Title: The Work Experiences of Migrant Process Workers in the Meat Industry in Otago, New Zealand

Author: Shabina Farnaaz

Degree: Master of Applied Management, Southern Institute of Technology

Supervisor(s): Dr Sally Bodkin-Allen

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The Work Experiences of Migrant Process Workers in the Meat Industry in Otago, New Zealand

by

Shabina Farnaaz

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Abstract

The New Zealand meat industry is one of the largest contributors towards the success of the economy. It provides employment for a wide range of people comprising of local and migrant workers. The aim of this research is to explore the work experience of migrant process workers in the meat industry in Otago, New Zealand. To achieve this aim, four key objectives were set out which includes the reason behind the migration of migrant meat workers, the perceived workplace challenges, access to equal employment opportunities and the social relationships amongst the co-workers at the workplace. An interpretivism philosophy was used for this research and data was collected through two focus groups. The data was analysed using thematic analysis where seven themes emerged from the findings and they were categorised under the research objectives.

The first objective was based on the reason behind the movement of meat workers to New Zealand. The second objective focused on their perceived workplace challenges which included language barriers, changing job responsibilities, aging workforce, and work ethics. The third objective identified that the participants had access to equal employment opportunities with the aid of trade unions. The last objective explains how social isolation affects their social relationship with the co-workers and can lead to homesickness. It is recommended to conduct future studies on other meat industries around New Zealand and to have a large sample size on different aspects relating to meat workers to have a more detailed understanding of the meat industry.

Keywords: process workers, migrants, New Zealand, meat industry, workplace challenges, equal employment opportunities.

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List of Acronyms

CTS	Carpal Tunnel Syndrome
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunities
MSD	Musculoskeletal Disorder
NELM	New economics of labour migration
SWOT	Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, Threats

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1. Introduction

The New Zealand meat industry is one of the biggest contributors towards the county's economy which provides employment to a diverse range of people including migrant and local workers (BeefLamb New Zealand Ltd & Meat Industry Association, 2020). In addition, since the early 1800s, New Zealand has been supporting the entry of migrants from different countries (Phillips, 2005). Many local meat processing companies rely on the migrant workers to fill the labour shortage gap ("Meat processing and exporting jobs in jeopardy unless specialist migrants are allowed to remain," 2020). This study is designed to explore the work experience of migrant process workers in the meat industry in New Zealand. It explores the experiences of these workers by understanding the reason behind their migration, their perceived workplace challenges, equal employment opportunities and social relationship. This chapter is subdivided into four sections which discuss the purpose of this study and sets out the context of this research. The first section is a brief background on migrants in the meat industry, followed by the significance of the study. The next part states the aim and objective of the study and this chapter ends with a summary of each chapter.

1.2. Statement of the problem

The rising demand in meat consumption has led to an increase in the production of meat globally. Meat production has tripled over the years which has led to the production of more than 340 million tonnes of meat per year (Ritchie & Roser, 2017). According to Ritchie and Roser, statistics indicate that the meat industry is considered as a productive sector for most countries around the world. Currently, the New Zealand meat industry is worth $12 billion in value, operating more than 60 processing plants around the country (BeefLamb New Zealand Ltd & Meat Industry Association, 2020, p. 4). According to the Meat Industry Association, red meat exports alone were a total of $9.1 billion in New Zealand in 2019 (Taunton, 2020). To meet the growing demand of meat production, some meat factories have begun outsourcing labour from different countries, giving rise to a high number of migrant workers in this industry in New Zealand (Equality & Human Rights

Commission, 2010, p. 4). However, previous international research has indicated that migrant meat workers are often exploited or discriminated by their employers at the workplace (Birke & Bluhm, 2020; Lever & Milbourne, 2017). Other international research has shown that due to the fear of job loss, such matters are often not reported to higher authorities and thus, no action is taken to safeguard their employment (Choi & Constance, 2019, p. 22).

The evolution of migration in New Zealand began in the early 1800s with the first migrants coming in from Britain and Ireland (Phillips, 2005). Gradually over the years, more people began migrating to New Zealand and by the mid-1960s, the people from the Pacific Islands had started coming in to look for job opportunities (Phillips, 2005). Because of the high flow of people, New Zealand began to change their immigration policies and started assessing people based on their qualification (Phillips, 2005). The introduction of work visa and skilled migration came into place, which allowed only a selected number of people to enter the country.

The growth of the New Zealand meat export industry began when the first shipment of frozen meat was shipped to Britain in 1882 (History, n.d.). Today, the meat industry adds $12 billion worth of value towards New Zealand's economy each year and provides employment for more than 92,000 people comprising of migrant and local workers (BeefLamb New Zealand Ltd & Meat Industry Association, 2020, p. 4).

Process workers are often considered to be the backbone of the meat industry. For instance, as stated by the Meat Industry Association in New Zealand, there are more than 250 halal processing workers who help generate more than $3 billion, as 45% of the red meat export is halal certified ("Meat processing and exporting jobs in jeopardy unless specialist migrants are allowed to remain," 2020). Out of the 250 halal workers, 145 are from overseas who have been granted approval to work and cater for the shortfall in the meat factories since 2002 ("Meat processing and exporting jobs in jeopardy unless specialist migrants are allowed to remain," 2020). However, an international study conducted by Birke and Bluhm (2020, pp. 11-12) asserted that there has been an increase in exploitation of migrant meat workers at the workplace by discriminating them based on their nationality

and competency level. Coming from different ethnicities, the workers see each other as rivals because the locals feel that the migrants are trying to 'steal their jobs' (Lever & Milbourne, 2017, p. 6). According to another international study by Wagner and Hassel (2015, p. 6) the meat industry is mostly task oriented and because of this, some migrant workers do not have access to equal employment opportunities and are ill-treated at the workplace.

While meat workers are already a vulnerable group, the increased health issues associated with the working environment of the meat processing plants heightens this vulnerability. According to Arvidsson et al. (2012) the extreme physical workload and the constant repetitive movements of the hand and arm, can lead to a shoulder disorder for most meat workers. Due to the nature of the work, being engaged in tedious work can result in certain health problems and meat process workers are likely to develop musculoskeletal disorder (MSD) or carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS) (Chammas, 2014; Lipscomb et al., 2008). Similarly, the work environment of the workers can also contribute towards certain health related concerns. For instance, working in a cold environment like freezer rooms, can lead to the development of cardiac and respiratory symptoms (Chotiphan et al., 2020, p. 8). In addition, cold storage workers often have difficulty in concentrating at work which can decrease their level of productivity (Silva & Araújo, 2012). Another health-related concern that migrant workers are prone to is psychological distress, which is caused by various factors ranging from work to personal life. Rigorous work conditions, being discriminated at the workplace and not being accepted by the community often affects a person mentally, which can lead to increased crime rates and self-isolation causing further distress (Jenkins, 2018, p. 65).

The New Zealand meat industry is the second largest exporter in the country and provides meat to over 120 international markets ("Meat processing and exporting jobs in jeopardy unless specialist migrants are allowed to remain," 2020). According to the meat companies and the meat association reports, the focus is usually on the industry and how they have been growing over the years (Meat Industry Association & BeefLamb New Zealand, 2020) however, very little information has been provided on migrant workers. Media reports and statistical data only highlights the achievements and issues of the industry rather than the

workers ("March exports top $1b," 2020; Fyfe, 2020). This indicates that there is minimal research and critical reporting being done on the life of migrant meat workers over the years.

To bridge the research gap, this study attempts to explore the work experience of migrant process workers in the New Zealand meat industry. Considering the significance of the industry, the workers play an essential role towards the growth and development of this sector. The results of this study can provide valuable insight into the importance of migrant meat workers and understanding their work experiences through, the reasons behind their migration to New Zealand, their perceived workplace challenges, equal employment opportunity and social relationship at the workplace.

1.3. Methodology

The present study adopts a qualitative approach to explore the perception of workplace experience of migrant process workers in the meat industry in New Zealand. The research instrument used to collect data is focus groups at one meat processing plant in Otago. The research is focused on workers and their perception of the workplace which has influenced the use of interpretivism philosophy. Hennink et al. (2020) stated that, this philosophy "seeks to understand people's lived experience from the perspective of people themselves" (p. 15) which helps to create an in-depth understanding and interpretation (Saunders et al., 2019, p. 149) of the perceived reality.

An interpretive paradigm is subjective because it is based on the reality of people and their experience (Hennink et al., 2020, p. 15). The researcher was involved in the research through carrying out the focus group discussions to understand the workers' perceptions from their point of view (Saunders et al., 2019, p. 149). The target group for this study are migrant workers on a work visa employed as process workers in the meat factory. The invitation to participate in the discussion was given to all the processing departments and eight workers participated in two focus groups.

1.4. Significance of the study

This research is significant because it focuses on migrant workers in New Zealand. According to Immigration New Zealand, the number of migrant arrivals in 2019 on a work visa were approximately 244,762 people (Immigration, 2020). Statistics also indicate that the number of migrants arriving on a work visa has gradually increased over the years (Immigration, 2020). The figures are an indication that migrants on a work visa are coming to New Zealand for better employment opportunities. Process workers are considered essential because they need to be retained through continuous motivation and training which are the two key critical success components for an organisation (Ozkeser, 2019, p. 2). The commitment to recruit and retain employees who come from different ethnicities creates a diversified workforce which is achieved through diversity management. Patrick and Kumar (2012) stated that diversity management tends to value the opinion of individuals so that they can perform up to expectation and achieve the organisations goals by working in a positive work environment (p. 2). Further Patrick and Kumar state that employees with different work experiences are given the opportunity to portray their best performance and enhance self-development using their innovative ideas, that lead to the growth of the company (p. 2).

Previous studies based on the New Zealand meat industry have focused on the high risks of developing health-related issues while working in a meat factory. For instance, Dreyfus et al. (2015) focuses on how New Zealand abattoir workers are at a risk of developing leptospirosis. The highest risk of exposure is in the slaughterhouse process and apart from being provided with proper personal protective equipment, the factory should consider other alternate methods to the slaughter procedure. Similarly, McLean et al. (2004) stated that the increased risk of cancer for New Zealand meat workers was because of exposure to material that contains animal urine and blood (p. 6). It is evident that while there is some research on workers in the meat industry in New Zealand, this has been largely limited to health issues. There is a gap in the literature when considering the experiences of migrant meat workers in New Zealand.

This study explores the work experiences of migrant process workers in the meat industry in Otago, New Zealand. The results of this study can help to understand the reason behind the migration of workers to New Zealand which can help meat companies to recruit more workers from overseas. This study can also add to the body of knowledge on migrant meat workers in New Zealand and educate the public on their significance and contribution towards the economy. Furthermore, this research can also be used by other researchers for future comparison in relation to different processing plants or for an in-depth analysis on migrant workers.

1.5 Research question/aim and objectives

The aim of this research is to explore the work experience of migrant process workers in the meat industry in Otago, New Zealand.

Research Objectives:

1 To identify the reasons behind the movement of migrant meat workers to New Zealand.
2 To ascertain the perception of workplace challenges by migrant workers.
3 To determine if migrant workers have access to equal employment opportunities.
4 To determine the social relationship between co-workers at the workplace.

1.6 Structure of thesis

The structure of this research consists of six chapters as outlined below. The first chapter highlights the research and background of the meat industry and the role of migrants in New Zealand. The chapter also sets out the research aim and objective together with the significance of the research by addressing the gaps and relating it to the concept of applied management.

The second chapter is divided into two parts where the first part is based on the theoretical framework pertaining to migration and the second part talks about the industry analysis of the meat industry. The theories of neoclassical economics and push-pull migration law are used to explain the reason behind migration. Moreover, an industry analysis of the meat

industry will be conducted using a SWOT analysis which will identify the internal strengths and weaknesses, external opportunities, and threats.

The third chapter is a literature review that discusses on process workers in the meat industry from various sources. The literature review is categorised into three themes that focuses on exploitation of migrant workers, working conditions and health-related issues faced by workers in the meat industry.

Furthermore, the methodology of this research is explained in chapter four. The research uses an interpretivist philosophy with an inductive approach and data is collected using focus groups. The purpose, procedure, and analysis of the focus group are comprehensively explained in this chapter. The limitations, reliability and ethical consideration of the research are also discussed at the end of the chapter.

The fifth chapter states the results and discussion based on the findings. The chapter has two parts where the first section reveals the findings that are analysed using thematic analysis and seven themes are presented. While the second part is a discussion of the themes relating previous studies.

The last chapter is the conclusion of the research which summarises the main findings and presents recommendations for future research and the New Zealand meat industry.

Chapter 2. Theory and Industry Analysis

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will explore the theoretical framework and industry analysis of the present study. The relevance of this chapter is to understand the theories behind migration of people from one country to another and the current industrial context of the meat industry in relation to the research topic. The first part of this chapter is based on the theoretical analysis which is explained using the neoclassical economics theory and push-pull migration law. These two theories help describe the motives behind the movement of people internationally. The second part is an industry analysis of the meat industry which will be conducted using a SWOT analysis to identify the internal strengths and weaknesses together with the external opportunities and threats to analyse the business environment and plan for future perspectives.

2.2 Theoretical analysis

The decision to migrate is often determined by various factors leading towards the migration process. An international movement can somewhat be motivated by an individual's lifestyle choices (Benson & O'Reilly, 2015, p. 64). Mainly people move to developed countries from developing ones for a better lifestyle, job opportunities or education (Xu et al., 2018, p. 3). To understand the migration process, the neoclassical economics theory and push-pull migration law will be discussed to identify the motive behind international migration.

Neoclassical economics theory

Benson (2016, p. 1) stated that migration is considered to be a route to a better way of life, leaving behind an individual's previous life and emphasising on lifestyle choices. The escape from the previous life may include community histories, self-realisation, or unforeseen circumstances (p. 2). The neoclassical economics was one of the earliest theoretical frameworks developed to explain international labour migration (Hill, 2000, p. 1). The neoclassical theory of migration is based on wages and income and it is described at a micro and macro level.

