NORTH KOREAN MIGRANTS IN CHINA:

A CASE STUDY OF HUMAN SMUGGLING AND TRAFFICKING

BY

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

North Korean Migrants in China:
A Case Study of Human Smuggling and Trafficking
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This study investigates the smuggling and trafficking (e.g. forced marriage, sex trafficking, and labor exploitation) of North Korean Migrants in China (NKMCs). It seeks to answer the following questions: First, how should we define the status of NKMCs (e.g. illegal economic migrant, refugee, or trafficking victim)? Second, are the NKMCs victimized? If any, what are the contexts and factors that contribute to such victimization, and how? Further, what are the characteristics of the victims, smugglers, and traffickers? Finally, what are the contributing factors and possible policy implications to prevent the victimization of NKMCs?

For this, one-on-one, face-to-face in-depth interviews with 58 NKMCs (47 women and 11 men) currently living in South Korea were conducted. Study participants were recruited through the purposive snowball sampling method. Interviews were conducted using a standardized questionnaire. This study suggests that 37 NKMCs (64%) should be classified as trafficking victims of forced marriage, commercial sex, or labor exploitation. There were 34 cases of forced marriage, 10 cases of sex trafficking, and 3 cases of labor exploitation among the 58 NKMCs. The most common pattern (22 cases, 59%) of trafficking victimization was being deceived by traffickers in North Korea, crossing the border with traffickers, and being victimized by forced marriage. This study suggests that high demand for marriageable women in China, vulnerabilities of victims due to fear of deportation, and lack of guardianship owing to the Chinese government's indifference contributed to the trafficking victimization of NKMCs.

In sum, this study provides a general picture of the smuggling and trafficking of NKMCs. It also suggests the adoption of a criminal justice approach rather than a human rights perspective to the understanding of NKMCs' victimization. Routine activity theory was adopted to analyze the

contributing factors to the victimization of NKMCs. Finally, this study suggests the Chinese government should do more to protect NKMC trafficking victims.

PREFACE

Before 2013, I knew nothing about North Korean's human trafficking victimization in China. So, when I first met a North Korean who talked about how she had been victimized, I was greatly surprised and began to look for more reports on the issue. Surprisingly, it was hard for me to find good empirical research reports from the criminal justice perspective. For this research, I have spent almost five years and I hope this dissertation will attract many scholars and international attention.

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This work would not have been possible without the support of Dr. Ko-lin Chin, my dissertation advisor and the chairman of my Dissertation Committee. He continually and convincingly conveyed a spirit of adventure with regard to research and he provided me extensive personal and professional guidance. Especially, his guidance in this work, from research design to the final revision, has provided me with great inspiration and courage.

I would especially like to thank Dr. Jody Miller, one of my Dissertation Committee members, who has the attitude and the substance of a genius. Without her guidance and persistent help, this dissertation would not have been possible. Especially, she provided full revisions of my dissertation several times. She has taught me more than I could ever give her credit for here. She has shown me, by her example, what a good scholar, teacher, and person should be.

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I would also like to thank those members of my family who have been with me throughout the pursuit of this long journey. To my father, late Park: I miss all your heartfelt advice and smiles. My eternal supporters, my real mother, Heo and step mother Noh: both of you always give your infinite love to me and because of that love, I stand here today. To my three children I would also like to say thank you.

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of the Problem

A. Background

Korea was divided into North and South Korea after the Japanese colonial era (1910–1945). The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK or North Korea) developed communism under the trusteeship of the Soviet Union while the Republic of Korea (ROK or South Korea) developed democracy under the trusteeship of the United States. Kim Il-Sung started to seize power in North Korea in 1945. Only five years after the Japanese occupation, the Korean War broke out in 1950. The economy of North Korea collapsed during the Korean War (1950-1953). The Kim regime was able to revive the economy with the help of the Soviet Union by a program called the Molotov Plan, which was originally set up to provide aid to rebuild countries in Eastern Europe. However, Kim's family, from Kim Il-Sung to Kim Jung-Il and to Kim Jung-Un, has focused on strengthening its dictatorship and the military instead of developing the country's economy (Hoare, 2015; Noland, 2000; Sandler, 2015; Seth, 2016; Stueck, 2012).

The breakdown of the North Korean economy started again in the late 1980s and a chronic food shortage began in the early 1990s (Hawk, 2016). By the late 1980s, Pyongyang had defaulted on international debts. Due to the world-wide crisis and shortage of fertilizer, agricultural production in North Korea fell significantly beginning in 1989 (Lee, 1994; Noland, Robinson, and Wang, 2001). The break-up of the Eastern Bloc and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 made the situation worse because grants and subsidies from the Soviet Union to North Korea were terminated (Noland, Robinson, and Wang, 2000; Noland et al., 2001). By 1993, North Korea's exports to the Soviet Union had fallen to less than a tenth of that of the earlier period (Eberstadt, Rubin, and Tretyakova, 1995; Noland, 1995). To make matters worse, a bad harvest in 1993 and two big floods in 1995 and 1996 followed. In 1998, United States (U.S.) congressional staff concluded after a visit to North Korea that between 900,000 to 2.4 million people - representing approximately 4 to 10% of the population - had died from starvation or hunger-related diseases between 1995 and 1998 (Kirk, Brookes, and Pica, 1998; Natsios, 1999).

The Kim regime has remained in power through restrictive social policies, controlling ideas and information, and the use of force against

its citizens (Byman and Lind, 2010). One example took place with a 1991 campaign entitled “Let’s Eat Only Two Meals a Day”; another declared a so-called “Arduous March” slogan in 1996. “Arduous March” referred to the hard time of resistance against Japanese colonization, with the North Korean regime intending to cheer up its citizens to endure starvation during hard times (Gahng, 2009; Hayashi and Komaki, 1997; Noland et al., 2001). However, more and more people have chosen to escape from North Korea to China by crossing the border to avoid the famine.

It is estimated that approximately 300,000 North Korean migrants had crossed the Chinese border illegally by the end of the 20th century (Margesson, Chanlett-Avery, and Bruno, 2007; Muico, 2005). Among them, nearly 75 percent of North Korean migrants in China (NKMCs) were estimated to be women (Amnesty International India, 2007). Significantly more women than men migrated because women could find jobs more easily than men in places such as karaoke lounges (singing clubs) or restaurants. At the very least, North Korean women could marry Chinese or Korean Chinese in China for survival (Duong, Belanger, and Hong, 2007; Grier, Hicks, and Yuan, 2016; Jiang, Zhang, and Sánchez-Barricarte, 2015; Kang, 2005; Li, Wei, Jiang, and Feldman, 2007; Su, 2013; Sweeney, 2015; Wang and Chang, 2002; Yang and Lu, 2010).

Owing to China's one-child policy, implemented from 1979, and the preference of sons to daughters, there have become fewer women in China than men. Couples might have tried to have sons through more births before the strict birth control policy. Once the one-child policy was in place, however, they have changed to more prudence in selecting the sex of the baby. Women have aborted daughters, female children have died disproportionately, and more girls have gone missed. The imbalanced sex ratio in China has intensified in the ensuing decades (Hesketh, Lu, and Xing, 2005; Li et al., 2007). The Chinese national average was 108 males per 100 females in 1982, but by 2012 it had changed to an average of 118 males per 100 females (Greenhalgh, 2013). In rural areas, the imbalance is more severe, because of women's migration to cities for better economic opportunities. Many unmarried men in rural areas have difficulties finding a bride and have had to pay more money to marry (Jiang and Sanchez-Barricarte, 2012). This accounts for why many North Korean women who have crossed the border have been sold as brides to Chinese and Korean Chinese farmers in the border area.

In Asia, as richer nations' men seek wives from poorer nations, marriage migration has increased (Yang and Lu, 2010). Because of the

one-child policy, China is one of the largest nations in Asia to import brides. Besides North Korean women, there have been considerable numbers of Vietnamese and Burmese women married to Chinese men (Duong et al., 2007; Hackney, 2015). Women from Vietnam and Myanmar (Burma) are married to Chinese men through marriage agencies in Yunnan Province, which is in southwest China adjacent to Vietnam and Myanmar. Some international marriage agencies operate openly and legally while others often use deception and force in recruiting and transporting brides to Chinese men (Duong et al., 2007; Hackney, 2015). However, as crossing the border is illegal for NKMCs, North Korean women usually do not rely on marriage agencies to find Chinese men. North Koreans need permits from the North Korean regime to cross the border and these permissions are rarely issued to the general public. Pyongyang has a strict emigration policy, so it is very difficult for the people to immigrate legally.

Before the 1990s, the number of North Koreans crossing the border was small. During that time, *chosonjok* (Chinese citizens of Korean descent or Korean Chinese) were generous to North Koreans who crossed the border and helped them enormously. They gave food to North Koreans out of pity. Some North Koreans asked for food or money from

their relatives in China and returned to North Korea. The Chinese authorities were also relatively lenient to NKMCs because the number was limited and most of them returned to North Korea. This pattern was maintained until the early period of increasing migration of North Koreans to China from 1992 to 1995 (Gahng, 2009; Lee, 2012; Moon, Kim, and Lee, 2000; Park, 2006). From the end of 1995 to 1999, the movement of North Koreans to China had become a serious concern for Beijing, as the numbers of migrants increased exponentially year after year (Lee, 2012; Moon et al., 2000). Many North Koreans did not go back to North Korea as the shortage of food there forced them to remain in China (Kim, 2003).

Beginning in the early 2000s, Pyongyang began to tighten border crossings between North Korea and China (Gahng, 2009; Kim, 2005b). The Chinese government also stepped up border patrols, cracked down on North Koreans in China, and repatriated North Koreans by force (Gahng, 2009; Lee, 2012). According to a report by the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (2002), the number of deported North Koreans in 2000 was at least 6,000 and the number of North Koreans crossing the border decreased rapidly. Correspondingly, the number of NKMCs is believed to have been reduced. According to a report from the

U.S. Department of State (2005), the number of NKMC probably peaked in 1998 and 1999. The report estimated the number of NKMC ranged between 75,000 and 125,000 in 2000 and between 30,000 and 50,000 in 2005 (U.S. Department of State, 2005). There have also been changes in the characteristics of North Korean's migration. Motives for crossing the border have changed from merely escaping the famine to seeking better lives. Further, North Koreans who have settled in South Korea started to help family members who remained in North Korea to migrate to the South, preparing the entire itinerary for their family to make the trip (Lee, 2005a; Lee, 2012).

As the Chinese government started to repatriate NKMCs, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), South Korean government, and international NGOs criticized the Chinese government for violating the principle of non-refoulement.[1] This put the Chinese government in a dilemma regarding the NKMC issue because of its need to maintain a good relationship with North Korea, and at the same time to avoid international blame and have good diplomatic and trade

[1] Non-refoulement is a principle of international law which prohibits the rendering of a true victim of persecution from his or her persecutor. This principle was officially enshrined in Article 33 of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugee and was also contained in the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees and Article 3 of the 1984 Convention Against Torture.

relationships with both the US and South Korea. In particular, cooperation with the US and South Korea is necessary for China's goal to stop the further nuclear development of North Korea. However, there are several problems for the Chinese government to recognize NKMCs as refugees. First, China and North Korea signed a bilateral agreement in 1961 regarding security in the border area (Gahng, 2009), and another agreement in 1986 on the repatriation of NKMCs (Chang, Haggard, and Noland, 2009; Lee, 2012). To follow the principle of non-refoulement would be to inevitably breach these treaties with North Korea. China chose to follow the treaties with North Korea, arguing that there is not enough evidence to prove that NKMCs are actually refugees (Lim, 2000). Secondly, Beijing is concerned about the difficulties in maintaining order in the border area if defectors are ignored. North Korea is very important geo-politically for China because it acts as a buffer zone against US allied countries such as South Korea and Japan (Lee, 2012). Nevertheless, criticism of the Chinese government from the world community hurts China's international reputation.

B. Vulnerability of NKMCs

Song (2015) described the lives of NKMCs using Giorgio Agamben's concept of "bare life" (1998: 23), a life that is not "simply set outside the

law and made indifferent to it but is rather abandoned by it, that is, exposed and threatened on the threshold in which life and law, outside and inside, become indistinguishable." To be a NKMC is quite similar to this concept, as without being granted residential status or being deported, they "may be killed and yet not sacrificed" (Song, 2015: 402). NKMCs' illegal status, fear of deportation, language problems, unfamiliarity with the place, and poverty make them vulnerable to victimization such as sex trafficking, forced marriage, and labor exploitation. According to some sources, around 80 to 90 percent of female NKMCs are suspected to be victims of sex trafficking and/or forced marriage (Charny, 2005; Muico, 2005). Because of their illegal status, the Chinese government's repatriation, and severe punishment from the North Korean regime, most NKMCs are extremely fearful of deportation.

The Chinese government treats such individuals as illegal economic migrants rather than trafficking victims, and the arrest of NKMCs has increased since the mid-1990s. Chinese authorities promptly repatriate NKMCs to North Korea regardless of their experiences of victimization (Chan and Schloenhardt, 2007). The PRC does not provide any legal assistance to repatriated NKMCs. Moreover, Chinese authorities

sometimes detain and prosecute Chinese citizens who assist NKMCs (U.S. Department of State, 2015).

The North punishes these repatriated NKMCs harshly because the regime regards them as betrayers of the country (Charny, 2005; Lee, 2005a; PoKempner and Baik, 2002). Article 63 of the North Korean Penal Code states that those who run away to another country shall be imprisoned at labor re-education centers for not less than five years and the person who's "circumstances are especially serious" [2] shall get life imprisonment at labor re-education centers or the death penalty (Kim, 2012; Margesson et al., 2007). North Koreans who crossed the border for economic reasons were treated less harshly than those who went to China for political reasons, had contacts with South Korean groups (including religious groups), or sought asylum in third countries. However, since the summer of 2004, Pyongyang has punished all repatriated NKMCs with longer sentences in abusive prisons regardless of their reasons for leaving or their experience after they left (Margesson et al., 2007; Muico, 2005; Seok, 2007).

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[2] Article 63 does not explain what the phrase "circumstances are especially serious" means. According to some reports, persons who contacts South Koreans or Christians in China belong to this category of offenders (Database Center for North Korean Human Rights, 2013; Lee and Yoon, 2006; Yoon, 2004).

Besides their deep fear of deportation, NKMCs also have language problems and they are not familiar with the new environment. Because of their illegal status and the possibility of being arrested, it is very hard for them to have stable jobs in China. Even if they are victimized, they cannot report to the Chinese authorities as they will be arrested. They cannot escape either because they are not familiar with their surroundings and have no money to do so. The only way to survive is to endure such victimization. Traffickers can take advantage of these vulnerabilities, and thus a considerable number of NKMCs may be subjected to sex trafficking, forced marriage, and/or forced labor.

1.2 Classification of NKMCs

The question of how to define NKMCs is important because appropriate policy and intervention depends on it. The Chinese government regards such individuals as illegal economic migrants and treats them as criminals. The North Korean regime regards them as betrayers and punishes them harshly. The South Korea government regards them as citizens of South Korea and is willing to accept and provide them assistance. Human rights NGOs and the United Nations

(UN) sees them as refugees or trafficked victims and tries to protect them.

A. Illegal Economic Migrants

China is a party to the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (UN General Assembly, 1951) and the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees (UN General Assembly, 1969). However, the Chinese government disregards the international obligation and repatriates NKMCs without offering them any access to the UNHCR (Chan and Schloenhardt, 2007). Beijing does not allow NKMCs to seek asylum (PoKempner and Baik, 2002). After 25 NKMCs entered the Spanish Embassy in Beijing by force seeking asylums in 2002, the Chinese government began strengthening border control near the Yalu River (a river on the border between North Korea and China), cracked down on undocumented NKMCs, and has raided Chinese houses and businesses for NKMCs. Furthermore, Chinese citizens who are hiding undocumented North Koreans are punished severely (Gahng, 2009).

B. Betrayers

Repatriated NKMCs are treated as betrayers of the country by North Korean officials. After deportation, they are taken to *bowibu* (the North

Korean state security agency) and are often stripped search, interrogated, and beaten (Muico, 2005). Those who have previous records of illegal crossing, are married to Chinese men, or are pregnant receive severe treatment at these agencies. Those who have contacted South Koreans and churches are sent to a *kwanliso* (political labor camp) or a *kyohwaso* (labor re-education center) or will be executed in serious cases (Hawk, 2003). For the rest, the majority are sent to *jipkyulso* (detention center) or *nodongdanryundae* (labor training camp). When they arrived in these two short-term detention centers, they are again stripped searched, interrogated, and beaten. They are put into crowded, unsanitary quarters, and are forced to do hard labor (Hawk, 2003; Muico, 2005). According to some reports, a considerable number of inmates have died because of insufficient food, extreme work, and unsanitary environments. Forced abortions and infanticides in detention centers also have been reported. North Korean officials are reported to abuse and torture women who have Chinese babies (Hawk, 2003; Muico, 2005).

C. South Korean Citizens

In contrast, South Korea regards NKMCs as South Korean citizens. According to Article 3 of the South Korean Constitution, the whole

Korean peninsula and its contiguous islands are defined as the territory of South Korea (PoKempner and Baik, 2002). Under this legal framework, NKMCs are regarded as South Korean citizens and are treated generously by the South Korean government (PoKempner and Baik, 2002). When North Koreans in a foreign country request protection from the South Korean government, they will be protected in a diplomatic office or a temporary shelter in the foreign country and then they will be assisted with travel to South Korea. After they arrive in South Korea, officers from the National Intelligence Service (Korean CIA) and the police department will interview them and send them to *hanawon* (the settlement support center for North Korean refugees).

In *hanawon*, they receive twelve weeks of education to help them adapt to South Korean society. This education involves assistance in maintaining mental stability, understanding South Korean society, developing career direction, and receiving basic vocational training. Before they complete their education in *hanawon*, basic support for registration as a citizen and housing assistance are provided. For their dwelling, permanent rental houses are introduced and 13 million won ($11,800) is rendered for the security deposit. For the resettlement, 7 million won ($6,300) is provided per family and there are incentives from

1.3 to 2.6 million won (from $1,200 to $2,400) for those willing to live in rural areas. In addition, for those who are elderly, disabled, sick, or single parents, up to 15 million won ($13,600) is offered. After they finish the educational program, minimum living expenses and medical aid are provided for five years. They are assigned police officers for protection and support (Ministry of Unification, 2014). According to a report of the Ministry of Unification (2014), 75% of resettled North Koreans are satisfied with their lives in South Korea.

D. Refugees/Trafficked Victims

According to Article 1 A (2) of the UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (1951) and Article I 2 of the UN Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees (1967), a refugee is defined as a person who is:

> Owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence, is unable or,

owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it (Cho, 2008: 194, 2010; 1951: 390, 1969: 386; UNHCR., 2007: 6).

Article 47 of the 1999 North Korean Criminal Code[3] stated that one who escapes to another country or to the enemy in betrayal of his motherland and people will receive a punishment of a minimum of seven years labor re-education, and for serious violations the mandated sentence is execution and forfeiture of all property (Charny, 2005). Some regard this as "imputed political opinion" because the North treats an "economic smuggler" as a "betrayer of his motherland" (Cho, 2008: 196, 2010: 214). Cho (2010: 214) argues that repatriated NKMCs are categorized as a "hostile class" and this means "being persecuted for membership of a particular social group." Moreover, Cho (2010) interprets that the abortion of the Chinese fetuses of pregnant NKMCs conforms to the classification of persecution for reasons of race. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) also explained that NKMCs might be classified as refugees because they will be punished by Articles 63 and 233 of the North Korean Criminal Code

[3] The North Korean Penal Code was revised in 2012 and Article 47 became Article 63, which was mentioned above.

when they return and because of the fear of prosecution they are unwilling to return to North Korea (UNHCR., 2007).

