of local knowledge highlighting the challenges faced with international actors, the implementation of interventions and the complexity of the issues encountered. The methods and critiques of the liberal peace as a theoretical framework provide a basis for analysing what the reality and daily needs are for the Filipino context from a critical perspective.

Research strategy

A crucial element for any research is establishing a plan identifying the most suitable method to approach a subject and answer the research questions. For this research, a qualitative model was considered the most appropriate, as it aimed to understand CSE through the first-hand experiences of local actors. Tavallaei & Abu Talib (2010:570) state that a qualitative study 'attempts to understand the participants' actual contexts or settings, which are directly related to the phenomenon.' Furthermore, a qualitative study will ensure data gathered is extensive and all encompassing, as 'theories exist at different and variable levels including individual theories, organizational, group, and social theories' (Yin, 2008). A qualitative approach was employed since the study sought to convey the local perspective as comprehensively as possible, as well as the relationship between international and local actors to show the implications on responses to CSE. Qualitative methods offer an effective way of capturing the richness of social phenomena, which is crucial to socially diverse issues

like CSE. Based on the identified literature in the previous chapter, a qualitative method is adaptable to the heterogeneous characteristics of CSE and the cultural sensitivities experience by practitioners navigating responses in the Philippines.

In qualitative research, the role and influence of the researcher on data collection, analysis and interpretation is an important element of the overall research. The researcher carrying out this study will have inherent biases and knowledge, which will influence the findings. Berg & Lune (2017:133) argue that social scientists have aimed for 'value neutral' research, but in actuality, this is unrealistic given that 'all humans residing in and among social groups are the product of those social groups.' In other words, the 'various values, moral attitudes, and beliefs' influence a researcher's perceptions and application of knowledge to a phenomenon (Berg & Lune, 2017:133). Therefore, an awareness of what the researcher represents to participants and the research site is important for data collection and analysis as it has the potential implications on the overall study and its outcomes. Galdas (2017:2) explains Thorne's (2009) work well, stating that the 'challenge is not to try and convince that qualitative work reflects objective, opinion-free neutrality.' Instead, there is 'unique value' in articulating an awareness of the biases including that of the researcher, highlighting that previous knowledge and experiences can be beneficial to research (Galdas, 2017:2).

Two years prior to the study, I gained work experience in the Philippines, which inspired my pursuit of developing a deeper understanding of CSE from the Filipino perspective. Similarly, recognising how my past experience working as a UK educated social worker may influence views when conducting research was important, because there is likelihood of conveying preconceived ideas and expectations. My previous experience will influence the participants and the data interpretation process. Hence, an awareness of self is key, but it is unavoidable to detach self from the context and from knowledge and experiences already gained. As Patton (2015:40) explains:

> *Qualitative inquiry is personal. The researcher is the instrument of inquiry.*
> *What brings you to an inquiry matters. Your background, experience,*
> *training, skills, interpersonal competence, capacity for empathy, cross-*
> *cultural sensitivity, and how you, as a person, engage in fieldwork and*
> *analysis—these things undergird the credibility of your findings.*

Based on Patton's remarks, my past experiences of working with INGOs and GNGOs in the Philippines contributes unique insights to conduct this research. Suwankhong & Liamputtong (2015:516) discuss the impact of researchers being 'cultural insiders' or 'outsiders,' emphasising the benefits of being an 'insider' and sharing language, behaviours and values as opposed to an outsider. Reflecting on my role as initially a 'cultural outsider', an awareness of my dual British and Filipino heritage was essential in acknowledging any biases due to growing up in the UK and the cultural influences this would have on data collection and interpretation. Likewise, there are elements of cultural crossover that are inherent from having Filipino family and working proficiency of the Filipino language (Tagalog). For data collection, my unfamiliarity with the local processes required to conduct research on CSE, meant that navigating the local systems required more time. For instance, a formality when conducting research with local government agencies in the Philippines is to request management approval from the agency leaders before interviews, which I was initially unaware of. Furthermore, my lack of local knowledge meant that these processes took time, as I had to identify the right individual and learn how to navigate the process. Despite my own cultural barriers, Suwankhong & Liamputtong (2015:516) argue that the 'cultural insider' and 'outsider' role is more fluid, as this identity does not remain static. Likewise, a researcher can be considered as both an insider and an outsider as local knowledge is accumulated. For this research, a case study approach provides an opportunity for the researcher to transition from being an 'outsider' to being thought of as both an 'insider' and an 'outsider.' Access to Filipino experiences through the case studies allows the researcher to build knowledge to be considered as a 'cultural insider,' which is advantageous for engaging with Filipino participants. Moreover, my working proficiency in the Filipino language and social behaviours from my heritage may help further develop rapport with local participants providing me with the advantage of being seen as an 'insider.'

In Filipino culture, Narag and Maxwell (2013: 313) share that there are two predominant characteristics, 'collective identity' and 'colonial mentality', that have implications on conducting fieldwork.. For Filipinos, collectivism as defined in chapter one is an internalised Filipino characteristic, which demonstrates a kinship and inbuilt nature of togetherness. Based on Narag and Maxwell's (2013:313) work, penetrating close knit Filipino communities presents a challenge and a dependency on local networks when conducting research. As a foreign national and a 'cultural outsider', my identity as a mixed-race British Filipino may pose both barriers as well as opportunities for data gathering. For

instance, the cultural implications of a 'colonial mentality' (Narag and Maxwell, 2013: 313) indicate that a Western researcher is likely to be receive preferential or special treatment suggesting that historical legacies of colonial power continue to impact on research.

Research questions

The literature review uncovered an overall dearth in critical literature on CSE in the Philippines, specifically research conducted from the field. In response to this, the research sought to investigate CSE from the Filipino perspective, whilst focussing on responses to CSE where an absence of knowledge exists. Responses to CSE are a crucial to protect children from being sexually exploited and to minimise risks posed to their safety on the ground. Significant investment from international agencies supporting responses indicates the importance placed by international donors on interventions reaching beneficiaries. Despite ongoing international interventions, responses have lacked critical analysis of the implications and experiences of local actors who are implementing programmes on the ground. Therefore, the following questions aimed to remedy this gap by examining the local perspective and CSE responses.

1) In the Philippines, what do local responses to managing child sexual exploitation look like?
2) What are the challenges encountered by practitioners implementing responses in the Philippines?
3) What is the relationship between international engagement and Philippine implementation?
4) How does the relationship between international actors and local agencies influence programmes and Filipino efforts responding to CSE?

Each question sought to explore CSE responses from the local perspective by focussing on the context. Moreover, as highlighted earlier, there is little to no research that captures CSE responses from the Filipino perspective, since most literature is produced by Western academics or INGOs supporting local programmatic efforts. Therefore, the research questions intended to investigate CSE more robustly than existing literature, using data from the local perspective to highlight the dynamics, challenges and concerns specific to the Philippines. Furthermore, the research questions are not limited to this study but also help to identify central themes and lines of inquiry for further studies into CSE in the Philippines and

development research exploring the relationship between international interventions and local efforts. The questions provide scope to critically analyse the assumptions and accepted truths about CSE responses at present, by understanding from the local perspective the nature of responses, the meaning of responses and the risks and conflicts that influence how CSE responses are understood in the Philippines.

The case study approach

For the purposes of answering the research questions and developing knowledge on CSE responses in the Philippines, the following section details the methods adopted to gather, analyse and interpret the data in this research. When considering the most appropriate approach to examine CSE, there were numerous prominent factors to consider such as data access, participant engagement and the ethical implications given the subject matter. Creswell (2007: 138-139) articulates that a significant challenge for research is 'convincing individuals to participate in the study, building trust and credibility at the field site, and getting people from a site to respond.' Likewise, conducting fieldwork in the Philippines as a researcher presents its own distinctive complexities. For example, children who are sexually exploited are difficult to detect and prevalence is unknown by local agencies implementing efforts (Crews and Crews, 2010:29). There are also cultural norms and differences around local practices that may be challenging for rigid methods that lack flexibility to accommodate. Narag and Maxwell (2013:312) explain that research methods are often tied to procedures and practices to 'collect valid, reliable, and authentic information,' which are often created and applicable to Western contexts but may be difficult to apply to other contexts. To avoid any hurdles in data gathering, the research approach sought to be exploratory in nature to accommodate these factors in relation to Filipino cultural norms and dynamics specific to CSE responses and the relationship between international and local actors.

Since the research sought to engage with the local Filipino perspective, a flexible approach was best suited. After researching possible data collection techniques, the case study method presented as the most relevant approach, offering a flexible 'one-off design' centred on individual outcomes specific to the study and research questions (Robson and McCarten, 2016 :146). The case study is defined as a 'strategy for doing research which involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context using multiple sources of evidence' (Robson and McCarten, 2016:150). As a

method to collect data, a case study approach would allow for rich data gathering across numerous sources, offering a beneficial way to validate findings and to provide an accurate account of CSE.

A 'unique strength' of utilising the case study method is 'its ability to deal with a full variety of evidence – documents, artifacts, interviews, and observations' (Yin, 2003:8). For instance, data access issues can be remedied by having multiple sources since the researcher is not reliant on one data source alone but several points of access. Another benefit is that different evidence types have distinctive strengths that can be used to create greater visibility of a phenomenon. Most importantly, the use of various data sources affords this research a robust and detailed understanding of the realities in the context where a phenomenon exists (Yin, 2017:197). The case study approach allows data gathering to take place in a setting over time, allowing for more comprehensive evidence at different stages of the research process to gather relevant data (Yin, 2017:197). Social science researchers benefit from this approach, since it can allow access to often difficult information because there is time to build rapport with participants, learn about their daily experiences and familiarise with the culture. Bryman (2016:68) recognises, that a researcher situated within a multiple case study, provides invaluable insight and access to 'the operation of generative causal mechanisms in contrasting or similar contexts.' The next section will explain how data was collected as part of the case studies.

Semi-structured Interviews

As part of the case study approach, semi-structured interviews were used to gather data. Interviews offer access to information where social or cultural norms linked to the context may cause obstacles to data. Rubin and Rubin (2012: xv) state that interviews allow the researcher to 'reach across barriers of race, income, national origin, sex and occupation.' Thus, as a 'cultural outsider[4]' interviews are a valuable tool for data collection. Interviews are also helpful in case studies as a form of data validation, where data has been gathered using other techniques. According to Brenner et al (1985:3):

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[4] (Suwankhong & Liamputtong, 2015:516)

There is an implicit, or explicit sharing and/or negotiation of understanding in the interview situation which is not so central, and often not present, in other research procedures. Any misunderstandings on the part of the interviewer or the interviewee can be checked immediately in a way that is just not possible when questionnaires are being completed, or tests are being performed.

Reflecting on the work of Brenner et al (1985:3), the way interviews are conducted also has implications on the data gathered. For instance, face to face interviews enable the researcher to observe the participant's reaction through their body language, voice tone and eye contact. In interviews, non-verbal prompts can assist the researcher by acting as a cue for knowing when it is appropriate to ask further questions. Likewise, determining the interview structure for the research's purpose is crucial as it influences how data is collected. For this study, semi-structured interviews we considered most suitable. Semi-structured interviews provide a flexible approach to data collection, providing a core structure to interview questions whilst also being adaptable to the participant's answers and engagement (Robson and McCarten, 2016: 286). Semi-structured interviews present a unique opportunity to engage in more in-depth discussions with participants, which allows the researcher to navigate the dialogue towards topics that are relevant to the research questions. Therefore, a crucial part of conducting interviews is creating questions to ask participants that support this exploratory method of research. According to Patton (2015:384) questions should aim to be open-ended and descriptive so as to 'avoid dichotomous (yes/no)' answers. Another factor to consider is the researcher's bias and experience, for example, a social work background may be beneficial to the interviewing process when asking social worker practitioners questions whilst also assessing the participants 'thoughts, values, feelings and perspectives' (Hammond & Wellington, 2013:91).

Participant observations

The use of participant observations can help develop contextual knowledge in a case study. In a case study, participant observations allow the researcher to engage in the 'natural' environment and engage with a phenomenon in its most authentic state or circumstances where 'attention is paid to contextual conditions, regarded as highly relevant to the phenomenon being investigated' (Iacono et al, 2009:40). Likewise, through participatory observations the researcher can realise the everyday experiences of the environment wherein

the phenomenon exists, offering the opportunity to witness 'nonverbal communication [which] might provide additional information' (Fuji, 2018:70). For this research focussed on the Philippines, the context is a vital element of the study, thus, participant observations offer significant value to study underlying cultures and interactions to compliment other data collection approaches. According to Gold (1958: 219-221), the researcher can observe a phenomenon as a 'complete participant,' 'participant as observer,' 'complete observer' or as an 'observer as participant.' For this study, the 'observer as participant' was adopted as part of the case study. In early discussions with the GNGOs participating in the study, they shared that because of their ongoing operations and work the researcher can be immersed but undisruptive when collecting data. Therefore, the 'observer as participant' approach was considered the most appropriate for this research, as the researcher's role of 'observer as participant' keeps the environment as natural as possible with minimal interaction (Gold, 1958:220).

The researcher's role and positioning in relation to the participants and data gathering process is important. De Laine (1997:142) states that 'participant-observation moves the researcher into a position to capture the other person's point of view, expressed in the interactive sequence.' In De Laine's work, an important point is touched on about the researcher's position and how their role, experience and presence can influence participant's observations. This highlights how the researcher should acknowledge that their 'positionality in the field is relational and context dependent, not fixed or absolute' (Fuji, 2018:19). For instance, in case studies where data is collected over a period of time; the researcher may build rapport with participants, influencing the data collected. One risk of participant observations is that the researcher becomes deeply involved with people's lives, which results in 'forced emotional and physical separation' after case studies (Shah, 2017: 54). Therefore, any values and experiences held by the researcher required acknowledgement to consider any biases that may influence the data. During the data collection and analysis process, reflecting on any interactions, events and experiences was a crucial part of creating self-awareness as a researcher. In particular, any interactions that may be influenced by race, gender, social status and the 'colonial mentality' (Narag and Maxwell, 2013: 313). For instance, gender is a significant factor to consider as a researcher. Patton (2015:507) details that 'gender can create barriers to participant observation.' This meant difficulties may be encountered if the study were to adopt a 'participant as an observer' (p.221) approach when joining GNGO activities, since the researcher would also be observed in relation to the setting. However, since this

research uses 'observer as participant' (p.220) it may reduce any biases observed against the researcher related to gender, because the researcher is not included in the observation itself (Gold, 1958).

Participant observations also require that data gathered is rich, well-detailed and captured in-depth. Scholars such as Patton (2015:503) use the term 'rich description,' detailing that this is a key strength of participant observations as they 'take readers into the setting observed, providing a vicarious experience and deepened understanding.' Furthermore, detailed accounts of observations can afford the research a deeper understanding of a phenomenon as well as external validation as 'some of these processes are mental rather than physical and are not directly observable, but they can often be inferred from behaviour (including speech)' (Maxwell, 2004:254). Therefore, participant observations and how data is captured can bring a wealth of knowledge beyond tangible evidence, which also takes into consideration cultural and human behaviours.

Physical artefacts

Physical artefacts provide another source of data for case studies, to bolster knowledge on a phenomenon. Qualitative research highly values documentation as a crucial source of data (Bryman, 2012; Bryman and Bell, 2015; Patton, 2015; Azungah, 2018). Artefacts allow for detailed physical evidence, which is a material product or resource that can be utilised for reference. Saldana and Omasta (2017:63) explain that 'products in and of environments are inseparable parts of social worlds.' Therefore, physical artefacts allow for an in-depth account or snapshot of an experience or phenomenon as an integral object of the 'social world' where the phenomenon exists (Saldana and Omasta, 2017:63). The use of documentation produced by participants as artefacts can be used as a form of validation, in cases where details have been captured more methodically and systematically. According to Buchanan and Bryman (2007:487), research can be challenging to obtain since 'the field is fragmented, with no central core of traditions, frameworks, and concepts, no unified theoretical or practical proposal.' Since the researcher's role is to make sense of the phenomenon, already produced or created artefacts can act as a source of insight into its background. Furthermore, artefacts can also show the researcher how progress has been made over a period of time offering 'a possible story of its history, or an explanatory purpose for its

presence' (Saldana and Omasta, 2017:63). Artefacts can present a snapshot of a phenomenon at its time of creation including details that may have been ignored or forgotten over time by participants in interviews or through other data collecting approaches.

Data triangulation

For this research, the use of multiple data sources as part of the case study approach, specifically interviews, participant observations and physical artefacts allows for data triangulation. The use of one technique to gather data provides a singular lens of a phenomenon or setting. However, multiple types of data allow for further authentication of a phenomenon providing different accounts and more comprehensive understanding from various viewpoints. For example, interviews and participant observations show the 'interrelationship' between the researcher and participant, which can contribute to a 'co-construction of meaning' (Mills et al, 2006:26). To develop this further, three data sources when used can be triangulated to validate findings to mutually confirm evidence. Berg and Lune (2017:14) explains triangulation as 'multiple lines of sight' intersecting to create a 'triangle of error.' Triangulating data helps to develop more comprehensive knowledge allowing 'researchers [to] obtain a better, more substantive picture of reality; a richer, more complete array of symbols and theoretical concepts; and a means of verifying many of these elements' (Berg and Lune, 2017:14). In addition, triangulation can help to 'increase credibility' by offering 'a more holistic perspective' (Azungah, 2018:389). Interviews, participant observations and artefacts all provide a different contribution to data gathering but when utilised together as part of a case study, they can create a robust knowledge base.

Snowball Sampling

The selection process when deciding on research participants for this study had to consider the hidden nature of CSE as a phenomenon. Hidden phenomena such as CSE can be difficult to research since 'traditional sampling methods are ineffective or inappropriate because of the group's social or physical location, vulnerability, or otherwise hidden nature' (Ellard-Gray et al, 2015:1). Overcoming challenges to identify how to approach sampling was a crucial part of the research strategy, to ascertain the best participants to report on local efforts in the

Philippines. Based on these considerations, all participants for the research were selected using a snowball sampling approach. For this research, the approach is beneficial in light of the researcher's limited resources, the sensitive nature of the topic and the need for information rich data sources. Snowball sampling is the process of selecting participants from a 'population of interest' and then utilising them as 'informants' for their knowledge and connections to identify other participants (Robson and McCartan, 2015:281). There are risks with snowball sampling. For example, informants may have a limited network linked to a lack of contacts or diverse perspectives. Bitektine (2008:167) articulates that other risks include the researcher's reliability on others political stance and values, as 'snowball sampling is based on informants' personal networks, which also comprise of political context.' This may have some implications on the research showing a biased perspective rather than holistically showing the reality of the phenomenon (Bitektine, 2008:168). However, snowball sampling helps with populations and research where it may be difficult to find participants especially where research is conducted in another context (Robson and McCartan, 2015:281).

Research Participants

One of the major challenges with studying a sensitive subject like CSE is that 'people may not agree to cooperate in a study if they feel their anonymity may be violated by their participation' (Shaghaghi, 2011:87). Based on this, the following section will detail the research participants whilst explaining the rationale and purpose for their inclusion in the study. The data gathering was divided into two phases to get a more holistic perspective of CSE responses. In the first phase, the research sought to gather data through three Philippine-based GNGOs implementing responses to CSE. For the second phase of the case study, data was gathered through interviews with government agencies, international NGOs and research institutions contributing to CSE responses. The US Trafficking in Persons as an international policy tool referred to by international donors and agencies is used to articulate the international lens. This study sought to garner the local perspective in the Philippines to understand responses to CSE as an underrepresented and under researched site, thus participants were unable to substantiate the international donors' perspective as frontline staff addressing the issue on the ground. A direct international voice would provide further insights but went beyond the scope of this thesis given that the original intention of the study

was to focus on the Philippine responses. The tension between international and local was a later finding that came out of the data collection as part of this study.

Grassroots Non-Governmental Organisations (GNGOs)

GNGOs were targeted for their multi-agency approach in engaging and delivering services to sexually exploited children and their families within local community settings. From their connections, GNGOs had access to vulnerable communities, which enabled them to protect victims by facilitating efforts with local government, networks and agencies (Almog-Bar, 2018:412). The term 'grassroots' is difficult to define because of its inconsistent usage when applied to NGOs (Martinez, 2008:341). Martinez (2008:342) states that grassroots organisations are 'development NGOs working with definable populations (underprivileged, impoverished), intervening at a particular level (community), by means of a specific method (grassroots support), and seeking a clear goal (sustainable development).' For the purposes of this thesis, GNGOs refer to locally founded community-based NGOs operating in a 'bottom-up manner reflecting local contexts, needs, and realities and are not subject to commercial or political capture' (Banks, Hulme and Edwards, 2015: 710). GNGOs were included in this research for their role in leading Philippine based programmes, lobbying and for their exposure working with and supporting victims of CSE. The GNGOs afforded the research with well-established networks and expertise from frontline practitioners directly engaged with implementing Filipino responses.

For the purposes of this research, three GNGOs known as GNGO-A, GNGO-B and GNGO were the focus of this study, because they demonstrated a variety of responses to CSE through their programmes and represented different locations in the Philippines. The GNGOs were based in Cebu City, Olongapo and Metro Manila. These places were locations where GNGO responses were needed to respond to different forms of CSE. Based in Olongapo, Central Luzon[5], GNGO-A worked on rescue operations, provided therapeutic interventions and supported the legal needs of sexually abused and exploited children. GNGO-B was founded in Metro Manila[6] to accommodate victims of child trafficking. Previously GNGO-B focussed on labour trafficking but shifted their interventions to addressing CSE to reflect the needs of the community where there saw cases rising. In Manila, GNGO-B had a long stay

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[5] Also known as Region III located North of Metro Manila.
[6] Also known officially as the National Capital Region (NCR)

shelter and short stay halfway house to facilitate the assessment of victims and care needs. Finally, GNGO-C is located in Cebu City in the Central Visayas[7] region, the GNGO leads advocacy work and also conducts legal casework to build an evidence base for legislative advocacy. The communities where each GNGO work have different characteristics and community cultures representative of their cities and regions. For example, Cebu City is a known tourist destination where foreign nationals visit for the beaches but with travelling to engage in sex tourism and prostitution. Therefore, GNGO-C offers distinct CSE responses focussed on OSEC and child sex tourism to support victims' specific needs in the community. GNGO-A is located near Subic Bay, which is an old US military base. Although the US base is no longer actively used for military purposes, the legacy of prostitution continues to influence local behaviour towards normalising sexual exploitation and prostitution. For GNGO-B, Metro Manila is a cosmopolitan hub and tourist hotspot, many Filipinos originally from the provinces and local areas travel to the city looking for opportunities, which can make both children and adults vulnerable to exploitation. The diverse data collection sites are valuable as they provide more depth to understanding the contextual influences on CSE responses at the local level.

After researching Filipino GNGOs through existing practitioners and published reports of their interventions, these GNGOs were chosen for this study for their extensive experience managing cases of CSE. Furthermore, the researcher's past experience employment, and connections with GNGOs and INGOs in the Philippines helped to validate the work of the GNGOs participating in the study. Using the snowball sampling approach, the researcher initially approached GNGO-A to take part in the study. Then, GNGO-B and GNGO-C were later selected through connections at GNGO-A and their partners, who shared that both organisations had good reputations in their respective locations in the Philippines. The case study profiles of the all the GNGOs are in Appendix D, which was created using the interviews, artefacts and participatory observations.

Government agencies, international NGOs and research institutions

The role of GNGOs is vital to understanding local level responses but they only show part of the responses whilst often working alongside international non-government organisations

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[7] Central Visayas also known as Region VII.

(INGOs) and 'the government on implementation' (Brass, Longhofer, Robinson and Schnable, 2018:142). Therefore, to vary the local perspective, practitioners across government agencies, academia and international non-governmental organisations were interviewed. This population was identified using snowball sampling from informants at each of the GNGOs participating in the study. Reflecting on the breadth of participants, there may be biases in utilising participants from GNGO networks since they tend to engage with similar agencies and work on related programmes. In attempts to minimise bias and garner a more critical perspective of responses to CSE in the Philippines, the researcher also engaged in recruiting participants who were not in direct contact with GNGOs. One way this was approached was by asking participants if there were any other agencies beyond their networks, who may be informative to the research's objectives. Related literature and word of mouth were also used to support this line of inquiry, to engage with critical voices beyond the GNGOs, by looking for any published work or interviews.

Data collection

For data gathering, a series of comprehensive case studies were conducted with three GNGOs based in different regions to show variations and similarities in responses across the Philippines. Data was collected from the organisational strategies, frameworks and experiences of these three GNGOs to understand how CSE responses are implemented to identify and minimise CSE and support children that have been sexually exploited. The Filipino GNGOs were crucial to the study, as they had vital insights of navigating the local context from their existing programmes focussed on advocacy, educational seminars, law enforcement, psycho-social interventions, legislation, rescue and reintegration operations to ensure the protection of children. Each case study consisted of a six-week period immersed in the GNGO's day to day activities. Over six weeks, data relating to GNGO practices and implementation efforts was collected through participant observations, semi-structured interviews and physical artefacts. Data collected for the GNGO-A took place from the 9th April to 11th May 2018, GNGO-B data was gathered from 9th July to 17th August 2018 and GNGO-C's data was obtained from 24th September to 2nd November 2018. A six-week period was considered the most time available to spend with each GNGO to minimise disruption to their activities and events, while being able to collect sufficient data for the research. Prior to commencing the study, a meeting was held with each GNGO leader to discuss plans for data

gathering and to formalise the process, which included the GNGOs sharing their internal policies and safeguarding documents. The period in between each six week block of data gathering provided ample time for further data collection. In addition to the case studies, a second phase of interviews totalling fourteen were also conducted with government agencies, INGOs and research institutions to bolster findings in the Philippines beyond the scope of GNGO efforts.

Observers as a participant

The 'observer as participant' stance is considered a less invasive data collection technique but also allows for the observer to interact with the environment and participants (Gold, 1958:220). During data collection, GNGOs staff expected where possible that the researcher would partake in the activities by joining engagement meetings with partners, attending multi-agency meetings for rescued children and participating in their community work. In turn, participating helped to develop relationships with the GNGO staff who were leading implementation efforts, which enabled them to feel more comfortable to share openly and honestly during the interview process. Participating within the GNGOs involved shadowing staff who were leading advocacy workshops, rehabilitation and legal interventions as well as joining partnership development meetings and observing all aspects of the interventions delivered by each of the GNGOs.

For participatory observations, notes were taken throughout, and a diary was maintained over the duration of each case study and reviewed with a GNGO staff member on a weekly basis to anonymise data and check the details were correct. The notes were used to support the interview questions providing further information and context to the discussions. For example, notes were made to reference the types of CSE terminology used that were interchangeably used during most interviews, this practice helped with data analysis and as a way to validate interviews. Furthermore, social interactions and discussions from the field where advocacy workshops were delivered in the local Filipino language were difficult to interpret and fully understand without being immersed in the context. Filipino (*Tagalog*) was the main language at GNGO-A and GNGO-B. However, Cebuano was the native dialect for GNGO-C based in Cebu City, which the researcher did not speak. Initially, the language barrier was a barrier to observations, however, most staff at GNGO-C spoke English in the

office but spoke using the local dialect in meetings with local partners and in the communities. Despite this, staff were accommodating speaking in English afterwards, there was also a translator available to explain. In rural areas, the language barrier was more problematic because of travel difficulties and restrictions a translator was not always available. During educational seminars ran by GNGO-C in local rural communities, staff had to translate but it was possible to understand some of the conversation topics since I was able to converse another dialect. GNGO-C also made time afterwards to discuss the sessions to confirm that the discussion points had been captured accurately.

Physical Artefacts: data gathering

Physical artefacts have also been a valuable source to validate the interview data in the case studies. For example, GNGOs often had resources that they provided as handouts or booklets during and following the implementation of CSE responses. These artefacts proved to be valuable for filling in any missing details from the interviews and were used to check the transcribed data. Artefacts were also used informally to support unstructured interview questions where there was a lack of information on a subject. For example, in an advocacy seminar with GNGO-C, the purpose of the session was to share vital CSE related legislation to inform the audience of the processes often used to prosecute perpetrators. Although the interviews provided some details, staff often did not have direct references of the specific legislation or information to hand, so provided artefacts specifying the legislation as a resource.

The table below illustrates the artefacts collected at each GNGO including the number and types of artefacts obtained to support the interviews as part of the case study. The specific titles of the artefacts have not been detailed as some of the contents may allow participating GNGOs to be identified.

Organisation identifier	Number of artefacts	Nature and Number of Artefacts collected
GNGO-A	11	Blog posts, informative leaflets and advocacy materials for staff, children and families.

| GNGO-B | 8 | Process documentation for trafficking cases, advocacy documents and supporting GNGO-B documents from delivery of seminars, workshops and meetings. |
| GNGO-C | 10 | Meeting content, informative leaflets (legal), supporting files (GNGO-C information) and advocacy documents. |

Table 1: The table shows a breakdown of the number and types of artefacts provided by the GNGOs.