The macro level theory states that migration has historically occurred due to the geographical difference between supply and demand for labour (Hill, 2000; Institute, n.d.; Kurekova, 2009). The countries that have a high ratio of labour have low wages whereas, countries with low ratio of labour have higher wages (Hill, 2000, pp. 1-2). High-skilled workers migrate from a capital-rich country to a capital-poor country for better wages (Institute, n.d.; Kurekova, 2009). The movement causes a decrease in labour resources for poor countries, concurrently increasing labour resources in wealthier countries creating a balance for the economy (Porumbescu, 2018, p. 12). The main reason behind migration is because of the difference in wage level and by eliminating this difference, migration of workers can potentially be stopped.

At the micro-level, the decision to move is based on the socio-demographic factors of an individual (Kurekova, 2009, p. 9), where options are weighed using a cost-benefit calculation prior to migrating (King, 2012, p. 15). This is conceptualised as an investment in human capital with positive monetary returns (Massey et al., 1993, p. 5). An individual may choose to move to a place that offers higher wages but in order to get there, they need to invest in their destination's cost of living, financial and moral support (Massey et al., 1993, p. 5).

However, the new economics of labour migration (NELM) is based on a collective decision, that consists of a larger unit of related people from families or households (Massey et al., 1993, p. 7). According to Wickramasinghe and Wimalaratana (2016, p. 10), the decision to migrate is made collectively rather than individually, ultimately challenging the decision of the neo-classical theory. According to this model, migrants temporarily travel abroad for a limited period to secure employment and increase income or accumulate savings and then return to their country (Constant & Massey, 2002, p. 6). These return migrants are considered as successful people with an accomplished goal (p. 7).

Under the NELM approach, household resources are diversified in order to minimise risks (Massey et al., 1993, p. 7) and maximise income (Institute, n.d.). Families or households diversify their income-earnings (King, 2012, p. 24) or household resources such as family labour (Massey et al., 1993), into different activities. Each member maybe allocated a different task such as being a local labourer or migrating internally while others engage in

international migration (King, 2012, p. 24). By diversifying household resources, the members of the household can rely on the remittance from foreign labour market in event of an economic crisis (Massey et al., 1993, p. 7). For most developing countries, migrant remittance provides a form of income insurance (Haas, 2008, p. 17), due to the unavailability of affordable private insurance and credit programs (Massey et al., 1993, p. 7). Under the NELM approach the source of income is important for the families, so that they have an opportunity to invest in other household resources that will provide access to various forms of income (p. 9).

Push-pull migration law

According to Ravenstein's 1885 publication on "The Laws of Migration", he formulated ten laws of migration that focused on people's behaviour towards migration (Tobler, 1995, p. 3). However, Lee (1966, p. 2), revised Ravenstein's laws and proposed a new framework which consisted of four factors behind migration; area of origin, destination, obstacles and personal factors (Haas, 2008, p. 12). Using these factors and by putting together a general hypothesis, led to the development of the 'push-pull theory' (Porumbescu, 2018, p. 4) based on an "individual choice and equilibrium model" (Haas, 2008, p. 13). The push-pull migration law is a commonly used theory that describes the movement of people from one country to another. Datta (2004) stated in a research based on Bangladeshi migration, how people from Bangladesh moved to West Bengal due to factors such as economic insecurity, lack of employment and industrialisation (p. 18). Similarly, Kajiura (2008) found that Japanese people often migrate due to education, cultural changes and economic conditions (p. 2). Kajiura also stated that the push and pull factors are also contributing towards a brain drain, which is the loss of qualified people from a developing country to a developed country (p. 1). The push-pull migration law is relevant to the present study as one of the objectives is to identify the reasons behind the movement of the workers from their home country to New Zealand.

Push factors are known to be dissatisfying events that motivates a person to migrate, whereas pull factors are favourable attributes that appeal to an individual (Dorigo & Tobler, 1983, p. 2). The push-pull theory relates to certain factors that push people out of their countries and pull them to the host country (Haas, 2011, p. 8). High unemployment rates and low wages contribute as push factors, while fulfilment of essential needs by

foreign employment (Wickramasinghe & Wimalaratana, 2016, p. 11) structural inflation, motivational problems, economic dualism and demography of labour supply identify as pull factors (Massey et al., 1993, pp. 12-14). According to Krishnakumar and Indumathi (2014), the reason behind people's movement can be classified into economic, socio-cultural, political and miscellaneous factors (p. 2) which are further explained below.

Stanojoska and Petrevski (2012) identified that globalisation has been a contributing economic factor that has changed people's perception towards their way of living. Many have become more aware of their lifestyle and living standard through media or stories from returning migrants (p. 3). Poverty has become an alarming issue and the public's understanding of it has increased which motivated them to migrate and obtain income (p. 3). Factors such as increasing unemployment rate and lack of job opportunities are also contributing push factors towards migration (p. 5).

Krishnakumar and Indumathi (2014) asserted that socio-cultural factors can also influence international migration. The younger generation mostly migrate to gain independence, better education opportunities or to escape from family conflict (p. 3). However, the issue of social exclusion primarily exists between certain groups or class of people in terms of ethnicity, gender, and discrimination in job opportunities, which leads to lack of social protection (p. 3). Factors pertaining to population growth rate, presence of family in urban areas and cultural diversity are also associated with migration (p. 4).

In addition to the economic and socio-cultural factors, the political condition of the country can also encourage migration. A politically unstable society creates civil unrest and increases crime rates including human/labour trafficking (Stanojoska & Petrevski, 2012, p. 8). Often corrupted officers are bribed to facilitate trafficking to cater for low wages and improve living standards (p. 8). The matter of public safety, political instability and individual attitudes are also push factors for migration (Krishnakumar & Indumathi, 2014, p. 3).

Furthermore, Dorigo and Tobler (1983, p. 2) tried to invent a formula that measured the push and pull factors using dimensional consideration which requires availability of the numeric value of all push-pull factors (p. 3). Haas (2011, p. 8) argued that it may be difficult to classify the push-pull model as a theory due to the understanding that these are

just mere factors that motivate the movement of people. In comparison to the neoclassical model, push-pull theory is not able to describe return migration, family ties nor does it have a realistic cost-benefit calculation (Haas, 2008, p. 15). It simply focuses on external factors that are the reason behind migration, which limits its analytical perspective.

The neoclassical theory and push-pull law of migration can be used to understand the reason behind an individual's decision to migrate. The neoclassical theory describes how the decision to migrate can either be a supply and demand for labour or a family-based decision. The present study also focuses on the reasons behind the movement of migrant meat workers to New Zealand. The push pull law of migration is used in this research to understand the push factors that drove the workers out of their home country and pulled them towards New Zealand and how they ended up working at the meat factory. The next section of this chapter is based on an industry analysis of the meat industry in New Zealand.

2.3 Industry analysis

The New Zealand meat industry initiated in 1882 when the first shipment of frozen meat was transported to Britain (History, n.d.). The industry has grown ever since and has become an internationally recognised competitor with other meat markets from different countries around the world. A SWOT analysis is used to assess this industry and understand its contribution towards the economy.

For up to 30 years since 1882, the export market for UK had been a huge success for the New Zealand meat industry and farmers were encouraged to continue production until there was a price drop and government intervention was needed (Smith, 1998). Over the years, the meat industry has evolved rapidly and today it is a $12 billion industry with $4.6 billion in household income (Meat Industry Association & BeefLamb New Zealand, 2020, p. 4). Meat processing has become the largest manufacturing industry in New Zealand (Anderson, 2020). Due to the demand in export markets, the locally recruited workers are not enough to cater for the needs of the factories which means that meat companies are required to bring in migrants to fill almost 150 roles each year (Anderson, 2020). The New Zealand export market is dependent on agricultural production and this requires significant

labour in the form of skilled and semi-skilled workers (Lovelock & Leopold, 2008, p. 2). Taking that into consideration, the meat industry provides employment for over 92,000 people (Meat Industry Association & BeefLamb New Zealand, 2020, p. 4) of which the highest contribution towards employment and household income is from Otago and Southland combined which is 12% of the total industry value (p. 5).

The history of New Zealand's immigration goes back to 1840 when the first English settlers arrived in the country. According to the New Zealand Parliamentary Library research paper (2008, p. 2), by 1874, 32,118 settlers had arrived adding to the 28,000 Europeans, Australian migrants and Chinese that were already present in the country. Gradually over the years, the Chinese Immigration Act 1881, Imbecile Passengers Act 1882, and Immigration Restriction Act 1899 came into effect to control the number of immigrants settling in New Zealand (p. 3). The research paper also states that in 1960, changes were made to the immigration policy to allow skilled workers to work for the essential industries (p. 5). In 1970, Samoa was given an immigration quota that allowed the first Pacific Islanders access to New Zealand residency and later, more Pacific Islanders were given the opportunity to enter, to ease the labour shortage gap (p. 6). This led to the introduction of work permits, skilled migration, and a Talent Visa to allow employers to recruit workers and provide them access to global skills and knowledge (pp. 8-9). Workers were able to fill the labour shortage issue and were absorbed into meat factories and dairy farms supporting the growth of the industry.

Table 1 illustrates the SWOT analysis of the meat industry and identifies the industry's internal and external factors for growth and survival. These factors are discussed in more detail later in the chapter. The internal factors are the strengths and weaknesses of the industry, whereas the external factors are the opportunities and threats (Gretzky, 2010, p. 2).

Table 1 SWOT analysis of the meat industry

STRENGTHS	**WEAKNESSES**
• Natural NZ environment that supports pastoral agriculture • Strong global position • Reputable image • Grass fed meat • Access to Europe market	• International tariff charges • Workers at risk of developing leukaemia or cancer. • Worker health impacts absenteeism rate which affects productivity.
OPPORTUNITIES	**THREATS**
• Demand for grass-fed meat • Increase in global meat consumption • Enter new markets • Continuous innovation • Greenhouse gas reduction • Sustainable farming practices • Bringing in migrant meat workers through skilled employment	• Demand for vegan and vegetarian meals • Competitive market • NCD risks • Animals prone to sickness • Shortage of process workers

<u>Strengths</u>

- The potential strengths for the meat industry provides them with a competitive advantage over their competitors, leading to increased profits (McIvor, 2003, p. 1). According to the Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment (2017, p. 8), the key strength of the meat industry is the natural New Zealand environment which is supportive towards pastoral agriculture. The 2016 statistics indicate that sheep and

beef farming take up the largest land space compared to dairy and horticulture (Stats NZ, 2018). The South Island had a land use of 1,271,858 hectares of which the Otago region used 237,624 ha as of 2016 (Stats NZ, 2018). With the huge amount of land use, New Zealand farmers are constantly trying to improve on grass harvesting techniques through research and development (McIvor, 2003).

- Looking back at New Zealand's history of exporting meat internationally for over 135 years, it has enabled them to create a strong position globally and maintain a high standard in terms of food safety and industry regulations (Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment, 2017, p. 8). Over the years New Zealand has built a reputable image in the meat industry by providing quality products and gaining supplier confidence through grass fed red meat (BeefLamb New Zealand Ltd & Meat Industry Association, 2020, p. 5). Due to the first export of frozen meat to Britain (History, n.d.), New Zealand has gained preferential access into the Europe market (Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment, 2017, p. 8), making them a strong competitor.

Weaknesses

- The issue of high tariff charges is a problem for exporting products internationally. Different countries have their own rules on exported goods and high tariff barriers impose as a weakness for meat companies because it limits their access to key markets internationally (Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment, 2017, p. 8).

- Meat workers are often exposed to biological material from animal discharge (blood or urine) or are in contact with raw meat during the slaughter process, which can lead to lung cancer or other forms of health risks (McLean et al., 2004, p. 6). Similar to abattoir workers who directly handle animal blood or internal organs, have higher chances of developing leukaemia (Bethwaite et al., 2001, p. 5) or even leptospirosis. Exposure to these types of illnesses, increases worker absenteeism which affects overall productivity of the company.

- Over the years, there has been a growth in processed meat and frozen meal packages. While traditional meat is considered by many, processed meat is becoming readily accessible and convenient for many people. Instead of exporting meat as raw material for processing, meat factories can use this opportunity to add value to their products and make processed meat locally and export into different markets (Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment, 2017, p. 2), but there is a lack of experience in this area.

Opportunities

- According to Weber et al. (2008, p. 5), 15 years ago grass-fed beef was only a technical term used to describe meat of low quality which did not meet the regulatory standard. Now grass-fed meat is being supplied to high-end restaurants at a premium price. This becomes an opportunity for the New Zealand meat sector considering the demand for grass-fed meat and the added health benefits (Meat Industry Association & BeefLamb New Zealand, 2020, p. 5).

- The growing demand for global meat consumption has led to the increase in demand for meat production. With the rise in income levels and population growth, meat production is predicted to increase from 218 to 376 million tonnes by 2030 (World Health Organisation, n.d.). The demand creates an opportunity for the meat sector to keep up with production and penetrate across different markets.

- Continuous improvement and innovation are carried out to improve farming practices. In collaboration with a primary sector, He Waka Eke Noa, together with the government, a greenhouse gas emission reduction plan, has been established for farm level agriculture (BeefLamb New Zealand Ltd & Meat Industry Association, 2020, p. 10). The sector will work with farmers to design a regulatory framework and minimise greenhouse gases, which will also be an initiative towards sustainable farming.

- The local meat processing companies rely on migrant workers to address the labour shortage issue in New Zealand meat industry ("Meat processing and exporting jobs in jeopardy unless specialist migrants are allowed to remain," 2020). This creates an

opportunity for the industry to bring in more workers from other countries so that the production process is not affected, and they are able to continue international trade.