Economic migrant and refugee are different from each other. According to the UNHCR definition of “economic migrant”, an economic migrant is “someone who normally leaves a country voluntarily to seek a better life. Should he or she elect to return home, they would continue to receive the protection of their government” (Muico, 2005: 11).

According to Article 3(a) of the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Combat Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (hereafter, Anti-Trafficking Protocol), supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, human trafficking is:

> the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of threat or use of force, or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, or the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal, manipulation or implantation of organs (UN General Assembly, 2000: 2).

Thus, if NKMCs are forced, deceived, controlled, or exploited by their smugglers, traffickers, or others in the process of their movement from North Korea to China, they should be treated as trafficked victims.

1.3 Significance of this Study

A. Limitations of Previous Studies

Human trafficking has been an important issue in the criminal justice academic field and numerous articles, books, and reports have been published on this issue. However, according to Gozdziak (2011), among the 2,388 English publications on human trafficking (1,249 reports, 736 journal articles, and 403 books) as of six years ago, only 31% (429 reports, 218 journal articles, and 94 books) were research-based. Moreover, there were only thirty six (5%) peer-reviewed empirical journal articles and six (0.5%) peer-reviewed empirical reports (Gozdziak, 2011). Thus, research-based and peer-reviewed empirical articles/reports are very few, as pointed out by Zhang earlier (2009).

In this vein, there have been also very few research-based empirical studies on the victimization of NKMCs, either in English or Korean (Eom and Kim, 2016; Kim, Yun, Park, and Williams, 2009; Ko, Chung, and Oh, 2002; Lee, 2005a; Lim and Choi, 2001; McPhee, 2014; Moon et

al., 2000). The plight of NKMCs has been known to the public primarily through the media and NGO reports. There have been large numbers of NGO reports dealing with the human rights issues of NKMCs (Beck, Kim, and Macintyre, 2007; Davis, 2006; Good Friends, 1999, 2004; Hawk, 2003; Hughes, Sporcic, Mendelsohn, and Chirgwin, 1999; HumanTrafficking.org, 2008; Kim, 2011; Margesson et al., 2007; Muico, 2005; Park, Kim, Lee, and Hong, 2010; PoKempner and Baik, 2002; Seymour, 2005; Song, 2002; The Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, 2009). However, it is hard to find empirical research-based findings in NGO reports.

Even the research-based empirical literature on the victimization of NKMCs is not free from concerns about reliability. Among the seven research-based empirical studies on this issue, four were written in English (Eom and Kim, 2016; Kim et al., 2009; Ko et al., 2002; McPhee, 2014) and three in Korean. Eom and Kim (2016) conducted in-depth interviews with eight female NKMCs currently living in South Korea. In their article, their research methods were introduced but not in detail. Kim et al. (2009) performed telephone interviews with 77 female NKMCs who were in shelters located in China and Thailand. Interviews in shelters might raise concerns about the reliability of the interviewees'

answers because the respondents would not say anything to jeopardize their relationships with the operators of the shelters.

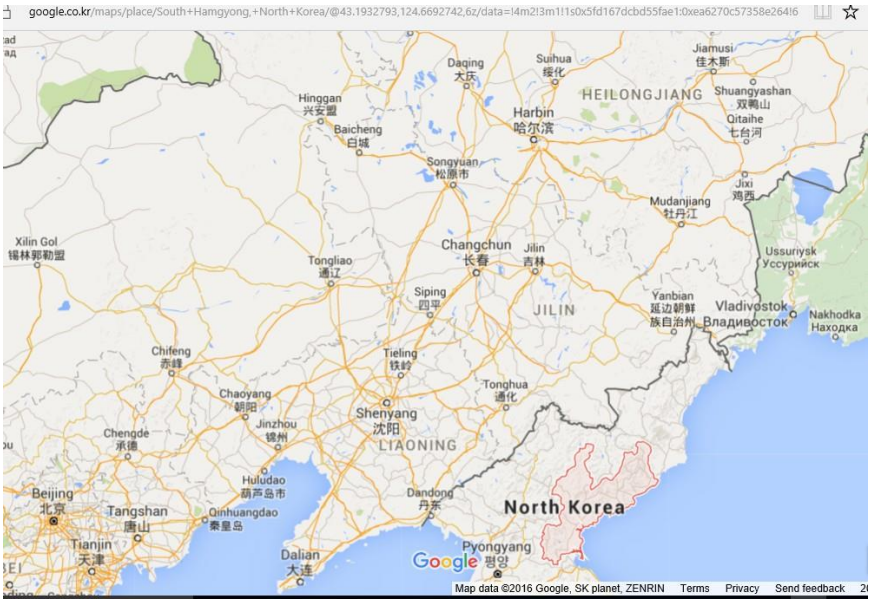
Ko et al. (2002) interviewed 12 NKMCs (7 females and 5 males) currently living in South Korea. They used semi-structured questionnaires, recorded the interviews and transcribed them. However, they only studied economic and psychological problems among NKMCs and did not deal with human trafficking issues. McPhee (2014) interviewed 10 boys and 6 girls aged between 9 and 16. His description of research methods noted only that his interviewees were street children in China near the North Korean border. Unfortunately, methodological details such as when and where the interviews were conducted, how study participants were identified, and the domains of information collected were not explained.

The articles by Lee and Yoon (2006), Lim and Choi (2001), and Moon et al. (2000) were written in Korean. Lee and Yoon (2006) said they interviewed 135 NKMCs living in South Korea for their article, "The Forcible Deportations of Border-Crossing North Koreans: The Process and Punishment." With regard to research methods, they explained only that their sample did not represent the whole NKMC population and that the domains of information were different from case

to case. Unfortunately, other methodological issues, such as demographic features of their sample, sampling, when and where the interviews were conducted, and the scope of their questionnaire, were not explained.

Lim and Choi (2001) conducted a survey of 200 NKMCs (122 male and 78 female) for their article, "Refugee Situation of North Koreans in China and Policy Implication in Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture." They conducted the survey face-to-face in Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture[4] in Jilin Province of China in 2000 (Map 1).

[4] Chinese government contends that it practices a regional ethnic autonomy system in accordance with the principles of equality, unity, mutual help and common prosperity. In this context, autonomous bodies of self-government are built under the unified leadership of the state where ethnic minorities live in compact communities. Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture was established in 1952. Chosunjok (Korean Chinese) occupies 37% of the whole population of the prefecture. It is in the northeastern Jilin Province of China and just north of the border with North Korea.



Map 1-1: North Korea and Northeastern China

(Source:

https://www.google.co.kr/maps/@44.4652061,124.5893255,6z?hl=en)

The survey was conducted by 8 trained workers (4 South Koreans and 4 Chinese). The workers met the respondents with multiple-choice questionnaires and help them to fill out the survey. The survey questionnaire consisted of a total of 43 items that asked about motivations for leaving North Korea, living conditions in China, and human rights violations in China. In addition, the survey questionnaire had 15 items related to human trafficking, labor exploitation, diseases, and forced deportation. For human trafficking, the researchers asked whether the respondents recognized other NKMCs' human trafficking

and, if any, which types of trafficking. It was not clear whether the study participants understood the concept of human trafficking, whether the study participants heard the cases or witnessed the cases, or how they were victimized.

In their article, "A Study on the Motive of Escape from North Korea and Life Situation of Female Fugitives in China - Based on the Interviews with North Korean Female Refugees in Yanbian Province," Moon et al. (2000) conducted face-to-face interviews with 202 female NKMCs in three northeastern provinces in China, including Liaoning, Jilin, and Heilongjiang, from July to October in 1999. They prepared and revised the questionnaire through a pilot study in January 1999 and trained 10 interviewers for the study. Their questionnaire included both closed- and open-ended questions. However, they did not provide a copy of their questionnaire, and their sampling method was not explained. They focused not on victimization or human rights issue but on the lives of female NKMCs in China, including motivations for marriage in China, adaptation to Chinese lives, and difficulties encountered in domestic lives.

B. From Human Rights to Criminal Justice

This study explores the lives of 58 NKMCs who are now living in South Korea, through in-depth interviews. The focus is on the smuggling and trafficking of NKMCs, focusing on forced marriage, sex trafficking, and labor exploitation. Unlike previous studies on NKMCs, which has utilized a human rights framework, this study approaches the issue from the academic viewpoint of criminal justice. From the perspective of a human rights framework, researchers have concluded that NKMCs should be protected as refugees and, correspondingly, the Chinese government should not deport NKMCs back to North Korea but instead guarantee them asylum. These are very important steps in protecting NKMCs but not enough. From the viewpoint of criminal justice, NKMCs' victimization should be prevented before its occurrence and traffickers should be punished as offenders. Victims should be protected and should be given the freedom to choose the country they wish to move to.

Yet, when Chinese officials deny refugee status to NKMCs, there is no way to compel them to change their policy, for reasons already mentioned above. However, for the Chinese government, admitting the trafficking victimization of NKMCs is somewhat easier than accepting NKMCs as refugees. In other words, arresting human traffickers and

protecting trafficked victims has less political liability than accepting NKMCs as refugees. Investigating crime, arresting criminals, and protecting victims are internal issues free from international implications. Of course, Chinese officials would have political liability if they allow trafficked NKMC victims the freedom to choose which country they will go. However, under the human trafficking framework, we could expect at least that the Chinese government would pay attention to human trafficking cases involving NKMCs and some traffickers would be arrested and punished. In this circumstance, the activities of the traffickers and the buyers might be deterred. Re-victimization of NKMCs after the original trafficking might be reduced as well because trafficked victims might able to report their victimization to the authorities and correspondingly the victims who were trafficked might be provided with assistance.

In this context, approaching the NKMC issue through a human trafficking perspective might be more practical in the prevention of NKMC victimization than approaching the issue through a human rights perspective.

C. Applying Routine Activity Theory to the Study of NKMCs

There are at least two ways to examine human smuggling and trafficking from a criminal justice perspective. One is to focus on the offenders and the other, on the people who cross the border illegally. As far as offenders are concerned, some researchers have found that human traffickers are organized criminals (Bales and Soodalter, 2010; Richard, 1999). Others have suggested that they are individual entrepreneurs or mom-and-pop opportunists who act as smugglers or traffickers to make some extra money (Chin, 1999; Finckenauer, 2001; Finckenauer and Schrock, 2000; Kyle and Siracusa, 2005; Miller, 2011; Sanchez, 2011; Zhang, 2008, 2011; Zhang and Chin, 2002).

As for the people who cross the border illegally or involve in sex business or trafficked victims, some examined them from the perspective of bounded rationality (Chin and Finckenauer, 2012; Clarke and Cornish, 2000; Liu, 2011; Miller, 2001; Simon, 1982) while others developed the concept of indentured mobility (Parreñas, 2010). Bounded rationality is a theory that attempts to explain organizational behavior and various forms of management and economic decision-making processes (Simon, 1982). Jody Miller's (2001) work considers the nature of gender inequality, and how it limits the choices available to women. She notes that structural inequalities in society can influence choices available to girls and

women. Despite this limitation, however, women do still have choice, and are not “simply passive victims of male oppression” (Miller, 2001: 26).

Bounded rationality was also utilized by Min Liu (2011) in her study of prostitution and sex trafficking in China. Her work contends that there are several different factors in China that determine what options are possible for women, as well as how they are understood. The author points out how attitudes toward sex have become increasingly liberal; both premarital and extramarital sex is viewed as much more acceptable now. However, at the same time, other more traditional opinions of women have returned to the fore, including that of women being subordinated to men. This has actually left women in a more disadvantaged position than they were before. Furthermore, there are many, varied, and highly accessible opportunities to work in prostitution. In addition, the general social view of money and accumulated wealth have developed over time, creating a more materialistic view (Liu, 2010). Needless to say, not all women’s decisions to work in prostitution mean the women’s being deceived by traffickers. Nonetheless, we can assume the similarity between processes of making voluntary decision and being deceived by trafficker. If individuals are under the condition of being

completely rational and able to consider all the possible risks and benefits surrounding their decision and choice, they would do not do so (Chin and Finckenauer, 2012).

Parrenas (2011: 23) claimed that the framework of indentured mobility "blurs the distinction between human trafficking and labor migration by recognizing Filipina hostesses [working in Japan] as labor migrants who face severe structural constraints." This middle zone means that those involved both experience progress through occupational mobility, as well as economic opportunities and oppression. This can come in the form of service to middlemen or exploitative contracts with entertainment venues (Marine-Street, 2011). Parennas (2011:24) argued that "the idea of indentured mobility, the recognition of 'trafficked persons' as labor migrants, forces a realignment of our solution from one of 'rescue' to one of 'harm reduction.'"

However, the focus on only the offenders or illegal border crossers in the study of human smuggling and trafficking neglects the role of the guardians. Smugglers or traffickers of NKMCs might be organized criminals or individual entrepreneurs. NKMCs' decision to move to China might be explained as a result of bounded rationality. Their experience in China might be considered as indentured mobility.

However, these explanations overlook one very important aspect of NKMCs' experience. NKMCs are vulnerable mainly because of their fear of being arrested and deported back to North Korea and traffickers or end users use this fear to control NKMCs. The fear of being arrested and being deported back to North Korea is mainly owing to the operations of Chinese authorities and harsh punishments of the Kim regime. The authorities who usually act as guardians in other criminal justice systems do not act as guardians for NKMCs. Moreover, they act as facilitators of NKMCs' victimization.

Routine activity theory explains that "most criminal acts require convergence in space and time of likely offenders, suitable targets and the absence of capable guardians against crime" (Cohen and Felson, 1979: 588). Several researchers had adopted routine activity theory in their studies of human smuggling and trafficking (Bullock, Clarke, and Tilley, 2010; Kenyon and Schanz, 2014; Lutya, 2010; Nguyen, 2010). Accordingly, this study will also examine the victimization of NKMCs within the framework of routine activity theory, focusing on how the lack of capable guardians is a critical contributing factor to the victimization of NKMCs.

D. Research Questions

This study will explore the following research questions:

1. How should we define NKMCs? Are they illegal economic migrants, refugees, or trafficking victims?

   To determine which definitional criteria best fit NKMCs, this study will look into the experience of 58 NKMCs and examine the various components of each classification. For example, I will examine research participants' fear of deportation and the punishment of deported NKMCs by Pyongyang to answer whether NKMCs are best understood as economic migrants or refugees. The criteria of the Anti-Trafficking Protocol (2000), such as whether there is threat, use of force, coercion, deception, or any kinds of abuse of power will be examined as well. The classification of betrayer is important in showing Kim regime's hostility to NKMCs and in understanding NKMCs' fear of deportation. However, examining whether NKMCs are best understood as betrayers would be meaningless because it is only the viewpoint of the North Korean regime and it is highly unlikely others outside of North Korea would agree with this classification. The

question of whether NKMCs now in South Korea are best understood as South Korean citizens is important to assess the viability of Seoul's approach toward NKMCs. However, examining whether NKMCs are best understood as South Korean citizens will be meaningless as well because that is only the viewpoint of South Korean government. In this context, classifying NKMCs as betrayers or South Korean citizens will be excluded in future discussion.

2. What are the methods by which some NKMCs are smuggled from North Korea to China?

   If a NKMC initially looked for smugglers who could help them to cross the border, it might be interpreted as the beginning point of human smuggling. However, if the introduced person was a trafficker and the NKMC was deceived, this case will be understood as human trafficking from the beginning. If the trafficker, disguised as a smuggler, approached the NKMC first, this will be trafficking as well. This study will examine questions such as: How did NKMCs come into contact with smugglers and/or traffickers in North Korea and/or China? How did they cross the border? How did

they avoid the surveillance of border guards (for example, did they bribe the officials?)?

3. Are NKMCs actually victimized? If so, how are they victimized?

   In this study, the victimization of NKMCs will be examined by analyzing the experience described by 58 study participants. Some study participants might not be victimized throughout their movement from North Korea to China and then South Korea. Others might have experienced trafficking exploitation such as forced marriage, forced prostitution, or forced labor. Some trafficked victims might experience one or more forms of victimization in the process of human trafficking, such as kidnapping, confinement, assault, or rape. Every aspect of the victimization of NKMCs, including prevalence, how, where, by whom, etc., will be examined in this study.

4. What are the individual and group characteristics of the smugglers and/or traffickers and their accomplices? What is the relationship, if any, between smuggling, trafficking, and

organized crime? What are the characteristics of the victims of trafficking?

Smugglers and traffickers might act individually or jointly. If a smuggler acts jointly with a trafficker, we can define the smuggler as a trafficker. Smugglers and traffickers in North Korea might be linked with smugglers or traffickers in China. Traffickers in North Korea might act as recruiters, and there might be accomplices who are experts in crossing the border, and/or corrupt officials in North Korea or China might act as accomplices to help NKMCs to cross the border. Traffickers in China might act as recruiters, transporters, middlemen, sellers, or bosses of the whole operations. There might be safe houses in North Korea or in China. Accomplices of smugglers or traffickers might include family members, relatives, friends, neighbors, or organized crime members. There might be a boss who organized the whole smuggling or trafficking event, or smugglers and traffickers who belong to a network on an ad hoc basis. They might work as smugglers or traffickers on a part-time or full-time basis. Smugglers and traffickers might be North Koreans, Chinese, or *chosonjok*

(Korean Chinese). This study will also examine the characteristics of the victims of trafficking and other NKMCs who did not experience trafficking. Their age, marital status, economic status, education, occupation, and so on will be examined to consider the possible relationship between individual characteristics and victimization.

5. What are the factors that contribute to the victimization of NKMCs?

   Answers to this question are very important for policy development. First, I will examine victim-related factors that contribute to their victimization. Second, factors that may motivate offenders to offend will be explored as well. Third, I will identify some of the social or political factors that contribute to NKMCs' victimization. Finally, I will examine how Chinese authorities' policies on NKMCs might have an impact on NKMCs' victimization. According to routine activity theory, in order for a crime to occur, three specific criteria must be involved: a motivated offender, a suitable victim, and the absence of a capable guardian. In this study, I

also seek to examine the utility of routine activity theory in explaining the victimization of NKMCs.

6. What are the possible policy implications for the prevention of the trafficking of NKMCs?

   Finally, I will consider the possible policy implications of this research, discussing such issues as the roles of Beijing, Pyongyang, Seoul, the United Nations, and NGOs in the prevention of NKMCs' victimization.

1.4 Outline of the Dissertation

This dissertation will include nine chapters. Chapter One has provided a statement of the problem with historical, economic, and sociological considerations, and has assessed the likely vulnerability of NKMCs. I also discussed how China, North Korea, South Korea, the United Nations, and human rights NGOs view and treat NKMCs. In addition, this chapter included a section on the significance of the current study and an overview of this dissertation, including the limitations of previous studies, consideration of the utility of a shift from the human

rights perspective to a criminal justice perspective, and the research questions that will guide this investigation.

Chapter Two includes a review of the literature on the smuggling and trafficking of NKMCs. It contains both research-based and non-research-based literatures. The chapter is divided into two sections: what we know about NKMCs' smuggling and trafficking, a discussion of the components for the definitional classification of NKMCs and relevant theories. In the first section, the literature describing the smuggling and trafficking of NKMCs is introduced. This section includes general information about NKMCs, the movement from North Korea to China (via both smuggling and trafficking), the nature of victimization among NKMCs, characteristics of smugglers and traffickers, and factors contributing to the victimization of NKMCs. In the second section, the components of each definition of NKMCs explained in the literature is examined.

Chapter Three discusses the research methods utilized for this study, including data collection, data management and analysis, and validity and reliability. First, difficulties in studying the trafficking of NKMCs are examined. Second, I introduce the research sites of my study, explain the purposive snowball sampling method I used, describe how I conducted

the interviews with the help of a structured questionnaire, and explore the ethical issues involved in conducting this study. Third, data management and a description of the sample follow. Three strategies for data analysis are explained as well. Fourth, I include a discussion of the validity and reliability issues in qualitative research in general and this study in particular. I conclude the chapter with a discussion of the limitations of this research.