Interviews

For data gathering, GNGO interviews were conducted approximately three to four weeks into the case study after developing rapport with staff. In the first three weeks of the case study, the researcher was able to familiarise with the GNGO and their CSE responses through observations prior to interviewing staff. The interviews presented as a good opportunity to target certain areas of inquest and clarify any ambiguities. For example, prosecution responses led by GNGOs involved travelling to the main Filipino cities to attend court, but there were often times when GNGO staff arrived at court to find out that proceedings had been postponed on the same day without warning. The reoccurrence and knowledge of this across the GNGOs was an important area of questioning, to understand why this was the situation in navigating the legal system in the Philippines. Furthermore, conducting interviews three to four weeks into the case study also helped with selecting participants, providing sufficient time to develop knowledge and build relationships with subject matter experts within each GNGO.

The 'interview guide' (Appendix A) provides the structured interview questions and the 'interview participation information sheet' (Appendix B) outlines the purpose of the study and answers any general questions the participants may have about their involvement in the study. Participants were given the 'interview participation information sheet' ahead of the interview, which also explained the terms for the interview including information about consent and requesting that the interview would be recorded. As part of phase two, detailed later in this section, multi-agency participants were contacted and emailed the 'interview participation information sheet' approximately one week prior to the interview, giving the participant time to prepare and ask any questions ahead of the interview.

Interviews: the first phase

Since the GNGOs had large teams and the researcher had little insight into the inner workings of the organisation, selected staff were asked to participate in interviews towards the end of the case study. To answer the research questions, GNGO staff who had extensive frontline experience were asked to participate in the interviews. As a result, interviews were held with staff who were directly leading CSE responses in the community, with local partners and international agencies providing strategic and financial interventions. For example, at GNGO-B, one interview was conducted with the principal social worker who was leading programmes at a community level, and another interview was with the executive director working with international agencies who funding the GNGO's efforts. The interviews demonstrated the complex roles and responsibilities of the GNGO staff in leading and implementing local programmes.

The case study approach allowed for rapport building with GNGO staff, which was a unique attribute of this research providing a voice to frontline staff. Johnson & Clarke (2003: 423) state that there is a 'lack of any systematic inquiry into the experiences of field workers.' This study sought to remedy the dearth in local perspectives. Interviews within the context of the GNGOs gave a voice to experienced practitioners who were experts but may have been reluctant to give an account of their challenges and the tensions from implementing CSE responses. Another consideration is that internal dynamics and hierarchy can be a barrier to some staff; the social workers were often directly involved in working with victims but had less authority and status within the organisations, as leaders often presented publicly about GNGO activities. Therefore, the interviews were an opportunity to extract often inaccessible information from social workers and staff on the ground who often overlooked, providing access to the participant's taken for granted experiences.

The following table presents the number of interviews conducted in both phase one (GNGOs) and phase two (multi-agency) and the roles of the participants who were interviewed for the study. Since the information provided by participants is confidential, the roles have been generalised as more specialist job titles may identify participants.

Organisation	No. of Interviews	Roles of interviewed staff
GNGO-A	4	Social worker, paralegal, managing director and advocacy staff.
GNGO-B	5	Prosecutor, advocacy staff, social worker, executive director and project director.
GNGO-C	4	Advocacy staff, social workers and executive director.
Multi-agency – Government agencies	7	Local government staff including social workers, investigators, specialists, national government directors.
Multi-agency – Child advocacy networks, INGOs and research institutions	7	Child advocate researchers and specialists, prosecutors, academics and child protection practitioners.

Table 2: The table details the roles and total number of interviewed participants from both grassroot non-government organisations and multi-agency.

Interviews: the second phase

Alongside interviews with GNGO staff, multi-agency interviews were also conducted. These Philippine based multi-agency interviews were made up of seven government agencies and seven organisations comprising of child advocacy networks, INGOs and research institutions. For government interviews to take place, participants working for government agencies required approval from government heads and leaders as per their internal processes. For interviews, a formalised process to pre-screen the interview questions for this study was a pre-requisite for Philippine government agencies, including a formal request (Appendix C). Multi-agency interviews were crucial to this research, as they not only engaged with numerous private sector organisations but also with international actors, as well as providing a holistic understanding of the CSE response from numerous local perspectives beyond the GNGOs. The prevalence of online sexual exploitation of children (OSEC) meant that interviews providing insight into local efforts and active organisations responding to OSEC

were a crucial element of the study. GNGOs did manage a few cases of OSEC but were not fully equipped to manage the complexity of OSEC cases since it required significant resource to fund specialised interventions. OSEC cases were mostly managed by INGOs, who were leading interventions to target rescue operations, legal interventions, rehabilitation for OSEC specific traumas and partnership development with international law enforcement agencies.

Multi-agency interviews were conducted sporadically over one year from April 2018 to March 2019. Interviews were located in the same or nearby geographical locations as the GNGOs during the case studies, so in most cases multi-agency interviews were conducted after a case study was completed. The multi-agency interviews provided further contextual understanding to the local area and helped to target gaps in knowledge identified from the interviews in the case studies. The semi-structured questions were based on the same framework as the GNGO questions, with the addition of some questions relating to the wider context to aid understanding the dynamics between agencies, particularly in relation to international and local actors. Interview respondents were forthcoming about information and shared their concerns, thoughts and experiences without reservation, perceiving the study's purpose as vital to the dialogue on CSE efforts in the Philippines. However, some of the government organisations were more reluctant about sharing information; one interviewee from a government agency refused to be audio recorded requesting that only written notes could be taken. The government agency interview demonstrated the caution of government agencies in discussing matters of sensitivity, which suggested that there were tensions across local agencies and between the national government and local government agencies.

Limitations

This section details the limitations of the study from the methods, also highlighting areas for further development. The study sought to incorporate various locations in the Philippines beyond Metro Manila, where research on the Philippines is usually based. According to Gingrich (2006:252), most research conducted tends to focus on 'large urban centres such as metro Manila.' Therefore, the choice to involve GNGOs not only based in Metro Manila is important as offers more diverse knowledge of the Philippine context beyond the capital city. The research wanted to explore whether CSE as an issue in the Philippines, is more nuanced depending on the location. However, this research was only able to include Cebu City and Olongapo City in addition to Metro Manila as locations for investigation because of the time

and resources available. There is still significantly underdeveloped research and a lack of local knowledge development in areas of conflict such as Mindanao (Herbert, 2019:2). Development agencies actively avoid going to parts of Mindanao but research into CSE in this area could be insightful to understanding the local context and responses. Further research into other areas of the Philippines would create a more comprehensive view of the Philippines as well as the local needs specific to the local areas.

Another limitation to this research from a methods perspective is the lack of time and resources to complete a fully comprehensive study into CSE responses. A more in-depth ethnographic study would have been valuable, as it would create further insight into the local context from the community level experiences. Furthermore, a longitudinal study looking at the progress of CSE responses would show if there had been changes between international and local actors, or if the dynamics of international and local agencies have changed over time.

Ethical challenges

In all research, ethical practices underpin and guide the way in which a study is conducted. Ensuring due diligence for ethical practices is crucial prior to a study, including anticipating any ethical issues that may arise. Based on the methods adopted for this study, the following section will detail the ethical issues and how they apply to this research in the Philippines.

Ethical practices are pertinent throughout the research process where consideration should be given to 'anonymity, confidentiality, informed consent, researchers' potential impact on the participants and vice versa' (Sanjari et al, 2014:1). Other scholars such as Berg and Lune (2017:43) state that ethical practices should also be 'concerned with honesty, integrity, and the responsible reporting of the data.' There are considerations that need to be made not only restricted to ethical procedures and codes but also in researcher's ethical behaviours as well (Shaw, 2008:403). For example, informed consent is central to ethical practice with research participants when garnering their thoughts, opinions and insights. However, the way in which informed consent is given to participants is also important. Sanjari et al (2014:3) state that it's vital 'to specify in advance which data will be collected and how they are to be used.' Moreover, the researcher's role is to ensure that the participant can fully comprehend the 'the nature of the study, the participants' potential role, the identity

of the researcher and the financing body, the objective of the research, and how the results will be published and used' (Sanjari et al, 2014:3).

Another consideration for ethical practices is the potential harm to both researchers and participants, which is dependent on the methods adopted and the topic of the research. For example, social science research is reported to be less invasive than medical research (Boden et al, 2009; Melrose, 2011). Boden et al (2009:735) details that although physical harm may not be caused, other risks can cause 'emotional or reputational damage to respondents and knowledge may be harmfully deployed.' There are also wider contextual factors such as politics and cultural traditions that need to be considered. Fuji (2018:23) states that the researcher should safeguard participants from contextual specific risks by 'seek[ing] protections that are meaningful in the local context.' Since this research was carried out in the Philippines, research linked to human rights requires sensitivity. For instance, alongside global trafficking interest, international awareness of the Philippines has grown around contentious human rights issues flagged by human rights networks, advocates and media outlets (Human Rights Watch, 2021: n.p.). Social justice issues in the Philippines gained recognition for the states failures to protect vulnerable populations, including CSE as a form of human trafficking. Human rights related topics in the Philippines are especially problematic, as they are linked to political instability and reports of extra-judicial killings (Herbert, 2019:3). Alongside the researcher's role to ensure that participants are protected from harm, there are also risks to the research that must be mitigated where possible.

Another ethical practice for research is confidentiality and anonymity for participants, which are crucial for sensitive topics. Both confidentiality and anonymity protect the identity and information shared by participants. Vanclay (2013:247) explains that confidentiality should be applied to 'all private or personal matters or views' to ensure the research is ethical. There are also clear differences between confidentiality and anonymity that should be highlighted. According to Patton (2015:726), 'confidentiality means you know but won't tell,' and 'anonymity means you don't know.' In other words, the researcher is responsible for treating information with discretion to ensure it remains confidential. On the other hand, anonymity falls on the researcher or relevant parties to ensure that data has no identifiable characteristics or features linked to participants.

This research examining CSE is a subject considered 'sensitive or risky by those undertaking ethical review' (Melrose, 2011:n.p.) Therefore, appropriate ethical measures were needed to care for participants, which included reassuring participants of confidentiality given the risks of human rights research in the Philippines as explained above. For example, to support participants, consent forms (Appendix E) were provided either in paper form or via email beforehand as detailed earlier. Although confidentiality and anonymity were detailed in the consent form, each individual was also verbally asked again to check they had provided consent. Likewise, participants were also consulted about audio recording the interviews, where it was reiterated that interviews were semi-structured so the researcher may ask questions that were initially provided in the 'interview guide'.

For research to be conducted, ethical approval was obtained from St Mary's University Ethics Committee prior to starting the research in March 2018. The ethical process considered the subject matter and potential engagement with minors as high risk, based on the sensitivity of the study. The ethical review was completed in two stages. The first stage was an initial submission of the ethical approval request with supporting documentation and a meeting with the ethical review board to discuss the details of the ethical approval request. The second stage was a review of the suggested amendments, following the ethical review board meeting and the submission of a completed Disclosure and Barring Service check and written consent from all participating GNGOs.

Data management

Ethical considerations in managing the digital and physical formats of raw data are required to protect sensitive information. According to St Mary's University research data management (RDM) policy there are clear rules to ensure data is managed appropriately (St Mary's University, 2021:n.p.). To summarise, the policy stipulates that if ethical approval is required, data should be anonymised then destroyed when suitable; safeguarding measures must ensure data collected is purposeful, secure and that no personal data is gathered (St Mary's University, 2021:n.p.). For this research, physical data was stored in a locked and secure location offsite during fieldwork only accessible by the researcher. However, there were challenges with maintaining security for sensitive data out in the field especially when data collecting in rural areas. This was addressed by prioritising the digitisation of sensitive and confidential paper-based files and notes. Written notes and a diary of activities were used

to document observations. To manage this, notes were written up and captured digitally in a diary, saved to a secured encrypted drive via the St Mary's University server accessible by the researcher's login and password. The physical notes were then securely destroyed.

Artefacts provided by the NGO were mostly public documents, so they did not require a secure data management plan. These artefacts included advocacy leaflets, NGO booklets and grey literature written by the NGOs. However, artefacts containing sensitive data indirectly related to cases of CSE or were restricted by the NGO or Government agencies for research purposes only were locked in a secure location. Audio recordings of the interviews were kept in the same protected cloud database only accessible with a St Mary's University password. The transcripts and translated versions were also kept in the same location. In cases where the participant had refused to be audio recorded, written notes were made. Similarly, the notes were written up following the interview and a picture taken of the original written document and stored via St Mary's secured one drive.

To protect the identity of the children and families under GNGO care, no personal details of the children were kept for the research. Any information obtained about the children were quantitative data, which was anonymised by GNGOs and government agencies prior to being obtained for the study. Any data stored from the research in accordance with St Mary's University's ethical approval terms will be kept for a period of ten year and subsequently destroyed.

Data analysis

Thematic analysis was used for this study to order the data. The thematic coding approach is valuable for understanding and conceptualising data that is often complex. This is because it 'offers an accessible and theoretically flexible approach to analysing qualitative data' (Braun and Clarke 2006:77). The complexity of the data collected for this research lends itself to using thematic coding analysis due to the cross-cultural understandings, the use of Filipino and English and the substantial amount of qualitative data collected from the interviews. The process of thematic analysis can be broken down into the following steps as guided by Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014:10). The first step of the process is coding the qualitative data, in other words categorising or labelling words, sentences or sections according to what they represent or as a form of summarising. Step two of the process is to add memos, which would

include the researcher's thoughts, ideas, reflections and comments to the data. The third step is to interpret the data so themes can be drawn that represent patterns, relationships, dynamics or as a way to group the data further. This can then be organised and linked across other sections of the data to create more generalised ideas. Lastly, the generalised ideas and thoughts can be connected to create 'a formalised body of knowledge in the form of constructs or theories' (Robson and McCartan, 2015:463). This approach was adopted for data analysis and is discussed in more detail in the following sections.

This discussion refers to the representation and preparation of the data before analysis and coding could take place. The section takes into consideration the referencing process, anonymising and transcribing and translating. To protect the identities of participants and the organisations, anonymous references needed to be used that would ensure that details were undistinguishable when referenced. The data chapters refer to the interviewed participant's organisation or agency type and job role as an identifier. These reference points allow for interviews to be shared without identifying the participant. In addition, the raw data was anonymised to remove any words or references to specific people, organisations or identifiers that could single out an organisation. Incidentally, in most interviews, participants were cautious about sharing information about victims, perpetrators, people in the organisation or any details that would identify the organisations they worked for.

To manage and analyse the qualitative data, the interviews and observations were exported into NVivo for coding and adding memos. The NVivo tool helped with searching through large portions of data to add themes, categories, sub-categories, notes and memos to the text. NVivo provided the functionality to save, store and order data and also map the key themes once coded and themes had emerged. There is also a robust search function in NVivo that allows for navigation across the interviews to search for specific words and to review the themes coded.

Transcription and coding

The interviews were both transcribed and translated prior to analysis to organise the text into a similar format and language. Most of the interviews were done in; '*Taglish*' (intermittent use of English and Filipino, known locally as Tagalog) if not entirely in English or Filipino. Therefore, the interviews had to be translated into the English language unless there were

some words that did not have direct translation or were names. For example, *'akyat barko'* was a term used in the interviews, which referred to a local type of CSE involving children onboarding a boat for sexual exploitation purposes. Welch and Piekkari (2006:427) state that a researcher who has knowledge of the native language is able to use their skills for transcribing and analysing to improve the accuracy of data interpretation. Furthermore, the case study approach also provided the opportunity for anonymised interviews to be further validated by native speakers. According to Welch and Piekkari (2006:427), native speakers can bring further insights to data analysis and the transcribing process, which can result in a 'double analysis' since transcripts are examined 'from the "insider" perspective of a native speaker as well as the "outsider" perspective of the researcher, who can question meanings, turns of phrase, expressions and metaphors that may be taken for granted by a native speaker.' The researcher's language skills can also be limited to analyse the data, but native speakers can bring further context and knowledge of local jargon.

Identifying and analysing the data

This section explains the use of thematic analysis used to analyse the qualitative data, which sought to draw themes that articulated the experienced realities of CSE responses from the local lens. Braun and Clarke (2019:78) articulate that a benefit of thematic analysis is 'its flexibility' when dealing with large data sets (Braun and Clarke, 2019:78). The process of analysing data was a methodical process in approaching coding, comparing and conceptualising data. From the outset, this process of analysing data was applied across the different forms of data sources (observations and interviews) in the form of transcribed interviews and notes made from observations. The qualitative data gathered once transcribed and translated was added into NVivo under folders titled with either the GNGO's name or government or non-government multi-agency interviews. Organising the interviews helped with referencing and referring back to the large amounts of data. Thematic analysis was applied to all qualitative data with the exception of artefacts. Artefacts were used as a reference based on the key themes found in the interviews to triangulate the data as a method of validation. The artefacts for this study were also used to fill in gaps identified in the interviews to ensure that the data collected was a true representation of CSE responses. For instance, GNGO staff often referred to different types of programmes that the organisation was implementing, but there were times when the respondent was vague or had forgotten the

information. In these cases, to help with coding and later with writing up the findings, artefacts were valuable to provide in-depth details such as the names of programmes being delivered, job roles or descriptions of the responses within the different communities. Artefacts were also useful given the language differences where there were Filipino or Cebuano words that were difficult to remember or recall without seeing it written down.

In the early stages, when identifying the codes and then the themes for this data, the codes were interpreted based on my narrow experience as a researcher and on already existing literature. Therefore, the process of coding was a process of constant comparing and contrasting, as my knowledge of CSE responses developed from the interviews and case studies. Thus, to answer the research questions, all data was analysed to identify the key themes for this study by interpreting the data gathered, which Stake (2010:55) describes as an 'act of composition.' In practice, the data is interpreted through a process where the researcher 'takes descriptions and makes them more complex, drawing upon a few conceptual relationships' (Stake, 2010:55). In other words, the researcher extracts from the data to refine and develop knowledge to understand a phenomenon.

The themes identified through interpreting the data provided an indication of the experiences of GNGOs and multi-agency realities, including the researchers bias and knowledge brought to the study, from the lived experiences and written notes made during the case studies. After collating all the interviews by translating and transcribing, the coding process began which sought to dismantle and analyse the raw data. The process of coding involved going through the interview data line by line annotating with key phrases and words to allocate a label. During the coding process, the process of refining was guided by the research questions to understand the local responses, to examine the challenges experienced by practitioners, by exploring from the local lens the relationship with international engagement and how this relationship influences programmes and responses to CSE in the Philippines. For the qualitative data, sentences, short sections and words were coded to reflect the topic, these were then grouped into sub-categories according to the subject, these were then grouped into categories and then themes as a high-level condensed term for the data. The process of coding was completed after each GNGO interview, which helped to accurately capture information whilst details were still new and familiar. After all the data was collected, the interview data was analysed again retrospectively to conceptualise ideas based on the knowledge developed over the course of data collection. To validate the themes, after

completing the coding process the researcher started with the theme and then drilled back down to the raw data to see if the coding process effectively captured the extract. Coding was done by the researcher without any other input to prevent any dilution of the data or any additional bias. The coding process and themes were layered and could also be broken down into categories and sub-categories. For example, an extract from the interview data could be coded as 'prevention responses,' and then 'advocacy', and then 'advocacy seminar and training.' Coding in this manner helped to drill down into the detail of the interviews and specify clearly where there were similar or different themes. For example,

All the codes, sub-categories, categories and themes for all the interviews and notes are mapped in NVivo with breakdowns and links directly to the interviews where they were coded. A sample of the categories and themes used in this thesis are presented in Table 3, since a significant amount of qualitative data was collected, which amounted to 76 categories and 26 themes. There are eight themes that will be used as focus points for the data chapters and were selected because participants reference these eight themes most out of all the other themes. Furthermore, given the scope of the study to focus on understanding the local response, relationship with international engagement in particular the TIP report or references to the 4P's as an international model and the implications on the ground, these themes also needed to align with the research questions. For the purposes of this thesis, Table 3 below indicate the central themes that will be explored in the next three chapters providing a sample of the most referenced categories and themes as dominant discussion points from coding the GNGO and multi-agency interviews. The final themes have also been chosen for the most references and relevance to the thesis but also to nuance understandings of CSE responses where there is a scarcity of research examining CSE in the Philippines.

Number of interview participants making reference to the theme	**Categories**	**Themes**
16 participants (12 GNGO and 4 multi-agency participants)	'Prosecution and criminal justice responses'	Prosecution

20 participants (9 GNGO and 11 multi-agency participants)	'Advocacy and prevention'	Prevention
19 participants (8 GNGO and 11 multi-agency participants)	'Online sexual exploitation'	Context related forms of CSE – Online forms
18 participants (8 GNGO and 10 multi-agency participants)	'International' and/or 'funding'	International responses
17 participants (13 GNGO and 4 multi-agency participants)	'Protection and protective factors'	Child protection
12 participants (6 GNGO and 6 multi-agency participants)	'Reporting cases and investigations'	Child protection
14 participants (6 GNGO and 8 multi-agency participants)	'Poverty' and/or 'Limitation of poverty'	Modernisation – Driving factors
19 participants (10 GNGO and 9 multi-agency participants)	'Broken families' and/or 'Dysfunctional families'	Characteristics of CSE – Driving factors

Table 3: The table provides a sample of the key categories and themes based on the highest number of references made by participants.

Understanding CSE in the Philippines: summary of themes from the data

The following segment presents the identified data themes that will be discussed and analysed in chapters four, five and six. The main themes were identified as: 'prosecution'; 'prevention'; 'characteristics of CSE – online forms'; 'international responses'; 'child protection' and 'characteristics of CSE – driving factors.' Originally, the TIP report's 4Ps (prevention, protection, prosecution and partnership) dominated the themes because most participants were used to the universal terminology for CSE responses. Other themes at the

beginning of analysis included 'role of the family,' 'Incest cases,' 'child sexual health,' 'Filipino identity – prostitution,' 'accessible and affordable technology,' 'CSE for survival' and 'lack of education – community.' As coding progressed with more qualitative data, the sub-categories, categories and themes began to shift to create a more comprehensive picture of CSE. There were also cultural nuances that were visibly different based on the GNGOs location, which influenced the themes to become more generalised when more sub-categories shifted the broader topic. One example where the location influenced the theme was after coding GNGO-A's qualitative date, 'incest' was a theme that was prevalent to the cases in Olongapo but for other GNGO's in Metro Manila and Cebu this was hardly recorded in the interviews. The theme of 'incest' fell into the theme of child protection at the end of the study under the category of 'protection and protective factors,' and under the sub-category of 'child sexual abuse.' Similarly, many other themes that were identified at the beginning shifted and evolved to reflect the raw data gathered during the study. From the data, the analysis also revealed an underlying tension, which had emerged in the relationship between international and local actors through the key themes highlighted in table three. From the Philippine perspective, local agencies implementing efforts indicated a disjuncture was present between international responses and local efforts creating a tension. Although showing the international perspective is complex and the local agencies were unable to completely substantiate the international donor perspective despite anecdotally sharing the challenges they face with donors, the TIP report as a relevant and annually updated international policy tool will provide a strong basis for the international. Since there has been little existing literature discussing a tension between international and Philippine actors, the following three data chapters aim to use the evidence to show how a tension is present. The most referenced themes are used as a guide to demonstrate how the tension has manifested between international agencies and local actors through the projection of ideas, projection of priorities and projection of processes. In chapter four, the themes of 'context-related forms of CSE' and 'child protection' including their categories specifically 'modernisation – driving factors,' 'broken and dysfunctional families,' 'boy victims and gender,' 'poverty and the limits of poverty,' and 'incest' were used to focus on the projection of ideas. In chapter five, the themes of 'prosecution,' 'international responses – donors' and 'characteristics of CSE – online forms' are analysed. In particular, the categories of 'online sexual exploitation'; 'international'; 'funding'; 'reporting cases and investigations' and 'prosecution and criminal justice responses' are used to investigate how the tension has manifested in the Philippines. Lastly, chapter six presents the tension through a projection of processes specifically using

the themes of 'prevention' and 'partnerships' from the findings. For the Philippines, these themes show central discussion points based on practitioners' knowledge from engaging directly with CSE victims and implementing responses. The themes highlight not only the challenges from their experience on the ground but also their professional observations. Therefore, this thesis will be looking at the relationship from a different lens, focussed on the local frontline response adopting a bottom-up approach from the Philippine context.

Conclusion

This chapter explains the planning and preparation for the study including the selection process employed to identify the three GNGOs for a six week case study with each organisation. The contents of this chapter also detail the data collection, analysis, interpretation of data for this research. Likewise, it provides a rationale for the case study and approaches taken specifically for the purposes of answering the research questions. The themes detailed in this chapter will help to form the key arguments in the subsequent data chapters to detail the relationship between international interventions and local agencies in responses to CSE. Finally, the hierarchy of local actions presents the results by also discussing how the international development model applies to CSE in the Philippines and the central actors.

Chapter 4 - Projection of ideas: characteristics of child sexual exploitation and child protection

In this chapter, the findings will show that a tension exists in the projection of ideas between international responses and local actors, demonstrating a projection of ideas through the themes of 'characteristics of CSE' and 'child protection.' The following categories of the themes are then used to inform the chapter's analysis to show how the tension has emerged. Firstly, the importance of location in the Philippines. Secondly, the characteristics of child sexual exploitation (CSE) and how they present at the local level. Thirdly, the challenges around gendered responses. Fourthly, the protective factors in the communities and lastly, children's autonomy. To summarise, this chapter shows that international responses have preconceived ideas in their understanding of Filipino children, which influences how responses are shaped.

The United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) introduced in 1989 is a human rights treaty used as the global standard guiding states in prioritising children's rights, establishing an international model and moral responsibility to protect children (Zheng, 2010). The UNCRC (1989, Art. 19.1) defines a child's right to protection as:

> *States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.*

Global perceptions of CSE are based on universal ideas of children's lives, rights, and experiences. For instance, the United States Trafficking In Persons (TIP) report adopts the UNCRC as a global child protection benchmark for CSE. When these norms are adopted to frame interventions on CSE, they can pose challenges lacking nuance to accommodate local cultural norms, beliefs and traditions when applied to local contexts. Despite the recognition of contextual differences, a global model for child representation exists and influences ideas of how children are perceived within society (Ansell, 2017:17). Both the UNCRC and the US TIP report act as global yardsticks for child maltreatment showing the ideal of what good looks like for child protection. International policies like the UNCRC and the TIP report have been influenced by liberal values in their responses, drawing similarities to the liberal peace.

Likewise, the human rights foundation of the UNCRC and the TIP are based on liberal thought, which values democracy and 'the rule of law' (Wallis, 2018:83).

The response in the Philippines has been modelled on the UNCRC and the TIP report, which is influenced by Westernised ideas of children. In particular, the UNCRC represents a Westernised view of children derived from psychological understandings and knowledge of a child's development, which undermines 'children's responsibilities' (Mayall, 2013:5). Likewise, there has been recognition of this imbalance and the cultural differences between the principal frameworks, which situate children as important cultural agents of change. References to childhood conceived on a Westernised concept have 'ascribed hegemonic importance through international development and children's rights movements' (Hanson et al, 2018:273-274). As a result, applying universal understandings of childhood to local experiences and realities does not fully acknowledge children's experiences in countries like the Philippines, causing a tension between international interventions and local actors in how children are understood and represented in countries like the Philippines. How this tension plays out is examined from the local lens to argue that the international community's understanding of CSE is too broad, and thus lacks nuance to recognise distinct features of CSE in the Philippines. The implications of this influence how responses to CSE are framed and understood.

Universal vs. Cultural relativism

While no one would argue that child maltreatment is acceptable, there are multiple ways of viewing and responding to the problem. However, international frameworks for responding to child maltreatment, such as the UNCRC and the US TIP Report, are based on the presumption of a monolithic reality transculturally. This idea of universality has been debated extensively in the field of human rights. A major proponent of the universality of human rights, Jack Donnelly (1984: 2007), argued that universality implies human rights conventions are a blueprint that can be interpreted differently, but ensures a baseline of protections are in place. The primary challenge, cultural relativism, claims that the individual focus of human rights is a Western construct that does not apply everywhere, sustaining that all cultures are legitimate. As an example, leaders of the 'Asian Tiger' economies have argued

that economic growth in Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and South Korea has been a result of authoritarian rule and a communal conception of protection (Le, 2016:208). These arguments have also been challenged, suggesting they are a cover for human rights abuses. However, the underpinnings of the debate are relevant here, as there is potential for a universal approach to overlook the importance of context. Similarly, the UNCRC viewed as a universal standard and blueprint for child maltreatment, promotes the need for children's rights to protection as a baseline based on their vulnerabilities. In an equivalent manner, the universal and cultural relativist debate applies to CSE in the Philippines, specifically in how victims are represented and conceptualised.