Threats

- An increasing demand for vegan/vegetarian meals has led to tough competition between traditional processed meat and plant-based meat (BeefLamb New Zealand Ltd, 2018, p. 5). The change in consumer eating patterns and preference may affect the meat sector and challenge them to meet ongoing consumer expectation. In addition to that, other countries around the world have also started producing meat, which may affect exports and profitability in the long run (Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment, 2017, p. 8; BeefLamb New Zealand Ltd, 2018, p. 5).

- Food scandals and advocates around the world have influenced people to eliminate red meat out of their lifestyle due to non-communicable diseases (NCD) (BeefLamb New Zealand & KANTAR, 2019, p. 64). With the increased meat consumption, regulatory measures are expected by government authorities, which may affect meat production (BeefLamb New Zealand Ltd, 2018, p. 4). Medical officials have also started to promote on the health risks of red meat consumption, favouring plant-based protein (p. 5).

- Animals are prone to becoming sick if they are not kept under proper hygiene. Cattles are more likely to get Mycoplasma bovis which is a “bacterium that can cause a range of serious conditions in cattle, including mastitis that doesn’t respond to treatment, pneumonia, arthritis, and late-term abortions” (Biosecurity New Zealand, n.d.). This can spread through body contact or bodily fluids. Some animals are at risk of carrying leptospirosis or Campylobacter which can be passed on to humans and other animals (Biosecurity New Zealand, n.d.). If animals are not kept hygienically and workers are not provided with proper safety gear, this can have an impact on the productivity of the company.

- Another threat for the meat industry is the shortage of process workers. The sector requires a high level of skilled workers and during the peak seasonal time, there is a

shortage of labour because of high absenteeism rate and the failure to fill vacancies (Mohanlall, 2019). The meat industry generally brings workers from China and the Pacific Islands if they are not able to employ local workers (Mohanlall, 2019).

2.4 Summary

This chapter has identified the theoretical background of the research and conducted an industry analysis of the meat industry in New Zealand. The two theories provide an understanding of international migration through relevant conceptual frameworks. The first theory is based on neoclassical economics, which is one of the oldest theories for migration. According to this theory, an individual migrates based on the demand for income and the desire to earn more wages at a macro level. But at a micro level, the decision to migrate is based on a cost benefit calculation where human capital is invested to get positive returns. However, the new economics of labour migration challenges the old neoclassical theory as the decision to migrate is based on a collective decision rather than individually. The second theory that was discussed here is based on push-pull law of migration that indicates factors that push people out of a country and pulls them to the host country. The movement is influenced by economic, political, socio-cultural, and miscellaneous factors. The push-pull law of migration will be further explored in detail in Chapter five, to understand the migration experience of the process workers who are the research participants.

The second half of this chapter was based on the meat industry analysis using a SWOT approach. Considering that the meat industry has been operating for over 130 years, it has already built a reputation in the international export market by supplying quality meat through sustainable farming practices. Because of the changing customer preference, the meat industry is exposed to various threats which they need to tackle in the coming future and convert them into opportunities.

The next chapter is a literature review and explores research relating to migrant meat workers and is categorised under three different themes that highlight the type of challenges being faced by migrant process workers in the meat industry.

Chapter 3. Literature Review

3.1. Introduction

Due to the growing demand for global meat consumption, the demand for production has increased rapidly over the years. The increase in production eventually creates the need for more workforce leading to a labour shortage gap ultimately filled by migrant workers as discussed in Chapter two. Therefore, this chapter is a review of the literature relating to the workplace experiences and challenges of migrant workers in the meat industry based on previous studies. It will firstly examine the exploitation of workers through unfair treatment and discrimination at the workplace. Moreover, it will discuss the types of working conditions that workers are working in, and finally the health conditions that develop over time by working as a meat process worker.

This literature review was completed as part of MGT804, which is the research methodology component of the Master of Applied Management qualification, of which this research project is the final element. Only minor amendments have been made from the original literature review completed as part of MGT804. As MGT804 is the research methodology paper for this research project component of the Master of Applied management qualification, self-citation was not required.

3.2 Exploitation of Migrant Workers

Research suggests that the need to fulfil the labour shortage gap, has led to a substantial increase in migration of workers into developed countries which further leads to worker exploitation. For example, Birke and Bluhm (2020, pp. 11-12) found that migrant workers in three meat processing factories in Germany were exploited based on their nationality which led to them being stereotyped, and their ethnicity. Jenkins (2018, p. 64) asserted that migrants are perceived to be people of different colours and nationalities which is why they are ill-treated or become victims of racism. Moreover, Lever and Milbourne (2017) confirm that some of the Polish and Portuguese migrants in a meat processing sector in Wales see each other as rivals. One of the Portuguese workers stated that the Polish workers were trying to ‘steal their jobs’ which created room for competitive tension

between the two nationalities and segregation in production lines (p. 6). The literature suggests that in some countries, meat workers are often discriminated based on the country they come from or their nationality.

Migrant workers may also be discriminated based on the tasks they are required to perform in terms of gender and roles. It was found that in a meat factory in British Columbia some of the jobs were determined and divided by gender which created lack of solidarity amongst workers (Paulson, 2017, p. 30). Furthermore, McCabe and Hamilton (2015) stated that meat inspectors are classified as 'dirty workers' due to the nature of the work performed. The inspectors were allocated a cramped office space (p. 6), paid low wages, deprived of proper work facilities (p. 9), and kept away from management's office areas (p. 6). Additionally, in German meat factories a level of superiority is given to the locals because they prefer to work in the management section rather than working in the production line, while the migrants from Romania and Bulgaria are made to work in the factory (Birke & Bluhm, 2020, p. 7). However, due to the vulnerability of the migrant workers, matters relating to discrimination and workplace abuse are not reported to higher authority nor the government agencies, as workers are in fear of losing their job (Choi & Constance, 2019, p. 22; Stuesse, 2010, p. 9) and susceptible to ill-treatment by the employer (McCabe & Hamilton, 2015, p. 13; Tannock, 2015, p. 12). Hence, it is evident from the research that there is an employment disparity between locals and migrant workers in the same industry and because of the migrant workers vulnerability, they are unable to resolve this issue.

Workers that are under a zero-hour contract, often fall victim to false promises and are deprived of their basic rights at the workplace. Zero-hour contracts are open ended contracts that lack an agreed allocation of working hours and is used to position the migrants as outsiders and they are prevented from joining a trade union (Lever & Milbourne, 2017, p. 9). For example, a study in Germany found that Romanian meat workers were assured a better wage rate and incentives that would cover their accommodation and living expenses however, once they commenced employment the incentive costs were deducted from their wages (Wagner & Hassel, 2015, p. 6). In the study by Birke and Bluhm (2020), Syrian migrant workers working in a German meat processing plant stated that they were not paid for the first hour of work which was "stolen by

management" (p. 12), they were not paid when they were absent from work due to illnesses (p. 13) and they were unable to take a day off despite being rostered for five nights per week (p. 10). The extensive working hours mainly involved night shifts which became mentally and physically exhausting for the workers (Jenkins, 2018, p. 63) concurrently impacting their health (Birke & Bluhm, 2020, p. 11) and delayed wage payments prevented workers from resigning (Voivozeanu, 2019, p. 6). Similarly, meat workers in the UK described their work experience as a form of slavery and felt they were being treated like animals (p. 15) and there was no work ethics in the work culture (Tannock, 2015, p. 9). It is apparent from the literature that most migrant meat workers in some countries are being exploited using zero-hour contracts, through which they are being deprived of their entitlements at the workplace.

3.3 Working Conditions

A meat worker is often assigned activities under intensive working conditions that may have an impact on their body posture and cause a level of discomfort. This is usually in the case of manual work that requires repetitive movement of the body such as using cutting tools which requires extreme body strength and is identified as a risk factor for their health (Arvidsson et al., 2012; Lascano et al., 2019). The repetitive movements of certain body regions such as the neck, shoulders, arms and uncomfortable spine position, creates discomfort (Harmse et al., 2016, p. 14; Silva & Araújo, 2012, p. 3) causing pain and fatigue (Tirloni et al., 2012, p. 3). According to Reis et al. (2012, p. 4) workers who removed chicken parts from a conveyer belt in a processing plant, had to keep their arms raised above the shoulder line as the height of the belt is higher than an average shoulder height and as speed increases, there is discomfort in the shoulder joint due to inadequate anthropometric measurements. This is also considered dangerous because it causes abnormal nerve conditions in their hands (Jenkins, 2018, p. 63). Furthermore, high-intensive activities and overcrowded workspaces can also impact a workers' health and safety (Botti et al., 2015, p. 3) causing forced body posture and lack of space for movement (Lascano et al., 2019, p. 4). Consequently, the literature highlights that performing work that requires repetitive movement of the body parts and extreme body strength may cause body discomfort and impose a health risk for the workers.

The workplace temperature and the provision of proper working equipment is also a contributing factor towards an uncomfortable work environment. Chotiphan et al. (2020) analysed the association of cold related symptoms with workplace temperature and protective clothing for 300 chicken meat workers in Thailand. It was found that most of the workers developed cardiac and respiratory symptoms due to inadequate provision of thermal insulation and a decrease in performance while others had perceived symptoms such as cough, dry mouth and wheezing due to workplace cold (p. 8). In a study by Tirloni et al. (2018) cold storage workers had finger temperature less than 15 ºC despite using several overlapping hand gloves for thermal insulation (p. 11). Similarly, Silva and Araújo (2012) suggested that working in a cold environment reduced a worker's ability to concentrate decreasing overall productivity. Research also suggests that by working in cold exposed areas, workers develop high risk of musculoskeletal disorder compared to non-cold areas (Harmse et al., 2016; Piedrahita, 2005, p. 3). It is apparent from the literature that the workplace temperature and inadequate supply of proper safety gear impacts the health and performance of a worker.

Research evidence suggests that workplace accidents or injuries are mostly caused due to inadequate training or socio-demographic factors at the workplace and often these accidents are not reported to the relevant authority. A study by Birke and Bluhm (2020, p. 13) found that a worker had lost an arm because he was not trained on how to clean the factory machines. Another example from Jenkins (2018) stated that a factory worker was accidently killed by a hog splitting saw while another worker lost his leg in a grinder because of inadequate training (p. 63). A processing plant in Nairobi, Kenya identified that socio demographic factors are also a contributing factor towards workplace accidents apart from inadequate training (Makori et al., 2018). The young male workers and those with only primary education indicated a high rate of workplace injury such as severe wounds, frostbite, concussion, bone fracture and burns (p. 3). The most common form of injury was by an object that hit them while others got hurt by an animal or had a slip and fall (Makori et al., 2018; Ramos et al., 2018). However, despite the existence of company policies that require workers to report such injuries, most of them prefer not to report them due to fear of job loss compared to others who do report and hardly receive any form of compensation (Choi & Constance, 2019, p. 22; Stuesse, 2010, p. 9). Overall, the literature suggests that

migrant meat workers are often not provided with adequate health and safety training to prevent accidents at the workplace and those who are involved in such mishaps, do not report them as they fear losing their job.

3.4 Health-Related Concerns

Musculoskeletal disorder (MSD) is a common injury amongst meat processing workers that is caused by repetitive muscle movements of the upper limb (Lipscomb et al., 2008, p. 2). Arvidsson et al. (2012) stated that meat cutters displayed a high rate of disorder in their shoulders and hands due to constant physical workload. According to a study conducted in four meat processing plants in Colombia, the meat workers stationed at a cold exposed work area, indicated neck, shoulder and lower back pain which prevented the workers from carrying out their normal activities in everyday life (Piedrahíta et al., 2004, p. 5). The workers were assigned to manual work that involved repetitive movements of the hands in a standing position throughout the day (p. 4). Savescu et al. (2018) assessed 22 meat cutters from different processing plants around France and the results indicated that meat cutting activities and the type of tools used by a worker contribute immensely towards knife sharpening throughout the day which can lead to MSD (p. 5). Mechanisation may not be able to replace knives considering tasks like skinning and trimming which requires the use of knives but, forceful hand exertions may lead to MSD development (Harmse et al., 2016, p. 14). However, early detection of work-related musculoskeletal symptoms with the help of onsite prevention programs can assist in reducing further complications of MSD (Donovan et al., 2017, p. 3). The literature clearly shows that intense physical repetitive movements of certain body parts of the meat workers has a clear link to MSD development.

Carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS) is “the commonest entrapment neuropathy and is due to combined compression and traction on the median nerve at the wrist” (Chammas, 2014, p. 2). The speed in the movement of hands, wrists and upper arms is much higher amongst meat cutters in the production line and can cause CTS in both wrists (Arvidsson et al., 2012, p. 5). A study by Riccò and Signorelli (2017) on 434 meat workers in Northern Italy, showed increased risk of CTS on tasks that required pressure on hands, repetitive wrist movements and hand trauma (p. 8). Female workers were prone to be at a greater risk of developing CTS than males due to hormonal status being a risk factor (p. 7). According to

Reis et al. (2012), female workers have less strength level and high proportion of pain when performing repetitive tasks causing repetitive strain injury (pp. 5-6). Furthermore, working in a cold and moist environment during pro-longed shifts can also lead to a risk of developing CTS (Tefas et al., 2010, p. 2) and impact a workers health by resulting in long-term disability (Arcury et al., 2015, p. 8). Studies reveal that the nature of work performed by workers may lead to a risk of developing CTS which can have further impact on their health.