Chapter Four covers the lives of my study participants when they were back in North Korea. It includes the economic situation of their families, how they met their smugglers and/or traffickers and who these individuals were, what the parties agreed before leaving North Korea, what did they do to prepare for crossing the border, and whether and how study participants were deceived or trafficked.

Chapter Five focuses on border crossing. It describes when, where, and how study participants crossed the border, how many people crossed the border together, how they avoided the surveillance of border control agents, whether they bribed the border guards, where they arrived in China, who came to meet them, how safe houses are operated in North Korea and China, and how traffickers change their attitudes toward study participants after entering China.

Chapter Six discusses the lives and victimization of NKMCs in China. It considers how individuals were trafficked, what they experienced in the process of transportation from the border area to the destination, and the many forms of victimization, including sex trafficking, forced marriage, and labor exploitation.

Chapter Seven discusses how my study participants who had been trafficked escaped from their victimizers and moved to South Korea. Specifically, it covers how NKMCs escaped from victimization, how they left China, who helped them in the process, their experiences, if any, in a third country, the processes of entering South Korea, and their settlement in South Korea. Moreover, it describes, if arrested in China, how they were deported to North Korea and what they experienced afterward.

In Chapter Eight, I examine some of the major contributing factors to the victimization of NKMCs. The factors are categorized into victim-centered, offender-centered, and social-political. I also re-examine some of the theories of international migration and human trafficking and conclude the chapter with a discussion of how routine activity theory might help us to better understand why NKMCs are vulnerable and what the international community can do to stop their victimization.

The concluding chapter (Chapter Nine) provides a summary and answers to the six research questions mentioned above. It also includes suggestions regarding possible policy implications for different stakeholders, including the Chinese government, the North Korean regime, the South Korean government, the United Nations, and the various NGOs working with NKMCs.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter will review the literature on the characteristics of the smuggling and trafficking of NKMCs. It will also examine the various components for each definitional classification of NKMCs. Finally, I will assess theories related to irregular migration.

2.1 Characteristics of NKMCs' Human Smuggling and Trafficking

In this section, the literature on the smuggling and trafficking of NKMCs will be explained in detail, including general information of NKMCs, their movement from North Korea to China, victimization of NKMCs, characteristics of smugglers and traffickers, and factors contributing to the victimization of NKMCs. Finally, the unique characteristics of the irregular movement of NKMCs compared to the general nature of unregulated migration will be discussed.

A. Literature on the Smuggling and Trafficking of NKMCs

1. General Information about NKMCs

It is not easy to estimate the exact number of NKMCs in China. Based on field studies, the Citizens' Alliance for North Korean Human Rights (2004) estimated the number to be 100,000, while Good Friends (1999) suggested 300,000 at most (Kim, 2005a). According to Insung Kim (2005), there are several reasons that the estimates of NKMCs vary so widely. First, border crossings are conducted clandestinely. Second, NKMCs are hiding from the authorities and thus they are very reluctant to reveal their status. Third, the population that constitutes who is counted among NKMCs varies. Some estimates include temporary migrants from North Korea, while others do not (Kim, 2005a).

According to Good Friends (1999), 76% of the NKMCs in China were female at the time of their investigation. Among them, 52% lived in China as the "wife" of a Chinese national. Most NKMCs were between 20 and 40 years of age (Good Friends, 1999). Kim et al. (2009) found that the age range of female NKMCs was wider and older than for males. Female NKMC were often married with children in North Korea, unlike illicit migrant and trafficked women in other countries, who are more likely to be single and without children (Crawford and Kaufman, 2008; Ren, 1999; Silverman, Decker, Gupta, Maheshwari, Patel, Willis, and

Raj, 2007; Vocks and Nijboer, 2000). In addition, female NKMCs were comparatively better educated than female migrants in other countries (Crawford and Kaufman, 2008; Ren, 1999; Silverman et al., 2007; Vocks and Nijboer, 2000).

Good Friends (1999) estimated that 55% of their NKMC respondents were living in Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture and 45% were living in other parts of Northeast China (Liaoning Province, Jilin Province, and Heilongjiang Province). They reported that many NKMCs first started their lives in China in Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture and then moved to other parts of Northeast China. According to the interviews conducted by Lim and Choi (2001), the majority of NKMCs were living in villages and rural areas. While Good Friends (1999) explained that 50% of NKMCs they surveyed had lived in China less than six months and 11% had lived in China more than a year, Lim and Choi (2001) found that 21% of their NKMC respondents had lived in China less than six months and 44% had lived in China more than a year. According to a survey conducted by the Korea Institute for National Unification in 2012, among the 548 North Koreans who entered South Korea from January 2010 to October 2012, 53% had lived in China less

than six months, 39% had lived in China more than a year, and 15% had lived in China more than five years (Kim, 2012).

2. Moving from North Korea to China

According to Moon et al. (2000), 82% of their respondents reported that they crossed the border to survive from starvation, 75% also answered that they believed they could earn more money in China, and 16% answered that they entered China to marry Chinese men. The primary motivation of Charny's (2005) respondents was for survival too. Most of the respondents (95%) in Chang et al.'s (2009) survey with 1,346 NKMCs said they crossed the border for economic reasons, while only 2% crossed for political reasons. However, Lim and Choi (2001) found a higher proportion (18%) of respondents who had political motives in crossing the border than did Chang et al. (2009).

Kim et al. (2009) found that "hot-spots" where female NKMCs were recruited were villages and black markets in cities such as Hoeryong, Musan, Hyesan, and Sinuiju, near the North Korean border with China. The reason why the border areas were "hot-spots" appears to be that North Koreans' movements are severely limited because they need a travel permit to move to an area other than their residence. When North

Koreans arrive at a destination they must register with the destination's authorities (Park et al., 2010). Consequently, we can assume that people near the border area are more likely to cross into China than people who live elsewhere. According to Kim et al. (2009), most border-crossers from North Korea do not understand the conditions which they will experience in China. It can be argued it is because of the information interception policy of Pyongyang.

Unfortunately, it was difficult to find studies on how many North Koreans among the people who were contacted by recruiters believed the promises, who were more likely to be deceived than others, why the others were not deceived, and whether there was any human agency being exercised by these North Koreans. The reason it is hard to find such studies is that many have been conducted utilizing a human rights framework, and regard North Koreans as uninformed innocent victims rather than entrepreneurs who act after considering the pros and cons of entering China. However, as mentioned above, 16% of Moon et al.'s (2000) respondents answered that they crossed the border to marry Chinese men, indicating they knew at least in broad terms what they would be doing. Consequently, it is possible that some North Koreans knew that they would marry Chinese men and tried to make use of this

opportunity. Further, Kim et al. (2009) noted that some women approached the traffickers voluntarily asking to be smuggled into China, not knowing the latter were actually traffickers, not smugglers. Some parents of potential victims believed that marriage to Chinese men would be better off for their daughters economically and so deliberately requested the brokers to arrange such marriages (Kim et al., 2009).

Unfortunately, it was also difficult to find studies that investigated the social connections or human capital of North Koreans who want to migrate to China. The only note that can be assumed is that the people who live in the border area, as mentioned above, have more chances to cross the border than those who live elsewhere. After 2000, border control on both sides of China and North Korea was strengthened. Since that time, North Koreans who have family members in South Korea might have more chances to cross the border. North Koreans who have settled in the south want their remaining family to come without being exploited by traffickers or other forces. As they have had the experience of moving to South Korea, they have knowledge about how their family members can come safely and so ask NGOs or brokers from whom they received help to assist their family with travel to South Korea via China (Lee, 2009).

Kim et al.'s (2009) interviewees said they crossed the Tumen River (the river from Mt. Paektu to the east) by swimming and crossed the Yalu River (the river from Mt. Paektu to the west) by boat (Map 2). According to Moon et al. (2000), the majority of their respondents (85%) had crossed the border once, 7% crossed the border twice, 2% crossed the border three times, and 5% did not reply. Three-quarters of Chang et al.'s (2009) respondents said they received assistance in crossing the border and more than half said they paid for the service. These respondents said the bribery of officials and/or smuggling networks were helpful when they crossed the border.

According to a study conducted by Ko et al. (2002), if border crossers are caught, they will be humiliated, tortured, sent to political prison camps, or even executed in public. All of their interviewees admitted they had great anxiety when crossing the border (Ko et al., 2002). In order to cross the border successfully, they reported that they usually bribed North Korean border control officials. On the other hand, they said that they did not bribe the Chinese border guards or police officers unless they were detected. Once they arrived in China, the smugglers or traffickers used taxi, car, or train to transport them to the destinations (Ko et al., 2002).

Map 2-1: North Korea



(Source:

http://www.asiapress.org/rimjingang/english/MAP/index.html)

3. Victimization Experiences of NKMCs

Lim and Choi (2001) found that 11% of their respondents had experienced human trafficking, 12% had a family member or relative who had been subjected to human trafficking, and 7% had a friend who was a victim of human trafficking. Forced marriage (52%) was the most prevalent form of victimization. Among their study participants, 27% married Chinese men and 25% married Korean Chinese. The Chinese men were old, disabled, alcoholics, or otherwise described as abnormal characters. Moon et al.'s (2000) study revealed that 16% of their respondents were kidnapped and sold to Chinese men as brides by Chinese traffickers after they had crossed the border. According to Kim (2005), the prices charged for the female NKMCs who were sold as brides varied, ranging from 2,000 to 14,000 yuan (from $240 to $1,690). Good Friends (2004) found that the price of NKMC brides was low in Changbai, which is located near the North Korean border, but high in Yanji, which is the seat of the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture.

The U.S. Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, an NGO, conducted interviews with 71 female NKMCs from 2004 to 2006 in Jilin and Heilongjiang Provinces to investigate sex trafficking and forced marriage among female NKMCs. According to their report (2009),

NKMCs encountered many difficulties when they arrived in China. Many suffered from continuing poverty, indebtedness, and misery. The study reported that when female NKMCs tried to have stable lives with Chinese "husbands", the only thing they ended up with was deception and abuse. Without legal protection, they were vulnerable to abuse and were threatened with being handed over to the authorities to be sent back to North Korea. The authors argued that most NKMC victims were not trafficked into sexual slavery but were trafficked into forced marriages. The majority of their study participants who were married to previously unknown husbands were sold by traffickers. Others were sold to sex business owners.

Sex trafficking (15%) was the second most likely form of victimization (Lim and Choi, 2001). Among the respondents in Lim and Choi's (2001) study, 12% sold sex in Karaoke or coffee shops and 4% in construction sites. Park (2004) reported that female NKMCs suffered from confinement, violence, sexual exploitation, unwanted pregnancy, disease, labor exploitation, and the like. According to Kang (2005), 20% of the female NKMCs he interviewed revealed that they experienced sexual exploitation. However, Kim (2005) reported that many of his respondents had a sense of shame about such experiences, suggesting that

this explained low rates of reporting. This means that there might be more female NKMCs who had experienced sexual exploitation than study findings suggest.

According to Good Friends (1999), 41% of the NKMC laborers they interviewed had not been paid at all and the remaining NKMC laborers had received only 30% to 50% of the normal wages paid to Chinese workers (Kim et al., 2009; Lim and Choi, 2001; Moon et al., 2000). When NKMCs demanded the promised wages from their employers, the employers reported them to the Chinese authorities and they were arrested and deported back to North Korea (Lim and Choi, 2001).

4. Characteristics of Smugglers and Traffickers

It is hard to find any reports on the smugglers or traffickers of NKMCs, except for the research of Kim et al. (2009), which reports on traffickers specifically. They described four stages in the trafficking of NKMCs. The first stage was “initial recruitment and border crossing” (Kim et al., 2009: 162). North Korean recruiters played an important role at this stage. After recruiting, North Korean recruiters usually introduced the potential victims to traffickers, who accompanied them across the border. Kim et al. (2009) explained that there are individual traffickers

and organized crime group members among the traffickers. Further, according to Kim et al. (2009) and Park et al. (2010), North Korean traffickers play an important role in recruiting victims. They search, spot, and solicit potential victims in black markets or in poor villages through the victim's interpersonal network including family and friends. The main method of recruitment was deception through false promises of employment or helping to find victim's relatives in China (Kim et al., 2009). In particular, Korean Chinese traffickers serve as a bridge between North Korean potential victims and Chinese traffickers in terms of culture and language. They provide potential victims with guidance on how to cross the border safely (Kim et al., 2009).

"Intermediate traffickers" acted as transporters at the second stage (Kim et al., 2009: 163). Once the victims crossed the border, they were under the control of traffickers. Traffickers sold and re-sold to intermediate traffickers who were mostly Korean Chinese men. The methods of controlling victims were psychological or physical abuse and rape. Before they crossed the border, traffickers would not harm potential victims. However, after they crossed the border, the attitudes of traffickers would change. Potential victims fell into vulnerable situations because they could not speak Chinese, were unfamiliar with the location,

were weak in terms of physical strength, had no money, and were afraid of being arrested by Chinese authorities. The third stage was “final buyers and destinations” (Kim et al., 2009: 164). The final buyers were bride-seeking Chinese men or owners of sex businesses. The last stage was “recycling of trafficking” (Kim et al., 2009: 166). Some women might be re-trafficked after they ran away from their initial final buyers. In addition, some criminal gangs in China abducted the runaway NKMCs from the former buyers and re-sold them to other buyers.

According to Kim et al. (2009), the majority of the traffickers were between their early 20s and late 40s. Most were men, though some former female victims of trafficking also acted as traffickers (Kim et al., 2009). These women served as recruiters or reconcilers when victims were stressed and fearful. Traffickers in Kim et al.’s study included North Koreans, Chinese, and Korean Chinese. Kim et al. (2009: 159) suggested that traffickers have evolved from “amateur-opportunistic individual offenders into a more professional-systematic organized crime network.”

5. Factors Contributing to the Victimization of NKMCs

Kim et al. (2009) suggested that the poverty of NKMCs back in North Korea, the shortage of marriageable men in North Korea, and the high

demand for marriageable women in China are the contributing factors for the victimization of NKMCs. From their viewpoint, as most women in North Korea are in desperate economic conditions, marrying Chinese men might be seen as an opportunity to survive in China or to support their families in North Korea. Under the communist system in North Korea, jobs are offered to people by the regime, but they are not paid because of the ruinous national economy. Secondly, the shortage of marriageable men in North Korea results from a policy that requires men to serve a mandatory 10-year military service. This means a considerable number of marriageable men are secluded from the civilian population. Moreover, a substantial number of men die or are injured while serving in the military. Finally, Kim et al. (2009) asserted that the high demand for brides in China due to the one-child policy is another factor facilitating the victimization of NKMCs.

In my assessment, these three factors contribute to the migration of NKMCs rather than the victimization of NKMCs. Bad economic conditions among NKMCs in North Korea and the shortage of marriageable men there are push factors that cause North Koreans to leave for China. The high demand for marriageable women in China might be said to be the pull factor in North Koreans' movement to China.

On the other hand, several reports suggested that NKMCs' fear of deportation is an important factor contributing to the victimization of NKMCs. Charny (2005) explained that the lives of NKMCs are ones of constant fear of arrest and deportation. Chang et al. (2009) and Hawk (2003) also pointed to NKMCs' acute fear of arrest and deportation, with female NKMCs having greater fear due to the threat of forced abortions, infanticide, and separation from their children (Chang et al., 2009; Hawk, 2003). Moreover, the majority of Chang et al.'s (2009) respondents showed significant psychological distress owing to the fear of being arrested and deported. Jiwon Min (2003) contended that when female NKMCs were deported back to North Korea, they were tortured sexually and were compelled to have an abortion if pregnant. Wookhwa Hong (2003) found that because of the fear of being arrested and deported, female NKMCs did not report their victimization. Some female NKMCs chose to cohabitate with Chinese men in order to avoid the Chinese police.

B. Unique Characteristics of NKMCs' Smuggling and Trafficking

Most current human smuggling routes are from countries in Asia, Africa, South America, and eastern Europe and move to western Europe, Australia, and North America. According to Zhang (2007), there are four

main smuggling routes: (1) Starting in North Africa via Spain and Portugal, arriving in western Europe; (2) Beginning in Asia via Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan to Russia, and from that point, through Ukraine, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic, arriving in western Europe or sometimes carrying on all the way to North America; (3) From the Middle East and Asia to Oceania. This route usually ends in Australia as the first choice for the end of the journey. This is done by beginning first in Malaysia, followed by Indonesia, and from there continuing on by land to the southern Indonesian islands of Bali, Flores, or Lombok. From here, the next step is arrival in Australia; and (4) A more direct route to Canada and the United States by traditional land, sea, and air options (Zhang, 2007).

As for human trafficking, Ewa Morawska (2013: 97-98) explained that there are three major treks, each with different sub-trajectories.

> Beginning with longest distance travels, people are trafficked from Central Asia, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh through Russia, Ukraine, Lithuania to Poland, Slovakia, or Hungary, where they either stay or, more often, continue to Germany, Austria, Sweden and further to West European countries. Then, in long-to-middle-distance transfers, the trafficked persons are moved from Russia, Ukraine, and Lithuania in East Eastern Europe and Albania, Moldova, Bulgaria, Romania, Bosnia and Herzegovina in South-East Europe through Slovenia, Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic to Western Europe, Israel, the Arab Republics, and further to North America. Finally, diminishing after 2004 but still a distinguishable flow, a middle-to-short distance trajectory involves trafficking women and

> children from East Central European countries, including Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary to Western Europe and, especially, to Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, Belgium, Italy, France, Sweden, and the UK.

The route of smuggling and trafficking of NKMCs is distinguished from the most current smuggling and trafficking routes which were described above. Furthermore, NKMCs' smuggling or trafficking involves the movement of people from one communist country to another communist country. Most irregular migration involves the movement of people from communist countries to capitalist countries or from poorer capitalist countries to richer capitalist countries (Zhang, 2007). Thus, it is reasonable for us to assume that there might be other factors for NKMC's smuggling or trafficking than normal smuggling or trafficking. The specific factors for NKMC's smuggling or trafficking might be political or geo-political reason than simple economic reason. The specific factors for NKMC's smuggling or trafficking will be scrutinized through the analysis of this study data. Second, the distance between the origins and destinations of NKMCs' smuggling or trafficking is comparatively shorter than the others. Third, the cost of smuggling fees for most NKMCs (not more than $200) (Good Friends, 2004) are much cheaper than migrants of other nationalities (from several thousands to tens of

thousands) (Kahn, 2011; Massey and Sana, 2003; Petros, 2005; Sanchez, 2011).

Fourth, brokers, members of South Korean churches, and NGOs play an important role in the movement of NKMCs, whereas coyotes and snakeheads are key players in the movement of irregular migrants from Central America (Sanchez, 2011; Spener, 2009) and China (Chin, 1999; Zhang, 2007, 2008) to the United States. Brokers are similar to the coyotes and snakeheads in terms of pursuing economic benefit from smuggling, but South Korean churches or the other NGO organizations do not request money from North Koreans. They regard smuggling as helping North Koreans to escape from the North Korean dictatorship. Fifth, the risks to the lives of North Koreans when they cross the border are greater and distinct. Numerable fatal accidents in human smuggling across the globe have been reported, such as traveling on overloaded boats (Keefe, 2010) or crossing deserts (Spener, 2009). However, the risks facing North Koreans are different from such risks in that North Korean border guards shoot North Koreans attempting to cross the border. As mentioned above, the North Korean regime regards them as betrayers and they use lethal force to prevent illegal border crossing.