The risks of ignoring the context have been a critical focus in critiques of the liberal peace. For example, Chandler (2007:137) argues that the liberal peace approach 'has sought to reproduce and impose Western models.' In other words, liberally informed interventions to achieve peace promote Western values and approaches as the ideal. These values maintain that liberal strategies are best suited to deliver peace, upholding these principles for non-liberal states to follow. It also presumes that Western liberal ideas of how to achieve peace can work globally. However, this is problematic as non-liberal states contain their own political, cultural and social complexities that differ from the Western context. Thus, Chandler (2010:155) explains that liberal peace interventions are ineffective as they apply Westernised concepts of peace to non-liberal contexts. The ineffectiveness of the liberal peace approach highlights a limited understanding of inequality and injustice in non-liberal states, discarding social and cultural forces that influence the efficacy and understanding of peace. Instead, scholars such as Richmond and Mac Ginty (2014:178) argue that the limited understanding of non-liberal contexts has generated an 'unequal peace benefiting the West/North' rather than creating peace to accommodate the context where unrest exists. As a result, interventions have failed to deliver sustained peace and have acted as a form of 'pacification in other contexts' (Richmond and Mac Ginty, 2014:178). In turn, an 'unequal peace' has motivated discussions challenging the international bias, which neglects the 'recognition of, and support for, subjects' rights, representation and material situation' (Richmond and Mac Ginty, 2014:178). This shows a simplification of the contextual experience as well as cultural and social nuances that are experienced daily. Moreover, it disregards local autonomy, perpetuating a false liberalism, which was originally rooted in aspirations of freedom, autonomy and seeking the good life. Thus, the critiques of the liberal peace show a discrepancy between the international and local, which is widened further as

Western interests are narrow and orientated towards propagating their own liberalist values. Using this concept as a theoretical basis, the chapter will examine the extent to which this discrepancy plays out in the Philippine context in relation to CSE.

The evidence from the local perspective will show how the tension has manifested alongside the TIP report as an international policy tool. The evidence reveals international frameworks and knowledge provide only a narrow understanding of CSE and the experience of Filipino children, failing to capture contextual details that offer more comprehensive knowledge on the problem. Moreover, the disjuncture between international knowledge, which underpins responses to CSE and local realities indicating a disparity between global representations of children and the local realities of Filipino children who are victimised, showing that international ideas are not relative to the cultures where they exist. The consequences of this tension are then unpacked in relation to 'protection,' one of the 4Ps advanced by the TIP report. The protection component of the TIP report as part of the 4Ps paradigm (prevention, protection, prosecution, partnership) will be studied in order to understand the globalised concept of children, which is referred to by the Secretary of State as 'victim centred' and 'trauma informed' (US State Department, 2020: n.p.). To better understand protection, the US Department of state has condensed protection into 3Rs known as 'rescue, rehabilitation and reintegration,' forming a child protection model that has shaped interventions for the Philippines (US state department, 2000). This model will be used as a point of reference when investigating the application of protection to the context.

The relevance of the location

One area where the discrepancy is revealed is through presentation of CSE in the Philippines identified through the theme of 'characteristics of CSE' in the findings. At a policy level, international interventions for CSE tend to focus on shaping responses based on a universal model, which for CSE has been the 4Ps paradigm in the US TIP report. However, the TIP report tends to use broad strokes to detail evidence of CSE, which diminishes the experiences of children. Similarly, the TIP report contains assumptions about the Philippine context that suggest interventions are 'paying lip-service' and disregarding the contextual implications on characteristics of CSE. For example, the TIP report as a policy tool contains limited specific data about the context and instead focuses on reporting according to funding criteria. Parallels

can be drawn with critiques of the liberal peace, in that 'external mechanisms of international engagement ignore the economic and social context of these societies and are satisfied with non-Western states paying lip-service to external donor and institutional requirements' (Chandler, 2010:149). Similarities are visible in international responses, which neglect to respond or report the specifics of CSE related to the location and instead focus on presenting at a national level. The simplification of the local context is a common theme, which runs throughout the data but manifests in different ways contributing to the tension. However, for this chapter it applies to the lack of distinction in 'characteristics of CSE' in the Philippines.

In this section, the context will be explored to understand the relevance of location to forms of CSE. The Philippine context is far removed from the day to day lives and experiences of the decision makers, which has impacted how ideas of children are represented. The following section will discuss the local context in relation to the tension by looking at two cases from Naga City and Cordova, both located in the Visayas region. Both examples show that knowledge specific to the context and location are crucial for responses to CSE in the Philippines.

Naga City, Cebu.

At an international level, there is little recognition of influences such as local dialects, cultural nuances, and local infrastructure, including local trades, development and any legacy of exploitation linked to the area. The TIP report as a policy tool demonstrates this and has been disputed for an 'often simplistic and ideal construction of the issue.' (Wilson and Brien, 2016:43). For instance, the TIP report details that exploitation occurs in 'rural communities, conflict- and disaster-affected areas, and impoverished urban centres' (US State Department, 2021:457). However, recognition of locations and characteristics does not detail distinctive characteristics related to the location that put children at considerable risk of CSE. Instead, the TIP report presents a general view that mentions and consolidates characteristics of CSE presenting a simplified version. Understanding this is important, as it emphasises the need to develop a more nuanced concept of CSE in the Philippines beyond its national representation. For example, in the surrounding areas of Cebu City like Naga, local shipping trades drawing both local and international trade are indirectly involved in businesses linked to exploitation known as 'akyat barko' (Climb on the ship). As a form of CSE, 'akyat barko' would be

categorised as commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC), a form of CSE, since environmental factors like the shipping trade allow this to occur. This form of local CSE demonstrates a perpetuated form of sexual exploitation with characteristics linked to the local trades and normalised ideas around sexual exploitation, which has implications on putting children at risk as explained by a Filipino social worker:

'Prostitution has been passed from one generation to another that's their way of living, because of the akyat barko, that is their place to go and have [a sexual] transaction and coordinate with women and girls who ride in the boat and ride on the ship for, of course, pay.' (Interview with GNGO-C social worker, October 2018)

The social worker's account shares the implications that legacies of prostitution have had on infiltrating local social behaviours, which have normalised sexual transactions and exploitation for children. The extract shows that for some locations in the Philippines, allowing children to engage in exploitative behaviours is an accepted generational norm for children and families living nearby. For CSE, in the TIP report and international literature, legacies of prostitution are often downplayed as a historical feature commonly linked to adults rather than children or identified as commercial CSE. Moreover, the international emphasis on defining prostitution, exploitation and online forms of sexual abuse against children has resulted in a narrow focus instead of looking at the bigger picture of systemic and environmental factors enabling CSE. This narrow focus impacts on understanding the linkages that feature across different forms of child sexual maltreatment. The example of 'akyat barko' has apparent differences from online sexual exploitation of children (OSEC), which will be examined in more depth in the next chapter.

Cordova, Cebu.

Another example from observations at GNGO-C and building on the previous section, highlighted that social dynamics linked to family legacies of normalised sexual conduct are distinctive, as children have grown up within the trade and see it as a way of life. In Cebu, this is a family related business linked to generations of women in prostitution but also there has been nothing to remedy the lack of opportunities to improve socio-economic status. GNGO-C highlighted that social dynamics linked to family legacies of normalised sexual conduct are distinctive, as children have grown up within the trade and see it as a way

of life. In Cebu, this is a family related business linked to generations of women in prostitution. One frontline practitioner recalled:

> *For them, they can do nothing about it because it's a way of living. If you will convince them to stop, would you be willing to give them food everyday? Because you are [the one] convincing them to stop, so it's one of the issues. (Interview with GNGO-C social worker, October 2018.)*

The social worker details that children and families in these places have immediate needs like access to food and employment but with little options available. A problem for Cordova, Cebu is the promotion of tourism by international tour operations in known areas for prostitution, and the creation of commercial infrastructures like hotels in place of local industries and markets that provided a livelihood for Filipino families. This was observed in areas of Cebu. For example, Cordova, Cebu is an old fishing town located next to the sea. Living near the sea, fishermen residing there were able to maintain a livelihood for their families in the area. However, the location by the sea made it attractive to increased investment to build hotels and bars, which had resulted in job losses. A social worker working in the area shared that many of those who lost their jobs had families and struggled to find any employment. They had learnt the local trade and had no training, skills or education other than fishing making it difficult to find work to pay for food. There was little community development in the local areas to support small trades or training to upskill local fishermen including any support for displacement. As a result, the location has become known as a hotspot for specifically online forms of CSE so that families can maintain a living. The example shows that more impoverished rural areas where employment is difficult, families are engaging in CSE and specifically online forms for financial gain. An executive working for an GNGO in the local area explained that:

> *'Families are very vulnerable to trafficking and online exploitation because they need the money for survival.' (Interview with GNGO executive, November 2018.)*

For known tourist areas such as Cebu, a location renowned for holiday resorts and beaches, different risks linked to tourism exist comparatively with Metro Manila. Widespread acceptance of foreign tourists has resulted in CSE abuses against children to be overlooked.

Furthermore, the financial opportunities from foreign nationals visiting have led to CSE, which provides some Filipino families with a new source of revenue even becoming integral to the 'development strategy' (Leon-Guerrero & Zentgraf, 2009: 75) in impoverished areas. For instance, in rural areas, ' local manufacturing and agriculture can no longer function as sources of employment profits' (Leon-Guerrero & Zentgraf, 2009: 75); as a result, there has been growth in sex-driven economies such as 'akyat barko' and online sexual exploitation of children (OSEC), which offers an alternative source of income for families where demand is present.

Another issue raised was that local community members and neighbours of families engaged in CSE are 'turning a blind eye' (Orndorf, 2010:792) to exploitative activities against children. Ramiro et al (2019) also supports similar observations from their research into online child sexual exploitation and abuse (OCSEA) in Manila. In their observations, they articulate that 'gossip' and 'harassment' may occur at a community level but without reporting to law enforcement or the local barangay, citing they were unable to 'judge the person or the family' or decided 'not to involve themselves in their neighbours' business' (Ramiro et al, 2019:10). The lack of acknowledgement of CSE or the willingness of community members to ignore indications of CSE was explicit in two interviews. One interview detailed that OSEC had become so normalised within a community the social worker had visited, it was no longer perceived as a problem by people living in that location. The social worker stated:

> '[There is] a certain area in Cebu, where it seems they have just accepted online sexual exploitation' (Interview with GNGO-B social worker, September 2018.)

Another interview disclosed that they had witnessed an indifference in communities towards obvious indications of CSE, explaining that:

> 'People don't want to know, they don't care, they don't want to be involved, it's only an added responsibility and a problem [to them].' (Interview with international NGO social worker, August 2018.)

These interviews along with observations emphasise the significance of location and environment in how CSE manifests and in what way cases of CSE were managed, indicating that some areas were worse and not responsive to the risks posed to children. For example, some local barangays were very active in engaging with community watch efforts, whereas other locations where CSE was more normalised or had limited NGO input resulted in a minimal local response to tackle the issue. Reflecting on the findings and policy tools like the TIP report, there has been little detail expanding on the different subcultures, norms or location-specific challenges in the responses discussed in the TIP report. For instance, the TIP report acknowledges 'identified hotspots' for OSEC known locations from 'Luzon and Visayas include Iligan, Lapu-Lapu, Pampanga, Quezon City, Malabon, Pasig, Taguig, and Caloocan' (US State Department, 2021:458). In other words, a general sense of locations where CSE is prevalent. However, there are critical gaps in knowledge on characteristics of CSE within the Philippines and the enabling factors relevant to different locations. Instead, these details are glossed over, generalised or internationally projected simplified versions of CSE to suit the international donor lens, which overlook the contextual implications on CSE specific to the location.

Characteristics of CSE in the TIP report and international literature are often presented for a Western affluent audience, where the Western liberal interventions project is centred on universal understandings and responses onto the context. For example, enabling and driving factors of CSE are overtly linked to family dysfunction in the Philippines, which will be discussed in a later section. An explanation for why these factors may be part of a conceptualised idea of CSE, is that there are elements of bias promoting social and economic distance between prosperous liberal states and non-liberal states like the Philippines, which act as a form of othering. This can be beneficial for international donors, as othering distances them from the issue, enabling them to relate to CSE from a position of power.

Understanding the context is crucial to learning about how to improve the way CSE is presented in international policy tools and reports because representation influences the response. In reality, cases of CSE are more individual to the location where CSE exists and thus, requires precise local management by GNGOs and local Filipino actors to meet the needs based on the location. However, international responses use the UNCRC as a benchmark for their perceptions of CSE and victims in the Philippines, which dampens the actual experiences of Filipino children and culture where they exist.

Protecting children: the poverty question

In its various forms, CSE is often conceptualised around a single truth based on children's vulnerability, which is shaped by Westernised representations of childhood and framed for international understanding. Western concepts of childhood influence policy frameworks like the TIP report, maintaining the view that a child is a 'vulnerable, weak, and dependent creature' (Archard, 2006: 6). This perception upholds a prescribed childhood based on Westernised 'preoccupations and priorities of the capitalist countries of Europe and the US,' upholding the view that children are incapable and dependent (Boyden, 1997: 186). As a result, the cultural experiences of children from non-Western contexts and their realties lack accurate representation in international research and policy, which informs development interventions. As Marshall (2006:153) states, that responses 'do not occur in a vacuum but against a background of social tolerance grounded in discriminations against such groups as women, children, migrants and ethnic minorities.' For international actors, globally accepted Western ideas of childhood have infiltrated responses on the ground. Empirical data drawn from local sources will be used to show how international perceptions lack a complete understanding of CSE and the Philippine context creating a tension. This section will focus on poverty and the family, which show a way that the tension has manifested from the evidence.

One way that Filipino children are perceived to be vulnerable is through their family's socio-economic status. When participants were asked the question, 'in your opinion and experience, what do you think are the major factors that result in the children being victims of sexual exploitation?'[8] A total of 70% of the respondents reported that 'poverty' and being 'poor' were the main reasons. In an interview with a child protection medical practitioner and academic, they discussed how their experience with CSE in its various forms had been with children who often came from impoverished families recalling:

> *'The children involved, they are from the poor families, and so poverty plays a very critical role as always, when you're talking about exploitation.' (Interview with medical practitioner and academic, November 2018.)*

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[8] Interview question 3a. from the 'Interview guide' in Appendix A.

Driving factors referenced by the majority of participants also discussed poverty in relation to the immediate family, their socio-economic status and circumstances, highlighting how poverty placed children at risk. One social worker explained that:

> *'The root cause is actually poverty. It's very difficult, like the unemployed parents.' (Interview with GNGO-A social worker, September 2018.)*

As discussed in the last section, the livelihoods and employment of parents can act as driving factor to why children can be sexually exploited. In particular, young children who are reliant on parents as their central support system. The role of parents and the risks posed to children in OSEC with regard to parents will be discussed in the next section. However, poverty is not the only reason and there are other reflections beyond poverty to consider. An important point was made in an interview with an INGO coordinator who distinguished that poverty is only part of the issue, they stated:

> *'I think some other children are not that in need, because as I was saying, there are groups of children in school who are doing it (engaging in CSE) by themselves… they're doing that because they just want to get out and buy something for themselves, not necessarily to give to their parents for something that they can eat or provide for their needs.' (Interview with INGO coordinator, November 2018.)*

Each of the excerpts from the interviews show a range of ideas that show how CSE in its many forms correlates with low socio-economic status and lack of employment, among other factors that make a child vulnerable to CSE. However, as the INGO coordinator points out, older children in school have more autonomy to engage with perpetrators online and are more concerned with the monetary draw of engaging in CSE. They have an adequate standard of living but want to engage in CSE activities for materialistic purposes, demonstrating that characteristics of CSE are more refined. This narrative of children engaging with perpetrators in the Philippines is often lost in the narrative of younger victims being helpless. The emphasis especially in the TIP report has been that children are powerlessly victimised, and perpetrators are predatory. Wilson and Brien (2016:29) argue that the TIP portrays the 'ideal victim' for policy informing purposes rather than capturing the realities on the ground. In other words, international actors fail to accurately capture CSE and the specific characteristics of children's experiences beyond policy and funding priorities for the

Philippines. Gubrium (1989:94) claims that rather than correctly capturing the realities on the ground, 'policy typically glosses over localised interpretations, treating them as hindrances to successful general application' (Gubrium,1989:94). Instead, Western policy thinking and policy tools like the TIP report focus on presenting an acceptable version of reality for the international audience who exist far from the context, which in turn informs local responses of an idealised childhood and victim.

Understanding the family

Alongside financial deprivation as explained in the last section, complicated family systems erode the protective factors that generally allow children to have adequate safety. Luthar and Cicchetti (2000:859) state that 'protective factors are those that modify the effects of risk in a positive direction.' Luthar and Cicchetti (2000:859) discuss the importance of considering factors that protect or make an individual vulnerable. For instance, Obrist et al (2010:286) articulate that family and the community are often considered protective factors in Western notions of CSE. Likewise, Western ideas of childhood accept 'the nuclear family as a desirable norm' (Mayall, 2013:5). In contrast, for cases of CSE in the Philippines, this view not applicable because of the risks posed by family members to children who are victims of CSE. In interviews with social workers, they distinguished the specific roles and features of facilitators and perpetrators. Facilitators are locally based adults, often the parents or family members related to the child who are being exploited. Perpetrators are often foreign nationals engaged in various forms of CSE (US State Department, 2021). The social workers views on demonstrate that complex family circumstances with parents often being facilitators of CSE, especially in cases of OSEC, meant that they considered parents and carers not to be protective factors. All the social workers interviewed for the study referenced the familial issues in cases of CSE, using the terms '*broken families' and 'dysfunctional families.'* In an earlier section it was also highlighted that communities were actively ignoring risks to children contributing to the unsuccessful reporting of CSE cases. Instead, victims of CSE were heavily reliant on interventions provided by Philippine based organisations for protection.

Programmatic interventions provided by local agencies centre on tackling the immediate dangers and risks by implementing a protection model focussed on rescue,

rehabilitation and reintegration, known as the '3Rs,' as part of a protection response. The findings show that the protective response is often led by INGOs with support from local government agencies, geared towards problem solving rather than developing protective factors that address social and cultural behaviours. In this regard, critiques of the liberal peace share parallels with CSE, where Pugh (2005:39) claims that interventions and approaches to target peace can serve a 'problem-solving purpose - to doctor the dysfunctions.' For CSE in the Philippines, the heavy emphasis placed on protective operations acting as a band aid rather than addressing the more substantive issues such as driving and enabling factors. The findings indicate that interventions are reactive rather than transformative.

Whilst the US TIP report is used as a policy tool in this thesis, the report itself was not necessarily set up to establish contextual understandings. Thus, the TIP report lacks acknowledgement and details showing the power dynamics, vulnerabilities, and complex social environments that Filipino children experience daily. Furthermore, the TIP report has been criticised for being too general and broad in its accounts of trafficking (Wilson and Brien, 2016:43). However, as an internationally accepted framework, the TIP report provides an invaluable insight into the priorities of international actors and used as a tool to validate global policies. Overall understandings of protective factors require further development. For this to happen it is essential to understand the critical environmental and social influences from CSE survivors to develop a comprehensive knowledge base on protective factors. An INGO social worker supporting CSE survivors talked in-depth about children's experiences, including the risks and situations they encountered from their family and community when conducting assessments stating:

> *'They (children) come mainly from dysfunctional families, poor families,*
> *and children exposed to violence at home or the community and also*
> *probably families that [children] aren't really looked after [in]. The kind of*
> *guidance that parents are giving to their own children, and they are more*
> *or less in a complicated situation or structure. The father is separated and*
> *has his own family, the mother is separated [and] has her own partner, and*
> *they have step-siblings from both the father and the mother, and they are*
> *confused where to get help [from] when they have problems. And they live*
> *in a community, which is not so caring to them [to] make them feel secure.'*
> *(Interview with an International NGO social worker, November 2018.)*

The INGO social worker's account highlights the influence of the immediate family on increasing a child's risk of victimisation. Furthermore, the interview excerpt shows issues that drive children to CSE can start with the social dynamics in the family home and the primary caregivers, which is an area under addressed in CSE responses in the Philippines. Interestingly, dynamics within the family have received little acknowledgement in the TIP report despite family members facilitating OSEC. Alternatively, references made about the family in the TIP report detail that 'family members sold children to employers for domestic labour or sexual exploitation' (US State Department, 2021:458). The involvement of family members in facilitating CSE is shown but there is no mention of services that engage with problems within the family. Similarly, on the ground, concerns were raised about family issues but there was only one GNGO that was actively providing family interventions to address the risks to children by focussing on the family and community. The GNGO did this through creating livelihoods for the parents by giving them skills and employment. They also provided more robust educational programmes on a case-by-case basis to communities near locations known for CSE. Although the efforts of the GNGO show progress, the majority of CSE responses are geared towards problem solving, rather than developing protective factors that address the social dynamics and cultural behaviours linked to the family and community. Without engaging the family, responses will continue to deal with issues on a surface rather than tackling the root causes. There is an overreliance on the 3Rs international model to intervene and provide protection. A lack of investment in developing sustainable protective factors on the ground shows the 3Rs do not tackle the source of the problem but act reactively to manage the immediate threats.

Children as victims of CSE

Another characteristic of CSE where the tension can be identified is in the profile of children. Gender in particular has been largely overlooked in cases of CSE. Present-day Filipinos base their values on traditionalist gendered roles, which is characteristic of many other Southeast Asian nations making gender a 'largely undocumented and often misunderstood issue in the country' (Miles and Davis, 2017:54). The historical poor treatment of Southeast Asian women and children has continued to plague global perceptions of their role and value in society. In the Philippines, as discussed in Chapter one, a consequence of the US military presence during World War Two was the expansion of prostitution activity for servicemen

(Jeffrey, 1999:186-187). The repercussion of such activities has normalised gender mistreatment resulting in the sexual exploitation of children but with heavy emphasis on girls. In the TIP report, victims of CSE are identified as both boys and girls (US State Department, 2020: 409). However, a common view amongst participants implementing efforts in the Philippines is that CSE responses are designed for girls. One concern expressed among frontline practitioners is the lack of acknowledgement of what is needed by local organisations operating in the context. Gendered ideas of CSE victims tend to focus on female children, but GNGOs have observed an increasing number of OSEC cases involving boys but have experienced little support by international interventions to accommodate engagement and interventions for male victims.

In the findings, one social worker shared that they were managing a case where the perpetrator had requested CSEM involving a one-year-old child. The social worker explained that in previous years, teenagers were at risk of online forms of CSE but increasingly cases have included infants to meet demand for child pornographic content including videos, images and live streaming. Similarly, another social worker stated that they had seen an upward trend in boys being involved in OSEC, whereas previously girls had been the primary victims. These variations pose challenges for child protection responses in the Philippines, where programmes tailored to certain victim demographics and ideas of victims are not adapted to reflect local needs. One participant argued that:

> *'Since the victims are not just female children but also male children, and the baseline studies have shown that there are even more male children [who] are sexually abused than [just] females.' (Interview with government agency coordinator, February 2019.)*

Local NGOs have reported that resources for protecting boys have been limited and government agencies have been struggling to provide adequate facilities to support boys for specialised trauma and recovery needs. Possible explanations for why boys have become more visible victims include the use of online platforms, where there is physical evidence of boys being involved in CSE. In the interview data, government agencies and local partners reported that attempts to accommodate boys were often hindered by the limited services and resources. One INGO prosecutor partnering with government agencies recalled:

> *'Our previous commercial sexual exploitation project where children who have been rescued in bars, brothels, and similar establishments are predominantly women, so the fact that now we are seeing also young boys being rescued in exploitative conditions, have implications on shelters, interventions and all of those things.' (Interview with INGO Prosecutor, March 2019.)*

The INGO prosecutor acknowledged the 'implications on shelters' and 'interventions' because of male victims but also there was recognition in the findings that shelters were struggling in local organisations to provide interventions for boys. Some felt that that gender specialised interventions and shelters were needed, others considered that these were needed but interventions for boys were under resourced by international donors because they had set ideas about victims. The data indicates that international donors have not adjusted the existing protection response model to meet local needs for cases involving the victimisation of boys. It suggests that programmatic provision is not meeting local needs nor is it adapting to the contextual demands of CSE victims. International policy instead is concerned with having a model victim, 'disproportionately represented as young women or girls, or alternatively, as young boys, to position victims as prototypically weak and helpless,' which is projected onto the local response (Wilson and Brien, 2016:43).

Children's autonomy in CSE – posing a challenge to protection

For OSEC, family dysfunction and poverty are not the only contributing factors to risks for children being heightened. The UNCRC established on the Western world views has conceptualised children according to biological and psychological criteria. In turn, this undermines 'children's responsibilities' and accepting traditional Western family structures as the norm (Mayall, 2013:5). The underlying idea of children's responsibilities and roles as well as how the family is understood can be different depending upon the context. For example, a cultural and social norm for some children in non-Western countries is working to support the family, which is often ignored in Western thought and the UNCRC. This complexity highlights how children are perceived to be overtly victimised, which is discarded in the international dialogue. As Khan (2010: 103-104) states, there is a 'tendency to ignore children as economic agents.' In non-Western contexts, economic despair animates indifference resulting in children becoming economic agents. This shows a global disparity in

contextual related ideas of children and childhood representation. The Western model used to inform the TIP report among other policy tools has a narrow perception of the cultural responsibilities that children encounter in other contexts, including the economic value that some cultures anticipate children bring in contributing to the broader family.

For the Philippines, children from poorer backgrounds are expected to provide economically to the family unit. As Alampay (2014:113) states family obligations for children depend on the socio-economic circumstances. When the children grow up, there are expectations to contribute towards the family, 'children are trained to assume responsibilities in the household and community, are expected to gain greater control of their impulses, and obey their parents, elders, and older siblings' (Alampay, 2014:109). For impoverished Filipino families, children are expected to help with the household through helping with tasks but also contributing financially. For CSE, this has become problematic in areas where CSE and online forms of CSE have become normalised. Moreover, as children are able to see the financial gains of OSEC in comparison to the small amounts of money they receive from regular jobs, they start to engage with OSEC independently. Another enabling factor is that foreign currencies used by perpetrators in demand-side countries convert well into Philippine Pesos, so Filipino children benefit from the money that pays much better than local provided employment. As one participant illustrates:

> *'This is [a] financially driven activity (OSEC). Of course, they do it for money. And others they think this is a kind of livelihood. And even the groups we arrested, we asked them why they do it, it's because of easy money.' (Interview with Philippine government agency officer, January 2019.)*

The perception of 'easy money' from engaging with OSEC in the Philippines plays a significant part in developing the autonomy of children, where there are not only economic implications but social pressures from the family to earn a living. A number of respondents indicated that Filipino children perceive that the financial benefits allow them to have a better standard of living from OSEC. International actors simplify this situation to a one-dimensional understanding, emphasising the financial gains as an enabling factor and poverty as a driving factor with little contextual depth. Furthermore, there is a lack of consideration for the social pressures and cultural dynamics of Filipino families based on a collectivist

mentality, which is the idea of preserving family interests above the individuals themselves. For international agencies, UNCRC and the TIP report present as more 'individualistic,' which assume that children are able to harness a 'more empowered stance' when it comes to their autonomy (Hanson et al, 2018:291). In reality, this is not always the case, children in the Philippines lack autonomy to decide whether they want to engage in OSEC depending on a number of factors, but not limited to, socio-economic status, age, family, location and education, among others. However, it is crucial to emphasise that age has implications on a child's autonomy. In the findings for cases of OSEC, children were younger than other forms of CSE. Child victims of OSEC can be very young children, including babies and infants who are unable to exercise any autonomy and are solely dependent on their caregivers.

On the other hand, there are also cases involving older children who are able to exercise their autonomy by putting themselves and other children at risk. Older children have greater access to devices so they are able to engage with perpetrators directly. A participant stated:

> *'Now, they (children) have the capacity to actually say "we'll get into this"... It's changed from way before, before the model was [that] an adult pimp or paedophile would victimize children but this time, children are involved in making themselves vulnerable to victimization as well.'*
> *(Interview with researcher and child maltreatment academic, February 2019.)*

The extract details how CSE has moved beyond the traditional exploitative dynamics of adult and child relationships to become more convoluted. The data showed that peer to peer relationships have also emerged as a way of engaging children in sexually exploitative activities and demonstrating that CSE is consistently evolving. Interestingly, GNGO-C staff explained that they had also seen local gang involvement as an enabling factor for CSE, as teenagers exploited themselves as a gang initiation and way to make money. The critical point here, is whether children actually are autonomous in decision making to reject such norms that put them at risk of potential harm. The question of autonomy is complex and presents as problematic because CSE is also coercive.