A process worker's health is prone to be affected not just physically but psychologically as well given the nature of their work. A group of beef packing workers in Nebraska, displayed a high prevalence of serious psychological distress amongst them and one of the major contributing factors was ethnicity (Leibler et al., 2017, p. 3). The participants revealed how a minority group of non-Hispanic white workers experience psychological distress compared to the predominant Hispanic workers (p. 4). This shows that work ethics and discrimination can have an impact on a person's mental health (Pernice & Brook, 1996, p. 5). Language barrier is also a form of distress caused amongst migrant workers as they are not able to express themselves and communicate with their co-workers in the fear of being misunderstood (Pot et al., 2020, p. 10). The lack of communication prevents migrants from socialising with their colleagues which leads to self-isolation causing psychological distress (Rajendran et al., 2017, p. 10). Cohidon et al. (2009, p. 3) found that women are more prone to emotional reactions and lack energy, which gets worse as age increases (p. 4). Hack-Polay (2012, p. 10) asserted that homesickness can also be a factor of self-isolation which can have an impact on a worker's productivity and cause distress. Furthermore, migrant meat workers often have an impact on the community through increased crime rates because of poor living conditions, lower level of income and self-isolation (Jenkins, 2018, pp. 65-66). The literature highlights that apart from physical health conditions, a worker can also suffer from mental health issues that can be caused due to discrimination, work ethics, communication gap, lack of community support and feeling homesick.

3.5 Summary

Chapter 2 of the present study has established that migrant workers are a significant part of the meat industry in New Zealand. This chapter has discussed the academic literature relating to meat workers in general, and migrant meat workers in other countries. Three key themes are highlighted in this chapter in relation to workplace challenges faced by meat process workers at the workplace. The literature has shown that migrant meat workers are often subject to exploitation through discrimination and deprived of their entitlements at the workplace with the provision of zero-hour contracts. The literature has highlighted that by using these contracts, employers can take advantage of the workers because they are vulnerable and desperate for work. Workers are also subject to discrimination either through job roles, gender or based on ethnicity which can lead to workplace abuse affecting productivity.

The literature has also revealed that meat workers are often made to work in poorly designed workspaces that may affect their health in the long run. The individual tasks assigned to workers determines their comfort level causing forced body posture through extreme use of body strength or constant repetitive body movements. The workplace ergonomics and provision of inadequate training can also cause accidents or injuries to the workers. There is much evidence that suggests that working in a meat factory increases the risk of developing health-related problems such as MSD, CTS, and psychological distress. This also depends on the type of work activity assigned and the work environment. Due to limited research on the New Zealand meat industry, most of the published research discussed in the literature review is based on international literature that focuses on the migrant meat workers. Therefore, the present study will focus on the work experience of migrant meat workers in New Zealand to address this research gap. Table 2 provides a summary of the three themes that are discussed in this chapter and the different aspects under each theme.

Table 2 Summary of the key themes of the literature review

TOPIC	KEY POINTS	AUTHORS	DISCUSSION
3.2 Exploitation of migrant workers	Discrimination	• Birke and Bluhm (2020) • Jenkins (2018) • Lever and Milbourne (2017)	Migrant workers are discriminated at the workplace based on their nationality.
	Employment disparity	• Paulson (2017) • McCabe & Hamilton (2015) • Birke & Bluhm (2020) • Choi & Constance (2019) • Stuesse (2010) • Tannock (2015)	The job role and level of superiority also pays a part in discriminating migrant workers from local workers.
	Zero-hour contracts	• Wagner & Hassel (2015) • Birke and Bluhm (2020) • Jenkins (2018) • Voivozeanu (2019) • Tannock (2015) • Lever and Milbourne (2017)	Provision of zero-hour contracts to workers deprives them of their entitlements at the workplace and gives employers an opportunity to exploit them.
3.3 Working Condition	Intensive work condition	• Arvidsson et al. (2012) • Lascano et al. (2019) • Harmse et al. (2016) • Silva & Araújo (2012) • Tirloni et al. (2012) • Reis et al. (2012) • Jenkins (2018) • Botti et al. (2015)	The workspace design and the allocated tasks performed by workers can affect their body posture if intensive work and repetitive movements of the body and hands are required.
	Working in cold temperature	• Chotiphan et al. (2020) • Tirloni et al. (2018) • Silva and Araújo (2012) • Harmse et al. (2016) • Piedrahita (2005)	Working in a cold environment without proper safety gear leads to health issues and reduces workers performance.
	Workplace accidents	• Birke and Bluhm (2020) • Jenkins (2018) • Makori et al. (2018) • Ramos et al. (2018) • Choi & Constance (2019) • Stuesse (2010)	Workers must be given proper training before commencing employment to avoid workplace accidents and injuries.

3.4 Health-Related Concerns	Musculoskeletal disorder	• Lipscomb et al. (2008) • Arvidsson et al. (2012) • Piedrahíta et al. (2004) • Savescu et al. (2018) • Harmse et al. (2016) • Donovan et al. (2017)	Workers who carry out constant physical workload and involve in manual work that requires repetitive movement of the body are prone to develop MSD.
	Carpal tunnel syndrome	• Chammas (2014) • Arvidsson et al. (2012) • Riccò and Signorelli (2017) • Reis et al. (2012) • Tefas et al. (2010) • Arcury et al. (2015)	Constant movement of hands, wrists and upper arms may put pressure on hands and cause hand trauma which can lead to CTS.
	Psychological distress	• Leibler et al. (2017) • Cohidon et al. (2009) • Jenkins (2018) • Pernice and Brook (1996) • Pot et al. (2020) • Rajendran et al. (2017) • Hack-Polay (2012)	Factors that affect workers psychologically in their line of work include ethnicity, poor health, hours of work, emotional reaction and poor living conditions, language concerns, lack of communication, self-isolation and homesickness which causes distress.

Chapter 4. Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the method used to achieve the aim of this research. The research is a mono-method qualitative approach based on one meat processing plant. This chapter begins with the research philosophy and how it relates to the research design. It is followed by the method of data collection which is through a focus group. This section is subdivided into sections that explains the purpose, design, procedure, and sample size. Subsequently, the details of the data analysis of the research is described. Finally, the limitations, reliability, and ethical considerations are explained towards the end of the chapter.

4.2 Research philosophy and design

A research philosophy simply describes the way in which data is collected, analysed and used regarding a phenomenon (Dudovskiy, n.d.). The philosophical underpinning is determined based on the nature of the research, whereas in this case it is the interpretivism philosophy. According to Saunders et al. (2019) the interpretivism philosophy "emphasises that humans are different from physical phenomena because they create meanings" (p. 149). This research is designed to be interpretive so that it can develop a comprehensive understanding of the workers interpretation of the workplace. This philosophy is considered as a "social construction of reality" because it gives meaning to activities and situations recreated in the social world through the interaction and interpretation of the people (Leavy, 2017, p. 13). Ryan (2018) reflected that interpretivism is subjective (p. 4) and has multiple realities based on individual perception (p. 5).

Exploratory research is a useful method to create a better understanding when there is insufficient research on a particular subject (Geoffrey et al., 2005; Leavy, 2017). This is because exploratory research is intended to discover and "gain insight about a topic of interest" (Saunders et al., 2019, p. 186). The present study focused on gaining an insight into the involvement of migrant meat process workers at the workplace in New Zealand. Creswell and Poth (2018) suggest that most qualitative research is exploratory as the topic may be new or has never been addressed which makes the researcher unaware on what is to

be examined (p. 35). Since the aim of the present study is to explore the work experience of migrant meat process workers in the New Zealand meat industry, the literature review conducted in Chapter 3 found inadequate research based on New Zealand migrant meat workers which indicates that exploratory research is appropriate for the present study (Leavy, 2017, p. 5).

The time horizon for this study is cross sectional and data collection is carried out at one particular time (Saunders et al., 2019, p. 212). The research design has a phenomenological approach that describes "the common meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or a phenomenon" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 75). Saunders et al. (2019) stated that interpretivist researchers gather information that is relevant to the research by focusing on the interpretation of the lived experiences of the participants (p. 149). This refers to the experiences of the workplace gained by the migrant workers from their perceived challenges and work history.

Furthermore, the method of data collection for the research is through focus group. A focus group is a mode of data collection from individuals who share similar experiences or opinion on a particular issue or topic of interest (Geoffrey et al., 2005, p. 169). Based on the sensitivity of this research topic, the workers may not be comfortable with sharing their issues individually hence, a focus group is able to create meaningful interaction between the researcher and participants (Saunders et al., 2019, p. 470) and encourage group participation. Therefore, the researcher is involved in the research as a moderator, conducting the focus group to gain knowledge based on what the participants reveal (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 41).

A focus group is considered as a standard method for qualitative research compared to other methods of data collection such as observation or surveys (Geoffrey et al., 2005, p. 169). Qualitative data is collected for this research as the experience of the migrant meat workers is being explored. An exploration is needed when trying to understand an issue which is best developed by talking to people rather than assuming perspectives from literature (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 45). Given that the research has an interpretivist

philosophy, qualitative data is intended to provide rich contextual information for a detailed analysis (Saunders et al., 2019, p. 179).

According to Leavy (2017) qualitative research generally has an inductive analysis approach, in order to build an understanding on what is being researched (p. 72). Using an inductive approach, the researcher intends to have an emergent design by identifying patterns or themes that may arise during the data collection (Dawson, 2009; Saunders et al., 2019). Table 3 summarises the overall research design used by the present study.

Table 3 Summary of research design

Overall Approach	**Design**	**Method**	**Role of researcher**	**Kind of data collected**	**Analysis Approach**
Exploratory	Phenomenology	Focus group	Involved	Qualitative	Inductive

4.3 Method: Focus Group

4.3.1 Purpose of focus group

A focus group is generally used to obtain an in depth understanding regarding people's perception and opinion on a certain issue (Then et al., 2014, p. 1). According to Krueger and Casey (2000) the aim of a focus group is to "listen and gather information" (p. 4) from a group of people who share similar backgrounds on a particular topic (p. 5). A focus group is the most ideal method of data collection for the present study, because the focus is on migrant workers who share similar experiences and backgrounds. Considering the shared experiences of the participants which is the focus of the research, a focus group should promote self-disclosure (Krueger & Casey, 2000, p. 7) and create meaningful interaction between the workers (Saunders et al., 2019, p. 470). Through this interaction, the workers will be more comfortable in expressing their point of view (Hennink et al., 2020, p. 138).

The workers who participated in this research come from different ethnic backgrounds and work history. Dawson (2009) suggests that having a diversified group of people generates a

wide range of response and a better understanding of the underlying factors relating to the topic of interest. A focus group is appropriate when an exploratory study is involved (Hennink et al., 2020, p. 138).

However, Then et al. (2014) argue that some of the limitations of a focus group may include reluctance of participants to open up in front of other participants due to trust issues, particularly if they are work colleagues (p. 2). Opinionated individuals are likely to influence the discussion and provoke debates which limits interaction and since the moderator does not have much control, it may lead to time constraints and discussion of irrelevant issues (p. 3).

4.3.2 Focus group design

A focus group is generally designed for a group of people to enable discussion (Hennink et al., 2020). The present study adopted the Krueger and Casey (2000) model, which describes the five categories of questions that make up a focus group. It begins with opening questions to make the participants feel comfortable and to build an understanding between the researcher and the participant (p. 44). Opening questions are followed by open-ended introductory questions that make the participants think on the topic of discussion and make connection with their own experiences (p. 44). The focus group involves transitional questions that prepares the participants before going onto the key questions (p. 45). The key questions are the main questions that drive the study which is inclusive of probing questions to generate meaningful results (p. 45). Each participant is given a chance to answer the questions to achieve quality information. The focus group session ends with closing questions and a possible post interview stage which will allow room for feedback and a question-and-answer session (p. 45).

In the present study, the focus group questions were designed according to Krueger and Casey's (2000) model (refer to Appendix B). A well-structured focus group usually begins with a welcome note and introduction, acknowledging participants for their time and effort towards the research, and the purpose of conducting the focus group (Hennink et al., 2020, p. 144). The questions for the present study were designed based on the research objectives while some questions were broken down into two parts to achieve detailed information.

The focus group discussion began with a welcome note which also acknowledged the participants for their availability. Following that an opening statement was made where participants were explained in detail about the research topic and the purpose of the research. They were also given some ground rules so that there were no interruptions during the discussion as everything was being recorded. To make the participants comfortable, some general questions were asked to start up a discussion and get the workers talking to each other and the researcher. This was followed by the discussion questions which were further elaborated if workers were unclear about a question. After the discussion, a closing statement was made to acknowledge the workers and to note additional information.

4.3.3 Procedure

The researcher had contacted the company and received approval from the Plant Manager, to conduct a focus group discussion with the migrant process workers. All relevant details and paperwork were sent to the company prior, so that they were able to inform the relevant department supervisors and arrangements could be made for workers who were interested in attending the focus group without disrupting production.

The processing plant is divided into two separate departments for lamb and beef production and because the beef section was closed, they were experiencing a shortage of workers which made it difficult to randomly select workers. Therefore, workers who were free or those who had 2-3 workers doing the same work in the same department were the ones sent to participate. Because of this, one of the participants was not a process worker, she was part of the engineering team, but she was interested in participating. For the convenience of the workers, the focus group discussion was held at the company's meeting room during their work hours which the company had offered and even though this caused some disruption to the production, the company had no issues and tried to accommodate the discussion in any way possible.

At the start of the focus group, the participants were given a detailed explanation on the purpose of the research, the role of the moderator, the use of recorders and the confidentiality of the information. The researcher conducted two separate focus groups as

there were eight participants. Focus group one took approximately 30 minutes while focus group 2 lasted for 15 minutes. The focus group was recorded on two mobile phones; one was for audio, and the other had a video recording which made it easier to identify the workers while transcribing.

4.3.4 Participants

According to Kitzinger (2005, p. 75) the size of a focus group can range from three to fifteen people, depending on the type of research to be conducted. Kitzinger also stated that an ideal group usually has an average of four to eight people in a group as a small group minimises the chances of getting much information while a very large group gives individuals less time to participate. The size of the focus group in the present study was reliant on the number of workers that were able to attend on the designated day.

Eight workers from different departments participated in two separate focus group with four in each, which was homogenous as they all shared similar work experiences. Once the number and names of workers were confirmed, they were divided into two separate groups as there were equal number of males and females. This was done so that the female workers did not feel uncomfortable sharing their experiences in front of the male workers. Table 4 provides a summary of the characteristics of the participants.