Sixth, when NKMCs are sent back to their own country, the situation for them is worse than a return to where they started. For other illegal migrants, being detected by immigration authorities and being sent back to their own country means at most the waste of time, efforts, and money. However, for NKMCs, as mentioned above, deportation means the risk of being imprisoned for life or being executed. Seventh, the general types of human trafficking investigated have been sex trafficking (Chin and Finckenauer, 2012; Lee, 2013; Miller, 2002, 2011; Parrenas, 2006; Zhang, 2012b) or labor exploitation (Mahdavi, 2011; Zhang, 2012a). On the other hand, the predominant type of human trafficking of NKMCs is forced marriage. Finally, the Chinese authorities do not act as a guardian for the victimization of NKMCs and the worse they acted as passive facilitators. Furthermore, as mentioned above, Beijing is proactive in repatriating NKMCs regardless of their victimization, which indirectly facilitates the victimization of NKMC.

2.2 Components for the Definitional Classification of NKMCs

In this section, the components needed for each definition of NKMCs will be reviewed and the components of each definition explained in the research-based literature will be examined as well. There have been

seven research based, peer-reviewed, articles on NKMCs found in both English and Korean (Eom and Kim, 2016; Kim et al., 2009; Ko et al., 2002; Lee, 2005a; Lim and Choi, 2001; McPhee, 2014; Moon et al., 2000). Non-empirical, non-research-based NGO reports will be briefly examined in this chapter as well because even though the reliability of these reports is more uncertain, a review of only the seven researched-based empirical reports may not be sufficient to paint the whole picture of the definitional classification issue involving NKMCs.

A. Components Needed for Each Definition of NKMCs

Each definition of NKMCs (illegal economic migrants, refugees, trafficked victims) has its own components, such as acts, voluntariness, motives, and so on. UNHCR defines an economic migrant as “someone who normally leaves a country voluntarily to seek a better life. Should he or she elect to return home, they would continue to receive the protection of their government” (Muico, 2005: 11). To define NKMCs as illegal economic migrants, several components are needed: illegally crossing the border, voluntariness in crossing the border, seeking a better life, and the protection of the North Korea regime when requested.

To be defined as refugees, based on the definition of Article 1 A (2) of the 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and Article I 2 of the 1967 UN Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, several components are needed, including well-founded fear of being persecuted, reasons for persecution (such as race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion), being out of the country, and the fear of persecution from one's home country, resulting in the unwillingness to avail oneself of the protection of his/her country.

For trafficked victims, the U.S. Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) defines "severe forms of trafficking" as:

> a. sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such an act has not attained 18 years of age; or
>
> b. the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery (U.S. Department of State, 2008: 6)

There are three main elements of human trafficking: activities, means, and purpose (Lee, 2005b). First, activities such as recruitment, transportation, transferring, harboring or reception of persons are needed to be admitted as human trafficking. Second, these activities should be performed by means of deception, diverse types of coercion, or use of

physical force. Fraud and deception might be categorized as deception. Coercion might include “other forms of coercion”, “the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person.” “Use of force” and “abduction” might be categorized into physical force. Third, the purpose should be exploitation such as prostitution, sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery, or the removal, manipulation or implantation of organs (UN General Assembly, 2000: 2).

B. Components of Each Definition Explained in the Literature

Among the research-based peer-reviewed literature related to NKMCs (Eom and Kim, 2016; Kim et al., 2009; Ko et al., 2002; Lee and Yoon, 2006; Lim and Choi, 2001; McPhee, 2014; Moon et al., 2000), only Eom and Kim (2016) and Kim et al. (2009) treated such individuals as trafficking victims, while the rest considered NKMCs as refugees. Even though most NGO reports and non-research-based journal articles viewed NKMCs as refugees, some of them also examined the victimization and trafficking of NKMCs.

1. Components for Economic Migrants

As mentioned above, four components are needed to be classified as an illegal economic migrant: (1) leaving a country, (2) doing so voluntarily, (3) seeking a better life, and (4) receiving protection from one's government upon request. The component of "leaving a country" is obvious for all NKMCs but "voluntariness" is not clear, as some might leave their country after being deceived or coerced. Eom and Kim (2016) contended that among the eight participants in their study, seven were trafficking victims. Most did not know that they had been sold before they left North Korea. Kim et al. (2009) also indicated that many women were cheated and decided to leave without knowing the grim situation they would face. As a result, it is safe to say that some of the NKMCs are not "economic migrants."

Most NKMCs leave North Korea to seek a better life, regardless of whether they are deceived or coerced (Kim et al., 2009; Ko et al., 2002; Lee and Yoon, 2006; Lim and Choi, 2001; McPhee, 2014; Moon et al., 2000). More than 80% of Moon et al.'s (2000) study respondents and 75% of Lim and Choi's (2001) respondents answered that they had economic motives when they crossed the border. However, some had other motives, including to escape from punishment, meet family members in China, marry a Chinese man, go to South Korea eventually,

gain freedom, or do what had been urged by family or friends (Ko et al., 2002; Lim and Choi, 2001; McPhee, 2014; Moon et al., 2000).

As far as receiving "protection from one's government" is concerned, this is not the case. NKMCs would not receive protection from Pyongyang because NKMCs are regarded as betrayers by their government (Charny, 2005; Cho, 2008, 2010; Hawk, 2003; Muico, 2005). Lim and Choi (2001) found that approximately 46% of the repatriated NKMCs were punished and almost 2% of the repatriated female NKMCs were raped. All the repatriated NKMCs interviewed by Lee and Yoon (2006) said they had been incarcerated. In sum, there is no evidence to suggest that the Kim regime provides protections to NKMCs.

In conclusion, NKMCs cannot be classified as economic migrants because they do not fit one of the key definitional criteria: they are not protected by the North Korean regime after their return to their country. Thus, Beijing's position of labeling NKMCs as illegal economic migrants should be reconsidered.

2. Components for Refugees

As mentioned above, to classify someone as a refugee, he or she must have: (1) a well-founded fear of being persecuted; (2) for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a social group or political opinion; and (3) an unwillingness to return to his/her country or unwillingness to avail himself/herself of the protection of that country (Cho, 2008: 194, 2010; 1951: 390, 1969: 386; UNHCR., 2007: 6).

Numerous studies have shown that many NKMCs said they were fearful of being persecuted if they were arrested by the Chinese authorities and deported to North Korea (Eom and Kim, 2016; Kim et al., 2009; Ko et al., 2002; Lee and Yoon, 2006; Lim and Choi, 2001; McPhee, 2014; Moon et al., 2000). Ko et al. (2002: 14) found that their study participants believed "they would be humiliated, tortured, sent to prison camp or even executed in public." This fear is based on the reality that the Chinese government has very often arrested NKMCs and has repatriated them (Lee and Yoon, 2006). North Korean officials have punished deported NKMCs harshly, regarding them as betrayers of the motherland (Lee and Yoon, 2006). We can say that this fear is well-founded.

The North Korean regime has punished women who are married to Chinese men or men and women who are associated with Christians more

harshly than other repatriated NKMCs (Lee and Yoon, 2006). The Kim regime has tortured women who married Chinese men and forced them to have abortion when discovered to be pregnant. Some NKMCs who received help from Christian NGOs were executed (Lee and Yoon, 2006). Thus, we can say that Pyongyang persecuted NKMCs for reasons of race, religion, or membership in a social group. NKMCs who are afraid of being persecuted of course are unwilling to return to their country and are unwilling to avail themselves to the protection of their country. In sum, we can say that NKMCs fit the definitional criteria for classification as refugees.

3. Components for Trafficking Victims

Kim et al. (2009) described in detail the identities and characteristics of traffickers, trafficking routes, and accomplices' roles in trafficking operations between North Korea and China. As mentioned above, Eom and Kim (2016) found that seven out of eight NKMCs they interviewed reported being trafficked. However, details of the trafficking process such as how they were sold, who the traffickers were, and so on were not explained. According to Lim and Choi (2001), 11% of their respondents said they had been trafficked. Some said they were trafficked in North

Korea and brought to China, some claimed they were trafficked near the border right after they crossed into China, and others explained that they were trafficked deep inside China near train stations or local markets by "human hunters" (Lim and Choi, 2001). According to Moon et al. (2000), 33% of their interviewees said they were sold to Chinese men after they crossed the border. However, information about how they were trafficked, by who, and so on was not provided. Ko et al. (2002) did not mention the victimization of NKMCs and McPhee (2014) revealed that he could not find any trafficked victims.

As mentioned above, several components such as (1) behavior (recruitment, transportation, transferring, harboring or reception of person), (2) means (deception, coercion, or use of physical force), and (3) purpose of exploitation (such as prostitution, sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery, or the removal of organs) are needed to classify NKMCs as trafficked victims.

Discussions of behavior (i.e. recruitments, transportation, transferring, or reception of person) are found in a few journal articles that focus on NKMCs (Eom and Kim, 2016; Kim et al., 2009; Lim and Choi, 2001; Moon et al., 2000). According to these articles, the main recruitment method was deception, such as offering an employment

opportunity (Eom and Kim, 2016; Kim et al., 2009; Lim and Choi, 2001). Kim et al. (2009) explained that there were two major recruitment methods: kidnapping and deception. A few respondents said they were coerced to marry Chinese men and were reported to the Chinese authorities when they refused (Lee and Yoon, 2006). As mentioned above, Lim and Choi (2001) contended that some NKMCs were caught by so-called "human hunters" and were sold. According to several reports, NKMCs who were deceived, coerced, or kidnapped were said to be sold to bride-seeking Chinese men, brothel owners, or for labor exploitation (Eom and Kim, 2016; Kim et al., 2009; Lim and Choi, 2001). In sum, based on the articles mentioned above, some NKMCs might be classified as trafficking victims.

2.3 Theories

A. Theories on Migration

Fundamentally, we can say that the movement of NKMCs from North Korea to China is "migration" no matter how they are classified. There are several theoretical models on international migration. Some focus on individual decision-making mechanisms while others focus on higher levels of aggregation such as the structural requirements of modern

industrial economics or economic globalization (Massey, Arango, Hugo, Kouaouci, Pellegrino, and Taylor, 1993).

Neoclassical macro-economic theories focus on differential wages and employment conditions, which cause workers from low-wage countries to migrate to high-wage countries (Harris and Todaro, 1970; Lewis, 1954; Ranis and Fei, 1961; Todaro, 1980). Matching with the macro-level of economics is a micro-economic model of individual choice (Sjaastad, 1970; Todaro, 1969, 1980, 1989; Todaro and Maruszko, 1987). Micro-economic models focus on individual decisions made by rational actors who calculate the costs and benefits of international migration. According to this theory, immigrants consider the most productive place to move, costs of traveling, the effort of learning a new language and culture, difficulties in adapting to a new labor market, and psychological costs of cutting old ties (Massey et al., 1993).

Both macro and micro economic models explain migration through the economic point of view. It is true that there has been a differential in the economic conditions between North Korea and China and this has contributed to the migration of NKMCs. However, it might be insufficient to explain the situation of NKMCs' migration because it is more complicated than normal economic migration. Information from

abroad is intercepted by the North Korean regime and therefore most NKMCs do not understand the situation in China when they are in North Korea. Once they leave North Korea, they have to hide from the Chinese authorities for fear of being arrested. They avoid returning to North Korea because of the fear of persecution. Both macro and micro economic models do not explain these particular situations of NKMCs.

The new economics of migration emphasizes the importance of family or household decisions (Harbison, 1984; Katz and Stark, 1986; Lauby and Stark, 1988; Stark, 1991; Stark and Levhari, 1982; Taylor, 1984). This is quite different from the decision of NKMCs in several respects. First, it is not easy for North Koreans to talk about crossing the border, even to their family members. Crossing the border is illegal and the family members of illegal border crossers are punished as well in North Korea. Therefore, many North Koreans anticipate that their family members would not be in favor of their border crossing, both because it is too dangerous and also because family members' disagreements would make preparation for crossing harder. Second, in North Korea, individuals have the duty to monitor their family members to ensure they follow the rules of North Korea. In other words, informing family members of one's border crossing plan means taking on the added risk of

being revealed to the authorities of North Korea. In addition, family members with knowledge of a border crossing who do not report the plan to the authorities receive more severe blame than those who did not know of their family members' border crossing. For this reason, many North Koreans believe that not informing family members of their planned border crossing is better for their family because they will not be blamed for failing to report to the authorities (Database Center for North Korean Human Rights, 2013). In fact, only 57% of the respondents in a survey conducted by the Database Center for North Korean Human Rights (2013) said they informed their family members about crossing the border.

B. Theories on Human Trafficking

In my assessment, theories of human trafficking can be categorized into three groups: 1) victim-centered theories, 2) offender-centered theories, and 3) macro-level theories.

Victim-centered theories seek to identify the causes of human trafficking in victims. They focus on why certain individuals are more likely to be victimized than others. Van den Hoven and Maree (2005) suggested three risk factors: close relationship with traffickers, repeat

victimization, and the lifestyle of victims. According to Van den Hoven and Maree (2005), three types of victims - innocent, precipitating, and provocative victims - are more likely to be victimized than others. In addition, they suggested that lifestyle risks such as the personality of the potential victim, the absence of a capable guardian, the environment, and the daily routine activities are important (Van den Hoven and Maree, 2005).

The representative theory of offender-based theories is demand theory. It suggests that the major cause of human trafficking is the existence of purchasers of sex, and profiteers of prostitution (Hughes, 2004; Lutya and Lanier, 2012). Applications of demand theory have the limitation of focusing only on sex trafficking and ignoring other types of human trafficking such as labor exploitation. In addition, trauma theory focuses on trauma and fear as tools that are used by offenders to control victims (Freyd, 1998; Usman, 2014). Constitutive theory focuses on power and inequality constructed socially. It suggests that human trafficking victims are in weaker positions than offenders and this is why victims are harmed and deprived by the offenders (Henry, 1996; Lutya and Lanier, 2012). These theories have strengths in explaining the

offender's motives, ways of controlling victims, and the factors that make offenders more powerful than victims.

Macro-level theories include economic theory (Eagle and Betters, 1998; Lutya and Lanier, 2012; Persson and Siven, 2007; Van Liemt, 2004; Witte and Witt, 2002), socio-economic theory (Barner, Okech, and Camp, 2014; Danailova-Trainor and Belser, 2006; Laczko and Gramegna, 2003; Salt, 2000; Warria, Nel, and Triegaardt, 2015) , and politico-institutional theory (Lasa, 2013; Sawadogo, 2012; Warria et al., 2015). These theories seek to identify the causes of human trafficking in economic, socio-economic, political, and institutional differences between countries. These theories are useful to explain the unique situation of NKMCs, including famine in North Korea, North Korean authoritarian policy, the DPRK's harsh punishments of NKMCs and the correspondent fear of deportation of NKMCs as push factors. In addition, China's one-child policy, the corresponding sex ratio imbalance, Chinese authorities' repatriation of NKMCs and Chinese dowry culture serve as pull factors. However, these corresponding policies seem to be too far from realistic efforts at intervention. The economic, social and political situations within the two countries are not easy to change. Strengthening surveillance in border areas might be a practical policy but this will be

useless in helping NKMCs already in China who may be in current circumstances involving victimization. Moreover, border surveillance does not address the push and pull factors that motivate both migration and trafficking in the first place.

In sum, theories on human trafficking have focused disproportionately on sex trafficking while other forms of trafficking such as labor exploitation have been largely ignored. Moreover, these theories can explain some parts of NKMCs' trafficking victimization but cannot explain all aspects of the phenomenon. There need to be theories that can integrate aspects relevant for understanding offenders, victims, and guardianship. In this context, routine activity theory can provide a useful explanation for the trafficking and victimization of NKMCs. This theory can address the vulnerability of NKMCs, circumstances that create motivated offenders, and the lack of capable guardianship. The suitability of applying routine activities theory to explain the trafficking of NKMCs will be discussed further in Chapter Eight.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODS

3.1. Difficulties in Studying the Trafficking of NKMCs

There are several issues to consider in studying the trafficking of NKMCs. The first is who to interview (i.e. potential victims, traffickers, NGOs, and/or law enforcement authorities). Interviewing victims who are living in a trafficking situation would perhaps best provide concrete and rich information about experiences of trafficking. However, interviewing NKMCs trafficking victims would both raise tremendous ethical challenges, and also might be almost impossible, because they are difficult to locate and because the Chinese government does not permit the interviewing of NKMCs in China. I will expand on these points in the next section. As for traffickers, they are also hard to find in China and even if I were able to locate some of them, it is unlikely that Chinese authorities would allow me, as a South Korean researcher from the U.S., to conduct such a sensitive research in their country.

The second issue is where to collect the information. As a South Korean citizen, I am not permitted to enter North Korea to conduct a research project. Moreover, the South Korean government will not allow

its citizens to go to North Korea either. As for the difficulties in conducting interviews in China, I will explain them in the following section.

The third issue is how to obtain supports from the Chinese government, the North Korean regime, or the NGOs. If China was to support this study, meeting and interviewing NKMCs in China would be possible. Moreover, meeting traffickers, Chinese authorities, buyers, and anyone who is involved would be possible. However, Chinese government supports are hard to gain. As for the North Korean regime, the situation is worse than that of China. It is hard to imagine Pyongyang allowing anyone to study the trafficking of NKMCs. Lastly, as for the support of NGOs, it is also hard to expect because they are concerned with protecting the identities of their clients to outsiders.

3.2 Data Collection

A. Research Sites

The most ideal research site for interviewing NKMCs might be China. However, as I mentioned in Chapter 1, the Chinese government has stepped up border control near the Yalu River, cracked down on

North Koreans in China, and repatriated North Koreans in the new millennium (Gahng, 2009; Lee, 2012). As a result, except for McPhee's (2014) study, it is hard to find any empirical research based on interviews in China after 2002. In this context, gaining access to NKMCs in China is extremely challenging, especially after 2002. This is not to say that I did not try.

When I visited Shenyang and Dandong in northeastern China in August 2013, none of the people I know there would introduce NKMCs to me. One of my close friends in Shenyang, the capital of Liaoning Province, bluntly refused my request. I then asked this friend to introduce me to other South Koreans who are living in Shenyang. The South Koreans I met there explained that one should call the Chinese police if he or she notices a NKMC, otherwise, he or she will be punished by the Chinese authorities. They said that as the Chinese police had strengthened their crackdown on NKMCs, it became much harder to find NKMCs. I stayed in Shenyang for three days and traveled to Dandong, a large Chinese border city located on the western border of North Korea, for a day. During my stay in China, I tried to gather information on NKMCs from some of the South Koreans there but failed. Without the

help of local Chinese, it was impossible for me to locate any NKMCs or even identify promising leads by which to do so.

After the trip to China, I concluded that the second-best alternative for me was to interview NKMCs living in another country. Thus, I decided to interview NKMCs who had settled down in South Korea. A considerable number of NKMCs migrated to South Korea after living in China for a certain period of time, resulting in a sizable pool of potential research respondents. By 2015, 28,796 North Koreans had resettled in South Korea and the number has continued to increase (Ministry of Unification, 2016).

Moreover, interviewing NKMCs in South Korea is much better than in China for several reasons. First, study participants residing in South Korea do not have to be afraid of being arrested and deported, and this might improve the reliability of their statements. In addition, though their accounts are retrospective, NKMCs in South Korea are able to provide a more comprehensive narrative of their experiences in China because they have spent a relatively long period of time in China prior to coming to South Korea. Finally, as I am originally from South Korea, I can speak Koreans well, have a good understanding of Korean culture, and have good networks in South Korea.

I interviewed a total of 42 NKMCs (72%) in Seoul (the capital of South Korea), 10 NKMCs (17%) in Incheon (an hour by car from Seoul), 4 NKMCs (7%) in Eumseong, North Chungcheong Province (in the middle of South Korea), and 1 NKMC (2%) in Hwaseong, Gyeonggi Province (Map 3). After interviewing the study participants in Seoul, I traveled to other cities to conduct additional interviews because new study participants were referred to me by those I interviewed in Seoul.