Unexpected data: Child sexual abuse, offline exploitation and Incest

Throughout the study, incest was a topic beyond the scope of the study but was highlighted as a local issue. Sexual abuse of Filipino children, especially incest, has been a substantial aspect of the study beyond the remit of CSE that GNGOs raised as a common threat to children. Over the course of this study, it was observed that there were numerous incest cases that were known of or were being handled by the NGOs who participated in the study. During data collection, GNGO-A in particular had a high percentage of incest cases approximately 70% of all cases being managed by their staff. All the children were girls aged between the ages five to seventeen with no defining characteristics apart from the family situations were complex and children often came from a low-income families. Perpetrators were identified as the father, uncle or a grandparent. In 'A systematic literature review of drivers of violence affecting children: the Philippines' conducted by UNICEF (2016:40), incest is cited as a significant issue but as a 'taboo topic' it has lacked any compelling research. Despite some recognition, there has been little discussion on the links between forms of CSE and incest especially since cases of OSEC have included rape, sexual abuse and maltreatment conducted by family members. Furthermore, the data shows high percentages of incest cases but comparatively, there is little acknowledgement of the scale or prevalence on incest in existing literature apart from the UNICEF study (UNICEF, 2016: 40). In UNICEF's (2016: 40) report, they state that 'a study of 1,000 cases of violence in the home found that 33 per cent involved incest' highlighting the striking issue of incest in the Philippines. In an interview with a child sexual abuse and exploitation academic, they detailed that incest is a significantly underreported issue in the Philippines and that there are parallels between incest and cases of online sexual abuse where the facilitators are relatives arguing that:

> *'It's (OSEC is) just like an expansion of incest. Now they're making money out of incest.' ((Interview with medical practitioner and academic, November 2018)*

The academic stated the link between incest and OSEC, because cases of OSEC were facilitated by a parent or relatives in the majority of cases. As facilitators, their role involved carrying out sexual requests of abuse made by perpetrators, which in fact is a form of sexual abuse and incest conducted by the parent on the child. The point raised by the practitioner

and the cumulative evidence shows that there are high cases of incest in the Philippines. However, there is little international recognition of the issue, despite the evidence of cases. There was also no acknowledgement of incest in the TIP report, even though Filipino GNGO staff and other frontline participants acknowledged it as major problem.

Local actors have little agency to respond to cases of incest as international resources are focused on projects that look at CSE from their prescribed ideas. International interventions have a fixed scope on what issues relate to the international agenda, ideas and their priorities, which discard the realities of children and, in turn, neglect to recognise the local threat of incest. Since most international interventions responding to CSE have foreign perpetrators, there is a perceived responsibility by foreign countries to police their own. However, the data shows incest is a domestic issue involving local perpetrators. Therefore, international resources may be less inclined to intervene seeing it as an issue for the Philippines to manage.

Conclusion

This chapter shows how the disjuncture between international perceptions and local realities has influenced responses to CSE. The chapter shows how Western ideas have dominated understandings of children and simplified the complexity of the Philippine context. The tension between international and local is complex when applied to daily experiences that are 'unstable and blurred in everyday life,' and it can be challenging to capture interconnections across Philippine cultures, histories, economies and political structures within which a child's life unfolds (Hanson et al, 2018:274). Prescribed ideas of the international community based on the UNCRC and TIP report limit the ability for international donors and interventions to improve their responses to impact children who are victims of CSE. In each section, it was demonstrated that International reporting does not capture the nuance needed to fully understand CSE.

Protection responses in the Philippines lack robust support for families to foster these protective factors and develop responses around strengthening the family network. Culturally speaking, the Filipino family and the role of children present an interesting and essential dynamic as the 'family is seen as the one entity in almost all cultures that outsiders do not intervene upon very easily' (Crews & Crews, 2010; 27). However, protection responses provide a vital opportunity to develop interventions to support building the family network to establish protective factors beyond the reactive 3Rs model. For OSEC, even though GNGOs have engaged with the local environment, there has been minimal development beyond the protection model, which include the social and cultural influences on children. Responses should outline the importance of addressing behaviours and protective environmental factors after reintegration to support victims. UNICEF (2016) states the response to social norms, but such approaches require protective interventions that combat underlying locally guided partnership building and community engagement. These locally based partnerships and community initiatives will help develop better on the ground visibility of CSE and aid with changing social behaviours and perceptions around risks to CSE. There is also an evident need for international responses to become more dynamic. However, international donors have little interest in developing context-specific responses as international models provide prescribed ideas that set the benchmark and continue to be perceived as best practice. Therefore, the data shows that the TIP report needs to take a more expansive view of children and victims by considering in-depth the contextual experiences of children in the Philippines.

Although this thesis intended to present CSE, the data shows how there are other forms of child maltreatment that have been underreported and underrepresented in research, policy and local programmes. The findings show that there is a clear disjuncture not only in the characteristics of CSE but also in other forms of child maltreatment. For local agencies managing cases of incest, there is no acknowledgement in international policy tools like the TIP report indicating the high numbers of incest cases experienced by local actors. The local agencies experiencing such high rates of incest lack not only resources to manage the needs on the ground but also recognition of the types of child maltreatment they are dealing with. This requires nuanced responses to provide complex psychological, social and behavioural treatment.

Furthermore, this lends itself to the research methodology and theoretical approach to exposing the realities of terminology difficulties encountered on the frontline and within communities at the local level. It recognises that there may be assumptions surrounding the terminology and thus by articulating the phenomenon as child sexual exploitation that this provides the opportunity to not limit the understanding to a specific trend of child sexual violations.

Chapter 5 – Projection of priorities: Child Sexual Exploitation Responses in the Philippines

From the findings, frontline responses to CSE in the Philippines reveal the paradox of how essential the response is, but also how problematic implementation can be. The critique of the liberal peace frequently highlights the disjuncture between international responses and local realities, and a similar tension is evident in the Philippines context in the response to CSE. International priorities dominate how local responses are framed, which undermines the ability of local actors to effectively meet local needs. This chapter explores three areas where the disjuncture between international priorities and local needs is evident – the prioritisation of OSEC, the imbalanced criminal justice response and the allocation of funding towards implementation.

Addressing challenges such as CSE in a context such as the Philippines is difficult, as the country faces many competing challenges. GNGOs working in this area have limited resources, face difficulties with legal procedures and also with deeply embedded systemic issues such as inequality and low-income that perpetuates CSE. Responses implemented by GNGOs have improved, becoming more targeted. However, these improved responses have relied heavily on donors that fund the activities and ensure the survival of GNGOs. International funding, while not explicitly tied, comes with specific conditions to which grantees must adhere. The power dynamic that this establishes has the effect of overriding local priorities.

This section will explore the role of international interventions against local agencies to understand the basic assumptions that underpin the tension, highlighting that international interventions project global priorities onto the Philippine context. The TIP report produced annually by the US State Department is one tool that projects donor priorities onto grantees in an indirect way. To explain the tension, the TIP report will be used as a policy framework for international interventions. For the US, the TIP report is an example of a shift from 'direct intervention to sponsorship of acts of global governance' by policing international responses to trafficking (Wiss, 2013:66). Further, Wiss (2013:66) argues that 'utilising the moral authority of NGOs and the legitimacy provided by codification in international conventions, the US was able to back policy it approves of by underwriting the costs of implementation and enforcing compliance.' The TIP report has been able to maintain compliance of other

states to the TIP report, by pressuring and penalising states who do not adhere to the US defined trafficking criteria through withdrawing financial support provided by USAID, and discrediting states who have performed poorly (Wiss, 2013:66). Moreover, it has also been critiqued for being biased and politically swayed in favour of states with strong international relations with the US. Chuang (2006:482) states that the TIP report uses 'selective criticism' to build a profile of a state's anti-trafficking responses based on their relationship status with the US. For example, the US State Department has been critical in its feedback of states where relationships are tense. However, the TIP report has established a benchmark for anti-trafficking responses, solidifying its position as pioneering efforts in the global responses to CSE as a form of human trafficking. In turn, adherence to the framework has been stimulated through a carrot and stick approach, providing funding for countries that participate and penalising those who do not, by retracting financial support. Thus, states may feel additional pressures to contribute data for assessing to the TIP report, due to the heinous nature of human trafficking. Therefore, many states see it as a moral obligation and duty for society. Despite this, the role of the United States has been brought into question, as some states perceive the TIP report as another attempt by the US to regulate and monitor other states. An example of this is discussed in chapter five, which argues that the TIP report has been used as a political tool by the US. For the Philippines, the foundations of the TIP report and the criteria adopted are based on liberal contexts and reflective of liberal aspirations. The complexity of local implementation and how to execute local responses may be lost in favour of ensuring that criteria to obtain international funding are met.

Although the TIP report addresses cultural norms as factors to be incorporated when considering the report, it also acknowledges that local societal norms can be harnessed in order to disguise and encourage human trafficking (US Department of State, 2019:10). This starting point effectively establishes a distrust for the 'local' and prioritises the concerns of the donor. Martell (2010: 65) states that overlooking Western powers 'glosses over power, inequality and exploitation created by the West' and that focus needs to be balanced with localised representation and contextually specific responses 'not reduced to something other and passive.' Despite acknowledging local cultural norms, 'Western culture constantly reaffirms the West's view of itself as the centre of legitimate knowledge' deciding 'what counts' as 'universal knowledge' (Smith, 2012:66). According to Smith, universal knowledge is 'available to all and not really owned by anyone, that is, until non-Western scholars make claims to it.' Based on this critique, this chapter examines how the TIP report projects

priorities, and how that affects local responses to CSE in the Philippines, by exploring three areas where this tension is clearly evident - the prioritisation of OSEC, the imbalanced criminal justice response and the allocation of funding towards implementation.

Understanding child sexual exploitation responses in the Philippines

The model based on rescue, advocacy and education, legal services, rehabilitation was observed to be widely adopted across all international non-government organisations (INGOs) and GNGOs managing cases of CSE across all field sites and locations where this research was conducted. Both INGOs and GNGOs who were included in this study were involved in at least one area of rescue, advocacy, rehabilitation, legal or aftercare services. This model adopted to respond to CSE informed how INGOs and GNGOs shaped their projects and implementation efforts.

The work of INGO's, GNGOs, government agencies, and practitioners is based on the assumption that concentrating on rescue, prosecution, advocacy, rehabilitation and aftercare will reduce prevalence and improve the management of CSE cases. This assumption is influenced by the 4Ps framework in the TIP report that structures responses to human trafficking. However, what underpins most of these agencies and responses is the significant funding influenced by the measurements and criteria contained in the TIP report, which has been a guide and example of best practice for interventions. As a result, interventions apply what Kotiswaran (2019:415) describes as an 'ex post facto approach' focused on 'prosecutions, raids, rescues and paternalist models of institutionalised rehabilitation' rather than actually looking at what is needed locally (Kotiswaran, 2019:415). These areas of focus align with international priorities; what has been developed as best practice in the US context and may not necessarily be the best fit for the Philippine context. Over the course of this chapter, examples of this disjuncture are evident in the imbalanced justice response and the prioritisation of OSEC as a form of CSE.

Prioritising online sexual exploitation of children (OSEC)

The Philippines is acknowledged internationally as 'one of the largest known sources of online sexual exploitation of children' (US State Department, 2020:409). In the Philippines, CSE responses have shifted to prioritise online forms of sexual exploitation. While offline forms of sexual exploitation had been a primary focus previously, the prevalence of OSEC in the Philippines has led to its prioritisation in the development agenda. As a result, international donors have refocused their resources, targeting locally based INGOs and GNGOs to implement efforts to tackle OSEC. This shift has been vital for addressing OSEC, but has also neglected offline forms of CSE, which continues to be an issue for the Philippines. Drawing from the data, this section will demonstrate the tension between international and local by explaining how donors' prioritising OSEC has resulted in offline forms of CSE being overlooked.

Donors have increasingly aligned their agendas to provide resources against the threat OSEC poses to children. International donor agencies have emphasised the global scope needed to address the problem and the necessity for collaboration among governments, multilateral agencies and NGOs to tackle the issue. The global agenda has been prompted by reports and indications of an increased prevalence in online forms of CSE. Likewise, the global community has been influenced by the international reach and technological nature of online platforms and social media, which threaten traditional protective factors that previously distanced perpetrators from gaining direct access to potential victims (Baines, 2019; Quayle, 2020; Quayle and Koukopoulos, 2018; UNODC, 2015). Thus, OSEC as a form of CSE has been propagated as a prolific form of CSE, garnering international resources to support developing countries in establishing sufficient mechanisms to ensure they are able to respond to OSEC (Baines, 2019:197). The WePROTECT Global Alliance (WPGA) is an example of how online forms of CSE have come to the forefront of the international CSE agenda. Funded by the UK Home Office, the WPGA demonstrates an increased prioritisation by the international community to intervene and develop responses to OSEC, citing it as a 'moral and operational imperative to support the global fight against online child sexual exploitation' (UK Home Office, 2020:n.p.). Both WPGA and the TIP report demonstrate efforts to galvanise stakeholders internationally by developing structural mechanisms prioritising OSEC. The efforts of the WPGA and TIP report suggest that the problem is an internationally recognised issue and has therefore gained significant traction as a form of

CSE. However, the focus of the TIP report and the international agenda shows that OSEC responses have become an international priority, which overlooks offline forms of CSE.

The Philippines in particular has been called out for the prevalence of OSEC in the country. To remedy this, the TIP report has provided 'prioritised recommendations' across the 4Ps, emphasising gaps in OSEC responses and detailing the level of engagement between international and local actors (US State department, 2020:406). In the TIP report, OSEC responses call for increased resources, which is exhibited in the Child Protection Compact Partnership (CPC) between the Philippines and US State Department, to support interventions. The bilateral agreement, originally signed in 2017, details the commitment of $3.5 million by the US State Department and $800,000 from the Philippine government to 'strengthen' OSEC responses, by adopting a 'victim-centred approach to prosecuting traffickers and ensuring specialised services for child victims' (US State Department, 2018). Philippine officials and agencies may see the agreement as a positive investment for child protection efforts. However, the dependency of Philippine agencies on international funding underpins the agreement, indicating that it is effectively forcing the Philippine government to invest in this issue as a concern for donors. Moreover, the CPC agreement highlights that the US State Department's agreement to match the Philippine commitment is another way to obtain buy-in and commitment from local efforts. Thus, reflecting on the concerns raised about the strategic biases of the US TIP report, the agreement signifies US interests in the Philippines. Likewise, for the Philippine government, there are clear benefits by investing $800,000 in order to get $3.5 million in funding, which overrides where the Philippine government might have preferred to spend that money.

Despite progress and investment in OSEC responses, international resources towards OSEC risk other forms of CSE being overshadowed, diminishing the response to offline forms. This is problematic as 'there is no evidence to suggest that online abuse and exploitation are more serious or pervasive offences than crimes occurring offline' (Quayle, 2020:443). For GNGOs, cases of offline forms of CSE continue to be a larger proportion of the cases that they respond to. For example, thirty percent of cases at GNGO-B were online forms of CSE with the majority of cases being child prostitution and commercial forms of CSE. But the international support, awareness generation and resources for OSEC would suggest that these offline forms of CSE are less prevalent than OSEC. A prosecutor for an INGO stated that:

> *'People would try to make the connection with OSEC and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) and feel like maybe the prevalence of CSEC went down, [and that] perpetrators maybe went underground and here comes OSEC.'* (Interview with an INGO prosecutor, September 2018.)

The interview highlights that different types of CSE seem to be a trend that shifts or fluctuates as CSE characteristics change or adapt. Other interviews with different participants commented on the distinctive forms of CSE and responses but did not reveal that OSEC was more prevalent in the Philippines than offline forms of CSE. From the data drawn from GNGOs, more cases of offline forms of CSE were reported than online forms. However, INGOs targeting OSEC reported that OSEC was an area of focus because of its prevalence. An INGO social worker explained how there had been a *'big reduction already in CSEC (commercial sexual exploitation of children).'*[9] As a result, the INGO has focussed on prioritising OSEC, the participant recalled:

> *'we see the need to focus now on or respond to OSEC, because this is what is trending right now. We're not saying that CSEC has gone, but as an NGO [you] come and go, so you fill in the gap or help the government where you can be helpful.'* (Interview with INGO prosecutor, September 2018.)

The data shows the emphasis on OSEC from an INGOs employee, who talks about OSEC 'trending,' it is unclear where that this is related to international donors but most likely is a reflection of their observations from prosecuting cases of OSEC and CSE. INGOs are focussed on OSEC, where the INGO social worker explained that from a top-level the organisation's priorities are to help with government gaps. However, taking a step back, the government's gaps and priorities are influenced by the country-specific recommendations of the TIP report, which are provided by the US State Department. In comparison, GNGOs are closer to the ground and less influenced by international agendas to the same extent as INGOs. The GNGOs nearness shows a more authentic depiction of CSE on the ground. This suggests that responses to CSE should be more balanced considering both online and offline forms.

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[9] Interview with INGO social worker, August 2018.

Another participant also supported the claim that responses to OSEC is a trend, but in fact the responses continue to deal with the same victims. They stated that OSEC has arisen as a recent problem but that responses and resources for OSEC continue to be led and implemented by the same agencies.

> *'It's the same people; international NGO and agencies, and you know in every five years or so, there are certain trends or there is more focus. Like right now, it's more on the online, previously it was trafficking, you know. But you're still dealing with the same children. Maybe the strategy by perpetrators may change but they're still dealing with the same population of children.' (Interview with medical practitioner and academic, February 2019.)*

According to the medical practitioner and academic participant, the same children continue to be affected by different forms of CSE, meaning that whether international agendas reflect a new trend of CSE, or perpetrators adapt, the contextual experiences of this population continue to make them susceptible to exploitation. In addition, the interview details that the same international and local actors continue to be involved in efforts, shifting their work to reflect dominant trends. At a local level, both online and offline forms of CSE are complex and are often interlinked. According to the Director of GNGO-A, cases starting out as OSEC can easily evolve into offline forms of CSE, progressing to commercial sexual exploitation or sex tourism explaining:

> *'It starts with online sexual abuse but then they move on to travelling to the country so that will continue to become a big problem… Although we differentiate sexual abuse online, domestically and commercial sexual exploitation, I think they are all interrelated.' (Interview with GNGO-A Director, June 2018.)*

The emphasis on OSEC from international donors does not wholly reflect the multifaceted nature of CSE and its fluidity as a problem. Instead, it narrows the understanding to manage surface issues rather than the local systemic problems that result in vulnerability to both online and offline forms of CSE. This has parallels to the critiques of the liberal peace, which argue that interventions are no longer transformative based on the liberal values of emancipation but instead 'manage the complexity of non-Western societies' (Chandler, 2010:148). In a similar way to this critique of the liberal peace, the Philippine context has

been simplified to 'manage the complexity' of how CSE manifests in another context. Instead of approaching interventions to transform child protection to prevent sexual exploitation, efforts are investing in managing CSE without assessing the wider implications of the phenomenon for the Philippines.

Similarly, like the critiques of the liberal peace explain, responses need to assess, evaluate and improve the context to support 'pro-poor and emancipatory engagement with local populations' by nurturing local to local collaborative efforts (Pugh, 2005: 38). GNGOs recognise the fluidity of CSE issues in the Philippines but are limited in being able to implement locally robust programs that capture and respond to the social dynamics of CSE. Although the international agenda such as the TIP report promotes victim-centred approaches, shifting trends and priorities diminishes the depth of responses. In reality, perpetrators adapt and their relationships with victims develop so there is a need for community-led development, localisation and locally driven approaches to have flexibility from the bottom up to compensate and adapt to cultural and social nuances. For local GNGOs, who also manage offline forms of CSE, the focus is on context because all forms of CSE are impacted by the environment, such as Filipino social and cultural behaviours, which have allowed CSE to thrive regardless of whether it is online or offline. Thus, international momentum behind OSEC hinders more robust responses that deal with causal elements of CSE as a whole.

The example of OSEC's prioritisation contained in this section does not intend to devalue the importance of OSEC and the importance of protecting Filipino children from OSEC. Moreover, it could be argued that OSEC is a recently detected form of CSE and thus does not have adequate responses yet to support the complex needs. There is a need to continue efforts towards OSEC, especially since law enforcement data states that the Philippines is 'one of the largest known sources' of OSEC operating across technology platforms and financial transfer services (US State department, 2020:409). However, this section highlights the growing tension between international priorities and local realities, indicating that a more critical and rigorous understanding of CSE in the Philippines is required that goes beyond assumed ideas presented in grey literature.

Child sexual exploitation – The criminal justice response

Another area where a disjuncture occurs between international priorities and local needs is evident is the emphasis on justice responses. The role and impact of justice has been prioritised by international responses, but it is not always appropriate nor the best response in the Philippines, as it overlooks what is in place, both in terms of laws but also socio-cultural factors. For liberal states, the criminal justice response is promoted as a model of accountability but in fact, responses only scratch the surface and avoid embedding transformative mechanisms to address systemic issues. Therefore, it suggests that a more balanced response to CSE is needed, which looks beyond the liberal frameworks so that responses for the non-liberal context can be more effective. According to Gallagher & Surtees (2012:28), the criminal justice response often utilised by donors and local actors has been created in a 'reactive way,' whereby states are often amending their responses 'through trial and error' and as a result of 'strong political pressure.' Moreover, there are assumed ideas that a strong criminal justice approach will deliver the best outcome for victims. However, this is not necessarily the case from a local perspective since there are more complex factors at play such as corruption and impunity related to the context. Despite progress in the criminal justice response, children are still at risk of being re-victimised and re-traumatised. Therefore, this section will demonstrate how the tension presents between international and local priorities in the imbalanced justice response drawing from interview data.

Two strands have emerged from the data in this study regarding the CSE prosecution response. Firstly, the response is positioned to strengthen legislation, engage in advocacy work to inform relevant local actors of the laws and provide training to ensure that these actors can utilise this knowledge in practice. However, often these are idealistic and do not replicate well on the ground. For example, strengthened legislation can only be effective if it is properly implemented by government and locally based agencies. Secondly, local mechanisms and systems are problematic and highlight that there are deeply systemic issues and gaps that hinder substantial progress.

The focus on changing and implementing legislation is the approach applied globally to enhance prosecutions, but interviews and observations indicate that legislation in the Philippines is already robust enough to prosecute facilitators and perpetrators of CSE. In

particular, human rights lawyers that were interviewed recognised that Philippine laws had been critical in protecting and obtaining justice for crimes against children. A prosecutor based in an INGO shared that Philippine laws carry weighty sentences for individuals convicted, demonstrating the seriousness that Filipino jurisdiction gives to all forms of CSE.

'We have good laws that have teeth, and we have seen that in the number of cases that went through plea bargaining or full trial result[s], in a sentence, it (the laws) has teeth.' (Interview with INGO prosecutor, February 2019.)

Another interviewed participant also articulated that legislation in the Philippines is strong stating:

'we have fantastic laws… we have really complete laws that could really address all the social dealings here, but the problem is funding.' (Interview with child maltreatment academic, January 2019.)

The legislation according to the data shows that practitioners find the legislation comprehensive but there are other issues that impede progress. For example, at a local level funding is problematic for local government units to implement responses on the ground. The last section in this chapter will discuss funding in more detail.

Philippine prosecutors shared how they creatively apply existing laws to cases, based on their experience and knowledge in order to effectively prosecute facilitators and perpetrators. A prosecutor explained:

'I think we have good laws in general. It really is just trying to fit or rather determine the most applicable laws that fit a specific set of facts.'
(Interview with INGO prosecutor, February 2019.)

Accordingly, the legal response to CSE, including emerging priorities, is quite advanced. While there may be gaps in present legislation, local prosecutors are aware of how to work

laws to effectively prosecute all forms of CSE. Moreover, this example evidences both strands, showing that better partnerships are needed to enable existing laws to be used effectively and for improvements to be made to legislation where needed.

Legal cases for CSE tend to require specialised prosecution expertise and significant resources to afford legal staff, so are often targeted responses conducted by INGOs as they have the resources to lead prosecution responses. Moreover, criminal justice responses at an international level produce better monitoring and evaluation of outcomes, and thus, strategic cases are pursued as they have a larger impact, whilst also gaining global recognition. On the other hand, GNGO responses tend to focus on advocacy, education, informing government policy and community work as well as providing shelter and therapeutic support. GNGO-C as a grassroots organisation directs their international resources towards selecting legal cases for lobbying purposes.

> *'We advocate for policies, we advocate for communities, we criticize the government for things that they should be doing. So, a lot of that, a lot of the work is policy, advocacy, we also lobby for laws to be passed, and one of those we actively lobbied [for] became [a] law, [which] was the juvenile justice and welfare act.' (Interview with Legal executive, INCA, October 2018.)*

For GNGO's like GNGO-C, resources are unable to fund all cases, but are able to provide resources to make a greater impact on the justice system as a whole. Furthermore, GNGO-C's advocacy within the community allows them to act as a crucial bridge between legislation and the local community, who have little to no knowledge of how to navigate the justice system.

Building local knowledge has been essential to the success of prosecuting CSE cases but there are also issues. The challenges include the overemphasis on a criminal justice response, which can be linked to the international agenda. Wilson and Brien (2016:29) articulate that the TIP report shows the 'ideal offenders against idealised victims' for the purposes of shifting attention away from the realities 'towards criminal justice policies.' This brings into question the emphasis on prosecution and law enforcement responses at a local level. Cheah (2006:47) states that the criminal justice model is characteristic of ASEAN states, which 'focuses on penalisation of the trafficking act' but 'fails to adequately address

the socio-economic causes and consequences.' The challenge with the criminal justice responses is that it will 'often target victims rather than perpetrators […] it tends to target the smaller links in the trafficking chain' (Marshall, 2006:152). From the data, local implementers acknowledge that prosecution is one aspect of the response but that more needs to be done.

> *'Prosecution and law enforcement is not enough, there has to be [a] more comprehensive perspective as to how to solve this. It's more than just arresting; it's more than just prosecuting these cases.' (Interview with a Legal executive at GNGO-C, November 2018.)*

International donors support the criminal justice model, based on their efforts to pursue policies and legislation, which assume that changes to legislation will have direct implications on children and will deter perpetrators on the basis of prosecution and punishment. However, in reality the prioritisation of criminal justice responses neglects to embed important processes that protect children day to day, indicating that there is a gap in the implementation of responses.

The criminal justice response does, however, provide an important step towards improving conditions where CSE occurs. Quayle (2020) states that for online forms of CSE, looking at it as a 'cybercrime forces us to think about the context in which these abuses and exploitations take place'. According to Quayle (2020), when OSEC is thought of as a cybercrime it shifts to the environment, to cyberspace, as a different platform or setting where a crime can occur, from the material to the digital world. Therefore, rather than fixating on perpetrators, facilitators or children with the hope of making improvements or influencing their 'behaviours,' the complexity of the digital environment where sexual abuses and exploitation occur needs to be treated with the gravitas required to develop effective digital responses (Quayle, 2020).

The evidence from frontline legal staff reported that advocacy, partnerships and educating members of the justice system had improved engagement with Philippine courts, prosecutors and law enforcement agencies. For example, GNGO-C held a forum for members of the justice system, bringing together lawyers, public prosecutors and judges from the family courts in local province. The forum created a dialogue among Filipino legal

practitioners offering an opportunity to share resources and practices, including challenges in navigating legal practices and processes for cases of CSE. The forum was an annual event, which had started the year before, prior to data gathering for this study. Most attendees had attended the previous year and expressed the value of attending sharing that networking, seminars and training for members of the justice system was imperative to building local networks and knowledge on utilising victim-centred processes. Despite this, the process of embedding legislation and enforcing training to support implementation remains deficient. A researcher and child maltreatment academic stated:

> *'We have prosecutors who are not trained to handle children so that's a problem... When we've done their research it seems like they've been trained once or twice, but these are not enough. It has to be constant training, constant dialogue in order to improve the system and once you go to the smaller local government units, that's no longer a priority for the family courts to be improved.' (Interview with researcher and child maltreatment academic, January 2019.)*

The data reveals that the criminal justice response has bolstered how GNGOs have collaborated with law enforcement and significantly improved the judicial response for legal cases. It also highlighted that while local responses are an important part of the response, they were often difficult to navigate and riddled with complications that made prosecuting an onerous process. An example of this is the effectiveness of the prosecution process, such as the duration of CSE cases that average five to seven years before prosecution:

> *'Just one case the child will wait for 5 years for the court's decision' (Interview with social worker, August 2018,).*

The long delay of cases has numerous implications on all parties involved but most significantly on children who risk further trauma. In Manila, there were reports of hurried court cases to remedy the long delays of standard CSE cases. However, this was only a privilege for cases filed in Manila because most of the resources were pooled in the country's capital. Another problem on the ground was how courts were unable to accommodate children's needs for a trial:

> *'there are not enough family courts and it's not functional actually as a family court. So even if it's [a] family court there are still judges who are very insensitive, who are not child friendly.' (Interview with prosecutor at GNGO-C, November 2018.)*

Likewise, it was reported that there are:

> *'very few judges here in the Philippines and few prosecutors, so cases drag on for years and years and years sometimes those bringing the cases just lose hope and withdraw the cases themselves or they just don't attend it anymore.' (Interview with researcher and child maltreatment academic, January 2019.)*

This evidence highlights that the focus on legislation is misplaced and that systemic judicial processing and procedures in the Philippines are not working effectively at present. However, the way it is implemented indicates that improvements to the process need to be made. For example, there needs to be strategic investment in addressing systemic gaps such as ensuring that there is investment in public prosecutors, judges and courtrooms to fill the resource gap.