Table 4 Summary of the characteristics of the focus group participants

Focus Group 1	**Country of Origin**	**Position**	**Years of work experience in the meat industry**	**Age**
Female worker 1	Philippines	Bulk Packer	4 years	40-45
Female worker 2	Kenya	Packer	8 years	35-45
Female worker 3	Philippines	Trimmer	5 years	35-45
Female worker 4	China	Automation engineer	3 years	30-40
Focus Group 2				
Male worker 1	Samoa	Boner- Boning room	1 year	30-45
Male worker 2	Samoa	Trimmer	2.5 years	30-40
Male worker 3	Samoa	Boner	1 year	30-45
Male worker 4	Samoa	Boner	3 years	35-45

4.3.5 Data analysis

Data was collected through audio and video recordings, note taking and observation of non-verbal communication. The audio and video recordings for both sessions were transcribed using verbatim transcription. All participants were referred to as worker 1, worker 2 and so forth, to maintain the confidentiality of the sessions. The purpose of the study is to explore the work experience of migrant process workers and to achieve this information, a thematic analysis was used to analyse the transcripts. Thematic analysis is when themes are identified and analysed from a set of data collected (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2012). Themes were identified from the focus group discussion to analyse the research (Saunders et al., 2019, p. 651), as well as "explore different interpretations of the phenomenon" as required under the interpretivism philosophy (p. 652). Thematic analysis is a flexible mode of analysis because it can be conducted in several ways (Braun & Clarke, 2012, p. 58).

According to Braun and Clarke (2012) thematic analysis is comprised of six phases and begins with familiarising oneself with the data collected (p. 4). This was done by listening and watching the audio and video recordings. The transcripts were re-read, and cross checked with the original source so that no information was left out. The researcher read through the written notes which were taken during the discussion to highlight points of interest. The next step required creation of initial codes that provided a summary of a portion of the data which can also provide an underlying interpretation of what participants meant but did not convey during the discussion (p. 5). The third step is to search for themes and recognize the relationship in the data collected (Saunders et al., 2019, p. 689). Themes were extracted from the focus group discussion and coded data by identifying common topics or issues raised by the participants. The next step is to review the potential themes and check against the collected data to see if the themes are relevant, need to be combined or separated into a different theme (Saunders et al., 2019, p. 691). The fifth step is to define and name the themes and finish off with the last step of writing the final report (Braun & Clarke, 2012, p. 13).

Using an interpretivist philosophy and thematic analysis, an inductive approach is more

ideal because themes are derived from the data and not imposed by the researcher (Dawson, 2009, p. 119). A complete set of themes were established from the data collected instead of using pre-existing ideas (Saunders et al., 2019, p. 652). Since the research is a mono-method qualitative study, there is no triangulation of data involved.

4.4 Limitations, reliability, and bias

4.4.1 Limitations

Due to limited time and resources only one meat processing plant was chosen for the research, hence the generalisability of the study is limited. A further limitation concerns the participation of workers. It was difficult to get the workers at the same time because there were different shift schedules for everyone, and the beef section was closed which meant that they had short staff. Pulling workers out of their work for the discussion meant halting of production process for at least 40 minutes which was inconvenient for some departments considering they had labour shortage. This led to only some supervisors releasing their staff for the discussion which resulted in only eight participants being able to take part in the research.

Furthermore, after the completion of the focus group, the researcher became aware that some workers were not comfortable participating in the focus group because they assumed that the discussion involved their visa conditions and so they feared that participating in the discussion would jeopardise their employment. Some workers also feared to participate as they thought that the researcher was from the company and if they would say something negative then they may lose their job. Despite the Plant Manager and HR explaining the procedure and details of the focus group, the workers were not willing to participate, and the researcher had no control over this.

Further limitations concern the quality of the focus group 2 discussion. It was difficult to conduct the male focus group discussion as the workers found it difficult to understand English. The questions were asked in general, broken down for easier understanding and translated by one member of the group so that everyone could understand. Because of this, the focus group lasted for about 15 minutes and majority of the members were only

nodding in agreement rather than answering the questions and so an in-depth discussion never really took place. Compared to focus group 1 which was lively and informative, focus group 2 was rather slow and some participants got bored and did not pay much attention.

A final limitation concerns the timing of the research. The meat factory closes for Christmas break for 2 weeks and some workers may take longer holidays depending on their leave. This made the researcher conduct the focus group earlier as workers would not have been available later. And because of this, the factory was busy clearing their production stock which also affected the release of staff to participate in the discussion.

4.4.2 Delimitations

Having equal number of male and female workers, the researcher decided to divide them into 2 groups so that it is easier to engage with everyone and get individual opinion. Furthermore, the focus of this research is on migrant process workers only and not on the meat workers in general which limits the findings to only one specific category of workers. A qualitative method was chosen for this research to get an in-depth information from the participants and no other method was involved. Another delimitation of the research was geographical, as only the Otago region in South Island was chosen for the present study.

4.4.3 Reliability, Validity and Bias

According to Roberts and Priest (2006), the reliability of a research demonstrates the credibility of the research findings (p. 1) while validity is the accuracy of the findings (Brink, 1993). To confirm the reliability of a research, the research method should be able to generate consistent results through continuous testing (Brink, 1993, p. 1). Two focus groups were conducted to collect data for the present study and the same set of questions were used for both groups. Additionally, the focus group discussions were recorded as audio and video to increase the reliability and maintain accuracy of the results. Roberts and Priest (2006) found that researcher biasness creates difficulty in achieving validity in qualitative research (p. 4). The validity of the focus group was not compromised because of the homogeneity of the group. The group comprised of only migrant process workers, they

did not have any issues in voicing your opinions and because the females were separate from the males, the researcher felt that the females were more outspoken compared to the males. Another factor that emerged from having a homogeneous focus group was that most of the themes were similar to both males and females and the most common one identified was language being a barrier.

The response of the participants is determined by the status position of the researcher who can be an outsider or part of the focus group (Brink, 1993, p. 2). The present study was based on migrant workers and the researcher is also a migrant. This has influenced the way the present study has been conducted and the scope of this research. In research practice, the reliability is based on consistency which is reflected in the research and the limits of the findings (Cypress, 2017, p. 4). Furthermore, to capture accurate information from the workers, the focus group was held in a closed meeting room to prevent being overheard by the office staff. However, the response from the workers may not have been reliable if they were affected by circumstances as such not trusting the researcher. Because of the distrust and fear of risking their employment, it was observed that workers mentioned very little challenges based on the work they do. It was also observed that the workers gave positive responses about the company and the co-workers and used one-word answers to describe a situation they prefer not to elaborate further.

4.5 Ethical considerations

4.5.1 Method: Focus Group

Ethical consideration is an essential aspect of research when human participation is involved (Saunders et al., 2019, p. 232) and for the present study this applies to the migrant process workers. Ethics approval was obtained from the SIT Ethics Committee for this study. Refer to Appendix A for a copy of the approval letter and Appendix C for a copy of the ethics application. It is also worth noting that the research supervisor is also the Chair of the SIT Ethics Committee. To manage this conflict of interest, when the ethics application for this project was considered by the Committee, the Chair excused herself and the meeting was presided over by an alternative member of the Committee while the application was being considered.

The ethical principles of the SIT policy were upheld during the period of conducting the study to ensure anonymity and privacy of the participants. The participants were provided a copy each of the Participant Information Sheet (refer to Appendix D) at the beginning of the focus group to explain the purpose and benefits of the research. The participants were explained the procedure of the focus group and adherence to confidentiality. Participation was re-confirmed since it was voluntary, and they had the right to withdraw at any point in time without being disadvantaged. After they had been briefed on the research, the participants were given the Consent Form (refer to Appendix E) to confirm participation. Participants' names were not mentioned in the report as they were given full anonymity and their names were changed to worker 1, worker 2 and so forth throughout the research. The same was applied to the meat processing plant as they were given the approved ethics application and provided assurance for anonymity throughout the research, and they gave permission for the research to take place at their plant. The letter provided to the meat factory to obtain approval, could not be included as an Appendix because to do so would result in the processing plant being identified.

Data collected from the research was kept confidential and only accessible to the researcher and supervisor. The hard copies of the consent form, information sheet and written notes were kept in a locked storage facility while the electronic copies of the transcript, were stored on a password protected laptop. According to the SIT research policy, all data collected will be destroyed after five years.

4.6 Summary

This chapter highlights the mono-method qualitative design used by this research. The research philosophy adapted is interpretivism which is used to create a meaningful interpretation of the work experience of the migrant meat process workers. The research has an exploratory approach because it explores the work experience of the workers with a cross sectional time horizon. The research design is phenomenological, so that it focuses on the lived experience of the workers through their perceived challenges, equal employment opportunities and social interaction level at the workplace. The data is collected through

two separate focus groups comprising of four males and four females. The data has been analysed using thematic analysis where themes are identified from the data collected which makes this an inductive approach. Some of the major limitations of the research include time constraints, shortage of staff, and difficulty in getting participants for the focus group discussion. Since people are involved in the research, an ethics approval was obtained from the SIT ethics committee to carry out the study.

The next chapter is focused on the findings of the data collected through the focus group discussion.

Chapter 5 Findings and Analysis

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the findings of the focus group discussion that was conducted with the migrant meat workers. To address the research aim of exploring the work experience of migrant process workers in the New Zealand meat industry, the focus group discussion was based on four key objectives that involved discovering the reason behind migration of workers to New Zealand, understanding their perception of workplace challenges, access to equal employment opportunities, and social relationship with their co-workers at the workplace.

Two focus groups were conducted to collect data for the present study and the results are analysed using thematic analysis where themes emerged from the data. Firstly, the themes are identified from the findings and tabulated to show the similarity between the two groups. Secondly, the findings are discussed and presented in italicised direct quotes from the participants with inclusion of words in square brackets for grammatically incorrect sentences. Lastly, the findings are discussed in relation to the relevant theories discussed in chapter two and pieces of key literature.

5.2 Findings

5.2.1 Method: Focus Group

The data collected for this research was with two groups of workers at a meat processing plant. As discussed in the previous chapter, two focus groups were conducted with four male and four female workers. Focus group 1 comprised of female migrant workers from the packing and engineering department. The workers were from different countries namely, Philippines, China, and Kenya. They were familiar with each other and comfortable speaking in each other's presence. Some of them shared similar experiences in their line of work or personal life. Focus group 2 comprised of male process workers from the lamb boning department. All four workers were from Samoa and shared similar work experiences. The workers range between 30 to 45 years of age and most of them had been

in New Zealand for more than two years. Due to ethical consideration, the names of the participants are not mentioned throughout the discussion and they were referred to as worker 1, worker 2 and so forth to maintain anonymity. With the qualitative nature of the research, it adopts an inductive approach to build an understanding and "allow meanings to emerge from the data collected in order to identify patterns" (Saunders et al., 2019, p. 52). Using the inductive approach to identify patterns or themes, the present study has used the Braun and Clarke (2006) thematic analysis method to analyse the data collected. This method involves themes being developed from the focus groups. Table 5 presents a summary of the seven themes and how they were discussed in each of the focus groups.

Table 5 Comparison of themes across the two focus groups

Themes	**Key Findings**	
	Female Focus Group	Male Focus Group
1. Building a better life	• Accompanied their spouse and brought their families to work in New Zealand.	• To cater for their families back in their home country. • Loved their job.
2. Appreciating a better working environment	• Better work experience in New Zealand compared to their home country. • Good working relationship with their boss. • Lower stress level	• No changes in work experience compared to their home country.
3. Workplace challenges	• Changing responsibilities • Aging makes work difficult • Work ethics of co-workers	• Work ethics of co-workers
4. Worker rights	• Understand basic work rights • Support from trade union • No gender inequality	• Understand basic work rights
5. Language barriers creating communication gap	• Prevents from socialising • Not able to understand Kiwi humour	• Difficult to communicate with workers.

6. Language barriers demotivating growth	• Prevents taking part in interviews. • Fear of being misunderstood	
7. Social isolation	• No social life due to work commitments • Smaller community of people from the same culture. • Homesickness	

5.2.2 Focus Group Themes

5.2.2.1 Building a better life

The concept of building a better life presented as a dominant theme in the women's focus group. Although they were all from different countries and backgrounds, they mostly spoke about building a better future for their families and themselves. Three participants were working mothers and the main reason behind their move, was to follow their husbands to New Zealand through employment opportunities:

I came here obviously looking for a better life. My husband came here first and then we followed him. (Female worker 2)

I already [had a] job in China but I still decided to go to university to study for my Master's degree… I also think it's a good opportunity for me to improve on my career. (Female worker 4)

Working at the meat factory had been a decision through choice and to have access to better working conditions. Some workers were recommended by a family friend to work at the meat factory while others decided to take up a different career path due to personal reasons which landed them a job at the meat factory:

Just came here [and] followed my husband because my husband is [the]principal [applicant] so we [are] dependent on him. (Female worker 1)

Me and my husband worked at the dairy farm and my son [was] back home and [when] we took him in, the owner of the farm [told us] you cannot bring your kids [to work at] the farm. So, I [thought] to look for another job. (Female worker 3)

Through the discussions, some of the workers revealed that they had been doing a different job when they arrived in New Zealand. For example, female worker 3 mentioned that her first New Zealand employment was working at the dairy farm. She could not bring her kids to live with her at the farm as this was not allowed by the owner of the farm. So, because of this and to build a better career, she decided to look for other job opportunities which led her to work at the meat factory.

The male focus group also made similar statements when asked about their decision to migrate. The workers stated in agreement that the decision to migrate was to support their families back in their home country:

We love to work here [and] we love the job. [There is] more money [in this job and we can] help our family. (Male worker 3).

The male process workers had spent more than a year in New Zealand and enjoyed working at the factory as they were able to earn money for their family back in their home country. The male workers did not provide personal details regarding their family, but they did mention that they loved their job.