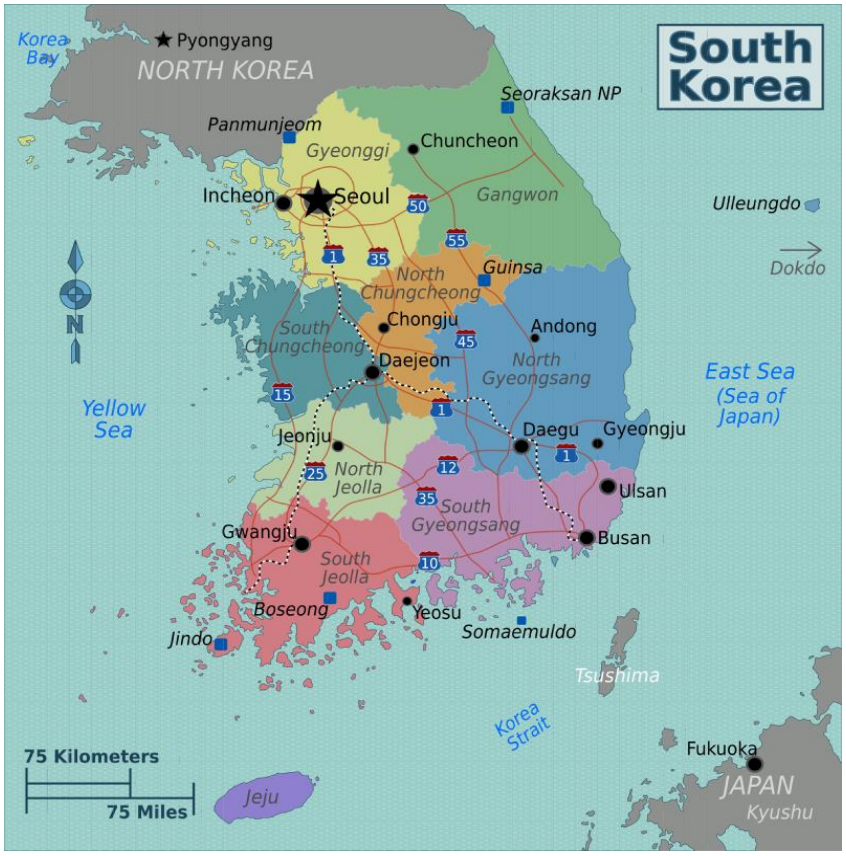
According to the Korean Ministry of Unification (2016), 29% of NKMCs are living in the Gyeonggi Province, 26% in Seoul and 9% in Incheon. The South Korean government provides North Koreans with rental houses in areas where they want to live. Many North Koreans prefer cities to rural areas. However, not all of them can live in the area they want, as it depends on the number of vacant rental houses available. North Koreans who live in rural area receive resettlement fund incentives (Ministry of Unification, 2014).

I utilized a snowballing sampling method. The first interview was conducted in Seoul. Seoul is the capital of South Korea, has a population of 10 million (around 20% of the total population of South Korea), and has an area of 605 square kilometers. Seoul is the 18th largest city in the world, the 4th largest metropolitan economy, with a GDP of US$ 845.9

billion in 2014, after Tokyo, New York, and Los Angeles. The city hosted the 1986 Asian Games, the 1988 Summer Olympic, the 2002 FIFA World Cup, and the 2010 G-20 Seoul Summit. Seoul is one of the preferring areas of settlement by North Koreans because it is one of the best cities to live in within South Korea.

Incheon is the third most populous city after Seoul and Busan. It has a population of 3 million and an area of 1,029 square kilometers. The city is located in northwest South Korea and it borders Seoul and Gyeonggi to the east. Incheon is famous for its international airport, which is the largest airport in South Korea and one of the largest and busiest in the world.

Map 3-1: South Korea



(Source: https://en.wikivoyage.org/wiki/South_Korea)

It was ranked the best airport in the world by Skytrax (a United Kingdom-based inflight research service) in 2009 and 2012. Additionally, Incheon's international harbor links many harbors in China and South Korea. In this respect, Incheon is also an attractive place to settle for North Koreans who have family members, relatives, and friends in China.

B. Purposive Snowball Sampling

After arriving in South Korea in 2013, I talked to several NKMC experts, some of whom were NKMCs themselves and others who were not. They were not optimistic about my chance of successfully interviewing North Koreans for several reasons. First, North Koreans are afraid of revealing their identities because they are worried that their families in North Korea might be punished (Byman and Lind, 2010; Charny, 2005; PoKempner and Baik, 2002). Second, even if I somehow could meet them, they might not be willing to tell me about their experiences in China because they do not want to recall the bad memories. Third, they proposed that it would be hard for victims of sex trafficking or forced marriage to admit their sexual victimization to a male researcher whom they met for the first time.

Thus, I turned to police officers who are in charge of protecting NKMCs after they arrive in South Korea. As a police officer in South Korea myself, I am well accustomed to the work of police officers who are in charge of protecting North Koreans in South Korea. These officers are very close to North Koreans living in South Korea. Some North Koreans who have no family in South Korea even asked these officers to

play the roles of their family members. For example, I am aware of one police officer who acted as the father of a North Korean bride who had no father in South Korea. She asked the police officer to be her stepfather in the wedding. However, even though South Korean police officers usually have good relationships with NKMCs, the three NKMCs who I met through these officers were not willing to introduce other NKMCs to me. I guess the most important reason was that they were worried about their own and their friends' identities being exposed. Although I did not ask their names and other identifiable information, they were concerned because the police officers already knew who they are and might provide me with their personal information.

Later, I contacted a Christian NGO in Seoul. This NGO belongs to a Korean church that operates a school for North Korean children and helps North Koreans who are living in South Korea. I tried to establish a close relationship with NKMCs who were referred by this NGO for several months so that I could locate willing interviewees, but nothing materialized. They were very careful when it came to talk about their pasts.

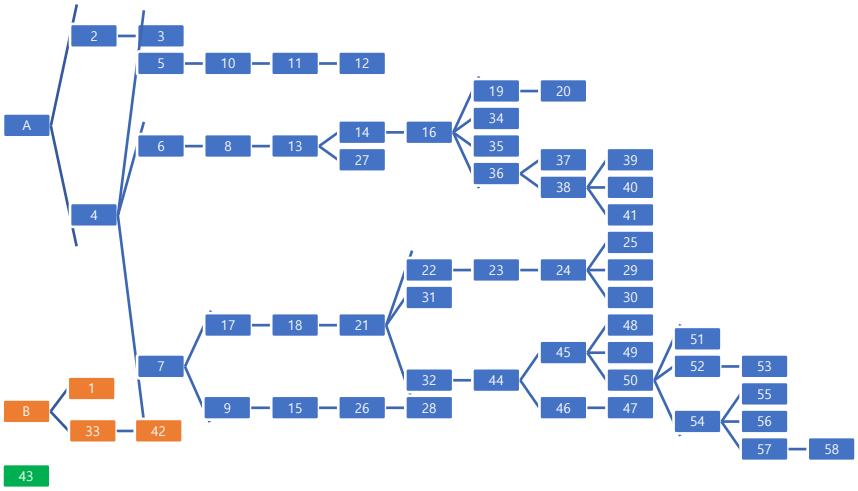
Finally, I contacted another NGO through my personal network. I asked a member of the NGO to introduce NKMCs to me. He told me that

he could refer NKMCs, but he could not ask them to be my research participants. He gave me the telephone numbers of two NKMCs and after I contacted them and explained to them the purpose of my study, they agreed to participate in my research. After the interviews, I paid 30,000 won ($26) to each interviewee as a stipend and I asked them to refer other potential study participants. After I interviewed the NKMCs they referred to me, I asked these NKMCs to introduce other potential study participants. The stipend of 30,000 won was not that much because other researchers in South Korea have paid from 50,000 ($43) to 100,000 won ($86) to NKMCs as research study participants. Several interviewees refused to accept the stipend because they hoped that NKMCs still in China would benefit from this study.

Except for one study participant whom I recruited on my own, fifty-seven NKMCs were recruited through snowball sampling (see Figure 3-1). As the research progressed, a purposive sampling criterion was utilized to control the types of study participants to be recruited. This was to make this study's sample somewhat representative of the general population of NKMCs in South Korea. For example, the number of male and female study participants were selected to reflect the sex-ratio of NKMCs in South Korea. In all, 47 women and 11 men were interviewed.

Male study participants were relatively less important than female in terms of the victimization of forced marriage and sex-trafficking. However, they might have been victimized by labor exploitation and were expected to be good comparative sample to the female group. For these reasons, male study participants were recruited as well.

Figure 3-1: Purposive Snowball Sampling Process



C. Interviews

Before I travelled to South Korea from the United States for this study, I obtained an approval from Rutgers University's Institutional

Review Board (IRB). All interviews were conducted with the consent of the study participants. To prevent the interviewees from being identified, I conducted the interviews one-on-one and face-to-face without the presence of a third party. I did not ask their real names nor any identifiable information. Interviews were conducted using a standardized questionnaire and a conversational method (Gall, Borg, and Gall, 1996).

The questionnaire was in Korean and all the interviews were conducted in Korean (see Appendix 1 for the English translation). The interviews were completed from November 2013 to March 2015. I tried to establish rapport with the study participants by explaining my research in detail and spending some time with them before the formal interviews. Interviews were conducted in any places convenient for the study participants. Many of them wanted to have the interviews carried out in their homes. Other interviews took place at cafes, offices, and a motel which was the workplace of one interviewee.

I gathered the following domains of information from NKMCs through face-to-face interviews.

- Personal Characteristics and Life in North Korea: Sex, age, education, marital status, number of children (if any), place of residence before leaving North Korea, whether he/she was

employed in North Korea, occupation (if employed), working conditions, job satisfaction, monthly income, reasons for unemployment (if not employed), living conditions, level of satisfaction with life in North Korea, knowledge and perceptions of China.

- Leaving North Korea: Personal, family, and social factors prompting NKMCs to leave; awareness of the punishment for illegal border crossing; how long it took to prepare for the departure; who helped in crossing the border; how respondents avoided border guard detection; what are the routes and associated risks; how long it took to get to China; any contingency plans; reaction of family members to respondents' decisions to leave.

- Recruitment: How respondents came to know smugglers or traffickers, characteristics of smugglers or traffickers, what the smugglers or traffickers promised, what types of arrangements needed to be made before leaving, how much and when respondents paid, in what currency, whether there was an argument over money, where the money came from, whether respondents knew what they would do in China, whether

recruiters deceived respondents, whether smugglers or traffickers informed respondents of what they would do in China, what smugglers or traffickers promised to respondents before leaving.

- Entering China: When did the respondents arrived in China; how they crossed the border; how many relatives or family members (if any) were in China; whether they or the smugglers or traffickers bribed the border police; if so, how much and who they bribed; through which city/province did they enter China; how many people crossed the border together (including smugglers or traffickers); whether they had travel documents; if so, what kinds of travel documents (genuine or fraudulent); how did they obtain the documents; who possessed the documents (respondents or smugglers or traffickers); who greeted respondents at the point of entry; their nationality; which language they used; and where they stayed after entering China.

- Moving from the border area to the destination: How they were transported, were there any difficulties in the journey; any abuse by others (including by smugglers or traffickers); if so,

how did it happen; what types of abuse (threats, assault, robbery, rape); whether they witnessed other people being abused; whether they were confined by smugglers or traffickers; the condition of the place they were confined; how long they were confined; how many people were kept together; how they were treated by smugglers or traffickers; any abuse when they were in custody.

- Experiences of being arrested: Whether they were stopped by North Korean or Chinese authorities; whether they were arrested by the authorities; if not, what they anticipated if they had been arrested and deported back to North Korea; if so, how many times and how it happened; how long they were detained by the authorities; how they were treated by the authorities; the conditions of detention, accommodations, and food; any abuse in custody; if so, what kinds of abuse; why and how they were released later.

- The smugglers and traffickers: Study participants' knowledge of smugglers' or traffickers' nationality, occupation, organized crime involvement; whether they had accomplices; what types of role allocations appeared to exist among smugglers or

traffickers; any places used as so-called safe houses; who the owners of such safe house were; how they worked together; how the prices of NKMCs changed when they were transferred; how they bought and sold NKMCs when trafficking was present; how they controlled NKMCs through the whole trafficking process; how they treated NKMCs.

- Life and work in China: How long did the study participants stay in China, their difficulties in living in China, level of satisfaction living in China, what kinds of jobs they had, how often they were employed, how many hours they worked, how much money they earned, whether they liked their jobs, the reasons they liked or disliked their jobs, how employers treated them, and what they did in their free time.

- Sex trafficking: Whether study participants worked in the sex business in China; if so, when they knew they would engage in sex work; how they began doing so; for how long; any physical force, deception, or coercion used to make them enter sex work; if so when, how, and by whom they were abused; how the sex business operated; what types of sex business; how many people were involved; what the roles of these others

were; how much money customers paid; how the money was distributed among the people involved; how much money the respondent earned; whether the respondent felt the money distribution was fair; where the respondents used the money; daily schedule; working times; who the customers were; whether the customer treated them well; any abuse or violence from customers, owners, co-workers, or other staff of the business; their biggest concerns while working in the sex business; whether they were arrested by Chinese authorities; if so, how they were arrested; whether they were free to move; whether the sex business owner held respondents' travel documents; whether the respondent used drugs or alcohol; whether the respondent tried to escape; if so, how and what happened, and if not, why.

- Forced marriage: Whether the respondent married a Chinese man, and if so, when they became aware they would marry; how long the respondent was in the marriage; whether there was force, deception, or coercion involved in the process; if not, what made the respondent decide to marry; how was the marriage arranged; how many family members were in the new

house; who was the husband; how was life in the new house; how did family members treat the respondent; whether the respondent felt happy, why, any work besides house work; daily schedule; whether the respondent had children; if so, how many, how old, sons or daughters; where are they now; how family members of the husband treated the children; any violence by the husband or family members; major concerns in the marriage; whether the respondent was free to move around; if not, how the husband or family members restricted the respondent's movement; who possessed the respondent's travel documents; whether the respondent tried to escape from the marriage; if not why; and if so, how and what was the result.

- Labor exploitation: Whether the respondent worked in China; if so, what kinds of work; the nationality of the employer; whether there was exploitation; if so, how; how many hours the respondent worked; how many off days the respondent had; how much money they made; how their wages compared to other Chinese workers; whether the employer offered explanation about pay discrepancies; in cases of exploitation, when the respondent realized they were exploited; how long

the respondent was exploited; any physical force, deception, or coercion involved in the process; in cases without exploitation, how the respondent decided to work; the process of getting to work; whether the respondent lived in the workplace; their daily schedule; any violence by employers or co-workers; other major concerns in the workplace; whether the respondent had freedom of movement; if not, how employers or co-workers restricted the respondent's movement; who possessed the travel documents; whether the respondent tried to escape from the workplace; if not, why; and if so, how and what happened.

- Other forms of victimization: Victimization other than sex trafficking, forced marriage, or labor exploitation; what circumstances led to the respondent's victimization; whether they reported the victimization to Chinese authorities; if not, why; if yes, the reaction of Chinese authorities; whether the respondent met or heard about other victims of sex trafficking, forced marriage, and labor exploitation; whether the respondent received any government assistances in China.

Each interview lasted from two to four hours. All the interviews were audio-recorded and were transcribed. Each transcribed interview was

from 30 to 50 pages, with around 2,000 pages in total. The transcripts were categorized and some of the answers were coded prior to data analysis.

D. Ethical Issues

According to the World Health Organization (Zimmerman and Watts, 2003: 1):

> interviewing a woman who has been trafficked raises a number of ethical questions and safety concerns for the woman, others close to her, and for the interviewer. Having a sound understanding of the risks, ethical considerations, and the practical realities related to trafficking can help minimize the dangers and increase the likelihood that a woman will disclose relevant and accurate information.

Zimmerman and Watts (2003: 4) also suggest the following guiding principles for the ethical and safe conduct of interviews with women who have been trafficked:

> (1) Do no harm; (2) Know your subject and assess the risks; (3) Prepare referral information—Don't offer advice or make promises that you cannot fulfill; (4) Adequately select and prepare interpreters and co-workers; (5) Ensure anonymity and confidentiality; (6) Get informed consent; (7) Listen to and respect each woman's assessment of her situation and risks to her safety; (8) Do not re-traumatize a

> woman; (9) Be prepared for emergency intervention; (10) Put information collected to good use.

When I was interviewing my study participants, I abided by all of these WHO recommendations and by IRB regulations. First, I treated each interviewee and situation carefully for the safety of the interviewees. I conducted the interview in a place where the respondent felt safe. I did not do anything to harm my study participants, either in the short term or long term. Second, when a potential interviewee did not want to be interviewed, I did not contact him or her again nor try to persuade the person to change his or her mind. Third, I prepared a list of agencies where my study participants could obtain legal, health, shelter, social support and security services if they wished to do so. Fourth, I did not work with an interpreter because I speak Korean and I worked alone without any co-workers. Fifth, to protect the identities of my respondents, I did not ask them to provide any identifiable information.

Sixth, I presented each study participant with the informed consent statement, which had been approved by the Rutgers University IRB (see Appendix 2). In the statement, I included my contact information and that of the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at Rutgers University, including phone numbers, office addresses, and email addresses. I explained that the identity of the respondent and any persons they

mentioned during the interview would not be recorded and would be kept anonymous. As I explained, the data were housed on a password-protected computer, which is locked and which only I have access to. Seventh, I recognized that many NKMCs have deep concerns about their identities being revealed because of family members still living in North Korea. I did whatever I could to protect their identities. Eighth, when I asked questions about their victimization, I paid particular attention not to re-traumatize them. For example, before I asked whether there was any sexual victimization, I told them that they did not need to answer the question if they did not feel comfortable. If a study participant said she was not sexually exploited and I was not completely convinced with her answer, I did not repeat the question again. Ninth, although it was highly unlikely for my respondents to be in imminent danger in South Korea, I was prepared to intervene if such an occasion arose. Tenth, my intention is to use the collected information for the benefit of NKMCs by assisting in the development of good policies.

3.3 Data Management and Data Analysis

A. Data Management

All the interviews were audio recorded on my laptop and my smartphone at the same time to prepare for any unexpected error in recording. Every interviewee gave their permission for the interview to be recorded once I explained why I wanted to record and that the recording would be deleted once transcribed. Every recording file was named by the date and order of the interviews. The recording files were kept in my password protected computer and were transcribed in Microsoft Word. For the analysis of interviewees' responses to each question, I made 167 columns corresponding to each question in an Excel file.

B. Description of the Sample

There are 47 women (81%) and 11 men (19%) in my sample. This ratio is not the same but similar to the gender ratio of North Koreans in South Korea (71% female and 29% male) (Ministry of Unification, 2016). Their ages ranged from 28 to 72. The majority of the sample (52%) was in their 40s, 22% in their 50s, and 14% their 30s. Among the 29,121 North Koreans who have settled in South Korea, 29% are in their 30s, 28% in their 20s, and 21% in their 40s (Ministry of Unification, 2016). The ages when study participants crossed the border ranged from 17 to 64 years (Table 3-1).