Despite these challenges, the criminal justice response has made vital improvements to the legislative structures that protect children. For OSEC, justice responses have been more progressive, whereby collaborative work between prosecutors and NGOs has led to informed cases that have improved care for victims, for example, video in-depth interviewing and plea bargaining. Plea bargaining agreements with perpetrators have been upheld as a favourable option in the Philippines. This approach aids the victim by reducing the possibility of court disruptions and re-traumatisation from having to testify on numerous occasions. Similarly, video in-depth interviewing is adopted as a victim-centred approach, to prevent the re-traumatisation of children providing their testimony. There are inherent challenges that are encountered by legal professionals, who identify that using digital evidence has been widely problematic in:

> *'the justice system's acceptance and appreciation of digital evidence.' (Interview with prosecution staff at an INGO, March 2019.)*

However, NGOs have been advocates for digital evidence being increasingly used and facilitated by courts in an effort to address the heavy reliance that courts place on victim and eyewitness testimony.

Contextually, the evidence demonstrates there are challenges with the criminal justice approach for CSE in the Philippines. Taken together, these results suggest that challenges navigating the Philippine justice system and the complexity involved in the mechanisms that feed into the justice system continue to be problematic even with the existing responses in place. Moreover, the process is often overlooked and simplified, and the legislative focus emphasises policy and legislative changes instead of looking beyond policy changes alone to explore the contextual application. Legislation alone does not equate to effective management of CSE, as GNGO staff have highlighted gaps in implementation, which depends not only on legislative rigor, but also on cultural, economic, social and political factors. Poor implementation has emerged as a dominant theme from the data. GNGO-C staff discussed implementation being a major problem for CSE:

> *The problem here in the Philippines is that we have a lot of laws, but it's not implemented well. So, the senators do not see that, they think that the laws that they are making are not enough, so what they do is that they add [more laws]. They're adding things, when the first law that they're making has not been fully implemented yet. So that's the problem, they're more on the "let's add new laws, let's add new laws" but [lacking] the implementation, [which] is "hey, we're stuck here" we don't have homes for the children that [are] supposed to be sheltered.' (Interview with prosecution executive at GNGO-C, October 2019.)*

There is little detail beyond surface level explanations and monitoring in the TIP report (US State Department, 2020), which tracks how implementation has been difficult. Instead, responses based on interventions and projects lack holistic understanding of the causal elements and rather draw attention to measuring projects and bureaucratic tasks. Again, this has parallels with the critique of the liberal peace, which highlights that 'external interveners have had much more status quo aspirations, concerned with regulatory stability and regional and domestic security, rather than transformation' (Chandler, 2010:148). The promotion of improving laws and detailing more legislative terms to an evolving phenomenon such as

CSE, highlights a disconnect in the effectiveness of more nuanced responses beyond prosecution. Furthermore, the prioritisation of the justice response to CSE displays limitations in engaging with social and cultural responses. Instead, it is assumed that the pursuit of justice is a more credible response even when the US Government Accountability Office (USGAO) reported that 'there is little or no evidence to indicate the extent to which different types of efforts—such as prosecuting traffickers, abolishing prostitution, increasing viable economic opportunities or sheltering and reintegrating victims—impact the level of trafficking' (USGAO, 2006: 25).

Prioritising funding for child sexual exploitation

In the Philippines, the evidence gathered in this study showed the importance of INGOs and GNGOs where the state child protective system has been reliant on NGO services. As a result, donors' funding interests have had a significant influence on local priorities as well as partnerships, which will be discussed in chapter five. For example, international funding has largely been project led, where calls for proposed projects have sought to invest in specified projects by donors. The process has led local actors to compete against each other for resources, discouraging local partnerships and creating silos where donors are operating independently.

The tension has been shown between international priorities and local realities through the funding provided support to CSE responses in the Philippines. Hovil and Okello (2011:339) state that donors' priorities are influential because of the substantial funding and government support they receive. In the data, the GNGO's ability to fund local responses are based on access to international resources, which are dependent upon predetermined priorities, agendas and criteria such as OSEC and justice discussed above. Simply put, resources for GNGOs are available to those who are able to accommodate and meet donors' criteria and their ideas on how to frame international interventions. One respondent noted:

> *'It [is] really dependent on the project. The funding will only come if they have projects that funding agencies like. So, if they don't like the projects anymore, if they feel like they have to move on, the funding agencies, then there will be no projects for the NGOs anymore. So, it's not a self-*

In the interview, the respondent referred to the importance of GNGOs in responding to the needs and agenda of international funders. The interview highlighted the tension between local needs and international donors in numerous ways. Firstly, the nature of funding is limited as it demonstrates short-term planning of donors towards CSE responses rather than sustainable priorities and the embedding of long-term solutions. Donors are less equipped to develop robust outcomes that actually capture transformative change. Instead, the measuring and evaluation tools utilised act more as bureaucratic indications that prove implementation rather than effectiveness. An example is seen in the TIP report measuring the number of trainings delivered to inform partners. This can be problematic as it does not explore or report on the quality or scale of training, the level of knowledge uptake or the effect this has on improving prosecutions and protection of children (US Department of State, 2020:407). Secondly, the tension is highlighted in the power of projected priorities and agendas by funders. International agencies dictate the agendas of GNGOs based less on the local experiences of children but instead reflecting international interests of liberal states. Banks, Hulme and Edwards (2015:712) argue that both donors and governments pressurise and pull GNGOs from their 'grassroots orientation', destabilising the local strength and foundations within communities they are assumed to have. Finally, the tension is also evident in the competitive environment donor funding creates for GNGOs seeking to obtain funding by promoting liberal economic values of the free market. This means that GNGOs are often working in silos, at risk of limiting their resources and unable to foster sustainable and valuable long-term partnership in favour of maintaining a competitive edge ahead of other government organisations, INGOs and GNGOs. In critiques of the liberal peace, Duffield (2001:57) states that NGOs possess the 'ability to monopolise local access and control information,' which 'has given NGOs a strong role in policy formation.' A similar parallel is seen in the role of GNGOs for CSE responses, where despite the challenges encountered with competition and strains experienced with navigating government and donor relationships, GNGOs fill an important space in the response and have been able to establish their dominance. Moreover, the TIP report highlights the invaluable role of Philippine government agencies, INGOs and GNGOs towards fostering better responses.

Partnerships with government agencies tend to be reliant on the resources of donors. However, not only are INGOs and GNGOs reliant on international funding, but international donors are also dependent on both INGOs and GNGOs implementing efforts to bring contextual knowledge. Local actors are expected to bring local information to the table without being treated as an equal partner. As a result, NGOs will play the game and not dispute international criteria and expectations in order to get funding but this also creates a tension because CSE is framed according to international donors and so challenges persist in pushing against funding.

For CSE, the TIP report created to monitor global trafficking efforts has guided how responses to CSE have been formed, with CSE responses evaluated against the 4Ps framework for international visibility. Conversely, the US role in developing trafficking protocols and the TIP report for the international community has had significant influence on the shaping of the liberal interventionist project. The establishment of a universal approach to trafficking supported by other liberal states has not only enabled the US to undertake 'the role of policing other states' (Chuang, 2014: 613), but the economic power of the US has also enabled them to enforce a 'sanctions threat' for non-compliance. The US TIP report has set 'minimum standards,' which has helped to bolster their 'anti-trafficking law and policy responses worldwide' (Chuang, 2014: 613). Thus, local actors and NGOs need to tailor their efforts towards the US set criteria, project priorities and anti-trafficking agenda in order to access donor funding and grants for CSE responses. For GNGOs responding to CSE, international interventions and the resources they provide are considered a lifeline for delivering projects and programmes. However, GNGOs reported that international interventions and aid are powerful in dictating their programme expectations according to their own perceptions of intervention rather than local responses. For example, during data gathering in November 2018, funding was being withdrawn from a GNGO providing a shelter for CSE victims, since the international donor no longer perceived shelter programmes as a funding priority. The GNGO staff explained that most international donors were shifting resources toward OSEC interventions as an internationally driven priority in the Philippines. An interview explained the outcomes following the removal of funding after the GNGO was unable to secure further funding.

'When the shelter was closed down, the government agency took the children in, but I think some of them had to be flown [to another NGO]

because there's not enough space at the shelter here' (Interview with child maltreatment academic, January 2019).

At the GNGO-C there was less direct work with government organisations. Despite this, there were numerous consortiums and collaborative partnerships organised by the GNGO, which contributed towards pooling resources. GNGOs are able to drive the work of government agencies with donor funding, so the lack of recognition of their efforts is problematic in sustaining and embedding not only partnerships with other GNGOs but government agencies as well. GNGOs are at more risk of losing funding to sustain their interventions.

International priorities can influence local agencies and priorities using funding as an incentive and tool for governance. International intentions for local actors to receive funding are attached to hegemonic liberal ideas about what responses should look like. This aligns with the critiques of liberal peace, which suggests that liberal interventions are biased by promoting international liberal values ahead of the needs on the ground (Richmond, 2011:6). GNGOs follow international guidance on what the right approaches are perceived to be instead of exploring more in-depth the Filipino context and grassroots experiences. It suggests that CSE responses are limited, as how they apply liberal ideas to a non-liberal context are often limited and do not grasp more causal factors that impact on root causes (Chandler, 2010:144). For example, a consequence of prioritising the creation of laws has been poor implementation as a result of limited resources. Most of the interviewees reported that CSE responses lack adequate resources to enable more effective and sustainable implementation. For example:

'The local government units, they should be the ones to implement the laws, that's where the problem is. Especially if there are local government units, [they] are very poor local government units, because they will not have enough funding to go by with. Or, if it's a big city like Cebu for instance, it has a lot of funding, but the population is so huge - the social problems are magnified' (Interview with researcher and child maltreatment academic, February 2019.)

According to participants, funding has enabled legislation to be implemented to a point, but actually upholds the government's role in ownership and fails to follow through with implementation. Moreover, the differing roles of national and local government and the decentralised structure add another level of complexity to implementation. For example, even if it were to be a priority of the national government, it would come down to budgeting of the local governments to decide how funds would be allocated to implementation efforts. Ultimately, it demonstrates that responses only go so far and do not engage with systemic issues that would transform some of the implementation challenges faced. Moreover, the focus on the criminal justice responses assumes that implementation is a given, but this evidences a clear disconnect in how liberal states struggle to translate interventions to the local context.

How funding influences the forming of local priorities is often subtle and overlooked. For local implementation, financial resources provide many valuable contributions for communities including access to improved services, adequate available facilities and staff to manage forms of CSE. GNGO staff highlighted how vital funding has been to their efforts and without it, children would have minimal protection from sexual exploitation. For example, legal expertise for cases of CSE are expensive and problematic to access without NGO support. Most children in cases of CSE, do not recognise they are victims of sexual exploitation. Secondly, families do not have access to adequate funding to prosecute perpetrators or facilitators of CSE. Moreover, for OSEC, facilitators are often related to the child victim, so children have little or no financial support to obtain any aid for legal counsel without NGO interventions. Therefore, funding has been essential to sustain local responses but there are challenges experienced at a local level.

For NGOs their dependency on international funding has huge implications on their ability to deviate from the 4Ps structure. The penalising systems of the 4Ps model contained in the TIP report directly influences GNGO services in particular, who are dependent upon international funding bodies to provide responses. There is a risk that Filipino NGOs could be caught in a stagnant cycle of adhering to established funding guidelines based upon the 4Ps paradigm as an accepted and assumed model of effectiveness rather than exploring a more localised targeted model to address CSE. Expectations exist that progress utilising this framework is the most effective response. Often, power dynamics between grassroot NGOs, international NGOs and funders are overlooked and unexplored. As a contentious subject,

locally based NGOs are at risk of being discarded from the priority setting in order to receive funding for sustaining local efforts. This will be unpacked more in the discussion chapter.

Conclusion

The prioritisation of OSEC and the focus on a criminal justice response, demonstrate the tension between international and local priorities, which is reinforced by the influences of funding that underpin interventions. The chapter highlights the need for improved efforts to align donor support with local initiatives to confront 'the challenge of building public institutions capable of effective delivery' (Addison, Nino-Zarazua and Tarp, 2015:1361). The question raised is whether the existing responses with the tension captured in this chapter can be effective given the liberal interventionist influence. The chapter highlights that more needs to be done, an emphasis placed on the cultural nuances that are often overlooked, and a critical analysis of the evidence where responses are less effective need to be taken seriously. In order to change public institutions, the responses need to be more nuanced to infiltrate the social and systemic issues, which are culturally embedded. These are often accommodated at a local level, as funding is bound by international criteria and universal ideas based on liberal ideas of what responses should look like.

Instead of following emerging trends which have limited impact on children, 'self-reflexive' practices of donors need to critically evaluate trends and stakeholders to explore how to enable GNGOs to change the circumstances of identified at-risk children (Yalvac, 2015:2). In other words, if the same children continue to be vulnerable to CSE, it signifies that interventions continue to be symptomatic, narrow and lacking depth. Responses need to engage with the driving and enabling factors of CSE rather than the new modalities being used by perpetrators. This will allow for less reactive, more sustainable and effective responses. Instead, the management of the disjuncture between priorities of interveners and the realities of the children who are at risk has become prominent, no matter the form of sexual exploitation. It implies that emphasis has been on the form of CSE ahead of the contextual implications and daily lives and problems of local children. For GNGOs, the implications of not shifting with the trends are high risk as they endanger their chances of securing sufficient funding to sustain local programs, even when other activities that engage with the drivers may be more effective.

Chapter 6 – Projection of Process: Localising the response in the Philippines

International interventions in the development sector have seen a shift towards local engagement and developing localised responses. The focus on developing localised efforts has occurred as scholars, advocates and donors point out the disconnect and failure of international interventions in meeting local needs. This chapter analyses the tension between international priorities and the Philippine context by investigating the assumptions, which underpin prevention and partnership responses. Moreover, the chapter shows that responses to CSE have adopted the local turn as a vehicle to further international priorities rather than genuinely understand and focus on local needs. As a result, local improvements are overlooked because best practice is understood to come from international expertise, not local experience. Local actors are often modifying international approaches and improving responses to suit the local context with little recognition. Likewise, local actors are careful to make sure that responses and projects still adhere to benchmarks set by international donors. Over the previous two chapters, a similar tension, which has parallels with critiques of the liberal peace, has been identified between international and local. This chapter expands that investigation focusing on prevention responses, partnerships and local challenges, which reveal a projection of processes onto local organisations.

Understanding the local

An important progression has occurred in the liberal peace, known as the local turn. The local turn indicates a shift towards localisation, which recognises the need for international efforts to improve its engagement with the local. For instance, the United Nations Secretary-General states that international efforts should strive to be 'as local as possible' and 'as international as necessary' (United Nations, 2016:). The UN Secretary-General's view shows that the international community is aware of how valuable local actors are to bridging the social and cultural gaps for global interventions. Local agencies bring contextual knowledge and access to marginalised communities, which help interventions to reach the intended beneficiaries. Despite progress, there are still gaps in both global understandings of the value local actors bring to the implementation process and also practically.

While the local turn is part of the liberal peace agenda, scholars such as Öjendal and Ou (2015: 930) argue that the local turn can be perceived as an 'add-on item to liberal peace interventions, possibly saving them from shallowness and lack of sustainability.' This has been prompted by an acknowledgement that international interventions have tended to debilitate local organisations from leading and acting with autonomy. Instead, attention has been drawn to 'making local organisations a better fit for partnerships, rather than better or more effective humanitarian actors in their own right' (Overseas Development Institute, 2018:1).

Although the local turn has signified considerable progress in generating knowledge by developing localised efforts, there is still a long way to go. Day-to-day experiences of the local are overlooked 'because they are outside the core interest of the core liberal peace discourse, but also because they are harder to pinpoint in statistics, less tangible as data collection goes, and inherently messy for researchers and policymakers alike' (Öjendal and Ou, 2015:937). Consequently, local efforts go unnoticed as they exist beyond the gaze of the international donors' priorities, even if they are vital to improving local partnerships and responses. Local efforts supporting, forming and improving CSE responses that operate beyond the donors' lens risk being unaccounted for and simplified at a global level. An explanation for this is the considerable distance between international donors and victims in terms of culture, local knowledge, and geographical location since decision makers are not based in local contexts. There is also limited engagement between international decision makers and local implementers to understand cultural nuances, which has resulted in prevention efforts, partnerships and local challenges being diminished and underrepresented in the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report. Moreover, decision-makers funding programmes in the Philippines are reliant on guidance from international policy tools, treating the TIP report as a valid and more creditable assessment of the state of CSE. The international donor community accepts the US TIP report as an essential source for human trafficking data, where the TIP report is assumed to be assembled using a rigorous and thorough process. However, there are inconsistencies in how the US embassies compile the TIP report, specifically in how data is managed and framed by staff. US embassy staff posts only last for four years and their local experiences (and personalities) vary. Information for the report is compiled individually depending on who and how the data is collected, as the TIP report process is not necessarily embedded in the local experiences. Therefore, staff compiling the TIP report are detached from cultural practices, with fluctuating familiarity of local

behaviours and social order. As discussed in *Chapter one – child sexual exploitation in the Philippines*, academics have disputed the process of compiling information for TIP reports, highlighting that the process fails to be open about tier allocation (Gallagher, 2011; Wooditch, 2011; Wooditch et al., 2009, Horning et al, 2014). Tier ranking, which is used to hold states accountable to anti-trafficking responses, has been problematic and critiqued for its use as leverage to pursue US political interests. There has also been further criticism, which disputes the authenticity of the local turn. For example, Richmond (2012: 371) argues that 'local ownership as it is often seen by key actors is neither local nor ownership.' Instead, international actors allege they are attentive to the importance of local ownership but ultimately remain the gatekeepers to resources for responses, which are 'defined by participation in pre-existing programmes' (Richmond, 2012: 371). Thus, one could argue that the local context has been romanticised and simplified 'as discrete places that host relatively homogeneous communities or, alternatively, constitute sites of grassroots mobilisation and resistance' (Mohan and Stokke, 2000: 264). In reality, the local is far more complex and underplayed, which is evident in the findings presented in this chapter.

For the Philippines and CSE responses, the evidence indicates that a disconnect exists between international interventions and how local organisations operate and are understood. For example, international actors are unaware of the extent local organisations go to in order to deliver programmes, develop partnerships and navigate complex Philippine processes. This chapter will focus on two key and interconnected topics: prevention and partnerships, to show the ways in which the tension has manifested. The chapter will look use context-specific issues from local organisations to examine how the tension is shown as a result of the local turn. Moreover, the following sections will explore how internationally assumed models and processes for CSE responses have been restrictive for local organisations, emphasising a power dynamic between international actors and local implementers who must adapt responses to accommodate local needs. Furthermore, the US TIP report will be used to unpack the tension from the international perspective. The TIP report provides a widely accepted international framework for human trafficking, which is an essential tool for generating international visibility of local capacity building, interventions and knowledge about local organisations working on CSE.

Prevention and partnerships responses discussed in this chapter are based on Western processes; to conform with knowledge generated in the Global North and assumed to be best

practice based, which influence monitor and evaluation (M&E) practices used in policy tools like the TIP report. In its simplest form, M&E is used by international agencies to measure programme implementation on the ground by gathering evidence on 'operating costs and simple outputs' (Marshall and Suárez, 2014:1035). To receive funding, local actors in the Philippines are expected to comply with M&E practices to prove programme execution and performance. Hovil and Okello (2011:339) argue that over the years, donors have increasingly fixated on M&E, which 'supersedes many other funding benchmarks.' Hovil and Okello (2011:339) proceed to state that while M&E practices are valuable, they are often short sighted because interventions can take 'decades' to see results. Likewise, there are understated power dynamics between donors and local actors that query how ethical M&E practices are when it comes to 'building trust' (Hovil and Okello, 2011:339). Local organisations are expected to observe M&E processes informed and guided by decision makers of international donors who are detached from the local context. The lack of contextual knowledge poses risks to activities on the ground, as cultural and social practices relative to implementing responses can go unmonitored unless they are of interest to donors. As a result, local efforts can be misunderstood as Western donor interpretation of M&E activities may not accurately capture the context because it can be difficult to monitor and evaluate in more complex settings. The processes that underpin M&E for international donors are often restrictive for local organisations, as monitoring activities are designed to serve the evidencing needs of funders.

Prevention as a 'P' in the TIP report

Central to the human trafficking agenda, prevention has become important to the global response, where emphasis on prevention has sought to reduce the risks considered threatening to children being victimised by CSE. The global response has seen greater investment towards improving policies and education, observed as essential to address the causal factors of CSE. Likewise, the focus of investing in CSE's deterrence rather than managing its consequences is perceived as crucial to lessening the dangers posed to children (Wheaton et al, 2010:131). Prevention as one of the 4Ps in the TIP report, is recognised as an integral part of the international response (Wooditch, 2011:473). In the TIP report, the US Department of State describes prevention as the 'dissemination of accurate and targeted information' through partnerships in order to 'expand awareness, leverage expertise, and facilitate creative solutions' (US Department of State, 2020). The TIP report's explanation outlines a unified

approach to prevention through informing all stakeholders of risks to CSE including awareness raising spanning across legislation, law enforcement and social monitoring programmes (US Department of State, 2020). Despite prevention being a key part of the 4Ps paradigm, its response has been overshadowed by the focus on protection and prosecution responses. As Horning et al (2014: 262) explains, of the Ps, prevention has less influence over the rankings used to assess a state's anti-trafficking response. This imbalance is problematic as it disregards the importance of social and cultural responses, including the implications on the resources needed to improve the response to prevention. Despite this, the data showed a widely held perception that prevention efforts were crucial for CSE responses. One participant stated that:

> *'There's certainly more recognition now, and there's more work in terms of prevention, but in terms of resources (for prevention), [there] may be a little bit more - it's increasing, but yet [lacking] to the amount that's really significant.' (Interview with a child protection and medical practitioner, November 2018.)*

The practitioner's acknowledgment of increased 'work' and 'recognition now,' suggests that historically preventative responses occurred in the background. Most participants shared that steps towards bolstering resources have been observed indicating prevention has become more important but still many mentioned the need for more preventative efforts to curb demand because limited resources were a key concern. An INGO coordinator explained:

> *'We have to increase our awareness campaigns, we really have to double our efforts…as it is, the Philippines is now the major hub of sexual, of porn materials.' (Interview with INGO coordinator, March 2019.)*

The emphasis made in the extract on the significant level of awareness efforts needed reflects the worries raised on the ground and observed in GNGOs that CSE is a rampant problem. The coordinator's account also coincides with the views of the majority of frontline practitioners who recognise the value of prevention on the ground specifically to address a lack of education. Educating children, families and the community were seen as valuable because in cases of OSEC, family members were often facilitating sexual exploitation. Some participants, especially social workers explained that educating families will help deter misconceptions they have encountered on the ground. For example, in cases where family

members are facilitating OSEC, social workers recalled that children recorded undressing in front of a video camera was not viewed as harmful by facilitators because there was no touch involved. On the other hand, education was also perceived as beneficial for cases where family members were not facilitating CSE including online forms because it can help to protect children from other ways to be victimised such as peer-to-peer victimisation. A practitioner working in recovery and reintegration explained that in cases where family members are not perpetrators or facilitators, awareness and education can be valuable. The practitioner stated:

'If one victim is already reintegrated [back] into the family and the perpetrator is not their mother or father, they (the parents) are the ones who are referring to us [asking] for the services.' (Interview with a Philippine government agency officer, March 2019.)

The interview data highlights the value of education as a preventative response suggesting that awareness and knowledge building can protect children in cases where they are not victimised by parents. Prevention responses can also aid in developing protective factors as articulated in chapter five providing important tools to 'modify the effects of risk in a positive direction' (Luthar and Cicchetti, 2000:859). The government agency officer's account provides evidence in support of investing and developing the preventative response further, by focussing on protective factors like educating children and families. Wooditch (2011: 473) states the importance of prevention, explaining that of the 4Ps, prevention should be more prominent than the other Ps especially since the knowledge base on enabling and driving factors of CSE has developed.

Awareness and educational programs for prevention

Interventions focussed on prevention are orientated towards tackling 'so-called root causes of trafficking' such as inequality, providing access to education and delivering poverty-driven initiatives (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2019:449). However, these areas of intervention upheld by international bodies are often lacking or based on assumptions influenced by Western bias. For instance, interventions tend to centre on victims rather than the causal factors, which 'contribute to a person becoming a trafficker' (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2019:449). The attention on victims instead of traffickers demonstrates one way that prevention responses have been biased, placing the responsibility

on the supply-side[10] countries rather than traffickers who are often located in affluent nations. As a result, international actors have focussed on prevention interventions in the states like the Philippines instead of responses in demand-side countries.

Advocacy, training and education have largely been the accepted and assumed approach to prevention by international agencies for other contexts. Although widely recognised, the prevention model focussed on advocacy, training and education has received criticism disputing whether such approaches actually result in the elimination or reduction of CSE cases. Moreover, scholars such as Marshall (2011:6) argue that prevention efforts often struggle with 'insufficiently clear objectives; limited evaluation of outcomes and impacts; and the fact that many prevention activities have been isolated rather than part of a strategic package of interventions.' Therefore, drawing from the data, the following segment explores the implementation of advocacy, educational and awareness raising programmes whilst also showing the limitations to this approach. Furthermore, supported by the findings, the latter part of this section examines community responses to demonstrate how local efforts are underappreciated and lack acknowledgement, despite international agencies pushing for localisation.

Preventative efforts in the Philippines focus on delivering educational programmes and awareness raising activities to inform participants of the risks, legislation and processes to follow in order to report and manage CSE better. In the TIP report, the impact of prevention responses is monitored through the number of attendees or agencies participating in advocacy, awareness raising and educational activities. For instance, the TIP report includes a 'new children's online safety campaign' in the Philippines' prevention narrative where 'the Department of Education trained 600 teachers and school personnel in eleven regions to conduct cyber safety lessons' (US State Department, 2020:408). As an international policy tool, the TIP report articulates how international actors have accepted training, awareness raising and education as a prevention model. Whilst prevention efforts to educate and inform are required, the existing approach to prevention has encountered some criticism. There are two assumptions that have been acknowledged as limitations in the existing prevention response. Firstly, there is an assumption that attendees are actively willing and able to apply the knowledge learnt from education, training and awareness raising

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[10] The term 'supply-side countries' refers the commodification element of human trafficking, which treats children as 'supplies.' States considered to be supply-side countries can be non-Western and undeveloped where child exploitation is rampant.

to their lived experiences. In reality, applying any learning from educational seminars and training is dependent on the attendee's experience of the context where they reside including their socio-economic status and thus far more complex than portrayed in the TIP report. Secondly, the measurement approach of counting the number attendees present at awareness raising seminars and training to show the impact of interventions assumes that informing is effective. However, counting the number of attendees does not provide an indication of the levels of knowledge gained from participating in training, nor gauge the impact of implementation. For the Philippines, training and awareness raising interventions as a method to educate are assumed to reduce cases of CSE. Van Dyke (2017:3) explains the basis of this assumption well from her work into monitoring and evaluation practices, stating that:

> *Awareness-raising and training of professional staff assumes that by providing information about human trafficking, the public and front-line staff will be aware of what constitutes trafficking, acquire knowledge about indicators of human trafficking, and, where appropriate, know what they should do if they come across possible cases.*

Van Dyke's account highlights how existing prevention responses can be limited by the model itself, which assumes that the dissemination of relevant knowledge equates to better reporting and management. In her detailed analysis, Van Dyke (2017:9) concluded that the dearth of substantive evidence to support such prevention responses has been problematic to any further progress, calling for improvements to evaluative practices that comprehensively assess an attendee's learning. In the Philippines, the use of training, education and awareness raising seminars makes the same assumption that attending participants have the information and tools to make well-informed decisions. Although, in the findings, most participants recognised the importance of preventative efforts, interestingly, there were also differences in opinion. In one case, the participant criticised the training and awareness raising process stating:

> *'We don't actually know whether they (attendees) are trained or how responsive they are and how many [attending] trainees are actually made to make a difference in their knowledge and practices, as well because when we've done the research it seems like they've been trained once or twice but these are not enough, it has to be a constant training, constant dialogue in order to improve the system.' (Interview with a University based researcher, December 2018.)*

In the extract, the researcher's critical perspective shows a more suspicious view of the preventative model itself, questioning its ability to meet local needs, and also the reality of the process by disputing if training actually makes 'a difference in their knowledge and practices.' Another participant also challenged the prevention model and processes, querying how training and awareness raising seminars are conducted:

> *'One session is not enough, like it should be repeatedly done so that it will really get inside (understood) and then they will eventually understand… it should be done repeatedly, it's not because "Oh, we finished doing our awareness raising in that community and it's fine.' (Interview with GNGO operations director, October 2018.)*

The respondent raises an important point; that sessions can be effective, but they need to be repeated. Moreover, the delivery of sessions alone does not mean that participants will apply the information learned to their experiences. The data shows that the existing preventative approach presents as an administrative task or a check box exercise rather than measuring the reality of a participant's experience and knowledge application. This is problematic as it does not show that interventions have been effective in transforming social behaviours or that attendees are fully informed on how to implement preventative training and activities. Based on this, the main limitation is that current awareness raising, and training processes are cursory and therefore lack consideration of more complex economic and social factors of Filipino social order in communities and their behaviours. Moreover, since the training, education and awareness-raising model is based on objectives and outcomes guided by international funders there is a need for more robust acknowledgement of the context and other influences that may impair the application of knowledge learned in a training or workshop to real-life situations. In reality, the prevention model based on informing and training key actors is too simplistic and idealistic rather than helping attendees by adapting responses to meet contextual needs.