5.2.2.2 Appreciating a better working environment

Another theme in the data is that of appreciating a better working environment. This theme concerns the comparison of work experience between the workers home country and in New Zealand. It also mentions the comparison of work experience between a previous job in New Zealand and at the meat factory. The female workers have had different years of work experience at the meat factory ranging from 3 – 8 years. It is apparent from the data that their work experiences have changed in comparison to their previous job. Some of the workers compared their current employment to their previous New Zealand employment, while others compared it to work back home. The first comparison of work experience is between their home country and the meat factory. The female workers explained that in their home country job they were not able to enjoy their work environment as they had strict rules to follow and they were not allowed to socialise with high level management.

The workers described how they would fear their bosses /supervisors whenever they come across each other and because of the status gap, bosses are not friends as they are highly respected in the company. Because of this, and being in a highly stressed work environment, the workers became emotionally drained.

In China, your boss is your boss but in New Zealand even your boss cannot order you too much, that is the difference. It is like [when] you are right your boss cannot say anything but in China you have to listen to your boss. (Female worker 4)

I used to work in my country too and when you meet your boss you almost kneel like you fear your boss. But here your boss and you are equal. (Female worker 3 adds to female worker 4's opinion)

In comparison to New Zealand work experience the workers talked about how they were able to express their concerns with their bosses. Their supervisors were not dominating the work environment which made it comfortable to work in and it was easy to socialise with everyone. It is evident that in the New Zealand work culture, bosses treat their subordinates fairly at the workplace. They mostly encourage workers to participate in contributing ideas and feedback to improve their services. This may be due to the friendly Kiwi culture which reflects the way they do business by creating a comfortable working environment.

Furthermore, the stress level is also low while working at the meat factory for the female workers. Due to the comfortable work environment and not being pressurised by their supervisors, they are able to work stress free. Because of the work being less stressful the workers can enjoy their work with other co-workers and look for more opportunities within the company to develop their career:

It's all good [in] my area in [the] bulk pack, [I am] enjoying because there are heaps of Filipinos also there (Female worker 1)

Now that you know you have the opportunity to grow and to use your skills and build your career. [Working at the meat factory is] a great opportunity (Female worker 3)

Working in a less stressful work environment, motivates workers and can reduce regular absenteeism. From the response and laughter of the workers, it was evident that they

enjoyed their work, and they did not have to worry about anything else apart from the work they were assigned to complete.

The second comparison is from their previous New Zealand employment to their current employment at the meat factory. For example, female worker 2 and 3 were previously employed at a dairy farm and in comparison, to their current employment, they are quite satisfied being meat process workers:

It's great over here because you know you are working as a team and over there (dairy farm) it would be just you. Well, it is a team over there but it's just a few people and you would [have] responsibilities. But here, there is no responsibility and you are working as a team you know. When you [are] done you go home…nobody would be asking you," oh did you do that"? No, so it's good [and] I love it. (Female worker 2)

It's more stressful there (dairy farm) because it's not like when you go home, someone is [going to] call you at 8 or 9 or 10 in the evening and say "oh the cows are ready" ...and here it's like you are done and you go home. (Female worker 3)

Moreover, the male focus group mentioned that there was not much difference when comparing their previous employment back home with working at the meat factory. Because everyone was involved in different jobs such as being a mechanic or taxi driver, the only difference was the type of work that they had to perform as process workers. The work was much difficult than what they used to do back in their home country but gradually it became easier once they had adjusted to it.

5.2.2.3 The changing workplace

Changing job responsibilities

The next theme is that of the changing workplace that affects the workers and their performance. The male focus group gave limited information on their changing responsibilities. However, they did mention that the work was difficult at the start of the season but then it became easier once the seasons changed. Even though the work was hard, they believed to be the best in their department:

We love [the job because] we [are]the best boners in the room… (Male worker 3)

Furthermore, the female focus group agreed that there were some challenges relating to changing job responsibilities. With job rotation and changing seasons, comes different responsibilities. They are often made to work in different departments depending on the stock count and other unforeseen circumstances that often arise at the processing plant:

Every day and every season are not the same…Each day you keep on thinking of doing better things you know that are not hard…For now I am good because with the changes, they give us a new department and so things got way easier than before. We hope everything is [going to] be good [from now] onwards (Female worker 2).

Well you know we have changing orders in our department and so sometimes it's hard and sometimes it's easy (Female worker 2).

Depending on the production and the season, the work can become demanding at times that creates issues for the workers. While the participants spoke of difficulties at the beginning of their employment it was clear that they were now familiar with the processes and were able to adapt to the changing circumstances.

Aging workforce

Moreover, the female workers spoke about how aging had made their work difficult in relation to the changing responsibilities:

It's getting harder [because we are] getting older. [We experience] body pain every day. (Female worker 1).

All the female workers agreed with each other in terms of this issue. They explained how the work was affecting their body and making it difficult to carry out intense tasks at times. It may not be the case all the time, but they do feel that with age and the changing seasons they are finding the work more challenging.

Work ethics

Through discussion, it was revealed that some co-workers were making work difficult because of their work ethics. The problem was due to regular absence of workers in various departments of the factory. The female focus group participants mentioned that if a worker

did not show up to work, then other staff members would have to take up their work for the day. The same is applied when a worker is not working up to expectation, then other workers in the same production line would have to complete their task. Some workers showed a bad attitude towards their work by being grumpy or lazy and causing disruption in production process:

[Sometimes] you have a lazy person [at work] or someone who doesn't come to work every day and then you have to share [the workload]. So yeah, it's challenging sometimes (Female worker 2).

The female workers explained how this was a challenge for them, but it was also a common issue as there were mostly high rates of absenteeism at the meat factory due to the workload.

The male workers did not elaborate much on workplace challenges but made a slight comment that sometimes work can get challenging.

5.2.2.4 Worker rights

Trade union

The next theme identified from the focus group was based on the entitlements of the workers. Both the groups were not clear on how to respond, when asked about their views on equal employment opportunity (EEO). They were further explained about EEO in terms of racism, gender equality, worker rights and being paid on time. The female workers only knew the basic leave entitlements that they had and mainly relied on the union for most of their issues. Especially when they are given documents to sign and they do not have the time to read them or are having difficulty in reading them, they simply rely on the union for assistance or further explanation. All the workers were part of the union and they all agreed that the union was always available to assist them whenever the need arises:

We don't actually know the law, but we have somewhere to ask for help. Normally if we have any questions, [we] ask the union which I think is good [because] not everyone has the time and energy to read all the laws and understand everything. (Female worker 4).

However, the male focus group were uncertain on the basic employment laws that covered them as employees. Apart from their leave entitlements, they were not aware of any other

regulation nor did they mention that they were part of the union or had union assistance. Male worker 3 was the only one who responded with a "yes" when asked if he knew about employment laws, while others nodded in agreement.

Equality

Moreover, the female workers felt that there was gender equality at the workplace because they were never discriminated at work. According to the workers, there were equal number of male and female workers in most departments to maintain equality at the workplace. This also did not demoralise the women from taking up senior roles at the factory because the positions were determined based on their skills and capabilities rather than gender:

I think that if there is any job opening and you are confident, and you know the job and if you [want to] apply for the job then you can. It's not like a man's or woman's job…as long as you know [the work] (Female worker 3).

Looking at the role requirements, certain work requires only women or just men to carry out a particular task. For example, the meat factory processes halal (permissible) meat for its export market which means the slaughtering process can only be done by Muslim men. This does not incite discrimination rather, taken as allocation of duties and adherence to policies:

It's just the kind of job [you do]. Like I have never thought [why] there is no men [in this department]. It's not like you are discriminated here, no it is not like that. It's just the type of job [they do] (Female worker 2).

The male focus group was also asked about equal employment opportunities and they were given examples of gender inequality or discrimination at the workplace. One of the workers mentioned that there are times when they are not treated equally as the locals but when the participants were asked to elaborate there was no further information provided.

I don't think so [Māori and Samoans are treated equally]. (Male worker 3)

We are boning people [and maybe] the only people inside the job. The first time we see the people working in the company especially some Māori guys is good, sometimes we [are on] good[terms] sometimes we [are]not good. That's the issue… (Male worker 1).

It was evident that the workers did experience some issues while working alongside the local workers. They did not seem comfortable sharing their experience as they did not further comment on what kind of issues they had. In addition, they were finding it difficult to explain more of their challenges.

5.2.2.5 Language barriers creating a communication gap

A strong theme brought up from the data is that of language being a barrier and creating communication gap. While English is the most widely spoken language in New Zealand, in some countries it is considered as a second language. Because of this, migrant workers who may not be fluent in English find it difficult to communicate with their co-workers. The female workers stated that language was one of the biggest challenges faced by them and often deprived them from socialising with their colleagues as they were unable to understand Kiwi humour or partake in a conversation:

They mainly talk about some joke [which] I cannot understand, and I don't think it's funny. They just laugh and I don't know what [they said]. (Female worker 4).

And the reason for that is English is not our language, it's our second language and you will be like 'I did not get that'. Even [for me] my children are more kiwi because they came here when they were younger. So, when they crack jokes its [the] same because you are like 'what was that'? (Female worker 2).

As an immigrant you have to make more effort to work as a team with them because sometimes what they are talking about doesn't make sense to us. Besides I am the only woman in my engineering team [and the other men] talk about sports or something [that] I don't know [much about]. I cannot find a topic to talk with them. I can just always talk about the weather [and make] small talk because they are very friendly Kiwi guys and they want to find something to talk to you but you don't have any topic to talk with them and sometimes you feel weird. (Female worker 4).

The female workers spoke about how they felt awkward when having a conversation with their workmates. Whenever someone made a humorous comment, they would just laugh because everyone was doing so and not because they understood. Communicating with workmates had been difficult in the beginning when they first joined the meat factory as they had a different English accent compared to the migrant workers. However, as they

became comfortable in their work environment, they are gradually trying to overcome this challenge.

Moreover, the male focus group also shared similar experiences by identifying language as a barrier. One of the male workers mentioned that when they commenced employment, they had some issues while working alongside with the local workers but gradually they have overcome that experience:

Some people [want to] talk [but] because of the language [you cannot] understand what they are saying sometimes. (Male worker 3)

Sometimes you [just] listen [but] hardly say [anything]. (Male worker 1)

Due to the language barrier, the workers spoke about how they had difficulty in communicating with their co-workers which further discouraged them from voicing their opinions at work or talking with other workers as they felt they might be misunderstood.

5.2.2.6 Language barriers demotivating growth

The next theme is that of language as a barrier which demotivates growth at the workplace. This creates a lack of confidence in the workers when applying for a new role. There is always a fear of being misunderstood and not being able to express oneself. The female workers found it difficult to express their views or speak clearly while doing an interview and so they decide not to apply for any new roles even though they have the required experience and skills to carry out that job:

Sometimes you feel you should apply for [a] vacancy here. Something [in a] higher [position] then you [and you] feel you can do it. But [then] something makes you leave it [and that] will be [the] language. Will people understand what I am [trying to] say?... I will leave it to someone else… that language barrier makes you feel inferior sometimes. (Female worker 2)

Every morning there is a streamline meeting within the department and the workers mentioned that they were afraid to raise any complaints with the supervisor to avoid saying something wrong and feeling embarrassed in front of other workers:

We have streamline meetings in the morning and sometimes you [want] to bring up a complaint but you will you fear. You get that fear [because] you will be working with white people and I [may] say something and it will be [wrong]. So nope, not saying anything. It's just that [it] is on your mind all the time and it's not your language even though you know how to talk but the accent is the problem. So as a migrant in a different country that is a challenge. (Female worker 2).

The workers do know how to speak in English, but they find it difficult because of the different accents being used by people. They feel that as a migrant this challenge is faced by other migrants as well. The data suggests that they felt like they could contribute more towards meetings and give suggestions, but they felt uncomfortable speaking in front of the other workers. Contributing your opinion and thoughts creates fear of being misunderstood which further demotivates them from taking a step forward in their career.

5.2.2.7 Social isolation

Lack of community

Another theme that emerged from the data is that of social isolation. Under this theme, two aspects are discussed which are having a lack of community and feeling of being homesick. With busy work schedules and differing shift timings, the female participants mentioned that they were not able to socialise with friends or workmates after hours as they do not have time. If there is a work get together then only, they may meet up, otherwise they simply do not have time for any kind of outing:

We don't have a life anymore here… just one day off in a week. (Female worker 1)

Workers expressed how having people from your own culture at the workplace and in the local community makes a difference compared to being a minority:

The Filipinos are so many [and] they [have] a community [here] so [as] you know they will be meeting often, like more often than me. I [have]got no one who is like me here so it [is] hard. Maybe once in a while we can go out with other migrants like them (Filipinos) but the problem [is] like social life is way down there. (Female worker 2).

According to them, if you have people from your home country living and working at the same place, it makes it a lot easier to adjust to a new country and you are given assistance either physically or emotionally. For example, rules and regulations for certain things are different for different countries. If people have support from their friends and families who already live in New Zealand, then it becomes easier to adjust in the country. But then if you do not have people from your same culture in the community, there are more chances of feeling lonely and you prefer to isolate yourself and with language being a barrier, it may be difficult to socialise as well.

Homesickness

Another aspect of social isolation is homesickness. With the lack of people in the community and being distant from family members, creates a feeling of being homesick especially when you are away from your home country for extended periods. The female workers mentioned how they miss their family back in their home country, but it was not possible to be with them. The workers also stated that they do have a work family, but they are not provided with the same comfort as their own family. For instance, female worker 4 was from China and her parents were not able to travel to New Zealand as they had some visa issues:

You feel lonely sometimes and you miss your parents. These people are friendly, but they are not your family and that is different. (Female worker 4)

Another reason that was brought up was because of the pandemic, workers were not able to travel outside of New Zealand due to closed borders:

Even [for] us, we still want [to] go home every like year or every 2 years. We have time to go home but right now [we can't] in this pandemic. (Female worker 3)

The workers were quite disappointed they were not able to travel to their home country and meet their families. Due to COVID 19, international borders had been closed to stop the virus from entering and spreading into the country. Because the borders were closed and the quarantine expenses, the workers were not able to travel out of the country as they may lose their jobs if they do not return. They also mentioned that the company should have

some type of visa for them and their families so that they are able to bring them to New Zealand.