Table 3-1: Study Participants' Demographics (N=58)

	Women (N=47)		Men (N=11)		Total (N=58)	
	Frequency	**Percent**	**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Age at crossing the border						
19 to 29	22	47	3	27	25	43
30 to 39	17	36	6	55	23	40
40 to 64	8	17	2	18	10	17
Marital status in North Korea						
Single	25	53	4	36	29	50
Married	17	36	6	55	23	40
Widowed	5	11	0	0	5	9
Divorced	0	0	1	9	1	2
Children (N=29, excluding single)						
None	1	5	1	14	2	7
One	5	23	2	29	7	23
Two	11	50	3	43	14	47
Three	3	13	0	0	4	13
Five	1	5	0	0	1	3
Missing	1	5	1	14	2	7
Province of origin						
North Hamgyong	29	62	6	55	35	60
South Hamgyong	7	15	2	18	9	16
Ryanggang	5	11	2	18	7	12
Kangwon	2	4	0	0	2	3
South Hwanghae	2	4	0	0	2	3
North Pyongan	1	2	1	9	2	3

Pyongyang City	1	2	0	0	1	2
Occupation						
Laborer	10	21	3	27	13	22
Vendor	10	21	0	0	10	17
Company worker	6	13	0	0	6	10
Teacher	4	9	0	0	4	7
Public official	3	6	0	0	3	5
House wife	3	6	0	0	3	5
Farmer	1	2	2	18	3	5
Mine worker	0	0	2	18	2	3
Serviceman	0	0	1	9	1	2
Others	7	15	3	27	10	17
None	3	6	0	0	3	5
Education						
None	0	0	1	9	1	2
Elementary	1	2	2	18	3	5
Middle School	18	38	1	9	19	33
High School	11	23	5	45	17	29
College	16	34	2	18	18	31
Graduate school	1	2	1	9	2	3
Total	**47**	**81**	**11**	**19**	**58**	**100**

NOTE: Percentages are rounded.

More than half (53%) of women were single when they were in North Korea while 55% of men were married when they were in North Korea.

The majority crossed the border when they were in their early thirties, with the mean age being 32 years.

Most (60%) of my study participants came from North Hamgyong Province, the northernmost province of North Korea. According to statistics from the Korean Ministry of Unification (2016), 62% of North Koreans who have entered South Korea are from North Hamgyong Province and it is almost the same with my sample. The respondents' educational backgrounds varied. A large percentage (60%) graduated from at least high school. Except for three study participants, all (95%) had occupations in North Korea. Their occupations were diverse: laborer, vendor, company worker, teacher, public official, house wife, farmer, mine worker, serviceman, barber, dancer, singer, athlete, and doctor.

C. Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted through various ways: analysis by comparisons of individual stories, analysis of responses to each question, and investigating the existence of interrelationships among factors and demographic features of different respondents. As one of the main contributions of qualitative research is its ability to capture situational processes and the contexts of phenomena, I will schematize the pathways

of the 58 study participants' movement from North Korea to China and, when relevant, into situations involving trafficking. This will enable a better understanding of the NKCMs' lives. Through schematization, I hope I will be able to simplify, visualize, and compare the respondents' pathways from North Korea to China, and later to South Korea. When I compare different diagrams of the victims' lives I will be able to find commonalities and differences in the process of each respondent's experiences, including those of victimization. There were a range of pathways among study participants in my study, from a simple case to a very complicated case. Some respondents were arrested after they entered China the first time, deported back to North Korea, and later re-entered China, while others did not have any experience with deportation. Some respondents experienced only forced marriage while others experienced multiple forms of victimization, including sex trafficking and labor exploitation. Though my study fundamentally employs qualitative data collection methods, I will tabulate some of my data for analysis. This is in keeping with best practices in qualitative data analysis to ensure a clear understanding of the patterns uncovered in the analysis (Silverman, 1993).

Third, I will examine the relationships between individual characteristics and vulnerability to victimization. For example, if highly educated respondents seldom experienced sex trafficking, this suggests that there is a negative relationship between education level and vulnerability. I will also investigate whether any relationships exist between certain types of social processes or experiences and vulnerability. For example, if the respondents who experienced deportation seldom experienced being sold as brides after re-entering China, this suggests there is a negative relationship between deportation experience and subsequent vulnerability to forced marriage.

3.4 Validity and Reliability

A. Validity and Reliability in Qualitative Research

Validity has been defined in quantitative research as "whether the research truly measures that which it was intended to measure or how truthful the research results are" (Bridges, Smeyers, and Smith, 2009: 121). Reliability has been defined in quantitative research as "whether the result is replicable" (Golafshani, 2003: 599). As qualitative researchers seek "illumination, understanding, and extrapolation to similar situation"

while quantitative researchers seek “causal determination, prediction, and generalization of findings”, quantitative applications of validity and reliability are somewhat distinct from those used by qualitative researchers (Golafshani, 2003: 600; Hoepfl, 1997). Although validity and reliability are separated concepts in quantitative studies, qualitative researchers do not draw these sharp conceptual distinctions within qualitative studies. Instead, qualitative researchers use terminology that encompasses both concepts, such as “credibility, transferability, and trustworthiness” (Golafshani, 2003: 600).

According to Winter (2000: 1), validity is not a single concept but rather a “contingent construct, inescapably grounded in the processes and intentions of particular research methodologies and projects.” Many qualitative researchers have suggested quality, rigor, and trustworthiness as more appropriate terms in qualitative research than the term of validity (Davies and Dodd, 2002; Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Seale, 1999; Stenbacka, 2001). As for reliability, Lincoln and Guba (1985) explained that credibility, neutrality or confirmability, consistency or dependability and applicability or transferability are essential criteria for assessing the quality of qualitative research, while validity and reliability are essential criteria for quality of quantitative research. Stenbacka (2001) argued that

reliability is an irrelevant issue in the assessment of quality in qualitative research because the concept of reliability is related to measurement. Furthermore, she contended that if it is used in the assessment of qualitative studies, then the "consequence is rather that the study is no good" (Stenbacka, 2001: 552).

B. Validity and Reliability of this Study

As a qualitative study, it is reasonable that the validity and reliability of this study cannot be assessed by the same criteria used in the assessment of a quantitative study. I have focused on the trustworthiness of my study. This means that I focused on the question of how much I can trust the statements of my respondents, what method would be best to collect data about NKMCs' victimization, and what strategies would be best to analyze my data in a rigorous and thorough manner.

With regard to trustworthiness, NKMCs have great concerns about the consequences of revealing their identities because they believe that their family members in North Korea might be in trouble if their identities become known. In addition, it may be hard for respondents to reveal bad experiences to someone who is not intimate to them if enough

rapport is not established. So, their willingness to participate and to tell the truth might be influenced by these concerns. Keeping these risks in mind, I used the following strategies to enhance the trustworthiness of their statements, following the example of Chin and Finckenauer (2012). First, I conducted all of the interviews face-to-face and one-on-one without the presence of a third party. Second, I conducted all of the interviews in a place the interviewee desired. Third, I did not collect any identifiable information. Fourth, before I met the interviewees, they already had some familiarity with and confidence in this study because they had heard about it from the former interviewees who referred them to me. Moreover, I employed conversational interview techniques to earn the trust and confidence of the interviewees. Even so, there might be possibilities for some female NKMCs to hide their sexual victimization because of shame associated with such experiences (Banyard, Ward, Cohn, Plante, Moorhead, and Walsh, 2007; Sable, Danis, Mauzy, and Gallagher, 2006; Weiss, 2010; Zinzow and Thompson, 2011).

Second, I choose qualitative methods because there is not enough in-depth, empirical data on the trafficking of NKMCs. I believe that conducting face-to-face and one-on-one interview without the presence of a third party is the best way to collect the data. Third, as I mentioned

above, I analyzed the data in three ways: (1) analysis of every research subject through the schematization of their stories, (2) analysis of the answers by quantifying the answers and key factors, and (3) examining the relationships between individual characteristics and vulnerability to victimization or the relationships between certain types of social processes and vulnerability. As I will tabulate some of my data, I will be able to identify some patterns, even though my sample size is relatively small.

C. Study Limitations

Despite the strengths and import of this research, my study has limitations. Some of the most obvious of these are as follows.

- I utilize a small, snowball sample, so it could be skewed in terms of sex, age, education, marital status in North Korea, level and type of victimization, and so on. Thus, my findings may not be generalizable to the population of NKMCs.

- Some of my study participants may either exaggerate their experiences of victimization to gain sympathy or minimize their victimization in shame.

- My study participants may not correctly recall what had happened in China because of the amount of time that has passed.

- I interviewed NKMCs only. Other actors who play a role in their migration and, in some cases, trafficking is not interviewed. This includes traffickers and smugglers (including safe house owners, middlemen, sellers, and buyers), neighbors of NKMCs, NGO workers, border patrol agents, and corrupt government authorities.

- I interviewed only North Koreans who had settle downed in South Korea after their time in China. NKMCs who are still in China might have very different experiences, including experiences of trafficking and victimization, than those who subsequently moved to South Korea.

- My study is only about North Koreans and consequently my findings and conclusions are only applicable to NKMCs and not to migrants who came to China from other countries and may also have experienced trafficking and victimization, for example, forced marriage victims from Myanmar and Vietnam.

- All the interviews were conducted by a male researcher. For some female NKMCs, it might not be easy to talk frankly about sexual victimization and engagement in commercial sex (but see Chin and Finckenauer, 2012; Miller, 2010).

CHAPTER 4

LIFE IN NORTH KOREA AND THE DECISION TO MIGRATE

4.1 Economic Situation in North Korea

As mentioned in Chapter 1, the North Korean economy broke down in the late 1980s and a chronic food shortage began in the early 1990s (Hawk, 2016). A bad harvest in 1993 and two big floods in 1995 and 1996 made matters worse (Park, 2012). According to Haggard et al. (2006), Public Distribution System (PDS) rations were reduced by ten percent in 1992 and thereafter rations became erratic, particularly in the northeast. Then, the North Korean regime stopped rations to North and South Hamgyong Province and Ryanggang Province in 1994. Finally, the PDS was only able to supply six percent of the population by 1997 (Choi, 2010; Haggard et al., 2006).

Many study participants said their lives in North Korea had been poor, miserable, and hopeless. Even though some of them had jobs provided by the government, they could not receive salaries from the government after the early 1990s. Many said they could not have even a single cup of soup for several days and looked for edible grass in the

mountains. Eun-Hi, a 28-year-old single when she arrived in China in 1996, said she was too poor to survive in North Korea:

> I was a laborer in a construction site in North Korea. I received 45 North Korean won (U.S. $0.20)[5] per month from the government, which could buy only 1kg of rice in the market. I could not survive with that amount of money, so I quit. I started selling items in the black market, the so-called *jangmadang*, but I could not earn money. I tried to find food every day and went up into the mountain to pick wormwood to eat or else I could not have anything for several days.

Ho-Chul, a 45-year-old laborer in North Korea when he arrived in China in 1998, said he was not paid a salary for many years and so he crossed the border:

> I worked in a steel mill and the promised salary was 60 North Korean won (U.S. $0.30) but I did not get any money from the government for five years. I needed to support my wife and two daughters. We were living like beggars. We could eat rice on some days but only grass on the others. My two daughters crossed the border together because they were convinced they would die of starvation if they did not leave.

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[5] The exchange rate between North Korean Won and US dollars changed from 80~100 Won to 1 USD in 1992 to 3,000 Won in 2007 (Moon, 2008). The rate has increased in succession to 2,540~5,400 Won in 2011 (Seo, 2013). The estimates of US dollar in the text were calculated based on the exchange rates suggested by Moon (2008) and Seo (2013) according to the years the bribes were offered.

Like Ho-Chul, many study participants could not receive salaries from the government, so they started to sell goods such as clothes, shoes, and food illegally in the *jangmadang*. Hyun-Ju, aged 38 and married with two sons when she crossed the border in 2000, said she quit working in a factory because the salary stopped:

> When I worked in the factory, they gave me 100 North Korean won (U.S. $0.50) but the government did not pay and stopped food rationing, I quit the factory work and started to sell goods in the *jangmadang*. As merchandizing is illegal[6] in North Korea, I sold goods at night in front of the railway station. I could have three meals a day and did not need to have rice soup only because I was better off than average people.

4.2 Decision to Leave North Korea

A. Motives

The reasons study participants chose to leave North Korea were varied and complex. For many, a combination of pros and cons for both staying and leaving were considered, as well as both economic and personal concerns. First, economic considerations were the most frequently reported reasons for North Koreans to leave their country. Some of them wanted to earn money and others wanted, at the least, to

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[6] As a communist regime, North Korea prohibited private trading and unlicensed production and sales (Kim and Song, 2008).

survive.

Most study participants were dissatisfied with their economic situation in North Korea and they wanted change. Twenty-nine out of 58 people (50%) noted starvation due to an inadequate food supply and an additional 18 (31%) noted poverty as the major reasons of dissatisfaction in North Korean life. Accordingly, 41 people (71%) said their primary motivation for entering China was to earn more money while seven (12%) cited survival as their primary motivation. See Table 4-1 for details.

Table 4-1: Motives and General Information of Study Participants

Pseudonym	Gender	Age when s/he crossed the border	Marital Status	Educational Attainment	Motive to Enter China	Year of Arriving in China
Chul-Soo	Male	37	Married	Elementary School	To survive	2000
Eun-Hi	Female	28	Single	Middle School	To survive	1996
Eun-Jin	Female	28	Single	Middle School	To earn money	1998
Eun-Mi	Female	48	Married	University	To earn money	2006
Ha-Eun	Female	52	Widowed	Elementary School	To earn money	1999
Hae-Won	Female	26	Widowed	University	To earn money	1998
Ho-Chul	Male	45	Married	None	To survive	1998

Hye-Jin	Female	51	Married	Middle School	To earn money	2007
Hye-Ran	Female	24	Single	High School	To survive	1999
Hyo-Sun	Female	37	Single	University	Discrimination	1999
Hyun-Ju	Female	38	Married	University	To earn money	2000
Hyun-Ok	Female	27	Single	Middle School	To earn money	1996
Ji-Min	Female	34	Widowed	High School	To earn money	2009
Jin-Ah	Female	20	Single	High School	To earn money	1998
Jin-Hi	Female	29	Single	High School	To earn money	2000
Jin-Ju	Female	35	Married	University	To earn money	2008
Ji-Won	Female	34	Single	Middle School	To earn money	2000
Ji-Woo	Female	24	Single	Middle School	To earn money	1998
Ji-Young	Female	29	Single	Middle School	To earn money	1998
Jong-Beom	Male	30	Single	University	To survive	1994
Jong-Min	Male	17	Single	High School	To earn money	2002
Jung-Ah	Female	30	Single	High School	To earn money	2000
Jung-Ho	Male	31	Married	Middle School	To escape punishment	1999
Ju-Young	Female	27	Single	Middle School	To earn money	2000
Kwang-Soo	Male	42	Married	Elementary School	To earn money	2002
Mee-Yon	Female	51	Married	High School	To earn money	2009
Mi-Kyung	Female	22	Company	University	Curiosity	2004

Mi-Na	Female	30	Single	University	To earn money	2001
Min-ji	Female	32	Married	Middle School	To earn money	2000
Min-Seo	Female	39	Widowed	University	To survive	2007
Min-Soo	Male	39	Married	High School	To earn money	2008
Mi-Young	Female	47	Widowed	University	Discrimination	1997
Myung-Sook	Female	30	Married	High School	To earn money	1998
Na-Rae	Female	22	Single	High School	To earn money	2004
Sang-Hoon	Male	23	Single	High School	To earn money	1997
Seo-Hyun	Female	49	Married	Middle School	To earn money	2003
Seong-Woo	Male	33	Married	High School	To earn money	2004
Seo-Yoon	Female	20	Single	Middle School	Curiosity	1997
Soo-Ah	Female	32	Divorced	College	Discrimination	2001
Soo-Bin	Female	64	Widowed	Middle School	To earn money	2008
Sook-Hi	Female	39	Married	College	To escape punishment	1998
Sook-Jin	Female	24	Single	Middle School	To earn money	1997
Soo-Mi	Female	19	Single	University	To earn money	1998
Soon-Ja	Female	32	Single	Middle School	To earn money	1998
Soon-Ok	Female	25	Single	High School	To earn money	2001
So-Yun	Female	21	Single	Middle School	To earn money	2009
Su-Ji	Female	27	Married	Middle School	To earn money	1997

Su-Jin	Female	22	Single	High School	To earn money	2000
Su-Jung	Female	19	Single	Middle School	To earn money	1998
Su-Min	Female	32	Married	College	To earn money	2003
Sun-Hi	Female	32	Married	College	To earn money	1998
Sun-Young	Female	25	Single	University	To earn money	2001
Ye-eun	Female	42	Married	College	To escape punishment	2005
Yong-Suk	Female	39	Widowed	High School	To survive	1998
Young_Chul	Male	28	Divorced	College	To escape punishment	1996
Young-Sam	Male	36	Married	High School	To escape punishment	2006
Yu-Na	Female	30	Single	Middle School	To earn money	2001
Yun-Seo	Female	28	Single	High School	To earn money	1997

Among the 41 study participants who said earning more money was the primary reason to enter China, seven were specifically motivated by family members already there. They reported both wanting to receive assistance from their family members already in China, as well as wanting to earn money there. Four study participants planned to return to their country after successfully earning money in China; they did not see it as a long term or permanent move. Soon-Ja, a 32-year-old single when she crossed the border in 1998, said:

> An older woman who went to China and came back to North Korea said that I could eat pork as much as I want in China. She said if I work in a restaurant in China, I would be able to have not only pork but anything I want to eat. I believed her words and made up my mind that I would work just for a month in China and would come back to North Korea and would live better than before. However, I could not come back to North Korea because she sold me as a bride to an unknown Chinese man.

Seven study participants who were motivated by survival believed that it was highly likely or close to certain that they would die if they remained in North Korea. Jin-Ah, who was 20 years old and single when she crossed the border in 1998, said that her mother suggested they kill themselves together when she was in North Korea as there was no hope to survive but to die of starvation. She said that her mother bought rat poison and told her three children to commit suicide. Several respondents reported that they looked for edible grass or tree bark in the mountains. Ha-Eun, a 52-year-old widow when she crossed the border in 1999, said that she did some farming but, at one point, still could not have even a cup of soup for several days at a time:

> We farmers got rice from the regime, but it was not enough. We got rice in the fall, but it ran out by May or June. From then on, we needed to borrow money for living expenses until fall came again. I just lived on because I could not kill myself. There was nothing to have, and we could not have a single cup of rice soup

for several days.

Because of their desire to survive, these study participants tried to escape from North Korea even though they believed they might be killed by the border guards during their crossing. Among the seven study participants who crossed the border for survival, two received help from smugglers while five crossed the border themselves and laid their lives on the line. Ho-Chul said he crossed the border just for food and had no other reasons:

> I just wanted to get some food. I felt that I would die if I did not do anything. I made up my mind that I would cross the border to get food from anybody like a beggar. It was winter, and the river was frozen. I just ran across the frozen river. I thought that if I were shot by the border guards, it could not be helped. I did not have money to get help from somebody else and I could not find anybody who could help me to cross the border.

In addition to the majority of study participants who crossed into China for economic reasons, some study participants crossed for personal reasons. Five participants were motivated by their very specific circumstances of wanting to escape punishment for a crime. Two study participants had gotten into trouble with the law because of their black-market business, while another had stolen a telephone wire. Another study participant had sold a television which had been a gift from the Kim

family. The last one had participated in the trafficking of North Koreans and was discovered by the North Korean regime. These five interviewees all reported the upcoming punishment as a key motivation for their leaving.

Three participants noted specifically that they felt discriminated against in North Korea and reported this as the main motivation for leaving. One was discriminated against for her South Korean family background, and two others for their Japanese family backgrounds. Hyo-Sun, a 37-year-old singer in North Korea when she crossed the border in 1999, wanted to leave North Korea because she felt that she faced discrimination as her family had been from South Korea.

> I did not know that my father had been from South Korea. I wanted to marry in North Korea but every time there was a marriage proposal it was declined by the man's family. Until then, my father had never told me the background of my family. Finally, he said he came from South Korea and because of his South Korean background, men's family declined the marriage proposal. I blamed my father and made up my mind to leave home.