Community-based efforts

The global drive towards localisation by organisations like the United Nations has pushed international agencies to consider ways to increase local ownership through improving engagement with communities. However, the following section provides evidence to suggest that CSE responses fail to engage with community needs, demonstrating that even with the local turn international agencies funding local organisations are failing to respond to local needs.

Practitioners implementing prevention programmes in the Philippines saw community-based interventions as a more valuable approach as they engaged with context-specific needs. A GNGO operations director explained that:

> *'The main problem that I see is, first [there] is really the [need for] awareness and the education of both the children [and] the families…the communities also.' (Interview with GNGO Operations director, October 2018.)*

The participant's view highlights ongoing gaps in the Philippines' preventative response specifically the lack of engagement with children and families at risk. Participants conducting direct work with children and families, such as coordinators and social workers articulated a similar need to engage in education and awareness raising of families. These perspectives from the findings show a commonly held view by practitioners who acknowledged the significance of community-based awareness raising and education. Moreover, interview data evidenced the need to focus community level responses by working alongside the children, families and community affected to tailor prevention efforts to the form of CSE specific to their locations. One respondent recalled the need for community-led initiatives beyond the existing prevention response:

> *'We really need to have a community and family-based approach to this issue, because we cannot take in all the children and put them all in a shelter. Because the problem is now super big [in] magnitude. And there's so many children now being victims of online [sexual exploitation].' (Interview with INGO social worker, February 2019.)*

The INGO social worker's interview shows that existing efforts are not adopting a family and community outlook but only deal with the symptoms by putting children in shelters. Likewise, the account provides insight into the effectiveness of prevention at present suggesting that if responses continue as they are the situation in their opinion will worsen. The evidence also shows how OSEC is a major concern for the INGO social worker there's a clear need to further localise responses in the community. At a local level, engagement should look to address with immediate factors such as economic development and more robust mechanisms, which focus on environmental influences causal to CSE. In the findings, all the GNGOs led efforts addressing community engagement with children but there is a lack of focus on empowering children. A respondent explained that preventative responses should do more to engage children to develop protective factors:

'They'll (children) have more protective behaviours because [the] government and NGOs can only do so much to help quell the problem. But if you prepare the children to face this problem and then [this will] make them be protective of themselves. I think that's a giant step already in trying to solve that problem and it's a problem that's like a web of different problems; you have poverty, you have peer influence, personal problems, family problems, so you should be able to get into those issues as well.' (Interview with child maltreatment academic, January 2019.)

The child maltreatment academic articulates that community efforts, which encourage a child to be empowered is more beneficial. As it allows children to have autonomy and develop their own 'protective behaviours,' acting as a deterrence to any risks they may face. For older children, this approach may be effective as a prevention approach. From the evidence presented in chapter four, the analysed data demonstrated that older children are exercising their autonomy in engaging with CSE. Therefore, the child maltreatment academic is proposing a counter response to generate the child's awareness as a way of informed prevention. A key aspect to consider is that the proposed prevention response will empower Filipino children to confront the social factors, which pose risks such as 'peer influence,' 'personal problems' and 'family problems.'

The majority of practitioners participating in the study perceived community driven efforts as important to CSE. However, the lack of recognition by international policy tools and from interviews with GNGOs, the data suggests that community-based efforts are less of

a significance to international donors. For example, interventions with children, families and the community are hard to measure since they are involved with transforming perceptions and norms linked to CSE rather than the immediate risks to CSE. Prevention programmes that do not adopt a context specific approach risk diminishing the influences of cultural, economic and social inequalities since efforts addressing norms, social, behavioural and education around cultural practices can be hard to quantify. Likewise, measuring and developing methodologies to measure community practices require resources that local agencies do not have.

GNGOs acknowledge that prevention efforts formed on relationship building with families, local government units and barangays were vital. For example, one participant shared details about their community-based work focussed on social development initiatives explaining:

> *'We really do the family development work. That's the meat of our programme. That's the case management work that we really have and then we have the entire framework - we call it the "child and family healing, recovery and reintegration framework of interventions." So, we have interventions for the children, for the family and then [for] the community, they undergo three phases.' (Interview with GNGO director, September 2018.)*

The respondent explains that community efforts for their GNGO based in Cebu City focusses on 'family development work' looking at children, family and the community. This is insightful as family and community in chapter five were highlighted as risks to children in the Philippines rather than protective factors. In community-based efforts detailed from the interview, the GNGO shows that 'family development work' aims to address the gap of the family and community being protective factors at the local level. The data shows that despite the challenges that pose risks to children such as parents facilitating OSEC and ignorant communities not reporting indications of CSE. GNGOs working directly in the communities see the importance of in preventative interventions that empower and develop protective factors with children, families and the community, rather than adopting a reactive response.

Partnerships

Since its inception, the TIP report has gone through numerous developments to accommodate shifts in national policies and international priorities. Among its major adaptations has been the addition of partnerships in 2009 as the fourth 'P' by then Secretary of State Hilary Clinton. The introduction of partnerships to the 4Ps paradigm signified a growing recognition of the value multi-agency collaborative efforts and networks play in responding to human trafficking (Lagon, 2015:21). Partnerships as a fourth 'P' sought to promote a unified approach between local and international agencies to counter silos in trafficking data and resource allocation (Perrin, Reichel & Winterdyk, 2012:46). Furthermore, the inclusion of partnerships also indicates how the local turn has influenced the international policy agenda, which acknowledges the need for partnership development and engagement with local actors to improve international interventions in order to better meet local needs.

Despite the addition of partnerships as another 'P' in the 4Ps paradigm, partnerships have not been prioritised to the same extent as the other Ps in the framework. For example, unlike the other 4Ps in the TIP report, partnerships does not have a standalone section where the US State Department's specifically assesses a country's partnership response to human trafficking. Instead, the partnership narrative is woven into the prevention, protection and prosecution sections as a contributing factor to the other Ps. Another issue is the state narrative's focus on partnerships between the international to local rather than local to local partnerships, which indicates a bias through the imbalanced portrayal of partnership interventions that favour international and local above local to local partnerships. This aligns to the recognition that partnerships with locals ensure access to communities at risk but does not engage with all the potential benefits of partnerships. The TIP report demonstrates international to local partnerships in the Philippines profile, which promotes government agency responses and international law enforcement efforts with support from International Justice Mission as an international non-government partner. In addition, the US Department of State (2019:20) explains the value of international partnerships with local efforts highlighting that 'partnerships with victim service providers and advocates, navigate the complexities that often arise in the process, and ensure that victims are afforded access to protection and services.' There is recognition of the relationship between international donors and local partnerships evident from the TIP reports, but local to local partnerships and the impact they have on communities have largely gone unnoticed. Instead, donors are more

concerned with developing international and local partnerships because international actors are trusted with knowledge of development processes and expectations. As a result, the view of partnerships is limited and does not encapsulate the depth and impact of local-to-local partnerships that have significant influence on CSE responses in the Philippines. As a result, local partnership development has struggled to gain recognition from donors resulting in a dearth of financial support for local-to-local partnership development. Based on these insights, the following sections will explore local partnerships demonstrating that the understanding of local partnerships is not fully integrated into the TIP report or donor agendas.

For the Philippines, partnerships have been critical for developing community networks as well as resource and knowledge sharing between local organisations. One GNGO leader stated:

> '*Partnerships are absolutely crucial. The synergy between NGOs, local communities, religious groups, private sector, shipping companies and even port workers is making sure that cases of potential trafficking are reported. The referrals and tips come from all over the country and from every imaginable sector' (Interview with GNGO-A Director, January 2019).*

In the interview data, frontline practitioners stated the importance of collaborative working since CSE was a national issue being enabled across multiple sectors. For instance, in known sectors for CSE such as tourism and transportation, partnership development allowed GNGOs to train staff and workers in these businesses to look for indications of CSE. Local cross-sector partnerships were seen as valuable to help identify children at risk especially in hard to access locations through awareness raising and training. GNGOs practitioners conducting work in rural areas acknowledged their programmatic interventions were particularly vulnerable without partnership engagement with other GNGOs and INGOs. For example, a networking forum held by GNGO-A highlighted that small GNGOs saw that establishing partnerships with other local agencies as necessary to their survival. One GNGO providing housing to CSE victims had no psychological interventions, so sought to partner with another local agencies with specialised psychological services and advice. The evidence showed that for the Filipino GNGOs operating in far flung areas, the complex geography made access to resources difficult but that partnerships helped to manage the resource deficiency. For

instance, GNGOs often lacked trained staff and funding to fully support programme delivery to meet local needs. A respondent explained:

'In the Philippines sometimes, you really need also to collaborate because as an NGO you have very limited resources and expertise so there are others who specialize in legal and others specialize in psychosocial, others specialize in community prevention and awareness programme. So, it is really important to work with different stakeholders to really complement each other's efforts.' (Interview Director of GNGO-B, March 2019).

The difficulties with resources and expertise were widely reported by GNGO practitioners. In the findings, practitioners reported ongoing struggles to recruit qualified staff, since experienced staff who were able to manage complex of CSE cases were often based in cities like Manila after moving and subsequently settling there following higher education. Another reason specified by GNGO practitioners were the programmatic parameters set by funders, which were considered too restrictive. The data shows that processes and perceptions of impactful work are constructed on the donors' own modelled ideas of CSE responses rather than local community needs. Simply put, local programmes are designed from the top-down instead of adopting a bottom-up approach to accommodate the cultural, behavioural and social needs for a more nuanced response to the children, families and communities affected. The international perspective simplifies the local in policy tools like the TIP report by failing to recognise the subcultures and the impact that location has on processes and partnerships in the Philippines. To remedy limitations in the response, advocacy staff saw empowering local businesses as a way to protect areas where GNGOs were unable to deliver comprehensive programmatic interventions. One respondent recalled:

I think it's time for us to reverse the norms that international are more in authority to dictate what is the right work, what is the right approach. Rather than focus on the organic institutions or NGOs who are working on the ground (Interview Director of GNGO-B, March 2019).

The evidence from interviews indicates a tension where donors bring their own Western biases and international ideas to form responses in the Philippines instead of supporting local ownership. In the TIP report, the central focus on the partnership between international agencies and the Philippines is problematic because donors have a limited understanding of

the political structures that make partnerships complex and tend to overlook the power imbalance between international and local agencies. Brauchler and Naucke (2017:432) argue that 'the local turn so far meant a half-hearted opening up towards local culture through a selective glorification, adoption and decontextualisation of specific elements and traditions… Local inequalities, power struggles, mechanisms of exclusion and suppression don't fit into that picture.' For partnership development, donors are detached from local implementers' efforts and thus, lack valuable cultural insights into the experiences confronted by local actors such as navigating local processes and practices. For example, local practitioners articulated that Filipino processes especially law enforcement procedures to support CSE casework are heavily bureaucratic and often require official managerial approval for requests, which makes engagement with the system prone to delays. Based on these insights, the data indicates that local challenges experienced by local actors can often be take for granted, there has been a failure to acknowledge the complexity of the local context. Location specific issues struggle to be recognised by the international but yet donors are heavily dependent on local agencies to localise and deliver programmatic responses.

Despite the challenges, local to local partnerships show one way to develop CSE responses. A respondent working with numerous locally based agencies said that of all efforts responding to CSE there was a *'bright spark'* observed through a group of agencies being led by GNGO-C. The partnership between local-to-local agencies was established to bridge a gap in efforts. The same respondent stated:

> *'It seems like [the] government is not doing enough. But the good thing is we have NGOs there that push [the] government and show them that these [are] the issues that we should focus on' (Interview with child maltreatment researcher, January 2019).*

Local-to-local partnerships present an adaptable and nuanced approach because they are close to the community to directly discern local needs in order to 'push [the] government' to make changes. The interview data demonstrates that local partnerships have driven change by pressuring the government to adapt to specific local needs in the community.

The data also showed that both GNGOs and INGOs are leading the CSE response in the Philippines. Aldaba (2002:180) states that Philippine NGOs are seen as 'flexible,' which gives them an 'advantage in undertaking activities that promote coordination and even

collaboration among various stakeholders.' GNGO-C developed local partnerships through a local consortium, which included the Filipino justice system, child protection organisations and law enforcers. An example was observed at GNGO-C where partnerships with other local agencies was observed to emerge organically to best utilise the staff and funding of programmes delivered in nearby communities. The evidence showed how local GNGOs were drawn to working together because of the specialised areas of local knowledge they had gained through implementing CSE programmes. In particular, GNGO-C partnered with two GNGOs delivering different programmes beyond their scope of intervention. One of the GNGOs provided a shelter for rescued children and the other implemented community interventions to support local children and families. The collaboration of all three GNGOs strengthened the services provided to children by overlapping their responses to advocacy, protection and prosecution in that location.

Consequences on the victims' environment

This chapter highlights that international processes and models are restrictive limit local practitioners from developing and improving responses on the ground. Despite the local turn and the drive towards sustainable processes, the evidence suggests that in reality the international view is narrow and does not encompass the wider realities of victims. One failure is that socio-environmental factors are scarcely discussed and often brushed over by international interventions and policy tools such as the TIP report. For instance, aftercare is an underdeveloped area of focus where there needs to be more emphasis to support victims after CSE interventions. Donors are often caught in the rescue, protection and prosecution aspects of CSE responses with little focus on victims once they have received interventions. The other challenge is that even with aftercare interventions in place, there is less focus on supporting children returning to the same environments where there originally sexually exploited.

The international perspective and framework such as the 4Ps treats programmes as a conveyor belt or a step-by-step model without considering the cultural and social realities experienced by children when interventions are removed. For example, children will receive support and input from government and both INGOs and GNGO but then when they have been assessed to have recovered, they return to the same realities and experiences in the

community where they had originally been exploited. For the Philippines, the environment that children return to is far more complex than international agencies often acknowledge and is often romanticised since children have been through a recovery and reintegration process. Moreover, there is also a presumption that once children receive support, they will reintegrate effectively back to a regular life but are, in fact, returning back to the same environments, same situations where they were influenced by enabling and driving factors that led to their victimisation. In other words, international processes and procedures do not capture information beyond their set measuring space and parameters. Despite services being robust and providing many children an opportunity to flourish, post-intervention victims are potentially at risk as they are transitioning to a lifestyle that has limited resources or back into communities where they may be exploited again. An aftercare social worker explained:

It's hard, especially when they've been engaged with it (CSE) for a long period of time, like if it's been a year or two… [The social workers] sometimes talk about how we could determine if the child has already recovered or if we should return them to their family, or the same community. How can we be sure that [the victims] won't go back to the same activity? Considering the influence, you'll be sending her back to the same place you took her from. So that's another factor. It's really hard. You think that they're already okay here because they've already undergone several therapies, counselling sessions etc. And then such time will be integrated into their families, [and then] after a few months they [will] go back to their old (CSE) activities. (Interview with GNGO-B social worker, August 2018.)

The data shows that post restorative interventions and efforts to rehabilitate children are ineffective, the social worker articulates that children once 'recovered' are returning back to the same environments where they fall back into being sexually exploited. For GNGOs managing cases they see the issues directly from interacting with the children. However, at present, the aftercare process is standardised and follows set guidance on following up with children for six months after reintegrating back into the community. Following this time children are no longer officially monitored, but number of social workers who were interviewed shared that they continued to observe children after the six months because on many occasions, children returned to being sexually exploited again. The findings highlight that post interventions are an area that needs further growth. Reintegration is problematic as it results in children returning to the communities where they were exploited. Likewise, in cases of OSEC where family members are often facilitators of sexual exploitation, this can be

problematic as 'perpetrators and victims may live the rest of their lives together within the same community' (Brysk & Choi-Fitzpatrick, 2012:22). Interviewees reflected on the lack of support post intervention not from the interventions themselves but from the local systems who do not have the resources to sustain their protection in the community. One participant stated:

> *They (children) realize that they are really victims and they want to change that one. So that's why they're very eager to finish education, have a decent job, but you know sometimes parents, there is also a need to have an intervention with the families cause the mindset of, you know, requiring or obliging the kids to provide or help the family financially. That's a pressure actually on the victim… there are a lot of factors such as stigma, the possibility of revictimization once they are reintegrated to the community, cause they don't have the access to opportunities or employment in their community so there's a need to survive.' (Interview with GNGO-B Operation lead, August 2018.)*

As shared in the extract, unemployment and opportunities for children post CSE are limited and it is difficult to find employment for survivors. Environmental factors are largely unaccounted for and result in CSE being perpetuated, since international donors fund the response according to international priorities and set criteria seen as important. Reintegration poses as a contextual issue that requires local knowhow to understand the direct risks faced by children following rehabilitation. In the TIP report, there was little mention of reintegration practices apart from descriptions of the integrations themselves. 'DSWD (Department for Social Welfare Development) reported serving […] 361 victims of sex trafficking, including 157 child victims of online sexual exploitation […] DSWD provided psychosocial support and trauma-informed assistance to all survivors. (US Department of State, 2021, 456). Protection programmes to understand the underpinning challenges that are encountered need to explore the social cultural influences that risk children being sexually exploited at all stages of their intervention.

Conclusion

Over this chapter, the disjuncture shown in processes and approaches shows a tension between international and local actors. In this chapter, international priorities have emphasised the importance of localisation but highlighted clear limitations in meeting local needs from the existing prevention and partnership responses. The next chapter will discuss in-depth the role of power in relation to the data gathered for this study. The data signals that a power imbalance exists between international donors and local actors, which indicates that despite the local turn, local agencies still have minimal influence on the processes implemented in the Philippines. For Filipino agencies who are close to local needs, the lack of power to design and inform responses leaves little scope for CSE response to progress with local trends and necessities. Furthermore, donors play a crucial role in the progression of CSE responses. Parallel to the liberal peace, Duffield states that 'properly managed aid can be used to draw divided communities together, foster collective goals and strengthen those local interests that support peace' (Duffield, 2010: 57). For CSE, international donors have the power to improve efforts and develop responses that harness local implementers' insights. However, despite international agencies stating that they are working towards partnering with the local, their lack of partnership support for local-to-local agencies suggests otherwise.

The data shows that at a local level activities and responses continue to respond to the need but there is a disconnect in international agencies' processes and understanding of local actors. Therefore, an evaluation of present programmes needs to take place, critically assessing the existing model and processes. However, this will only be effective if there is a willingness to go in the direction of the local. At present, international interventions that guide local processes are too rigid and cursory, bound by set ideas of what prevention and partnerships should look like, whilst failing to adapt to local needs highlighted by local practitioners. Although the TIP report talks about partnership and cooperation, the data shows that processes in the Philippines continue to be influenced by international ideas especially with regard to international to local rather than local to local partnerships. The community and localised ownership show that local agencies close to the ground are leaning towards or already implementing efforts to bolster protective factors that look at providing interventions to target the family and communities, who are considered risks especially in cases of OSEC. The inability of international donors to fully acknowledge and engage with the value and

recognition of the local highlights that much progress still has to be made to improve the disjuncture between international agencies and local implementers.

Chapter 7 – Discussion

This thesis has presented evidence investigating child sexual exploitation (CSE) responses in the Philippines, utilising data gathered from agencies embedded and leading interventions in the local context. The study is the first comprehensive investigation of CSE responses in the Philippines, offering unique insights into realities experienced by frontline practitioners and organisations on the ground. Using the critiques of the liberal peace, the study drew on evidence that emerged from data in the Philippines to show how a tension between international actors and local organisations is apparent through CSE responses. Although the study does not directly capture accounts from the international perspective, the TIP report as principal policy tool for international actors is used. The direct voice of international actors falls beyond the scope of this study, since the focus is to examine the phenomenon from the ground up from the GNGOs, local practitioners and agencies. Further studies would benefit from also asking international donors, governments and institutions to participate. From analysing the findings, the research uncovered assumptions that have influenced how CSE has been addressed by local actors in the Philippines, whilst also demonstrating the interplay between international interventions and local agencies implementing efforts contributing to the tension. Finally, adopting critiques of the liberal peace as a theoretical approach, the thesis shows its applicability as a critical lens for other areas of development interventions contributing to its use as a model for development.

The analysis identified three ways the tension was evident in a projection of ideas, projection of priorities and a projection of processes. This chapter will build on these findings to discuss the relevance of analysing the tension and showing how critiques of the liberal peace can be used as a development model for interventions. The discussion will focus on agency and power, which are themes that underpin the tension and examine dominant themes across the last three data chapters.

Hierarchy of local actors

The results of this study show that a hierarchy exists amongst all organisations involved in CSE responses. To understand the dynamics of international organisations and local actors more comprehensively, the subsequent figure and section examines the interplay amongst international donors and Philippine actors.

The hierarchy in figure 1 presents an insight into CSE responses more robustly in the Philippines. However, it must be recognised that the hierarchy is not stagnant and moves to reflect the dynamics of international actors and local organisations. One example for some ways the relationships change is that local organisations have become accustomed to the donor requirements and as a result have been more engaged and renewed in their local processes. As a result, GNGOs have moved further away from donors, indications of this from the data is the development of local-to-local partnerships and networks. On the other hand, a consequence of closeness to international donors is the impact that terminology and development language have, which is used at an international level. An example is use of terms like 'local' and 'localisation' can be seen as problematic as they can be used to define power differences between international funders and Philippine-based actors. Khan (2021: n.p.) states that:

> *The northern myth that everyone is a beneficiary in the south must be challenged, as must the narrative of "localisation". No one in the south is a "local". We are natives of our own countries and aid professionals of the south must push back as being viewed as such by their northern counterparts.*

International donors overuse these terms and use development language to differentiate international actors from beneficiaries and local organisations displaying a clear divide between us and them. Terms such as 'advocacy', 'community participation' and references made to monitoring and evaluation practices were discussed in the data adding further to the tension demonstrating how international language has permeated local programmes. For example, the role of delivering training to local communities has resulted not only in its execution but also in conducting evaluations that use international models and terms. Likewise, international agencies are so distant from local organisations because of their bureaucracy, which requires local organisations to document internationally funded interventions and local efforts. In the hierarchy, donors and IGNO are closer together, developing a stronger relationship through their headquarters but also because INGOs use the right terminology in their efforts and often centre their responses around more tangible programmes like prosecution, which are easier to evidence to investors. As donors continue to build on these familiar relationships with INGOs, they lose touch with GNGOs and the local realities that GNGOs experience in navigating responses. As a result, any efforts made by donors to get closer to its beneficiaries struggle as they are unable to engage with GNGOs

because of their standards and benchmarks, which distance them from the ground. The challenge is developing fairness and balancing monitoring and evaluating practices. Moreover, improved CSE responses also come down to the ability for international actors to trust locally based GNGOs in exercising their autonomy to freely make decisions.

Figure 1 below outlines a hierarchy of actors to show the dynamics and relationships acting as an aid to explain the structure of international donors and locally operating organisations in the Philippines.
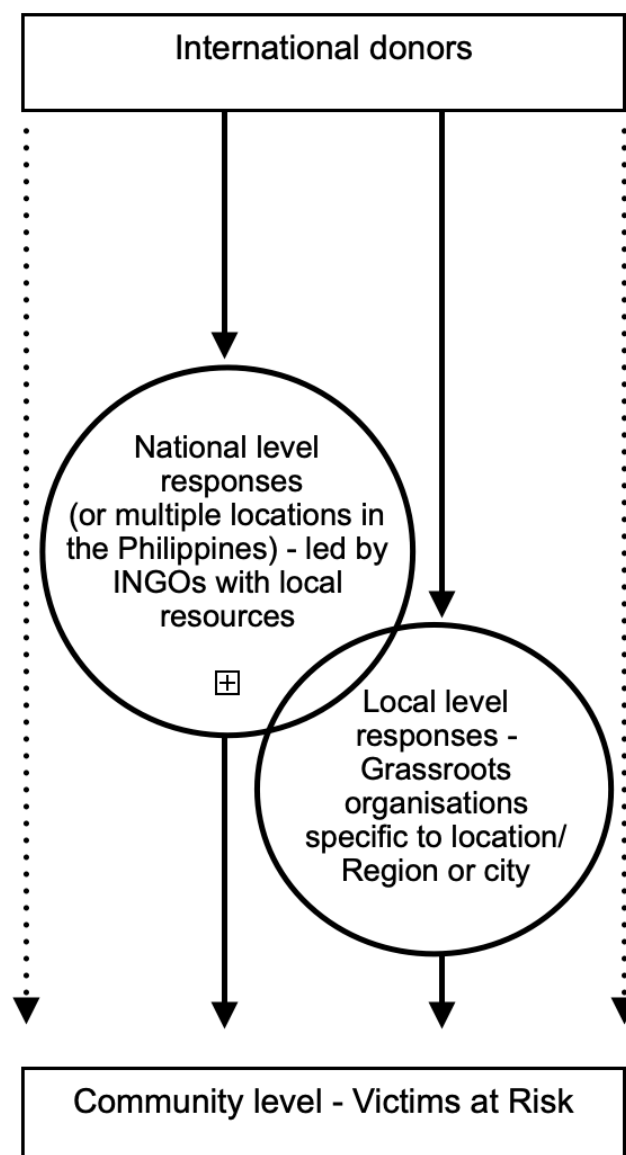

Figure 1: A visual representation showing the hierarchy of actors for CSE responses in the Philippines

In Figure 1, international donors are shown at the top of the hierarchy since they provide interventions from the global community through funding and resources to the Philippine based organisations leading national and local level CSE responses. As shown in the diagram, international donors are located the furthest distance from 'community level – victims at risk.' In the hierarchy, 'national level responses' led by INGOs are closer to international donors than 'community level – victims.' INGO headquarters are often based in Western nations rather than in the developing world, so are able to engage more closely with international donors. In comparison, the local level response is closer to the community level. Figure 1 also shows an overlap between the national and local level responses demonstrating the partnership cooperation between INGOs and GNGOs, where responses are collaborative, and resources are shared in implementing efforts. The Philippines government works alongside partners to deliver interventions but are often under resourced. Similar to INGOs and GNGOs, government agencies work at both a national level and local level. For CSE, government partners are willing to engage on such issues with partners because of the financial and knowledge resources that international donors bring into the nation. For instance, the US State Department's child protection compact agreement provided substantial funding and political partnership opportunities to engage internationally. This will be discussed in more detail in chapter five.

The importance of the hierarchy intends to highlight the distance from victims in the Philippine context, to visualise by showing that there is less understanding of the needs and situations of victims higher up the hierarchy. For instance, in the hierarchy, GNGOs (local level responses) out of all the actors are the closest to the community level beneficiaries. GNGO's closeness to the community level allows them to exercise autonomy because of their experience direct engagement and familiarity with the context. The hierarchy also details how autonomy can be exercises within each actor's span of control. There is an opportunity for GNGOs implementing CSE responses to harness their autonomy from within the parameters of international ideas, priorities and process set by international donors, since international donors do not have the comprehensive knowledge or expertise of local level responses.

The importance of the hierarchy can also put into perspective the tension in relation to the international actors. Ancker and Rechel (2015:524 -525) refer to a funding hierarchy that occurs between international actors and their investors, who are often governments and the

private sector. International actors need to account for the funding provided to CSE responses in the Philippines, to ensure that they can keep accessing resources. However, this requires that international actors provide a digestible and relatable representation of how their resources are being allocated and used. Ancker and Rechel (2015:524-525) argue in their findings on the 'interplay' between international actors and local organisations, donors are ultimately 'not interested in reality' but rather in a more palatable version of the local experience and context. As a result, funders of international actors are further removed from the local realities. Moreover, local realities become diluted the further up the reporting process responses to CSE go, suggesting that local experiences captured in policy tools such as the TIP report are partial and tempered versions of the local reality.