5.3 Discussion

The present study was intended to explore the perception of migrant workers' work experiences in the meat industry. To understand the work experience of the workers, the research discussion is based on four key objectives. Firstly, it will identify the reasons behind the movement of migrant meat workers to New Zealand. Secondly, it will explore the perceived workplace challenges faced by the workers at the workplace. Thirdly, it will determine if the workers have access to equal employment opportunities and lastly, it will determine the social relationship with co-workers at the workplace. The purpose of the discussion section is to consider the results and compare its relevance to the previous literature.

5.3.1 To identify the reasons behind the movement of migrant meat workers to New Zealand.

The first objective of the research is to identify the reasons behind the movement of migrant workers to New Zealand. The results of both the focus group discussions indicated that the workers decided to migrate to New Zealand so that they can build a better life for themselves and their families. According to Stanojoska and Petrevski (2012, p. 3) this factor for movement is identified as an economic push factor that improves standard of living. Another major reason to migrate was mentioned by the female participants, who followed their spouse because they were the primary applicant who migrated first on a work visa. Previous studies indicate that under the new economics of labour migration, the reason to migrate is mainly based on a family decision and most of the time the whole family migrates for better opportunities and returns after a period of time (Constant & Massey, 2002; Massey et al., 1993; Wickramasinghe & Wimalaratana, 2016). In the present study it was unclear whether the participants will return to their homeland or decide to settle in New Zealand permanently.

5.3.2 To ascertain the perception of workplace challenges by migrant workers.

The second objective of the research is to ascertain the perception of the workplace challenges by the meat workers. From the present study it has been revealed that the migrant meat workers do have ongoing workplace challenges that affects their work performance. The first challenge is that of language as a barrier contributing towards the underdevelopment of the migrant workforce. With the fear of being misinterpreted, workers decide not to take up challenging roles at the workplace as they are not able to express themselves. This is similar to a study by Pot et al. (2020) which states that workers avoid communication because they feel inferior and try not to be ashamed in front of co-workers for saying something wrong (p. 10).

Another workplace challenge identified from the themes was based on body pain and exhaustion due to aging. According to the female participants as they grew older, they experience more body pain every day. These findings are similar to that of Cohidon et al. (2009, p. 9) which stated that women become more prone to emotional reaction and lack energy as age increases which affects their overall health and quality of work. A study by Reis et al. (2012) in Brazil presented similar results that show that due to a lower strength level, women incur more pain and are prone to diseases and swelling of joints (p. 5). With increasing age comes hormonal changes that affects each women differently but in the long run it can be identified as a risk factor for Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (Riccò & Signorelli, 2017, p. 7). While pain and exhaustion for meat workers is commonly discussed in the literature (Cohidon et al., 2009; Reis et al., 2012; Riccò & Signorelli, 2017), the present study only covers a small aspect of what has come out of the collected data. The issue of body pains was only mentioned by the female workers, but it was not to such an extent that they suffered any other issues. The female workers had worked in the meat factory for more than five years and due to that they may be experiencing more pain compared to the male workers who had been in employment for less than three years. Although the male workers did not actually mention body pain, but they did state the work was difficult at times.

Another contributing factor towards workplace challenge is the work ethics of some co-workers. The present study revealed how the work ethics of some co-workers affected the overall production process causing overload of work for the other workers. The relevance

of the findings as far as 1990s suggests that the attitudes regarding work ethics and general prejudice at the workplace, often affects a person's mental health (Pernice & Brook, 1996, p. 5). A Welsh factory in Merthyr claims that local workers are disinterested, bad workers with no work ethics and lack discipline in the work culture (Tannock, 2015, p. 9). From the present study the workers stated that often work ethics were judged based on the workers attendance and their commitment towards their work.

Furthermore, the male workers hinted that they had encountered some forms of discrimination between Māori and Samoans at the workplace. This finding confirms the results of an earlier study by Pernice and Brook (1996) that found that most reported cases of workplace discrimination were either Southeast Asian or Pacific Island immigrants (p. 5). Due to the prevailing negative stereotype, often Samoans felt resented because they were assumed to be unskilled and uncivilized workers who would agree to take up tasks that were rejected by the local workers (p. 6). Even though the male workers did not fully explain the type of discrimination they faced with their co-workers, one of them did make a statement that they considered themselves as "the best boners" in the lamb boning department. Choi and Constance (2019) state that matters relating to discrimination often lead to workplace abuse (p. 22) however, in the present study it was not reported at all.

Moreover, from the response received, it was evident that both groups were satisfied with their employment at the meat factory in comparison to their home country. The Samoan male workers described how they were the best boners in the department, and no one could perform better than them. One of the common aspects raised by both groups was the approachable nature of their supervisors, which gave them a chance to hear and be heard. However, this finding is contradictory to previous studies such as that by Birke and Bluhm (2020, p. 7) who found that migrant workers are discriminated based on their job roles and the superiority level is given to the locals only while migrants are left to do the dirty work. Moreover, the workers revealed that working with New Zealand supervisors and a good team helps keep a stress-free work environment.

5.3.3 To determine if migrant workers have access to equal employment opportunities

The third objective is to find out if the workers have access to equal employment opportunities (EEO). To be able to have access to EEO, the workers are to understand their

rights under the employment laws. It was apparent that not everyone was aware of their rights as migrant workers, but they did have access to EEO as they were union members. The involvement of unions at the workplace was considered beneficial for migrant workers as it protected them from exploitation, and they were able to rely on them for any employment matters. The New Zealand meat industry is highly unionised and migrant workers are all union members. The meat factories encourage workers to join the union and they are well looked after by the union representatives. There is no opposition from the company in joining the union and the workers are very much dependent on them. This situation in New Zealand differs markedly with that in the UK, as illustrated in a study by Lever and Milbourne (2017, p. 8) which states that some UK meat factories strongly oppose union membership by trying to keep trade unions out of the workplace and because of this, migrant workers are continually exploited at the workplace and trade unions do not have the authority to deal with their complaints.

Another aspect of EEO is equality at the workplace. The present study indicates that gender equality is not an issue amongst the workers at the meat factory. However, it was observed that some of the jobs were clearly based on the role requirement for example, slaughtering was done by Muslim men only due to company policy requirement. This however, is different to the findings of Paulson (2017) who found that jobs were determined based on gender rather than the role requirement which created division amongst the workers as work was based on their preference. The workers in the present study did not share similar stories.

5.3.4 To determine the social relationship between co-workers

The last objective is understanding the social relationship between the participants and their co- workers. Language is seen as a common issue for migrant workers because it affects their daily communication. Both groups raised concerns that because of not being fluent in English and with the different accents, they were not able to socialise with their co-workers in fear of being misunderstood. This aligns with the findings from Rajendran et al. (2017) based on a study conducted on migrants from Australia who states that the Australian sense of humour was difficult to understand because of the accent and the use of “local” English (p. 12). This made socialising at work a form of psychological distress as finding topics for

their conversation or integrating with locals was more challenging compared to workplace issues (p. 10).

Furthermore, it is evident from the present study that the non-existence of people from your own culture in the community and at the workplace often leads to a social isolation and contributes towards the lack of interaction amongst co-workers. The participants stated that because of different working hours and the occasional department rotation, they are not able to socialise with other colleagues. They also experience isolation if there are not many people working at the workplace from their home country. Study reveals that having relations with people who belong to a majority in a diverse workplace is better than being a minority member, because it makes them feel part of the workplace (Bergbom & Kinnunen, 2014, p. 9). Similarly, with the constant interaction with co-workers, positive emotions creates a high sense of wellbeing and belonging regardless of cultural background (Pot et al., 2020, p. 12).

The sense of belonging can also help to ease the pain of being home sick and keeps workers motivated at work. Workers mentioned how they wanted to travel to their home country and meet their families but due to COVID 19 and international borders being closed, this was not possible. Similarly, Hack-Polay (2012) found that migrants are often prone to missing home when they are away from their home country. Hack-Polay also states that homesickness could be a factor of adaptation and adjustment into a new country and may further affect the workers performance at the workplace (p. 10).

5.4 Summary

This chapter has revealed several key findings that provide important insight into the work experience of migrant workers in the meat industry. The data was collected through focus groups and the results were analysed using thematic analysis. The first part is based on the findings which represent the key themes of the research. The chapter finished with a discussion based on the four key objectives.

The key themes identified from the results of the two focus groups indicate that the reason to migrate was to build a better life for their families and themselves which is based on the economic push factor. The second finding is based on the comparison of work experiences

of workers from their home country and working at the meat factory. Another finding discusses how the changing responsibilities, aging and work ethics of some employees create challenges for the workers and makes it difficult to perform certain tasks. Furthermore, the next finding states that workers are entitled to their rights with the help of the trade unions and there is little to no inequality experienced at the workplace. Language barriers can create communication gaps and demotivate growth for the workers.

The findings from this chapter reveal that there is no form of migrant exploitation in the meat processing plant compared to the international literature. However, this study had a small sample size which cannot be used to generalise the New Zealand meat industry as the focus was only on one processing plant. Additionally, the findings do indicate that the migrant workers felt vulnerable and hesitated to participate in the focus group discussion.

The next chapter summarises the research and provides recommendations for future research.

Chapter 6: Recommendations and Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary and future recommendation for the present study. Firstly, it will summarise all the other chapters of the research and provide an overview of what the chapter was about. Secondly, it identifies the relationship of the research findings to that of the previous research. Thirdly, it provides the limitations and delimitations of the present study. Fourthly, it will provide the possibilities for further development for future research and practice.

6.2 Purpose of the research

The aim of this research was to explore the work experience of migrant process workers in the meat industry in Otago, New Zealand. Based on the research aim, four research objectives were developed to achieve this research aim. These objectives focused on the reason behind the migration of meat workers to New Zealand, their perceived workplace challenges, access to equal employment opportunities and social relationship between co-workers at the workplace.

Chapter one of this research provided an insight into the meat industry and the history of migration in New Zealand. The meat industry is a major contributor towards the economy and provides employment to locals and migrants. The aim of the research is to explore the work experiences of the migrant meat workers based on four key objectives.

Chapter two discussed the theoretical perspective of this research. The first part presented the theoretical analysis used for this research of neoclassical economics theory and push-pull migration law. A SWOT analysis of the New Zealand meat industry was also presented in this chapter.

Chapter three presented a literature review of mainly international research related to workers in the meat industry, with a focus on migrant workers. Jenkins (2019, p. 64), for example suggested that migrant meat workers are discriminated based on their nationality and deprived of their employment rights. Meat workers often perform intense physical

tasks under cold temperatures with improper working equipment (Birke & Bluhm, 2020) which can lead to health-related concerns (Arvidsson et al., 2012).

Furthermore, the methodology of this research was discussed in Chapter four. The research uses an interpretivism philosophy with a mono-method qualitative approach. The data collected was through two focus group and analysed using thematic analysis where themes were created from the findings.

Chapter five presented the findings and discussion of the present study. Table 6 presents a summary of the key findings specified under the four research objectives.

Table 6 Summary of key findings against the research objectives

Research Objective	Key Findings
1. To identify the reasons behind the movement of migrant meat workers to New Zealand.	▪ Workers migrated to build a better life for their families and themselves. ▪ Appreciating a better working environment that is stress free.
2. To ascertain the perception of workplace challenges by migrant workers.	▪ A challenge they have is the constant changing workplace. This includes changing responsibilities as seasons change, aging workforce of the workers makes work difficult, and the work ethics of co-workers affects productivity. ▪ Language barriers demotivating growth which prevents workers from applying for other job roles.
3. To determine if migrant workers have access to equal employment opportunities.	▪ Worker rights – by having trade unions, workers are aware of their entitlements and receive assistance from them when needed. The workers do not have gender inequality issues but there is some form of inequality between the local and Samoan workers.
4. To determine the social relationship between co-workers at the workplace.	▪ Social isolation can be caused by having lack of people from the same culture in the community which leads to homesickness. ▪ Language as a barrier can lead to communication gap among the co-workers.

6.3 Relationship to previous research

The present study and the findings of this research are significant for the meat industry in New Zealand. This is because it provides a reasonable understanding of the work life experienced by the migrant workforce. This is the first study that provides insight into the work experience of migrant process workers in the meat industry in New Zealand. The present study has identified that one of the most common challenges faced by the workers is language barriers. Not only does language barriers create communication gap, but it also demotivates growth at the workplace. Apart from language barriers, other identified workplace challenges included changing responsibilities with changing seasons, aging workforce and work ethics of co-workers that affects performance and operation at the workplace. In addition, the results show how the lack of people from the same culture in the community and the workplace can affect a person's social life which may often lead to social isolation or homesickness. This indicates that there is very little social interaction between co-workers at the workplace. Therefore, this research adds to the body of knowledge on migrant meat workers in New Zealand and the findings of the research can be used to understand the type of challenges that they go through and how they can be resolved so that new migrant workers do not have to go through the same issues.

The findings also reveal that one of the most common reasons behind the movement of people from their home country to another is because of their families and to have a better lifestyle. This finding confirms the theory of other research who suggests that under the new economics of labour migration (NELM), the decision to move is a family decision where the family migrates for better opportunities (Constant & Massey, 2002; Massey et al., 1993; Wickramasinghe & Wimalaratana, 2016). The motive behind their movement can also be classified under the push-pull theory of Stanojoska and Petrevski (2012, p. 3) where factors such as better employment opportunities can be seen as a pull factor and improvement of living standards can be identified as a push factor for migration.