Alternatively, two study participants noted the urge to see China was much greater than any desire to leave the North. They said they were very curious and wanted to see China from the perspective of a tourist, even noting that they planned to return immediately after their visit. One

of them was deceived by her cousin and followed him to China. Later, she was sold as a bride. The other study participant stayed with her elder sister in China after the crossing and she changed her mind, deciding not to go back to North Korea and to live in China. Table 4-2 summarizes these patterns.

Table 4-2: Main Motives for Leaving North Korea

Motives (N=58)	**N**	**%**
To earn money	41	71
To survive	7	12
To escape punishment	5	9
Discrimination	3	5
Curiosity	2	3

* The percentages have been rounded.

B. Strong Positive Impression of China

In addition to their primary motives for leaving North Korea, 45 study participants (78%) stressed that they had a particularly strong positive impression of China when they were back in North Korea, and this contributed to their desire to go to China. They noted that even if they

did not know specifically what life in China was like, they knew it to be a wealthy country where they could live a much better life. Study participants developed this impression when they saw Chinese goods sold in the black market and when they heard stories told by people who had visited China. Some said they had learned about China from relatives already there. Some reported that they could see China across the river from the border area of North Korea and when they saw Chinese people and what they were wearing, they had the impression that China is a better country than North Korea and they could live better if they went there.

Sook-Hi, a 39-year-old married woman when she arrived in China in 1998, recalled that when she saw a storehouse in China filled with corn from the border area in North Korea, she did not believe it at first:

> When I visited my husband's home town in Onsong[7] in April, I saw a warehouse filled with corn in China from Onsong. I did not believe the scene and thought that they made a fake picture or a model for propaganda. I could not believe my eyes how they could be rich in corn in April because we had nothing to eat in April. Finally, I made up my mind to go to China and check out how they live and what they have.

Meanwhile, 11 study participants (19%) said they did not have

[7] Onsong is a county in North Hamgyong Province in North Korea located near the border with China.

any knowledge of China when they decided to go. This was because the North Korean regime blocked any information from the outside. Further, one study participant said she had believed that North Korea was a richer country than China. She said that she crossed the border to escape punishment. She had sold a TV which was a royal gift from the Kim family and was detected by the authorities. Another study participant, Young-Chul, who graduated from college in North Korea and was 28 years old when he crossed the border in 1996, said he thought that China was a cruel country when he heard a story that 10 people were executed for a crime in China. He said that he crossed the border because his black-market business was discovered by the North Korean authorities.

C. Awareness of Likely Punishment in North Korea

Another factor that study participants considered as they contemplated their move to China was the risk they faced if intercepted. Almost all my study participants knew that punishment by the North Korean regime was likely if they were caught trying to enter China. Most believed that they would have been incarcerated in prison in North Korea. Six believed they would be killed by a firing squad. Three participants reported that although they were aware of the likely punishment, they believed they could be released if they bribed someone in charge.

On the other hand, just six participants had a different opinion on what would happen if they were caught. These participants said that they did not know that they would be punished for crossing the border. One reported that she had seen many people visit China several times, traveling back and forth because the border was so porous. This made her believe that there would not be punishment and she was not worried.

D. Preparing for Departure

Most study participants said that there was nothing particular they had to do to prepare for crossing the border. Some reported that they needed to prepare money for bribing border guards (N=9) or paying someone for help (N=12). As for these latter smuggling and trafficking cases, only five study participants paid compensation for assistance in crossing the border. The other seven promised to pay the compensation but did not end up paying. Among these seven cases, five involved traffickers who lied to participants to help them cross the border, and they pretended to ask for compensation for their role so that study participants thought they were smugglers.8

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[8] Among these five traffickers, two approached the study participants promising jobs in China and the study participants asked them how much they needed to

Among the 41 study participants who answered the question on the length of time needed to prepare to cross the river, 13 (32%) spent less than one day. Nineteen (46%) spent less than two days, 24 (59%) less than three days, and 27 (66%) less than a week. It seems that there was nothing particular that they did to prepare for the crossing. In all, 36 (88%) spent less than a month preparing to leave. Just four study participants spent three months and one study participant spent six months. They said that they waited for someone else to be prepared or they spent a certain amount of time dithering over the illegal crossing. Generally, they did not need to prepare anything for crossing the border. It was very easy to find someone to assist them to leave, even though some did not know the other person's real intention of trafficking. There was nothing to prepare for leaving; it was enough when they set their mind to proceed with it.

Alternatively, some study participants decided to enter China spontaneously and crossed the border right after the decision was made. According to So-Yun, a 21-year-old single who arrived in China in 2009:

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pay for crossing and being introduced to jobs. The other three study participants looked for smugglers to help them cross the border. The traffickers disguised as smugglers asked for money just to mislead them into believing that they were smugglers. Traffickers suggested deferred payment as study participants did not have the money to pay. Study participants believed that they could pay for the journey after they earned money in China.

> We had a birthday party with close friends. I met a woman at the party and she talked a lot about China. She said that one could earn a lot of money and could have food as much as one wants. I became curious about all this. I asked her how I could go to China and she answered that she knew well, and she was willing to help me to cross the border. I did not doubt her intention. It was too late when I realized that I was deceived. Three friends crossed the border that night and all were sold.

E. Family Reaction to Plans to Leave

Many study participants did not inform their family that they planned to leave for China. As mentioned in Chapter 2, it is not easy for North Koreans to talk about crossing the border even to their family members because the latter are punished as well.

Among the study participants, seven did not have family and thus this was not a concern. Among the remaining 51 participants, 33 (65%) did not inform their family members[9]. Among those who did not tell their family about their crossing, eight reported that they did not tell the family because the plan itself was a secret. It might be interpreted that they did not trust even their family members, or they did not want their family members to be punished for not stopping them to cross the border

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[9] This percentage is higher than is reported in a survey conducted by the Database Center for North Korean Human Rights (2013); 39% of their respondents (110 among 280 respondents who had family) said they did not inform their family members about their crossing the border.

illegally.

Other participants said they did not tell their family because they were concerned that their family members would not let them go. North Koreans were educated by the North Korean regime that crossing the border is a betrayal of the motherland, and illegal border crossers are punished under the criminal code of North Korea. Other study participants said that though they did not tell the plan in advance, they left letters to their family members, with several noting that they learned later their family had looked for them for a long time. Some respondents told certain family members of their plans, though not all. Some were advised that they should worry about their safety and be careful to not get arrested. With this in mind, one respondent told only her elder brother.

While 33 study participants did not inform family of their plans, 18 (35%) either informed family members or crossed with them. In six cases, either the study participant crossed the border with family members or some family members promised to follow and cross at a later time. Another six received support from their family, who agreed with their decision to cross the border and understood their reasons. Family members of four participants told them that to survive they must go to China, and another two were told by their family that there was no future in North Korea and so to build a life, they must leave. Only three study participants

faced the objection of their family members, while the remaining three got the agreement of their family members by promising to return to North Korea sooner or later.

In sum, there were 15 out of 51 study participants (29%) who received agreement of their family members, though this is largely because most study participants (65%) chose not to inform their families. This finding that 83% (15 out of 18 study participants who informed their family members) received agreement implies that many family members who had not been informed about the crossing might have permitted their crossing if they had been informed. Like the findings of the Database Center for North Korean Human Rights (2013), my research suggest that many North Koreans believe that not informing family members of their planned border crossing is better for their family because they will not be punished for failing to report to the authorities.

4. 3 Crossing the Border

A. Non-Assisted Border Crossing

Some migrants were not assisted when they crossed the border. Among the 58 study participants, 26 (45%) crossed the border on their own. Of these, nine were allowed to cross by the border guards. They

offered bribes to the guards, who let study participants pass without any interference. Yong-Suk, a 39-year-old widow when she arrived in China in 1998, said she was able to cross the border safely because she bribed a border guard with 3,000 North Korean Won (U.S. $14). The other seventeen crossed the border without offering bribe and crossed the border sneaking through the border guards' surveillance.

Among the 26 non-assisted border crossers, 11 (42%) crossed the border alone. Seo-Hyun, who had two children in North Korea and was 49 years old when she crossed the border in 2003, crossed alone without any companion:

> I went to the river side around 3 o'clock in the morning. It was winter, and I lied flat on the snow. No border guard was in sight, and I thought that I was lucky. I ran on the frozen river to the other side of the river. There was no light and I tumbled several times, but I kept running until I arrived on the other side.

Another 15 (58%) study participants crossed the river with one or more other persons, namely other migrants who had the same purpose, without any involvement of smugglers or traffickers. The companions who crossed the border with study participants will be discussed in detail in chapter 5. Chul-Soo was a 37-year-old married farmer when he entered China in 2000. He recalled that he and a couple of friends crossed the river

easily because it was frozen and thus was walkable:

> I was hanging out with my two friends and wanted to go to China because we had no food to eat anymore. So, we walked on the frozen river to see if there was anything there.

The migrants who did not offer bribes to border guards had to hide themselves well, so they would not be caught by border guards. That was why they chose to cross the border at night. They risked their lives in doing so, usually seeking to enter China during the winter season when the river was frozen so that they could walk across easily. Most of them also looked carefully for shallow spots or areas where the guards were not taking regular patrols. Some study participants did not know when and where would be best to cross the river. Mee-Yon, who was 51 years old when she entered China in 2009, was single with a high school education, and was a company worker in North Korea at the time, did not know these details and thus faced particular dangers:

> The river was not frozen. When I walked in the river it was not deep at first but when I came to the middle of the river, the water came up to my chest and I could not walk well. I almost drowned. It was too cold, and I began to run once I crossed the river because I needed to warm up my body. I ran into the forest and hid myself.

B. Third Parties in Crossing the Border

While nearly half of study participants (26 of 58, 45%) did not receive assistance in crossing the border to China, the majority (32 of 58, 55%) relied on third parties for their journey. This included 23 trafficking cases, 8 smuggling cases, and one best classified as involving an altruistic helper. Traffickers were associated with the following conditions: threat or use of force; other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception; and/or abuse of power or of the migrant's position of vulnerability. Smugglers included individuals who were paid or were assured of payment in organizing the migration. However, if a smuggler was linked to one or more traffickers, he or she would be categorized as a trafficker because he or she was at least an accomplice in the process. Finally, altruistic helpers were those who offered simple assistance on the journey to China without any compensation. If they were promised financial compensation or were thinking of handing the migrants over to traffickers, then they would not be altruistic helpers.

Study participants who crossed with traffickers or smugglers reported that these individuals were acquaintances in 14 cases (44%), including 2 relatives and 6 neighbors. Alternatively, most cases involving trafficking or smuggling (18 of 32, 56%) involved individuals who were strangers. Traffickers were more likely to be strangers than smugglers (14

of 23 trafficking cases or 61% versus 4 of 8 smuggling cases, or 50%). Table 4-3 provides a breakdown of the third parties involved in study participants' travel to China.

In addition, study participants who were trafficked were more likely to report that they were approached by their traffickers about going to China as compared to individuals who relied on smugglers or, in one case, an altruistic helper. These latter participants were more likely to report that they first asked for help or sought assistance from others who they thought could help them cross the border safely.

Table 4-3: Types of Third Parties

	Traffickers	Smugglers	Altruistic Helpers	Total
Assisted by acquaintances	9 (60%)	4 (33%)	1 (7%)	14
Assisted by strangers	14 (78%)	4 (22%)	0 (0%)	18
Total	23 (72%)	8 (25%)	1 (3%)	32

* The percentages have been rounded.

Specifically, as shown in Table 4-4, in the majority of smuggling cases (5 of 8), study participants first approached the smugglers and asked for help to cross the border.

Table 4-4: Who Approached First?

Who Approached First?	Study Participants		Others (Helpers, Smugglers, or Traffickers)		Total
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Trafficking Cases	8	35	15	65	23
Smuggling Cases	5	63	3	38	8

Altruistic Helpers Case	1	100	0	0	1
Total	14	44	18	56	32

* The percentages have been rounded.

In contrast, in the 23 trafficking cases, 15 traffickers (65%) approached the study participants first and lured them to China. Only 8 study participants (35%) approached the traffickers first, not knowing that they were traffickers.

1) Traffickers

As noted, among the 58 study participants, 23 entered China with the assistance of individuals who were traffickers. All of the traffickers were North Korean nationals and most of them had no stable occupation. Among the 23 trafficking cases, 14 of the traffickers were strangers, while 9 traffickers (39%) were acquaintances of the study participants. Two of them were cousins and the other seven were neighbors or friends. One trafficker was the student of a study participant. Among the 23 trafficking cases, 15 (65%) were approached by traffickers while 8 study participants (35%) looked for people who could help them to cross the border (Table 4-5).

Table 4-5: Types of Traffickers

	Acquaintances	Strangers	Total
Study participants looked for helper or asked for help	3 (13%)	5 (22%)	8 (35%)
Traffickers approached	6 (26%)	9 (39%)	15 (65%)
Total	9 (39%)	14 (61%)	23 (100%)

* The percentages have been rounded.

In 35% of these cases (N=8), study participants approached the traffickers. Three were neighbors and five were introduced by acquaintances such as neighbors, relatives, or friends. Hyo-Sun said:

> I heard a story from a friend of my younger brother that several friends would cross the border to China together. They said that when they cross the border, somebody would come to meet them and would introduce them to work in China. I believed them and asked them to let me join. We arrived at the border area by train and crossed the frozen river at night. After we crossed the border, they sold me. I was deceived.

On the other hand, it was more often reported that traffickers approached the study participants (N=15). Among these, nine traffickers

were unknown people. Some of them were introduced by neighbors and friends, the others were strangers the study participants met in the train, the black market, or in the town where the study participants lived. Su-Ji, who was a 27-year-old worker with a middle school education when she entered China in 1997, had met a woman at a train station:

> I was on my way to my mother's home. I was sick and as I sat down in front of a train station, a woman came to me and gave me cold medicine. I got well after I took the medicine and she asked me if I would go to China to earn money. She said that she had connections who could help me to go to China and I could earn one hundred North Korean won (U.S. $0.50) a day in a restaurant. She told me that after six month's work I could come back to North Korea with a lot of money. She would take care of everything and I did not need to do anything but just follow her. She looked to be in her late thirties and she worked with her husband. I did not answer and thought about the offer for two days. She came to me and tried to persuade me during that time. At last, I decided to follow her, and they sent me to another old woman and I crossed the border with her. There were another four or five women like me who wanted to go to China and the old woman guided us. The old woman sold us when we arrived in China. All of us were deceived.

Soon-Ok said that she did not even know that she had crossed the border into China when it happened:

> I had come to know [the trafficker] in a train, and she had invited me to her town. I went to her house for a social visit. There was another man in her house and he asked me to go to bring corn. So, I asked them where to go and they answered that there was an

> orchard not too far away. It was at night and they said that we would go over the river. I did not know the place well because that was my first time in Musan. I just thought that it was inside of North Korea because I believed that there should be a barbed-wire fence between North Korea and China. We crossed the river at night and walked for thirty to forty minutes and entered a house. I was sold the next day.

The other six traffickers were acquaintances of the study participants, including three neighbors, two relatives, and the student of a study participant. Mi-Young, who was a widowed teacher, was 47 years old when she arrived in China in 1997, and was deceived by her student:

> When I came home from school after teaching, I met one of my students who had graduated. He looked nice and was well dressed. I asked him how he could dress well, and he answered that he earned money in China. So, I asked him again how I could go, and he said that he would help me to enter China. He added that I could be rich if I worked in China for only a few months. I asked him how I could escape the watch of border guards and he answered that he already bribed them, and they would not stop us. He also added that I should not tell anyone because it was a secret and otherwise we could fail. I believed him because he was a good student and I never dreamed that my student would deceive me. I thought over his offer for a month and decided to cross the border. There were three traffickers and seven border crossers including me. The seven of us were all women and we were sold after we crossed the border. I was deceived.

Seo-Yoon, who was a 20-years-old marathoner with a middle school education when she crossed the border in 1997, was trafficked by her cousin:

> My cousin was an antique dealer who was selling antiques to China. One day, he told me that he would go to the border area to sell antiques. I was curious and wanted to visit the area. I just wanted to have fruit, chewing gum, and enjoy looking around. I thought that we would come back home the next day. We walked to the border area and crossed the river at night around nine o'clock. After we crossed the border, we arrived at a town and waited for a signal. There was a light that flickered. We followed the light and entered a house. After that I was sold and then I realized that I was deceived by my elder cousin.

Traffickers usually deceived study participants by telling them that they could earn a large amount of money in China and return to North Korea soon. Traffickers appeared to be ready to deceive anyone who wanted to go to China. They were described by study participants as looking wealthier than normal North Koreans, like the former student of Mi-Young, and these obvious displays of affluence attracted many of the victims. Given that in the majority of cases, traffickers approached the study participants, traffickers were not just preparing to deceive victims who approached them but also were active in recruiting victims like Su-Ji, Soon-Ok, and Mi-Young. While study participants were not aware of whether the traffickers were working with organized crime groups, they all described that their traffickers had accomplices in China.

2) Smugglers and an Altruistic Helper

In this study, people who facilitated the border crossing were categorized into traffickers, smugglers, and one altruistic helper, each defined in 4.3.B above. There was only one altruistic helper who did not request any economic compensation. Yun-Seo, 28 years old when she crossed the border in 1997, had graduated from high school and was a vendor in North Korea, and received assistance from a friend of her husband's:

> He was my husband's friend. He was smuggling copper from China. I asked him to help me to cross the border so that I could ask for some money from my relatives in China. There was no promise of compensation for helping me to cross the border. My husband and he are close friends and he was preparing to send his younger brother to China. He allowed me to accompany his younger brother for free when he went to China.

Among the 31 cases that involved third parties, eight involved smuggling. Smugglers were paid or were assured promise of payment. The range of compensation started from U.S. $12 at the lowest to $2,904 at most.[10] Regarding the lowest compensation, a relative of a study

[10] Among the 9 smuggling cases, there were 6 cases in which an exact amount of compensation was mentioned. The discussed amounts of the money were $12, $32, $52, $73, $74, and $2,904. These amounts were calculated from North Korean Won or Chinese Yuan to US dollars according to the exchange rate at that time. Compensations in kind were asked in two cases and not an exact amount of compensation was asked in one case.

participant in China gave 100 Yuan (U.S. $12) to the smuggler after the study participant crossed the border because the study participant had no money. Regarding the highest compensation, a cousin of Ji-Min in China looked for a smuggler who could bring his cousin in North Korea safely to China with the promise of paying 20,000 Yuan (U.S. $2,904). After Ji-Min crossed the border, her cousin paid the promised amount to the smuggler. On the other hand, another study participant promised to pay after she earn money in China but did not. In other cases, study participants promised the smuggler compensation in kind. For example, Soo-Ah's relative gave six televisions to the smuggler for assisting in her journey. And Min-Soo, thirty-nine years old when he crossed the border in 2008, gave 30 kg of copper for assistance in his smuggling.

Among the eight smuggling cases, five study participants sought out someone who could help them cross the border and the other three were approached by their smugglers (Table 4-6). All of the smugglers were North Koreans except one, who was Chinese Korean. This is presumably due to the restrictive character of the North Korean regime, wherein foreign nationals are not easily able to travel to North Korea. The helper and smugglers had several occupations, including three vendors and a teacher. The other five smugglers' occupations were unknown. One smuggler acted as a smuggler to the study participant, but he acted as a

trafficker to the others he accompanied across the border. Jung-Ah, who was a 30-year-old single factory worker and high school graduate when she crossed the border in 2000, said that she crossed the border with three other women and along with traffickers/smugglers. The other women were sold by the traffickers. She was met by her cousin who lived in China and her cousin paid 100 Yuan (U.S. $12) after the crossing.