On the other hand, the use of critiques of the liberal peace has shown a presumed dominance of international interventions feeding into a tension with local organisations. However, critiques of the liberal peace does not analyse local autonomy and more specifically the reliance of the international actors on local organisations to deliver programmes. Locally based organisations are seen by international actors as vital to the implementation of CSE responses. Although international actors seen in figure 1 are far removed and lack familiarity to navigate the context, they also face other challenges to ensure that interventions 'deliver the desired results and may avoid reporting local problems with planning and implementation' to overcome any difficulties (Ancker and Rechel, 2015:525). The role of local organisations is crucial for international interventions, because international actors struggle to navigate local practices and engage with communities without local input. However, the predominant narrative and way it is framed within the development is that local organisations are dependent on donors, especially in the TIP report, where the tier ranking status ensures that the US State Department has the power to dictate over Philippine based organisations. For Philippine organisations, a dependency on internationally provided resources places their power to influence local programmes with international donors. As a result, Philippine organisations are restricted and unable to design interventions to meet local needs. However, this does not mean they have no agency. In reality, there is a mutual dependency between international actors and local organisations built on exchanging resources and local expertise for the purposes of implementation.

Key findings

From the data gathered in the Philippines, this research identified three ways in which the tension has been shown between international actors and local organisations. The results of this study reveal how the data themes demonstrate a projection of ideas, projection of priorities and projection of ideas as ways the tension has manifested.

The projection of ideas discussed in chapter four, demonstrates how international ideas of CSE's characteristics and understandings of childhood have been projected onto the local context. The evidence demonstrates how influential the context is on how forms of CSE manifest such as 'akyat barko' and where political focus on infrastructure overrides the livelihoods of communities. These experiences in the Philippines are often not reflected in international policy tools like the TIP report but yet result in CSE cases. Using international policy tools such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the TIP report, the chapter explains that both frameworks act as international standards and blueprints for child maltreatment and CSE. These global norms are adopted as the standard ideas for framing CSE interventions but often lack contextual specific knowledge of the realities experienced by victims and local organisations implementing responses. Chapter four presents issues related to social behaviours that counteract the community being protective factors in reporting concerns and safeguarding children. The evidence also shows how victimhood has evolved to acknowledge more male victims but with minimal services tailored to meet their needs. In chapter four, there is also focus on how the findings show children as economic agents based on local understandings of childhood representation. Incest is also presented as unexpected data that was found during data gathering as linked to CSE. Finally, the evidence presents the continued association made between CSE and 'poverty', which is linked to the Philippines' socio-economic status, rather than examining the complexity beyond poverty.

The projection of priorities shows how a tension is shown through a disjuncture of priorities between international actors and local organisations. In critiques of the liberal peace, the 'power-based' argument confronts the liberal bias of international interveners, institutions and liberal economies, explaining that liberal ideas are prioritised ahead of local needs (Richmond, 2011:6). Based on this understanding, the tension is identified through three examples: the international prioritisation of tackling online sexual exploitation of

children (OSEC), the focus on criminal justice responses to CSE and the role of funding in leveraging international priorities. Across these three cases, the evidence shows a disconnect between international priorities and local actors managing and implementing responses in the Philippines. Local actors explained that funding had been a significant tool in influencing local implementation, as local agencies struggled with a shortage of resources. They explained that local projects and agendas were reliant on international resources to support efforts.

Lastly, a projection of processes was another way the data showed the tension. The projection of process is where international agencies prescribe Western designed models and processes for local actors to implement with limited consideration of the context. The discussion addresses a shift that has occurred in the liberal peace framework towards recognising the importance of taking account of localisation and local ownership, known as the local turn. The local turn is part of the broader liberal interventionist project, which seeks to localise efforts and minimise where possible international influence (United Nations, 2016). Presenting as a more balanced approach by international agencies, the local turn appears to include local actors in taking the lead and collaborating on responses. Using examples from prevention and partnership responses to CSE, the data demonstrates how processes and procedures driven by international agencies still dominate local processes implemented by Filipino agencies. Moreover, the tension present in the disjuncture between the international agencies and local actors is shown in the international prevention model and the challenges faced by local actors implementing training in the Philippines. Whilst prevention and partnerships have sought to address social dynamics and behaviours at a local level, there are still limitations. Evidence at the local level shows that despite GNGOs efforts to localise education and engagement, the prevention model's focus on awareness raising and training is too cursory and does not engage with local social hierarchies and behaviours within Filipino communities. Likewise, partnerships largely ignore the context as demonstrated in the US TIP report, where the focus is on international partnerships with Philippine government agencies rather than local to local partnerships. As a result, GNGOs struggle to gain recognition for their value in navigating the context, which feeds into the tension.

Across the projection of ideas, projection of priorities and projection of ideas, the data articulates how the tension is visible on the ground through Philippine government agencies,

international non-government organisations (INGOs) and GNGOs implementing responses influenced by projected liberal values. Despite the local turn engaging with more local collaboration, the legacy of funding relationships with donors is complex, continuing to preserve responses that are not reflective of local needs. This will be discussed in more detail but also requires further research to understand how the complexity of donors manifests. The findings indicate that international organisations have parameters or criteria founded on liberal values that guide what responses look like that for local organisations. Since decision makers who direct funding and priorities for international actors are far removed from the Philippine context, they lack insight into the context specific hardships and complexity faced by those implementing programmes. As a result, without significant shifts towards increasing local power and ownership, the tension between international actors and local organisations will continue. The findings suggest that neglected local needs will persist as existing CSE responses in the Philippines are struggling to adapt to the challenges and issues of an evolving and worsening phenomenon. Therefore, there is an argument for improving the hybrid model by improving how CSE responses are contextualised.

The data shows how CSE has manifested in the Philippines, in particular, gender has become important to how OSEC has evolved, there are also legacies of prostitution and social norms surrounding normalised sexual exploitation of adults, which makes children more susceptible to CSE specifically commercial forms. Furthermore, the findings show there is a critical gap in responses that work with Filipino families to address CSE. For instance, there is recognition that some parents are facilitators of OSEC, while other cases highlight that there are significant root causes within the family system such as family dysfunction that dimmish the family as a protective factor.

Power and agency

The themes of agency and power emerged as key elements within the tension, which will be a central area of focus in this section. Understanding power is vital because it demonstrates the constructed roles of authority, influence and informal hierarchies between the international and local in this instance. To understand power better, Adler-Nissen and Pouliot (2014:909) explain that 'power should be studied not just as the possession of material capabilities or as discursive dominance, but also from the perspective of everyday social relations, including the ways in which various resources are put to task.' In other words, the dynamics of power

in relation to CSE responses cannot only be understood from the power dynamics generated through policy making, funding and resources offered to local organisations from the international lens, but by engaging with the local perspective and implementation of responses.

Critiques of the liberal peace argue that the local perspective has largely been neglected resulting in a dearth of evidence exploring the role of power and agency. Instead, the importance of power and agency issues are discussed in relation to the dominance of the international actors over local efforts. Thus, it is presumed that local autonomy is absent as a result of international power in the role of the liberal interventionist project, which is based on embedded institutional systems of power upheld by global organisations like the United Nations. Moreover, in critiques of the liberal peace there is an emphasis on challenging the role of liberal policy makers and institutions utilising their knowledge and resources to embed liberal ideas on how to achieve peace, rather than engaging with how local organisations view peace to be attainable. This is evident in relation to CSE in the way that the TIP report has dominated the international anti-trafficking agenda through a self-appointed role governing what is deemed appropriate for responses to CSE as well as other forms of human trafficking

The literature on the local turn in claims that international development has moved towards localisation. Since existing international interventions are perceived to be 'too centralised, with a small number of agencies receiving the bulk of the funding, and international responders too often taking over and turning local and national actors into their 'auxiliary force' (Van Brabant, 2016. Para 2). Localisation has sought to change this by enabling local organisations close to the issue to have ownership of creating and employing the response (Van Brabant, 2016. Para 12). While theoretically this may be the case, in chapter six the evidence shows how local organisations delivering trainings as a prevention and awareness responses are considered as superficial by only providing one off trainings. The one-off approach to training is challenged by practitioners highlighting the need to deliver reoccurring training to embed and ensure sustained practices. Despite GNGOs staff acknowledging the need for such interventions that have the potential for sustained change, local GNGOs have little influence over shaping awareness programs, training and how prevention processes are designed. Groves and Hinton (2004:10) argue that 'despite the

current rhetoric of ownership, participation and partnership, the present system is based on entrenched patterns of dominance, hierarchy and control.' The findings show how longstanding dynamics of 'dominance, hierarchy and control' continue to influence how local organisations operate and function. However, local GNGOs are continually negotiating their relationship with donors adapting to develop hybrid responses visible through the community-based evidence. For instance, the data is from a GNGO based in Cebu City, which focusses on 'family development work' to provide a holistic model supporting families with job opportunities to improve their economic status by empowering the parents through employment to help encourage children back into school. Hybrid approaches like the community-based interventions allow local agencies to maintain a level of power and agency since local GNGOs and agencies have in-depth contextual knowledge that donors lack.

The examples of hybridity show improvement, but significant progress is still necessary because local organisations have become accustom to following processes when engaging with international actors, learning the ways of executing internationally resourced programmes on the ground. Even with movements towards local ownership, there are still questions about how much ownership local actors will really have since international practices have become so embedded. For instance, Van Brabant (2016. Para 13) states that local organisations require increased ownership of local efforts as well as 'better quality funding,' but also need to claim more influence in the international policies that impact the local context. For local organisations, more recognition is required to promote the importance of their role in influencing international policies and the TIP report, for the purposes of developing knowledge on better contextual responses, collaboration and funding. For instance, the analysis shows just how crucial GNGOs participating in this research are to the CSE responses in the Philippines. Local organisations are not only filling the gaps of local government responses but shifting towards innovative partnership practices as well as bridging the gap between international actors and the local beneficiaries that they serve.

For local organisations, the simplification by international actors on the difficulties experienced in navigating the local context, the prescribed international ideas, priorities and processes on how to conduct CSE responses tied to bureaucratic M&E processes, and the scarcity of recognition and resources for local-to-local partnership development evidence a lack of local ownership. The role of power also has implications on autonomy and how it is constructed locally. In critiques of the liberal peace, international actors are perceived to

dictate the characteristics, actions and operations to local providers. However, Mac Ginty & Richmond (2013:764) argue that agency exists 'at all levels.' In responses to CSE, international and local actors including international institutions, donors, benefactors, Philippine government agencies, GNGOs and INGOs through their engagement with delivering CSE responses all represent different levels of autonomy. The power of international actors in directing resources based on their knowledge of CSE has meant that local organisations are perceived to lack agency. For Philippine GNGOs in particular, their agency is assumed to be dominated not only by international actors but also INGOs implementing efforts on the ground. INGOs uphold a globally accepted authority to inform policy since they have headquarters in Western nations. This allows INGOs to have more influence on ideas, priorities and processes than GNGOs, INGOs also have greater access to funding and the local resources and set up to implement large scale operations, which is attractive to donors looking to make a big impact. The prioritisation of OSEC, discussed in chapter five, demonstrates how the international agenda has driven CSE responses to focus on online forms ahead of offline forms of CSE. For INGOs, they have fully adopted the prioritisation of OSEC as it ensures they have continued access to resources funding their local operations. Comparatively, GNGOs have little autonomy to influence international prioritisation but are also engaging closely with other needs not restricted to OSEC such as offline forms of CSE and incest cases. There is an assumption that local organisations specifically GNGOs lack agency when in fact this is not true. On the ground, local providers are continuing to address the needs of the local communities not only filling the gap between the universal processes, priorities and processes that lack specificity, to engage with local communities and the local context. At present, the data shows that Filipino actors are tailoring international interventions to meet local needs where possible, whilst also managing the expectations and criteria established by international donors. The evidence in chapter six demonstrates how GNGOs in particular have been able to navigate the challenges of the Filipino context and respond to local needs. For instance, GNGOs at a community level have been pivotal to the local response by effectively leading the development of organic local to local partnerships. The analysis showed how local practitioners recognised a need for preventative interventions for children, families and communities. Acknowledging how crucial programmes dealing with the causal factors by specifically improving protective factors in the first instance as a way to deter children being sexually exploited. In this regard, GNGOs were leading vital efforts by leading ground breaking community-based efforts through establishing family and community focussed interventions a part of the CSE response

in the Philippines.

International reporting on CSE efforts tend to summarise and simplify the local context, overlooking the details in the implemented response. This diminishes the voice of local implementers in international reporting and literature. For example, the US TIP report is orientated towards the programmatic challenges and issues in relation to the 4Ps framework when discussing the state of CSE. As a result, as demonstrated in the analysis, there is little focus on the day-to-day experiences of local organisations and how they navigate the local processes. For example, international actors can also optimistically presume that conducting community awareness programmes will result in CSE improving in the Philippines. However, international processes and models can discount the social systems, localised norms and legacies of sexual exploitation passed through generations that influence individuals and community behaviours on the ground. In other words, details at the local level are lost at the international level reporting, muting the local practices of community engagement specifically at the community level despite being crucial to embedding local change. Similarly, the experience of navigating heavily bureaucratic local systems and processes is disregarded but problematic for local actors who have to rely on knowing the right person to speak to and having inside information to ensure that progress is made.

Applying the critiques of the liberal peace has been crucial to acknowledge presumed ideas about local autonomy and engagement. For example, local organisations in critiques of the liberal peace are presumed to lack agency specifically to influence responses because of the dominance of international interventions. However, data from this research shows that local actors are not completely powerless. Ancker and Rechel (2015: 523) refer to adapting to the 'rules of the game' as a strategy used by both INGOs and GNGOs to access donor funding. Elbers and Arts (2011:729) build on this, stating that locally based organisations 'use a range of strategies to manage donor constraints, highlighting that they are not powerless in their relations with funders.' For the Philippines, evidence of this is highlighted in the local turn, where Philippine GNGOs are navigating the social, political and cultural behaviours that influence progress in cases of CSE. The findings highlighted how through prevention, partnership and navigating the contextual terrain, GNGOs have adapted international models, criteria and TIP report responses to fit the needs of recipients. In other words, in the same way that INGOs and GNGO support fills the gaps in government responses, they are also creating hybrid responses to address the gap between international

interventions and the context. The local turn argues that GNGOs are agents of change and positioned effectively to exercise their autonomy at the local level. Evidence of this is shown through GNGO-A's networking forum in the previous chapter. The example revealed that GNGO-A was leading vital partnership development activities through a forum, which for one small GNGO attending allowed them to survive. The networking forum provided essential access to knowledge and resource sharing opportunities that helped to sustain programmes in rural areas.

In this study, the data demonstrates numerous barriers, measures and hoops to jump through for local implementers to exercise agency, suggesting that there is a lack of local autonomy as well as trust in local organisations. For example, as shared in chapter five, the 2017 bilateral agreement between the US Department of State and the Philippines government to 'strengthen' OSEC responses specified that in order to obtain US resources the Philippine government were also required to make a financial commitment as a form of validation of the Philippines' commitment to human trafficking efforts. In the agreement, a $3.5 million commitment by the US Department of State was provided on the condition that the Philippine government also puts $800,000 towards local OSEC efforts (US Embassy in the Philippines, 2018). Investing in the bilateral agreement suggests that the US is instigating the Philippine government to invest in this issue by ensuring that domestic financial support is provided. For local implementers, this process situates the power with donors who have resources and therefore have the power to establish what is acceptable and unacceptable. An example where donor power is visible is through funding distribution, where CSE responses especially conducted by INGOs tend to put their resources in the major cities of the Philippines. As a result, rural areas are not considered seriously because of the complexity and practicality of managing CSE cases, rural areas have low levels of trained staff and communities are geographically spread out. For example, court cases are often held in the major cities, but witnesses come from all over the country normally travelling days and often coming from rural poor communities to provide their statements in court. One explanation for the lack of resources outside of Filipino cities is that international organisations actively avoid risky locations, like the Southern islands of the Philippines. In areas such as Mindanao, responses are significantly lacking despite reported cases of CSE. However, insurgent groups are known to be based in the Sulu Archipelago and Mindanao, where 'three main armed insurgent groups are currently active, plus there are multiple violent extremist groups and factions' (Herbert, 2019:2). As a result, INGOs have favoured safer locations away from

known conflict zones, as they can be dangerous to non-local staff and organisations. Consequently, there has been limited exploration of how CSE is responded to and understood by international agencies across rural areas as a whole.

The US Trafficking In Persons (TIP) report

Throughout this thesis, the TIP report, in its role as an international policy tool, has been used to examine the tension more comprehensively and to understand how the international response has been constructed. The TIP report 'offers a snapshot not only of how the problem of trafficking is represented, but also of how this representation is employed to justify broader policy agendas' (Wilson and Brien, 2016:43). Central to the TIP report is the call for governments and civil societies to mobilise and safeguard trafficked, vulnerable and at-risk populations. Moreover, the report outlines criteria created by the US government, based on their domestic Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) created in 2000. The US Department of State has situated the TIP report as a universal model designed to unify global anti-trafficking efforts. As no existing framework has been established for the global response to human trafficking, the international community has adopted the TIP report as a universal standard. As a result, the US has become a knowledge leader and an authoritative figure in the field. One way this has been achieved is through the data gathering activities for the TIP report, which other nations are expected to comply with as an approach to enforce the moral responsibility that states have to protect their people from trafficking and exploitation. Furthermore, the TIP report acts as a database for anti-trafficking efforts, whereby the self-defined 4Ps are upheld as an international best practice for states to strive towards. The progressive implementation of a global TIP report, the control of this knowledge and the funding and resources alongside the TIP report, specifically in the Child Protection Compact agreement among other projects in the Philippines has given the US dominance and power. For instance, in chapter two, the existing literature on the TIP report suggests that tier ranking system in the TIP report has been used as leverage for benefiting the US's political agenda especially with non-compliant countries at risk of having US funding retracted if they fail to engage with the TIP reporting and monitoring mechanism.

Built on liberal values, the TIP report acts as a governance mechanism to oversee and regulate how states should respond to CSE according to the 4Ps. In turn, the 4Ps paradigm

acts as a benchmark for CSE in the Philippines assessing in-country responses that monitor global progress. However, as illustrated in the analysis of the prevention responses, which signal that the existing model of delivering training, awareness raising, and educational programmes may not be best suited to the context. For instance, the universal model of prevention efforts discussed earlier, based on instilling knowledge through training and awareness raising is too simplistic and superficial. This is because prevention efforts often disregard the autonomy of the people they are training because the content taught tends to be theoretical, which is difficult to translate to the experiences or reality in the Philippines. This indicates that using Western influenced frameworks such as the 4Ps paradigm need to consider how they capture local cultures or systemic difficulties that a state may face such as corruption or heavy local bureaucratic practices, which were issues presented in the findings.

The prominence of the TIP report has been significant for this research, during data analysis it became apparent that responses to CSE in the Philippines could be categorised into the 4Ps paradigm. For example, programmes delivered by GNGO-C such as legal seminars and advocacy workshops among others could be characterised as prevention, partnership and prosecution interventions. These efforts included leading multi-disciplinary conventions to share best practices across local government units on Philippine legislation in order to prosecute perpetrators and provide training on how to navigate the local reporting processes. On the other hand, GNGO-B was focussed on prevention, prosecution and partnership interventions, which included multi-agency meetings about the case management of victims staying at the shelter, facilitating meetings with the INGOs leading the prosecution of perpetrators and educating children in schools about the risks of CSE. Furthermore, there are influences of the framework throughout the data in international funding, the role of INGOs in leading local interventions and the reporting of local efforts to the United States Embassy on the local CSE responses. The framework permeates all aspects of the CSE response in the Philippines and carries significant gravitas as a point of reference to assess activities conducted by the Philippine government and locally operating organisations. The international community has relied on the TIP report as an information source detailing the state of human trafficking including CSE globally. However, the predetermined 4Ps model as a blueprint for informing international interventions is limited in how it is applied. As noted earlier, applying a top down approach rather than bottom up is restrictive but not completely ineffective as there are still good activities happening from the response. The model is limited in its ability to capture distinctive local activities because the focus across each of the 4Ps is

broadly centred on monitoring and evaluation based on pre-decided determinants and indicators that are limited in its consideration of characteristics exclusive to the context. For example, prevention interventions are limited in their ability to transform responses as they only seek to inform rather than embed knowledge. As analysed in chapter six, preventative interventions aim to educate through advocacy and training, but assume that informing equates to learning. Such approaches fail to remedy intersecting factors like 'dysfunctional families' and 'poverty' highlighted in chapter four, which pose serious risks to children and families. Touzenis (2010:99) states that 'poor people are vulnerable to trafficking by virtue of exerting little social power and having few income options […] it can be concluded that those targeted as victims of trafficking are not the poorest of the poor, but rather people with at least some resources.' Therefore, without embedding prevention in the communities and taking account of participants' social status and ability to exercise autonomy within the community to prevent CSE, prevention efforts become redundant.

Demand-side responses: a neglected issue in child sexual exploitation

Whilst this thesis has examined evidence from the Philippine context to show a tension between international actors and local organisations, the following section builds on the previous section arguing that the 4Ps do not adequately address demand. For CSE responses, the term demand refers to the supply and demand concept often linked with human trafficking whereby 'as long as there is a demand (consumers willing to pay to have sex with children and traffickers motivated by money), then supplies (children) will be recruited' (Miller-Perrin & Wurtele, 2017: 129). The term demand is also contained in the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons of 2000. It states that 'States Parties shall adopt or strengthen legislative or other measures, such as educational, social or cultural measures, including through bilateral and multilateral cooperation, to discourage the demand that fosters all forms of exploitation of persons, especially women and children, that leads to trafficking' (UN General Assembly, 2000). The importance of addressing demand as stated, highlights the state's role in leading the response to prevent demand and protect its citizens from exploitation. However, there has been less emphasis on international demand responses contained in the TIP report. In particular, the TIP report situates the responsibility of demand on the Philippine national government to confront demand domestically through preventative efforts, while failing to comprehensively discuss the issue of demand beyond emphasising the need for host governments to lead deterrence responses. For example, the TIP report

(2021:52) states the role of partnering governments is 'to reduce the demand for commercial sex acts and international sex tourism.' In recent years, the growth of OSEC has shifted demand away from the location of victims and moved it directly into rich countries, where perpetrators originate from. Whilst offline forms of CSE keep perpetrators travelling to the Philippines to engage in exploitative activities with a child. Historically, perpetrators from affluent nations would travel to the Philippines to sexually exploit children but technology has allowed for greater CSEM production and access, which may result in enticing a perpetrator to travel to the Philippines at a later stage. Frontline Filipino practitioners raise concerns articulating that more action is required to ameliorate the issue from the international demand perspective.

Research and policy efforts to understand demand have largely been neglected, in favour of targeting responses to countries where victims are located. Hughes (2005:7), when addressing demand, argues that there is a need 'to define and characterize each component so that policies and laws can be created to address it.' Although domestic prevention efforts are necessary, demand for CSEM has been sourced to affluent countries where 'demand for victims' starts (Hughes, 2005:7). International demand from liberal states like the UK, US, and Australia pose complex challenges to supply-side countries, who often struggle to access adequate resources to protect children. However, in relation to OSEC demand is primarily based outside of the country, outside of the power of the government to respond. There is very limited engagement with international demand side responses, with the default position to address the supply side. As Fouladvand (2017:13) details, 'supply-side issues have taken precedence once again and demand-side interventions which require increased attention to root causes including economic, social and cultural factors that enable the exploitation of trafficked persons, have been ignored.' Likewise, in the country narrative for the Philippines, there is no significant effort or response detailed in the TIP report to minimise demand. Instead, the narrative challenges the Philippine government's failure to 'reduce the demand for commercial sex acts' and highlights the number of 'foreign registered sex offenders' travelling to the Philippines (US State Department, 2020: 408). Hughes (2005:7) states that in order to address demand 'defin[ing] and characteris[ing] each component so that policies and laws can be created to address it' are crucial, meaning that more focus on critically examining demand and causal factors is required. For OSEC, the TIP report places responsibility on the Philippine government to initiate preventive mechanisms to deter demand. Instead, demand

needs to be prioritised by more affluent nations or demand-side countries where CSEM are sought after. Although domestic prevention efforts are necessary, demand for CSEM has been sourced to affluent countries where 'demand for victims' starts (Hughes, 2005:7). There has been less emphasis on international demand responses contained in the TIP report and more focus on the Philippine government to respond.

The CPC is welcomed by Philippine officials and agencies as a positive investment for child protection efforts. However, it reveals strategic biases in the TIP report that have become a blindspot. For instance, as noted, the CPC bilateral agreement, originally signed in 2017, details the commitment of $3.5 million by the US State Department and $800,000 from the Philippine government to 'strengthen' OSEC responses, by adopting a 'victim-centred approach to prosecuting traffickers and ensuring specialised services for child victims' (US Department of State, 2018). International funding, while not explicitly tied, comes with specific conditions to which grantees must adhere, acting as a powerful tool for donors to support OSEC efforts in the Philippines aligned to international priorities, but leaving the Philippines with limited agency to determine the most appropriate course of action. The power dynamic that this establishes has the effect of overriding local priorities, directing attention to the supply-side instead of demand, resulting in a reactive response.

Reactive versus strategic responses

The findings from this study indicate that from the Philippine perspective, responses to CSE are reactive instead of strategic. This section discusses the implications of reactive responses to CSE in the Philippines, highlighting the need to shift towards more strategic responses. Across data chapters four, five and six, responses centred on prosecution and protection efforts can be considered reactive as opposed to strategic responses. For example, chapters five and six highlight protection and prosecution, including the focus on rescue, rehabilitation and reintegration (3Rs) and the criminal justice model. Both the 3Rs and criminal justice model deal with the immediate short-term needs and circumstances of children who are already victims of CSE. Instead, the focus needs to shift beyond the child and perpetrator, to the broader context and address ways to establish protective factors as discussed in chapter four. Protective factors allow for a more sustainable prevention response that looks at root causes within the family and community. If Filipino families were supported to build

protective factors they would be empowered to take responsibility for their children into their own hands. However, family interventions are a significant gap in efforts responding to CSE, not only is it assumed that such services will be effective, there is also an assumption that these kinds of interventions will stop children and families from wanting to engage for the financial benefits of CSE.

Strategic responses are vital for improving CSE because they engage with the driving and enabling factors rather than the symptoms. In the 4Ps, prevention and partnership are more strategic responses but lack emphasis on the importance and value they bring to CSE responses. The challenge of prevention and partnerships is that they lack tangible statistics for reporting and evidencing the numbers of victims rescued or perpetrators convicted. Moreover, donors are unable to see the impact of their investment in prevention and partnerships as behavioural changes take time to become embedded. Thus, interest in reactive efforts have been more attractive. Molland (2018:12) argues that the anti-trafficking sector has focussed on 'shelters and repatriation and reintegration programmes, law enforcement, the arrest of traffickers and the rescue of victims.' These types of responses are fixated on 'individualising trafficking,' which centres 'on ways to 'combat' traffickers (that is, individuals)' rather than addressing structural issues (Molland, 2018:12). In the Philippines the evidence shows that CSE responses follow a similar model, which also does not address strategic issues relevant to the context but instead focus on measuring interventions by the numbers of rescued, victims reintegrated, and traffickers arrested and prosecuted. In addition, the cultural nuances as part of responses delivered on the ground, which are perceived or ignored as informal practices have meant that international interventions lack understanding of how GNGOs navigate local implementation. To reiterate Gallagher & Surtees (2012:28) argument, the international interventions' focus on the criminal justice response is 'reactive,' and there is an 'urgency of ensuring that robust systems for evaluating interventions are in place and functioning.' As a result, international donors are often unequipped to measure, capture and translate these informalities to investors. Likewise, they are unaware of how local organisations are navigating the complexity of the Philippines' various government, judicial and social systems to protect children. On the other hand, the model and focus on measuring via the criminal justice model is familiar and easily translatable to a foreign context.

For international donors, the emphasis on implementing interventions lacks strategic planning for long term outcomes and sustainability even with the focus on local ownership

through partnership development and collaborative efforts. Responses to CSE have been reactive because of a lack of focus on delivering long term goals, which are needed to change behaviours and norms that put children at risk of CSE. International actors are more concerned with a model that 'equate[s] income growth with impact growth' (Feuchtwang, 2014) by generating more funding international actors can developing and grow their programmes. As stated in chapter five, CSE responses are often projects lasting a few years. For example, the Child Protection Compact (CPC) Agreement between the Philippine Government and the US State Department was signed in 2017 till 2021. The CPC bilateral agreement to enforce local efforts towards online forms of CSE raises questions about whether a four-year agreement can successfully embed transformative and sustainable change. The issue is as Addison et al (2015:3) states, 'project aid tends to have low local ownership with capacity-building often dying out when donors cease funding, having achieved (or not) their short-term goals.' The project approach limits any potential strategic efforts from being implemented because the goal is to provide an impact rather than change and transform the local setting. An explanation for the reactive nature of responses is the emphasis on meeting bureaucratic requirements to show impact, according to the funder's timescales and criteria. Instead, the focus should be on asking the local and Philippine agencies how best they can be supported to respond to CSE. Whilst this would ideally help, the international development and aid sector that funds interventions in the Philippines are not geared towards local ownership. According to Khan (2021: n.p.), the aid sector is:

embedded in colonial structures and power inequalities, that looks down on countries based on their wealth, history and global positioning. By default, those who control these power structures – donors, international NGOs, charities, private foundations.