Another significant element of this research is that the findings indicate that language barriers are considered as one of the biggest challenges faced by the migrant workers in the meat industry. This can limit socialising with colleagues and can hinder applying for promotions. This builds on the findings of previous studies made by Rajendran et al. (2017)

who found that migrant workers often find it difficult to understand local sense of humour because they are not very fluent in English and also because of having different accents. Having language barriers at the workplace can deprive workers of having a social life as they avoid communicating and socialising with workmates which creates a fear of being misunderstood.

6.4 Limitations of the present study

The focus of the present study was to explore the work experience of migrant process workers in the meat industry however, one of the participants was not a process worker but a technical member. Hence, the findings of this research may not fully reflect the work experience of migrant process workers. Furthermore, the male participants were all from the same country and same processing department. This limited the response from the workers because there was not much difference in opinion amongst them. These workers also found it difficult to speak in English which affected the focus group discussion and resulted in a shorter session.

Moreover, due to time constraints only one meat processing plant was used for this research and eight participants took part in two focus groups. The findings are based on research carried out with a small sample of migrant workers at only one meat processing plant, and therefore may not represent the experiences of workers in other parts of New Zealand, or who come from other countries. Therefore, more meat processing plants should be engaged in future studies so that more information can be obtained reflecting the worker's work experiences.

Furthermore, the present study was only based on migrant workers rather than on meat process workers in general. Future research could also look at other perspectives such as the role of the meat factory management, other meat workers or even their families. The research was limited to only focusing on the work experience of the workers in terms of their migration decision, workplace challenges, equal employment opportunities and social relationships. While personal lives were touched on in the research, this was not an area of focus.

Another limitation of the focus group discussion was that there had been a miscommunication from the department supervisors to their workers as most of the workers assumed that the focus group had something to do with their visa requirements. This caused hesitation among the workers and they refused to participate in the discussion. This indicates the vulnerability of the workers as they feared losing their job and did not want to be involved in anything relating to their employment in New Zealand. This may have also been the case with the participating workers as they did not mention anything negative about the company and the male focus group gave very little information in their discussion.

6.5 Recommendations for future research and practice

The findings of this research are based on a meat processing plant only in the Otago region. This does not generalise the findings of this research in terms of the meat industry in New Zealand. As a recommendation, further studies conducted on the meat industry need to collect data from different meat factories around New Zealand because migrant workers in different regions may have differing work experiences in comparison to other meat factories. This would be a more accurate way to represent the migrant meat process workers in the meat industry in New Zealand. Future research could also consider a wider approach in terms of the meat industry by focusing on the meat process workers in a more general sense. The meat industry employs a large number of local workers in the processing sector (BeefLamb New Zealand Ltd & Meat Industry Association, 2020) which demonstrates their importance and contribution towards the economy as much as the migrant workers. They also need to be considered and understood in terms of their work experiences through perceived challenges and social relationships with their co-workers.

Furthermore, another scope of research that can be explored is by having a bigger sample size. Considering the limitations of this research, having a small number of participants may not be sufficient to indicate the work experiences of migrant meat workers in New Zealand. A random sampling method could be used when selecting focus group members so that workers are given the opportunity to participate and there is no bias representation. Through this strategy, a heterogenous group can be chosen consisting of people from different processing departments and experiences.

Moreover, from the challenges highlighted above, one of the things that the meat processing plant can introduce is language programs that can assist workers to overcome language barrier concerns. And because this is a common challenge identified by the workers which affects communication, they could also have one-to-one sessions with the staff so that they are able to raise other concerns relating to their work and do not feel uncomfortable when raising their opinions.

6.6 Conclusion

This research has explored the work experiences of migrant process workers in the meat industry in the Otago region. A small sample of process workers from one meat processing plant in the South Island of New Zealand, showed that language barriers, work ethics, aging workforce and changing responsibilities contribute towards their everyday workplace challenge. Generally, the experiences of the participants were positive: they spoke of building a better life for their families and they also appreciated their work environment and loved their job. Furthermore, the findings also contrast with the international literature in this field, as the workers did not present instances of exploitation, employment disparity, health related concerns or discrimination at the workplace. This research provides a better understanding of migrant meat workers and their workplace experiences from their perspective in this industry.

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Appendix B. Focus group questions

Focus Group Questions (Indicative)

1) Can you tell me how you came to be working at this meat factory?
    a) Did you have any expectations from your current job?
    b) What do you like the most about your job?
2) How long have you worked in the meat industry?
    a) Participants who come from a different industry will be asked about the transition and the differences in work experience from the previous company.
    b) Participants who have worked for more than 10 years will be asked about the changes in working conditions they have experienced over the years.
3) How would you describe your work here? Is it challenging?
4) What are some of the work-related challenges you have faced or are facing in your current employment? (If participants have answered yes to the previous question)
5) Are you aware of the current employment laws?
6) Do you know what are some of your entitlements as a worker? Please list them.
7) What are your thoughts on equal employment opportunities?
8) Do you think there are equal employment opportunities at the workplace?
9) How well do you get along with your workmates?
    a) Is there much interaction between migrants and local workers?
    b) (Possible prompt if needed) Do you feel there is a communication gap?
10) What are some of the things that are really positive about your current working conditions?
11) What are some of the things that could be improved regarding your current working conditions?

Appendix C. Ethics Application

Southern Institute of Technology **Ethics Application**			
If you require assistance filling out this form, please contact the Chair of the Ethics Committee.			
1. Name of Applicant	**Lead Researcher/ Supervisor (for student projects)**	**Researcher 2/ Student (for students projects)**	**Researcher 3**
	Dr Sally Bodkin-Allen	Shabina Farnaaz	
2. Faculty/School	Faculty of New Media, Arts and Business, School of Business		
3. Title of Research Project	The Work Experience of Migrant Process Workers in the Meat Industry in Otago, New Zealand		
4. Date of research project approval at Faculty research committee: (SIT staff only)	NA		
5. Is this research being carried out for a programme of study?	Yes		
If yes give details:	Master of Applied Management MGT 810		
6. Summary of the Research Project ***150-word explanation of the purpose and objectives of the project inclusive of why, who, what, where and for what benefit***	The meat industry is one of the most significant contributors towards New Zealand's economy. It provides employment to a diverse range of people including migrants and local workers. Therefore, the aim of this research is to explore the work experience of migrant process workers in the meat industry. In order to collect the required information, a meat processing plant in Otago has been approached to seek information from their workers. A focus group will be conducted for data collection. The number of focus groups conducted, will depend on the number of workers who agree to participate. The potential benefit of this project is to add to the body of knowledge on the perception of workplace experiences of migrant workers and provide recommendations to the company to improve worker satisfaction and increase productivity.		
7. Methodology	The process for the research involves conducting a focus group in order to find out about the work experience of migrant workers. This will be based on their perception of workplace challenges, equal employment opportunities and the level of social interaction between their co-workers. The focus groups will be conducted at the company premises depending on the workers availability. The session will be recorded on video (upon workers consent) and audio on the researchers' mobile phone for easier transcription.		
8. Dissemination of Results	The results will be written up into a report which will be available in the SIT library.		

9. Ethical Procedures ***Answer each question***	**Who is the research population? How many participants are you seeking?**
	The research population are migrant process workers in the meat industry. I am seeking around 6-8 workers in order to conduct the focus group.
	How much time will participants be asked to give to the project?
	It is expected that the focus group will be approximately 45-60 minutes.
	Are there potential areas that are of interest to or of concern for Māori?
	No, there are no potential areas of interest or of concern for Māori.
	Where and how will the project be conducted?
	A meat processing plant has already been selected for this research through a professional network. The company has agreed to let the researcher conduct the research at its location and for workers to participate in the focus group. For ease of participation, the focus groups will be conducted at the company's meeting room for the convenience of the workers after their working hours.
	How will participants be selected and found?
	The company will be contacted and asked if the researcher is able to have a meeting with migrant workers, a few days prior to conducting the focus group. At this meeting, the purpose of the focus group will be explained to the workers, with an invitation to participate. If more than 10 workers are willing to participate then two separate focus groups will be conducted to cater for them. Those who agree to participate will be given a consent form and information sheet and a time will be organised for conducting the focus group.
	Will participants be identified at any stage?
	No, all participants' names will be changed, and they will not be identified at any stage. For example, worker 1, worker 2 and so forth. Also, the meat factory chosen for this research will not be identified at any stage.
	What is your process for informed consent?
	An information sheet will be given to each participant, outlining the purpose and aim of the research. A consent form will be signed by each participant prior to conducting the focus groups.
	Who will have access to the research data? How will it be securely stored?
	My supervisor and I will have access to the research data, it will be stored on a password protected laptop and in a locked filing cabinet. Audio and video recordings of the focus group will be stored on my mobile phone and transcribed later.
	What information will be given back to participants?
	Transcripts of the focus group will be given back to the participants to confirm the accuracy of the data. They will also be provided with a write up of the report upon request.
10. Ethical Concerns ***Answer each question***	**Are there vulnerable participants (e.g. minors, recent immigrants)?**
	Yes, all participants are migrants.
	Are there any conflicts of interest? How will this be managed?
	Yes, there is a potential conflict of interest because my husband works at the chosen meat factory. However, he is not a process worker nor is he in a managerial position, therefore, he has no influence over this research.
	How will you ensure confidentiality for participants?
	My husband will not have access to the research data as it will be stored on a password protected laptop and all forms and transcribed information will be in a locked filing cabinet. Audio and video recordings of the focus group will be stored on my mobile phone which is also password protected. All data will be destroyed after 5 years of the research.

	Do any potential risks exist for the research participants? How will these be resolved?	
	No	
	Will any deception be employed? If so, please indicate the nature of this and why it is necessary for the research.	
	No	
	Is compensation (money/rewards/koha) to be offered to research participants? Please provide details.	
	No	
	Any other issues not covered previously?	
	No	
11. Attached Documentation *(Please cross applicable box)*		Information sheet
		Focus group questions
		Consent form
Signed:		
Tutor:		*Date:*

Appendix D. Information Sheet

The Work Experience of Migrant Process Workers in the Meat Industry in Otago, New Zealand
Information Sheet for Participants

Thank you for showing an interest in this project. Please read this information sheet carefully before deciding whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate, I thank you. If you decide not to take part, there will be no disadvantage to you of any kind and I thank you for considering my request.

Introduction

I am Shabina Farnaaz, and I am a student from the Master of Applied Management programme at the Southern Institute of Technology and I am carrying out this research as part of my course requirement.

What is the aim of the project?

This project aims to explore the work experience of migrant process workers in the meat industry. This research will examine perception of workplace challenges, rights to equal employment opportunities and the level of social relationships and interactions amongst their co-workers.

What type of participants are being sought?

The participants will be migrant process workers at one meat processing factory in Southland.

What will participants be asked to do?

The workers will be asked to attend a staff meeting, where the purpose of the research project will be explained. The workers will then be asked to volunteer themselves if they are willing to take part in the focus group. The focus groups will take around 45-60 minutes depending on the workers' availability. The focus group will be led by the researcher and factors relating to workplace experiences will only be discussed.

Please be aware that you may decide not to take part in the project at any time without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

Can participants change their minds and withdraw from the project?

You may withdraw from participation in the project at any time up until the point at which the data is anonymised and amalgamated into the report, without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

What data or information will be collected and what use will be made of it?

The focus group sessions will be recorded on a video and audio format on the researcher's mobile phone for later transcription and analysis. Your name will not be mentioned in the recording or transcription and you will not be identified at any stage. Your name will not be used in the final report and any identifying features in the data will be withheld or disguised to protect participant anonymity. All information will be kept confidential and the data will be used by the researcher and the supervisor only for the purpose of this study.

What will happen to the results?

A copy of the report will be available in the Southern Institute of Technology library (Invercargill, New Zealand). You are most welcome to request a copy of the results of the project should you wish.

How will the data be stored?

The data collected will be securely stored and only the researcher will be able to gain access to it. At the end of the project any personal information will be destroyed immediately except that as required by SIT's research policy, any raw data on which the results of the project depends on, will be retained in a secure storage for five years after which it will be destroyed.

What if you have any questions about the project?

If you have any questions about the project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact: -

Researcher: Shabina Farnaaz
Southern Institute of Technology

[redacted]

Supervisor: Dr Sally Bodkin-Allen
Southern Institute of Technology
[redacted]

This research has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at SIT.

If you have concerns about the **ethical conduct** of this research or the researcher, the following procedure should occur.

Write to the following:

The Secretary of the Human Research Ethics Committee
Southern Institute of Technology
133 Tay St
INVERCARGILL 9840 NZ
Tel: 03 211 2699

All information is confidential and will be handled as soon as possible.

Appendix E. Consent Form

Declaration of consent to be part of a focus group for The Work Experience of Migrant Process Workers in the Meat Industry in Otago, New Zealand

I have had the scope and nature of the research fully explained to me. Any questions about the research have been satisfactorily answered, and I understand that I may request further information at any stage.

I accept and note that:

1. My participation in this research is entirely voluntary.
2. I may withdraw from participation in the research at any time up to the point at which the data is anonymized and amalgamated without explanation, disadvantage or disincentive.
3. Any information given during the focus group is being utilized solely for the purpose of the specific research project and will not be disclosed to any other person or agency without my express consent.
4. The focus group will be recorded and videoed for later transcription.
5. This information may be incorporated into the research report, but actual names or other characteristics that may lead to identification of individuals or the organisation will not be disclosed.
6. I may request to view any completed drafts or sections of the research report to which I have contributed, at any time.
7. A copy of the completed research report will be made available to me, on request, at the conclusion of the research.

DECLARATION

I have read and understood the information set out on this form and give my informed consent to be part of a focus group in accordance with the stated terms and conditions.

Name of Research Subject/Participant	**Name of Researcher**
……	**……**
Signature ……	*Signature ……..*
Date ……	**Date ……**