Khan's statement suggests that the international development systems that fund CSE responses, are rigged to preserve inequal structures through its functions to provide interventions to countries like the Philippines. In reality strategic responses are long term and take into consideration less bureaucratic tick box exercises but are more focussed on embedding changes to social behaviour at a local level. It means handing over the power to local agencies to manage their own efforts and trusting that their interventions are working effectively.

Non-government organisations as response leaders

The following discussion explains that local organisations have been at the forefront of initiating Filipino responses to support government agencies. Both INGOs and GNGOs have played a substantial supporting role to under-resourced local government agencies such as the Department for Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and Philippine National Police (PNP). Furthermore, the value of local organisations leading CSE responses has been significant both internationally and domestically since. For the Philippines, local GNGOs have filled gaps by delivering services and efforts that local government units are under resourced to manage. For example, they have provided legal support, psychosocial interventions and invested in upskilling local frontline workers such as social workers. The role of GNGOs and INGOs for the Philippines is essential. The Philippine constitution recognises the value of NGO detailing: 'the state shall encourage non-governmental, community-based, or sectoral organizations that promote the welfare of the nation.'[11] During the research, a key observation disclosed the dependency of government agencies on GNGO and INGO interventions to support and fulfil deficiencies in the responses to CSE. In essence, INGOs were vital for developing progressive responses acting as a catalyst for other local agencies to be more ambitious in local programmes to combat CSE.

The challenge has been that NGO dependency on international resources has acted as a vehicle for international influence. The evidence indicates that although GNGOs are able to access funding, resources continue to be a longstanding problem for all local organisations based in the Philippines. The data in chapter six also refers to the reliance of Philippine government agencies on both international and GNGOs to support and strengthen CSE responses. For international donors, NGOs as leaders in CSE responses play a vital role, as international actors have prioritised supporting civil society, which has strengthened the role of both INGOs and GNGOs in the Philippines. In line with liberal values, 'the international prescription is generally to encourage democratisation and the empowerment of civil society, often with the help of international non-governmental organisations' (Mayall, 2005:56). NGOs bridge an important gap to government efforts, where there is a lack of consistent prioritisation of CSE. Moreover, NGOs' closeness to local communities emphasises the

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[11] Const. (1987), art. ii, § 23 (Phil.).

importance of their role in shaping localised responses. Local needs are improved through NGO networks, who are able to engage child victims of sexual exploitation and navigate cultural complexities encountered in the experiences of children and families affected. However, there are also challenges as NGOs have limited freedom to engage with communities more holistically and often only have sufficient resources to execute projects with a limited timeframe and scope determined by international donor expectations.

Both INGOs and GNGOs have been important to the Philippine response, as 'political incentives' and 'political economy factors' often influence national government agendas having a knock-on effect on the success of international interventions (Addison et al 2015:1361). Addison et al (2015:1361) go on to argue that 'when states are fragile and conflict-prone, and public institutions are ill-equipped to deliver social services, donors have turned to NGOs and community-based organisations as alternatives.' For the Philippines, the lack of political stability and questions raised about human rights violations from the international community have inadvertently influenced resources and aid.

Therefore, NGOs are perceived as removed from politically driven agendas, thus more valid proponents of transformation and leading local efforts. In particular, INGOs are perceived as 'institutions not legitimised by state representation but by their independence from nation-states,' (Chandler, 2005:210) possessing bureaucratic structures and global resources, which lend themselves to monitoring and evaluation (M&E) practices of international funders. Likewise, INGOs headquartered in liberal states also face similar pressures relying on donor funding, which directs their local agendas but for some INGOs who have independent donations from the private sector and individuals there is some freedom to explore areas beyond set funding criteria.

Despite the government responses by the Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking (IACAT) and the Department for Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), apparent issues arise with resources showing limitations in improving responses. The lack of sustainable funding tied to international funders hinders locally owned initiatives. There is a dearth of stable resources, which has had a detrimental effect on establishing long-term solutions. This hinders local investment in pushing for localised preventative solutions.

Acknowledgement of the study's limitations

Dichotomy of International and local is blurred

In this thesis, critiques of the liberal peace have provided an important theoretical lens to critically examine CSE responses in the Philippines as a development model. In turn, considerable emphasis was placed on the dichotomy between the local and international. In reality, these lines are much more blurred. Throughout chapters four to six, the focus on the international and local sought to explicitly demonstrate the tension present in the projection of ideas, priorities and processes onto the local context. However, the tension whilst present and significant is complex, less of a dichotomy and more of a spectrum. As discussed in the analysis from chapter five, CSE responses have often been reactive and thus lacking engagement with the drivers and enablers of CSE. Therefore, the GNGOs have been given little scope to exercise ownership and test whether there is an openness to sustainable practices. Furthermore, chapter six has sought to show balance to critiques of the liberal peace by highlighting that hybrid forms have bridged the gap in local responses to meet the nuances of the local context. In turn, theoretically speaking, localisation has softened the dichotomy by showing efforts from the international to collaborate more with the local. However, what is overlooked is the dynamics of power elaborated on in this chapter, which reinforces the dominance of the international. Thus, gaps still exist, suggesting that there is a false sense of local power because international donors are still able to control and ring fence funding as well as project their priorities, ideas and processes onto the Philippines according to their own set agendas and criteria. Ancker and Rechel (2015: 521) state that 'each donor agency has its own list of programmatic, procedural and funding requirements to ensure that their funding is spent in what they perceive as the most efficient and productive way, with maximum output and impact.' For example, the CPC agreement states that funding is for developing a 'victim-centred approach to prosecuting traffickers and ensuring specialised services for child victims' to 'strengthen' online sexual exploitation (OSEC) responses (US State Department, 2018). Therefore, the international still maintains power to influence what localisation looks like, how localised efforts should be, and which local actors have access to funding. As a result, GNGOs are often acting in silos and are detached from developing more effective CSE responses collaboratively.

Western donor dominance

The literature of the liberal peace is predominantly based on Western interventions and comes from Western scholars. Therefore, for the Philippines and other developing states, the critiques, along with the literature for the liberal agenda, reflect Western thought. In turn, the vast majority of the liberal peace literature refers to the West as providing foreign aid or intervening. Furthermore, liberal peace literature lacks consideration of other global donors who may have influence on the Philippines, for example, China, United Arab Emirates, Korea and Japan, who have different donor interests. For the Philippines as an ASEAN country, the issue of foreign aid is more complicated as funders from Asian states are increasingly becoming players within the field. For example, Japan is a member of the development assistance committee (DAC) for the OECD recognised as the only Asian state member among Western states joining the OECD discussion on development issues (Söderberg, 2010:107). Moreover, Söderberg (2010) discusses an emerging Asian model, which could see international funding from Japan invested more into development highlighting that non-Western states may have different funding behaviours. This is not new as Japan has provided development funds to the Philippines to invest in infrastructure but there may be scope for future donor activities across other areas of social development. Therefore, there needs to be acknowledgement in the growing interest of Middle Eastern and Asian donors, which may not be of significance to CSE at this stage but may become a factor in the future.

Using critiques of the liberal peace for CSE responses

At present, no critical assessments of development exist so applying critiques of the liberal peace to CSE responses also provided an opportunity to test its use as a theoretical approach for potential application to other development issues. As mentioned previously, there is no contextual reason for using critiques of the liberal peace. However, the critiques offer an established theoretical framework where a similar disparity is shared between international interventions and local actors. Using critiques of the liberal peace has enabled an in-depth exploration of CSE responses and an examination of how fundamental actors and their dynamics have impacted on local implementation and efforts. As a theoretical approach, critiques of the liberal peace offered a comprehensive framework to examine assumptions, challenges and the tension between international and local from the Philippine perspective.

The critiques of the liberal peace also provided a critical lens to understand how 'local configurations of power, knowledge, resources and institutions' have been influenced by international interventions (Richmond and Franks, 2007: 44). As highlighted in the key findings, this research was able to evidence from the local perspective how 'local configurations' demonstrated in responses to CSE have revealed a tension between local and international. For CSE responses, the critiques of the liberal peace have offered a critical lens to understand the role of power and agency in the Philippines, which will be discussed further below.

Although the critiques have enabled CSE responses to be critically examined, its application has also shed light on its limitations. In the critiques of the liberal peace, the focus is heavily centred on identifying malicious intent by international actors, which is not the case for the Philippines. While there may be harmful consequences as a result of international interventions, they are unintended. For example, a central assumption made by proponents in critiques of the liberal peace is the failure by international interventions to deliver sustainable peace solutions that reflect local needs. However, the data suggests that although a tension is evident in the response, international interventions have not failed in the Philippines. Instead, international resources have enabled a more comprehensive response where there was little to no response before. The absence of Philippine resources to invest in advocacy programs, rehabilitation and legal efforts has required international involvement. Therefore, while a tension does exist in responses to CSE between the international and local, the impact and influence on the local has been overtly positive. For example, findings presented in chapter five argue that responses to CSE heavily emphasise the importance of prosecution in tackling CSE. Although prosecution as a response risks overshadowing other responses to CSE, its influence has initiated a shift to improve Philippine legislation and legal procedures such the Cybercrime Prevention Act of 2012 (Republic Act 10175) and the Anti-Child Pornography Act of 2009 (Republic Act 9775). These laws have been introduced to address the growing online nature of CSE seeking to ensure that legislation protects children from exploitation in the digital realm. The focus on prosecution has drawn attention to the risks around re-traumatisation and the need to reduce the potential harms to children when presenting evidence in court through video in-depth interviewing as well as plea bargaining to minimise the trauma from long legal cases. As a result, international actors perceive interventions as good because they have influenced significant change to protect, by obtaining justice for the

harms caused to children. In addition, all efforts seen to help, deter or protect children are considered as right and morally good because of the appalling and insidious nature of CSE.

Romanticising the local

A central limitation in critiques of the liberal peace is that international interventions or actors are considered negatively and seen as damaging to local organisations and efforts. However, from the evidence, there have also been valuable interventions and leadership from international actors in CSE responses for the Philippines. For instance, the prioritisation of OSEC is important to the CSE response since existing literature and practitioners acknowledge the momentous problem that online sexual exploitation is to children and the substantial risk to younger children. International actors prioritising OSEC as part of their funding agenda is needed and good for CSE responses in the Philippines since it requires a comprehensive response not just domestically but globally. Prioritising OSEC brings local efforts and interventions to the forefront enabling local organisations to access wider discussions about online harms and risks to children. International actors offer resources, expertise and tools to engage with global stakeholders beyond the local CSE response.

On the other hand, the local is perceived to be better and always right when it comes to local responses. Mac Ginty (2008:140) and Pugh (2013:14) argue that in critiques of the liberal peace, local practices, traditions and efforts have been romanticised. As a result, local organisations and efforts are promoted as blameless and encouraged. In reality, there are also harmful practices at the local level, which are disregarded and ignored in critiques of the liberal peace. Therefore, the critiques of the liberal peace need to be balanced and reflective of practice and evidence on the ground and from within the local context, not just theoretically.

Conclusion

The evidence in this thesis demonstrates numerous ways that the tension between international and local has manifested from the local lens, suggesting that local actors are predisposed to the dominance and power of international interventions. Moreover, the research has also identified that because of the presumptions and emphasis on the power of international interventions, the lack of agency exercised by GNGOs has been unexplored and assumed to be non-existent. However, the discussion provides two important contributions on this subject. Firstly, counter to the presumptions of GNGOs' lack of agency from their relationship with international interventions and donors, GNGOs are exercising agency in managing the context and the implementation of responses. Furthermore, GNGOs have created important hybrid responses through local-to-local partnership development to manage CSE responses but lack recognition for how their agency is vital to navigating the complexity of the Philippine context. Secondly, based on the evidence of the tension between international interventions and Philippine implementers, the argument raised by Mac Ginty (2008:140) highlights that the local is romanticised and thus the expertise of GNGOs is not fully explore but rather is idealised. Lewis & Opoku-Mensah (2006: 671) state that there is value in asking 'What roles do NGOs play within these systems, what are they capable of, and how are they constrained?' While the critiques of the liberal peace have been vital for critically assessing CSE responses and the tension as a development issue. For CSE responses, more knowledge about local efforts needs to be developed beyond the liberal framework.

Concluding remarks

The purpose of the present research was to examine CSE responses in the Philippines, where international donors have provided substantial investment to support interventions on the ground. CSE responses presented as an underdeveloped topic with a considerable dearth of critical research as most literature was produced by INGOs and Western scholars. Therefore, the study aimed to gather data from the experiences of local practitioners and GNGOs implementing programmes in the Philippines. One key issue highlighted in critiques of the liberal peace is the failure of international interventions to address local needs, resulting in a tension between international interventions and local actors. A similar tension between international actors and local organisations emerged from the data in the Philippines. Therefore, adopting critiques of the liberal peace as a theoretical lens was valuable since it shares parallels with CSE as a development issue. The study also set out to test critiques of the liberal peace as a critical lens for future development research by analysing data in the Philippines to show how the tension between international actors and local organisations is present.

The research has shown three main research findings and contributions to development and CSE in the Philippines. Firstly, the study has developed a robust insight into CSE responses in the Philippines with data gathered on the ground over a relatively long period of time. The findings on CSE responses expose the dynamics between numerous local stakeholders, difficulties encountered from practitioners implementing efforts and specific characteristics of CSE that were scarce prior to the research. Secondly, the study identified a number of examples expanding on how the tension between international actors and local organisations had manifested through the main data themes and categories. For instance, prevention, child protection, prosecution and the criminal justice response among others. The evidence showed the tension predominately through the projection of ideas, projection of priorities and projection of process, indicating different layers to how the tension for CSE responses manifested. Starting with revealing how international ideas were projected on a conceptual level, then projected through priorities at a strategic and planning level, and finally, a projection of process on a granular implementation level. Lastly, one of the more significant contributions from this study is the findings show how critiques of the liberal peace can be used as a critical lens for development.

The study sought to interrogate the response to CSE in the Philippines exploring the challenges from the local perspective. The current data highlights the importance of conducting research in the context, to gather rich and in-depth data about the local context. This thesis has provided deeper insight into on the ground responses in the Philippines. Whilst CSE responses have been vital to protect children they still lack cultural nuance to accommodate local needs. The data evidenced in many ways how the tension between international actors and local organisations had manifested, aiding in understanding assumptions that underpin CSE responses. For example, the evidence showing the imbalanced approach towards prosecution and criminal justice responses, despite scholars arguing that the approach does not deal with causal issues. To reiterate Gallagher & Surtees (2012:28) argument, the international interventions' focus on the criminal justice response is 'reactive.' In the data, practitioners reiterated the need to engage with family structures to support, strengthen and develop resources, interventions that rescue, rehabilitate and reintegrate children are dealt with in isolation of the realities where they exist. The challenge is that international actors have little recognition of the efforts, culturally related informalities and lengths that local organisations go to when navigating the context. Therefore, this research brings vital insights into challenges and difficulties faced by practitioners and local organisations. The information in this research can be used to develop more localised and targeted CSE interventions in the Philippines.

In the thesis, analysis of the data showed how a tension was present in the relationship between international and local actors. The data has established why and how the tension had emerged then presented the analysis in a projection of ideas, priorities and process. Projection of ideas, examining how international ideas of children and characteristics of CSE are limited when applied to the Philippine context. Projection of priorities detailing that international programmatic priorities have influenced local implementation. Finally, projection of process which highlights how international programme processes often not comprehensive enough to understand the Philippine context. This tension illustrates the influence of international interventions on shaping the implementation of local programmes. Despite the international dominance on local programmes, the research concludes that GNGOs are able to exercise their agency and power in the Philippine context because of their local expertise from being embedded in communities. Furthermore, the analysis highlights how local organisations, in particular GNGOs encounter numerous challenges to implementation including funding,

resources, strategic issues with interventions related to the priorities and the difficulties with internationally driven programmatic processes. Existing literature lacks recognition of the hardships and challenges faced by local organisations and practitioners in navigating the systemic issues and bureaucracy of Philippine institutions. The reality is that navigating CSE responses is an unknown activity and since most literature is produced by Western scholars or INGOs, who fund interventions or communicate a abridged version of the Philippine context. The findings of this research support the ideas that more critical literature is required to understand practitioners and local difficulties in more depth without Western bias because of the international optics or financial benefits. These results add to the field of development and future use of critiques of the liberal peace as a theoretical framework for development.

This research also sought to test critiques of the liberal peace with CSE in the Philippines as a development issue for further application to other development areas. This project is the first comprehensive investigation of CSE and using critiques of the liberal peace. The evidence of applying the critiques gives valuable insights to the influences and dynamics between international and local actors. The use of the TIP report alongside the local perspective also helped to gather critical insights into how other development areas can be represented by both international and local actors. Either through practical representation like the GNGOs or at a policy level from internationally accepted policy tools such as the TIP report. The application of the critiques of the liberal peace in the Philippines has highlighted the need to focus on understanding the context further and using this to inform donor interests. At present, the tension evidences a greater issue at the very foundation of international development and aid, suggesting that the foundations that underpin international interventions are based on Western power and superiority. As Kwiatkowski (2005:308) states, 'the power of the local to substantially impact the global is much weaker than that of the global to influence the local.' This has been shown through this thesis specifically through the tension that idealised Western framed assumptions and idealistic blueprints do not effectively capture the Philippine context. Therefore, further research is needed to establish whether the tension between international interventions and local actors is only applicable to CSE in the Philippine context, or if the tension is present across other contexts and development areas. This would build on the scope of the study to show how other contexts manage the tension and to see comparatively if they face similar challenges. Furthermore, building on applying critiques of the liberal peace to CSE responses, it would

be valuable to apply the critiques to other development issues. Investment in further application of the critiques of the liberal peace to other development issues will only add to the body of knowledge. Based on this, the study lays the groundwork for future development research using critiques of the liberal peace as a development model.

Limitations

The main weakness of the study is that to fully capture CSE responses the research would have benefitted from the use of ethnography as a method. An ethnographic study is a timely method and requires significant resources that were not accessible to the researcher. This research would also have benefited as a longitudinal study analysing progress over a longer period of time. Another limitation is the scope of this study, which was limited in terms of exploring other viewpoints including international donors directly and victims, families and community members. The thesis would have benefited greatly from including a more substantive international voice to articulate the realities of international donors and global institutions. However, this type of study would also raise ethical concerns. Notwithstanding the limited sample, this thesis offers valuable insights into CSE and its responses in the Philippines.

Recommendations

Using critiques of the liberal peace as a theoretical approach, the research demonstrates its value as a critical lens for other areas of development interventions, where no existing critical model of interventions exists. This approach will prove useful in expanding academic, practical and policy related understanding of development interventions and the dynamics between international and local actors. The empirical findings in this study provide a new understanding of local implementation and the challenges encountered through CSE responses. However, further work needs to be done to fully develop the use of critiques of the liberal peace in other areas of develop. For instance, to test if the tension is present in the international and local relations in other sectors of development. More broadly, research is also needed to determine CSE responses in other locations across the Philippines. Therefore, another recommendation is to develop further research into other regions of the Philippines,

which would create a more comprehensive view of the Philippines as well as the local needs specific to the local areas.

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Appendices

Appendix A – Interview guide

<u>**Interview guide (Semi-structured questions)**</u>
It must be noted that the questions below will be used in the interview. However, since the interviews will be semi-structured and not all of the questions will be asked depending on the insight and expertise of the interviewee.

1. **What is your current role at your organisation?**
2. **What are the main responsibilities or areas of your work?**

Outcome 1: To understand CSE in its various forms (Case study & Wider study)
1. **What has been your professional experience with CSE? Has it been directly with victims/frontline staff?**
2. **How does OSCE in the different areas present/what are the differences?**
3. **a) What tends to be the general backgrounds/situations (upbringing) of the children who have been sexually exploited?**
   b) And specifically, online sexual exploitation/child pornography victims.
4. **Who have you recognised as the main victims from your work?**
5. **In your opinion and experience, what do you think are the major factors that result in the children being victims of sexual exploitation?**
   'Driving' meaning pressures driving them into being sexually exploited.
   'Enabling' meaning pressures that enable them into engage in CSE.
6. **What role do you think technology plays in the sexual exploitation of children from your experiences? -**
7. **What are some of the characteristics of perpetrators that you have come across in cases? (Tech savvy?)**

Outcome 2: To understand approaches to Child Sexual Exploitation (gaps & processes)
1. **From your experiences what have been the challenges in dealing with CSE in the Philippines/Region NCR from your experience? (Depending on the experience and area of the Interviewee)**
2. **What have you seen working well within your work?**
3. **What legislation do you utilise in your cases to prosecute OSCE? Is this the most used? Why?**
4. **Terminology – various terms? How do you use the law to prosecute cases? (case by case)?**
5. **What are the legal challenges to tackling OSCE?**
6. **How collaborative is the national approach (partnership between government/NGOs) to CSE from your view? (Including other NGOs, International government bodies, schools etc.**
7. **Do you think the efforts towards responding to CSE are effective?**
8. **What are the opportunities to improving the response and how CSE is dealt with?**

Closing questions (Case study & Wider study)

- **What is the largest barrier to addressing CSE in the Philippines/Region? What is working well/ What can be improved?**
- **From your experience, how have you seen the present CSE situation evolve in the Philippines? (Has it worsened? Improved? Changed?)**
- **How do you foresee the current situation of CSE evolving in the future, in light of the circumstances? Do you think the situation will get better?**

Appendix B - Interview participation information sheet

Research Project – Child sexual exploitation in the Philippines

Thank you for taking the time to consider partaking in this study into Child sexual exploitation in the Philippines. This document intends to outline the project being conducted as well as the role and responsibilities of participants. Please do ask if there are any points that are unclear or if you require further information.

Purpose

The PhD research is based at the Centre for the study of Modern Slavery at St Mary's University, United Kingdom and is being undertaken as part of a 3 year study.

The aims of the study are:
- To ultimately improve academic understanding and knowledge around Child Sexual Exploitation in the Philippines in its various forms.
- To understand the current climate in the Philippines and explore how the social issue is being addressed.
- To learn more about the role of modern technologies in facilitating the sexual exploitation of children.
- To understand the responses of NGOs involved directly in aiding children and how NGOs navigate the local understanding of Child sexual exploitation.

The study intends to understand the situation of child sexual exploitation, specifically the ways in which it is being dealt with from the NGO context. The focus is on understanding initiatives of NGOs to create a wider picture of the issue in the Philippines. It also hopes to learn and obtain expertise about observed factors that contribute to the issue being rife in the nation. This study will develop understandings of current practices in the Philippines to confronting child sexual exploitation in its various forms. Furthermore, it will investigate the influences and impact of the internet, social media technologies on CSE in the Philippines.

Why have I been chosen?
The project hopes to gain invaluable knowledge and expertise from key individuals and practitioners, which will then help to shape the themes of the study. You have been approached for the study because of your invaluable insight, knowledge and experience of the subject matter.

Do I have to take part?
You can choose whether or not to take part in the project or not. If your decision is to take part you will be able to keep a copy of this information. You are able to withdraw from the study at anytime and do not have to provide a reason.

What is my involvement in the project?
There will be an interview that should take no longer than 30 minutes, where questions will be asked about your knowledge around CSE, with interest in online sexual exploitation. The questions are there to find out your opinions, knowledge and current practices of child sexual exploitation from your experience.

What will I have to do?

Please answer the questions as best you can. There are no further commitments following the interview. The interview is semi-structured so the interviewer has some guided questions but will also be guided by you responses to the topic.

Will my contribution to the study be kept confidential?

All information that is collected about you during the study will be kept strictly confidential. You will not be able to be identified or identifiable in any reports or publications. Any information shared in the interviews will be stored online protected by passwords. Data collected may be shared in an anonymised form to allow reuse by the research team and other third parties.

What will the overall study look like?

The overall study consists of 3 case studies of local NGOs and projects to document and access the efforts to protect children who have been involved in sexual exploitation. This data is the foundation of the study and will then be bolstered with interviews from professionals and experts in the field, who have vital input to the final aspects of the study.

Further Information
Please do not hesitate to get in contact should you require any further details.

Imogen Fell
Imogen.b.fell@gmail.com
167217@live.stmarys.ac.uk

Appendix C – Philippine government agency letter template for formal requests

Dear ....

The Centre for the Study of Modern Slavery, St Mary's University, London is currently undertaking a research study entitled '*Protecting Children in the Philippines who are sexually exploited: the implications of globalised technologies.*' The project aims to systematically obtain data on the nature and scope of online sexual exploitation of children in the Philippines. The expected output will be an academic report for furthering academic knowledge in universities, policy makers and other stakeholders to improve the responses to and prevent the problem. The study is one of the first of its kind and is being self-funded by the University's funding from the United Kingdom Government.

A large factor of the research objective is to study first-hand from frontline staff and organisations both government and non-government who deal with cases of online sexual exploitation of their experiences to understand better the situation in the Philippines. Furthermore, it hopes to understand the situation in more detail and to learn about what frontline staff are encountering in their experiences on a daily basis.

Therefore, I would like to respectfully request to interview ………. for the research study. We are requesting for the interview to be held between the …. and …… on a agreed mutual location depending on …….. location, schedule and availablity.
I would be happy to address any other concerns that you may have. For inquiries, you may coordinate with myself directly.

      Name: Imogen Fell
      Email: Imogen.b.fell@gmail.com

Thank you in advance and I look forward to your favourable response.

Sincerely yours,

Imogen Fell
PhD Researcher
St Mary's University, London.

Visiting Researcher at Social Development Research Center, De La Salle University.

Appendix D - Grassroot Non-Government Organisations case study profiles

Grassroot Non-government organisation	Profiles
GNGO-A	GNGO-A is involved in rescue operations from commercial establishments (karaoke bars, clubs, holiday resorts) in partnership with other stakeholders, including the Department for Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Philippine National Police (PNP) among others. The GNGO provided housing in their shelter, where they supported victims with psychosocial therapeutic interventions and legal support to prosecute perpetrators and facilitators of CSE. Staff also lead advocacy initiatives in barangays, schools and local government units to educate on identifying and reporting cases of CSE. There are also efforts providing recovery and reintegration interventions in the community, setting up a supportive network in the local community, where survivors can work on local projects together. GNGO-A has shelters for boys and girls at the centre of their work, they also conducted advocacy seminars and Fairtrade initiatives for rural communities.
GNGO-B	GNGO-B provides protection through long term and short stay shelters. The organisation provides specialised psychosocial therapeutic interventions focussed on restoring and empowering girls who had been sexually exploited and abused. Following interventions to rehabilitate children, the GNGO reintegrated them back into the community once they had recovered. Responses consisted of supporting victims by prosecuting facilitators and perpetrators. However, this was done indirectly through partnerships with other INGOs and GNGOs, who provide legal resources (lawyers, funding) for CSE. The GNGO also developed an advocacy model to inform and educate children in schools about CSE risks.

GNGO-C	GNGO-C specialise predominantly in advocacy work and lobbying using trial cases to inform policy including advocacy in local government units, commercial partners (hotels, resorts). The purpose of prosecution efforts for GNGO-C is not only for justice but also for advocacy and lobbying for laws to be passed to improve national legislation. GNGO-C also facilitated community educational programmes with local barangays to develop community networks generating awareness of how to identify potential CSE cases, how to report and how to protect children in the community.
	Ahead of conducting the case study a meeting was arranged with the GNGO leader, who provided insight into their work. At the meeting, we discussed potential gaps in their services that were filled by other NGOs and the value of their partnership development with other local GNGOs.

Appendix E – Consent form

St Mary's
University
Twickenham
London

CONSENT FORM

Title of project: *Protecting Children in the Philippines who are sexually exploited: the implications of globalised technology from the NGO context.*
Researcher: Imogen Fell 167217@live.stmarys.ac.uk

Please
initial box

I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.

I understand that my participation is voluntary, that I do not have to answer questions I do not want to, and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason, without my medical care or legal rights being affected.

I agree to the use of audio recording during the interview

I agree to verbatim (word for word) quotations from my interview being used in research reports or presentations where these are anonymized, bearing no names or identifiers

I agree to take part in the above study.

_____   _____   _____

Name of participant   Date   Signature

_____   _____   _____

Name of person taking consent   Date   Signature

If you wish to withdraw from the research, please complete the form below and return to the main investigator named above.

I WISH TO WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY

Name:_____

Signed: _____   Date: _____

Appendix F – Ethical Approval

St Mary's University Twickenham London

26 March 2018   SMEC_2017-18_099

Imogen Fell (A&H): 'Protecting children in the Philippines who are trafficked for sexual exploitation: the implications of globalisation and technology advancement'.

Dear Imogen

University Ethics Sub-Committee

Thank you for re-submitting your ethics application for consideration.

I can confirm that all required amendments have been made and that you therefore have ethical approval to undertake your research.

Yours sincerely

Prof Conor Gissane.
Chair, Ethics Sub-Committee

Cc Dr Sasha Jesperson, Dr Carole Murphy