Table 4-6: Smugglers' Characteristics

Study Participants	Acquaintance?	Smugglers Approached First?	Relationship	Nationality
Soo-Mi	Yes	Yes	Met in train	North Korean
Ji-Min	Yes	No	Neighbor	North Korean
Jung-Ah	Yes	No	Former classmate	North Korean
Min-Soo	Yes	No	Met in the community	Chinese Korean
Mi-Na	No	Yes	Introduced by friend	North Korean
Hyun-Ju	No	Yes	Unknown	North Korean
Soo-Ah	No	No	Introduced by relative	North Korean
Hye-Ran	No	No	Introduced by friend	North Korean

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter reports on findings concerning the life circumstances and motives of NKMCs, along with details about how they made the journey. Two unique characteristics of NKMCs' situation were found. First, the reduction of PDS ration and the prohibition of private economic activity were primary situations that motivated their migration decisions. There had been great nationwide famine, which pushed North Koreans to find a way to survive. As a communist regime, North Koreans lived on PDS ration but the reduction of PDS and stoppages of salary payment from the government made the situation worse. In addition, the prohibition of private economic activity left many people hopeless in North Korea. This led study participants to turn their eyes on the possibility of traveling to a foreign nation.

Second, the control of information about foreign nations by the North Korean regime weakened people's judgements. Study participants' strong positive impressions of China might be influenced by anecdotal accounts, since they otherwise had limited access to information about the country. Most study participants reported being impressed by the material affluence of China compared to North Korea but did not have knowledge of the working conditions there or the risks of being abused. While a few study participants understood what was waiting for them, most did not.

This was one of the circumstances that made NKMCs vulnerable.

Despite these common themes, study participants' experiences crossing into China were more varied. Some study participants crossed the border without any assistance while others relied on an altruistic helper, smugglers, or traffickers who deceived them. In all, 22 of 58 study participants (38%) reported that they discovered they had been trafficked on their arrival in China. In Chapter 5, I turn to a more detailed analysis of study participants' border crossing experiences.

CHAPTER 5
CROSSING THE BORDER

In the last chapter, study participants' economic hardships in North Korea, their decisions to leave, and the facilitators in their crossing were discussed. Study participants' poor or even dire economic situations acted as a main motivation for crossing the border; consequently, 81% of the study participants (47 of 58) said that they left for China for economic reasons. There were 23 traffickers, 8 smugglers, and an altruistic helper who assisted some of the study participants to cross the border, while 26 study participants crossed the border without any facilitators. There were risks numerous risks associated with border crossing. In this chapter, these dangers, the processes of bribing border guards, and more information about the people who facilitated NKMCs' crossings will be discussed.

5.1 Eluding Observation

A. Risks of Border Crossing and Punishment

As mentioned in Chapter 1, Pyongyang punishes illegal border crossers harshly because they regard them as betrayers of their motherland (Charny, 2005; Lee, 2005; PoKempner and Baik, 2002). Article 63 of the North Korean Penal Code states that those who run away to another

country shall be imprisoned at a labor re-education camp for not less than five years and the person whose circumstances are especially serious will receive either life imprisonment or the death penalty (Kim, 2012; Margesson, Chanlett-Avery, and Bruno, 2007). Pyongyang has regarded illegal border crossers as political criminals, put them into political labor camps, and forcefully moved their family members to restricted areas. However, evidence suggests that as the number of illegal border crossers has increased, the punishments have been relaxed, with offenders often released after a short period of imprisonment. This loosening of punishment appears to have begun around 1997, as illegal border crossers became too many to punish as harshly (Lee, 2006).

Nevertheless, illegal border crossers face the risk of being shot by North Korean border guards on the way to China. Several study participants said they almost died when they were discovered by border guards. Su-Min, a 32-year-old vendor when she crossed the border in 2003, remembered the moment vividly when she was caught by the border guard:

> When we crossed the border, somebody shouted to us to stop. I tried to escape at that moment, but I could not because the boy [I was with], whom I had met on the way and had decided to bring along out of compassion, grabbed my hand. The others who went before us were in the middle of the shallow river and I was on the

> river side. I shouted to them to lie down, but they tried to move forward. I threw myself flat on the ground. Border guards did not recognize me and moved forward and shouted to the other border crossers to stop or they would shoot. The other border crossers stopped, and I was arrested too. The border guards kicked and beat us with sticks for three days.

Even after they were released from the prison, surveillance continued in their communities in the form of *saengwhalchongwha* (integration of life), which is one of the social control methods of the Kim regime. According to Lee and Shin (2006), integration of life refers to the activities of self-criticism and mutual criticism through revealing the private lives of the people. It is a method of ideological education utilized by the Kim regime to maintain their power, along with persuasion, modeling, and intuition (Lee and Shin, 2006)[11]. Individuals released from prison are required to criticize themselves in front of their community members, while the latter criticize them for illegal border crossings, in weekly or monthly *saengwhalchongwha*. These released people are disadvantaged in every aspect of their lives, and their treatment is a motivation for many former illegal border crossers to leave the country again. Though none of my study participants reported this as a motivation,

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[11] Persuasion is a type of general lecture, emphasizing the continuing explanation. Modeling is the method of showing bad and good examples, to stimulate people's thinking. Intuition is the method of delivering messages via objects such as posters, slogans, and bulletin boards.

Mi-Young noted that the North Korean women who crossed the border with her had suffered from *saengwhalchongwha* and they told her that was the primary reason they were crossing the border again:

> After we [Mi-Young's border crossing companions and traffickers] crossed the border, we were raped by the traffickers. The next day, I asked them [the border crossing companions] whether they knew they would be sold to bride seekers and that they could be raped by the traffickers on the way. They answered that they already knew because they had already experienced it. I asked them why they came to China again even though they knew the suffering they could face in China. They answered that they had experienced deportation and had suffered under the surveillance of neighbors and *saengwhalchongwha*. They thought that rape would end sometime or another but there was no end to criticism in North Korea.

B. Bribing Border Guards

Given the risks involved in being apprehended by border guards, a considerable number of study participants chose to offer them bribes to avoid being arrested. Among the 58 study participants, 25 (43%) said they bribed border guards or were helped by border guards who had been bribed. Among the 26 study participants who crossed the border without the involvement of third parties, nine study participants (35%) reported bribing the border guards themselves. In cases in which third parties were involved, approximately half included bribes. The altruistic helper bribed the border guard, along with 4 of 8 smugglers and 11 of 23 traffickers. See

Table 5-1 for details.

Table 5-1: Number of Those Who Bribed Border Guards

Type	Bribed		Did Not Bribe	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Alone	9	35	17	65
Altruistic Helper	1	100	0	0
Smuggling Cases	4	50	4	50
Trafficking Cases	11	48	12	52
Total	25	43	33	57

* Percentages are rounded.

Some border guards were linked to safe houses in China. For example, the border guard who helped Soo-Ah, 32 years old when she crossed the border in 2001, was in contact with such a safe house:

> When I told the border guard that I would like to cross the border, he helped me to cross and took me to a safe house in the Chinese border area. He helped me when I crossed the border from China to North Korea as well. The border guard kept in contact with a safe house in China all the time and was involved in human smuggling between North Korea and China.

Study participants also reported bribing higher-ranking officials. As mentioned in chapter 4, Yong-Suk said that she offered a bribe directly to an army executive officer, because a soldier serving as a border guard would request more money, as he would also need to bribe his boss. Likewise, Mee-Yon, 51 years old when she crossed the river in 2009, offered a bribe to a platoon leader:

> I was introduced to a platoon leader. He said that he would guarantee my safety. He said that I could cross the border just like taking a walk. I met him twice before the crossing and I gave him 10,000 Korean Won (U.S. $2.7) as a bribe. He pointed where soldiers stood and instructed me on the way to cross the river. He said that I should run fast, and the other side of the river was a main street and there should be many people walking on the main street and it would be easy for me to blend in.

However, sometimes, bribing the border guard did not guarantee the safety of the border crossers. Sook-Hi, a married hair dresser who was 39 years old when she arrived in China in 1998, said that she was almost shot even though she had bribed a soldier:

> As border crossing increased, border control was strengthened, and the bribe price went up in 1998. I bribed a soldier and tried to cross the border around four-thirty in the afternoon because the soldier said there were more soldiers at night. There were two soldiers every 100m during the day. I had thought that I could cross the border without any difficulties as before. However, four soldiers discovered me at that moment and they started to shoot at

> me. The bullets hit the water around me. I was nearly killed, and I ran as fast as I could. I guess the soldier who got my bribe did not share the bribe with the other soldiers.

The amount of the bribes to border guards ranged from 300 to 12,000 North Korean won (U.S. $1.50 to $60). Yong-Suk, a 39-year-old widow when she arrived in China in 1998, had sold her house to raise the money for the bribe, and her story also illustrates the primary motivations noted above:

> I was sick and had two children in North Korea. One was 14 years old and the other was 12 years old. I could not afford to raise them after my husband died from a traffic accident. I thought that if I stayed in North Korea, all of us would die of starvation. I knew well that the punishment for illegal border crossing was harsh, but I thought I would rather die on the way to China than die in North Korea doing nothing. I sold my house to prepare the bribe to the border guard. Purchasing houses in North Korea is illegal and I could receive only three thousand North Korean won (U.S. $14) and I gave it all to a border guard. I contacted an officer rather than a rank-and-file [guard] because the latter would ask for more money than an officer, because he needed extra money to bribe his boss. I met the officer three times. He decided to help me to cross the border in the first meeting, we decided the amount of the bribe in the second, and I crossed the border when we met for the third time.

Some study participants offered a bribe in kind. Ye-Eun, 42 years old when she crossed the border in 2005, said she promised to provide tobacco and liquor to soldiers when she returned.

C. Crossing the River

There were other study participants who could not afford the bribe to border guards or who did not know how to offer one. They chose to cross the border secretly. There are only the Yalu and Tumen Rivers between China and North Korea and there was no fence or barbed-wire before 2011 (Shin, 2014). Consequently, secret border crossers usually crossed one of these two rivers. Most study participants, regardless of whether they bribed border guards, crossed the river at night. Among the 50 study participants who addressed this question, 46 (92%) crossed the river at night; only four chose to cross during day time. One was Sook-Hi, whose experience was described above, who bribed a border guard and believed that she could cross the border safely but instead was shot at. Jin-Ju, 35 years old when she entered China in 2008, also crossed the river in daytime, along with her two children:

> I studied where the guard posts were, and I selected one point to cross. That point was between the two guard posts. It was far from both guard posts and narrow to cross. So, even if the border guards found us, it might be too late to catch us. I brought my 14- and 9-year-old children. I telephoned to my friend in China to greet us when we crossed the river. Then, we crossed the river early in the morning. Fortunately, no one noticed us. We ran to a Chinese village where we could meet my friend.

Yong-Suk, 39 years old when she arrived in China in 1998,

offered a bribe to a platoon leader and also crossed the river in the daytime:

> I saw when illegal border crossers were caught they were put into prison or were executed by a firing squad. So, I decided to sell my house and offer a bribe with the money. I brought my 14-year-old daughter and 12-year-old son. We crossed the river in the daytime because the border guard was bribed. After we crossed the river we waited for the night to come and moved at night.

The other 46 study participants said that they crossed the border at night, even when they had bribed the border guards. Mi-Na, who was a company worker and was 30 years old when she crossed the border in 2001, said:

> I was selling apples in Onsong. One day, a vendor who went back and forth between North Korea and China told me that I could earn a lot of money if I went to China. When I asked him how much it would cost, he said that I needed to pay 12,000 North Korean won (U.S. $60). I thought that I could earn that amount of money easily if I did business in China. So, I decided to go to China and to work just for a year, then to come back. I gave the money to him and he introduced a border guard to me several days later. We waited for the time when the border guard was on duty. The border guard was to work 6 am. in the morning. When we went to his guard post, the border guard let us cross the river in front of the guard post. I walked across the river with the smuggler and another unknown border crosser.

In addition, study participants were somewhat more likely to cross

into China during the winter. In all, 56 participants provided information about what time of year they crossed, with 12 (21%) crossing the river in the spring, 11 (20%) in the summer, 12 (21%) in the fall, and 21 (38%) in the winter. The majority of those who crossed in the winter (17 of 21) did so when the river was frozen by walking or running across it. Hyo-Sun, 37 years old and single when she crossed the border in 1999, said:

> One day, I heard a friend of my younger brother talked about going to China with his friends. I said that I would like to go with them. The friend of my younger brother said that he would bring me to China. A few days later, when I met him again, I found that there were 6 other women who would cross the border like me. There were also 3 men [traffickers]: my younger brother's friend, and two unknown men. The 10 of us moved to Hoeryong[12], approached the river, and hid. Then, we learned when and where the border guards patrolled. We waited until the sun set at around 6 o'clock in the evening and ran to the other side of the river. The river was frozen, and we ran as fast as we could. It took only one or two minutes to arrive at the other side, even though we slipped several times.

The site of crossing also made a difference; 24 study participants reported crossing at a shallow section of the river and 14 crossed where the river was deep. These latter individuals swam (N=4), used an inner tube (N=3), or walked through the water (N=6). Hyun-Ju said;

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[12] Hoeryong is a city in North Hamgyong Province, North Korea. It is located opposite Jilin Province, China, with the Tumen River in between.

> I went to Onsong as I wanted to go to China to meet my uncle. In Onsong, I met a smuggler by chance in an inn. When I told him that I would like to go to China to meet my uncle, he said that if I paid 1,500 North Korean won (U.S. $7.3), he would help me. So, I gave him 1,500 won and I crossed the river with the smuggler and an unknown man who said that he crossed the border to meet his daughter in China. The water was not frozen but was very cold. It was 2 o'clock in the morning in December. I could not walk because the river was too deep. At that point, the smuggler and the other border crosser grabbed me on each side and helped me to cross the river.

There was only one case in which a boat was used. According to Min-Soo, 39 years old when he crossed the border in 2008:

> The river was too deep to swim. I contacted the smugglers in China whom I know, as I sold iron which I gathered in North Korea to Chinese smugglers. I paid 30kg of copper for my smuggling. The smugglers, a Korean Chinese man and his wife, brought a small boat to the North Korean side of the river disguising as though they were fishing. I got on the boat in the evening and hid in the fish compartment. They pretended to fish, and we arrived on the Chinese side of the river around 11 p.m.

5.2 Travel Companions, Greeters, Smugglers, and Traffickers

A. Crossing the River with Others

As noted in Chapter 4, among the 26 study participants who

crossed without the assistance of third parties, 11 (42%) crossed the river alone. The other 15 (58%) did so with a range of one to five companions. There were six study participants among this group who crossed the river with one other person, three with two people, three with three people, one with four people, and two with five people. Among the 35 people who crossed the river with the study participants, 21 were other border crossers unfamiliar to the study participant (60%), 11 were family members (31%), and three were friends (9%).

Border crossings involving smugglers were more likely to include multiple border crossers. Of the nine individuals who received assistance from an altruistic helper or smuggler, only two crossed the border alone. The other seven crossed the river with one or more persons, including smugglers, family members, and other border crossers. The numbers of people who crossed the river together with the study participant ranged from two to four.

Case involving trafficking were especially likely to involve multiple border crossers. Among the 22 trafficking cases, only four study participants reported crossing the border only with one trafficker. Alternatively, five were with two people, five with three people, three with four people, a single case was with five people, three cases were with six people, and one case was with nine people. Among the 77 people who

crossed the border with the study participants in the trafficking cases, 39 (51%) were traffickers, 37 (48%) were other victims, and one (1%) was a border crosser who was not characterized as a trafficking victim.

In all, 128 people were described as crossing the border with my study participants, including 40 traffickers (31%), 38 other trafficking victims (30%), 25 other border crossers (20%), 13 family members (10%), 9 smugglers (7%), and three friends (2%). Including family members and friends, non-trafficked border crossers were 32% of those crossing with study participants (41 of 128).

Several additional patterns are suggestive in my data when comparing cases involving trafficking versus altruistic assistance and smuggling. First, traffickers usually crossed the border in pairs and transported two to three victims at a time on average. On the other hand, there were 9 smugglers/altruistic helpers and 16 other border crossers in the 9 cases of this type. On average, a smuggler crossed the border with less than two border crossers without the involvement of another smuggler. Thus, traffickers usually acted with another trafficker and smugglers acted alone. Traffickers appeared to rely on accomplices to control the victims, while smugglers, who were taking willing border crossers, did not need accomplices. In addition, the roles of smugglers ended after they crossed the border while traffickers needed to transport

their victims to the destination from which they would be sold or trafficked.

B. Being Greeted at the Border

Right after the crossing, some study participants met people who came to greet them on the Chinese side while others did not. Among the 58 cases, 21 individuals (36%) reported that someone came to meet them from the Chinese side of the border. This included 15 cases in which traffickers received study participants and six cases in which their relatives came to meet them. Most instances in which study participants were greeted by a trafficker on the Chinese side (14 of 15) were cases in which the third party involved in their border crossing was also a trafficker. This suggests that there were considerable international connections in the trafficking of North Koreans to China.

Among the Chinese side receivers, most traffickers (12 of 15) ran so-called “safe houses” and provided food, beds, or clothes to border crossers. Sun-Hi, 32 years old with three children when she crossed the border in 1998, said she could have enough noodles for the first time in her life.

When we entered China, two Korean-Chinese [traffickers] came

> to greet us. They gave us clothes and let us change our clothes because we were wet after we crossed the river. We got rid of all our underwear because they were all wet and put on the new clothes without underwear and shoes. We entered an empty house and they provided us with noodles. That was very cheap in China, but it was delicious as we had not had it before. We could have as much as we wanted.

The change of clothes was relevant for two reasons. First, the clothes worn in North Korea and China are distinctive; buying new clothes lessened the chance migrants would be recognized as North Koreans. Second, new clothes facilitated the marketing of female border crossers, as they would look more attractive to possible buyers and bride seekers. Eun-Mi, 48 years old when she crossed the border in 2006, recalled how she saw the receiver in China give clothes to a young woman who crossed the river with her:

> A Korean-Chinese man waited for us in a white car on the other side of the river. The person who crossed the river with us went back to North Korea and we moved to an empty house. The other border crosser with me was a 24-year-old woman. The Korean-Chinese man bought clothes for her and let her change her clothes the next day. He said that she looked like a Chinese woman after changing clothes. She was sold on the third day.

There also was a case in which the promised receiver did not show up. Su-Ji, 27 years old when she crossed the border in 1997, explained what happened:

> After we crossed the border, the receiver did not show up. So, we went up to the mountain and found a tent which the receiver prepared for us. There was food and other household items. After we had dinner, someone showed up and told us that the receiver had been arrested and we should move to another place.

As these examples illustrate, being received in China by strangers could be risky. On the other hand, when study participants were met by relatives, most of them were safe from victimization because their relatives protected them. However, there were two relatives who still wanted to exploit NKMCs. Soo-Ah remembered how her cousin tried to make money out of her:

> When I was in the house of my uncle, my cousin brought his friends over every day. We drank and went to the karaoke every day. They gave my cousin 100 to 300 Yuan. I did not get any money from my cousin. It seemed that he was running some kind of business using me. One day, my cousin introduced a South Korean businessman to me and said that I need to sleep with him. When I rejected, my cousin got angry with me, saying that his business would collapse. I moved out of my uncle's house the next day.

What about those cases in which there were not receivers on the Chinese side? Among border crossers who were brought by traffickers, nine (39%) were not met by individuals on the Chinese side. In these cases, the traffickers sold the victims to middlemen or sellers directly.

Hyo-Sun met a Korean-Chinese man after she crossed the border with 8 other border crossers. The Korean-Chinese did not receive study participant but tried to sell her to a bride seeker:

> They [the friend of her younger brother and his friends who crossed the border with her] said that there would be receivers on the Chinese side, but it turned out to be a lie. There was no one to greet us and we needed to find a shelter ourselves. We asked a Korean-Chinese person to give us some food and we were lucky he let us stay in his house. The next day, the traffickers left, saying that they would bring people who would introduce a job for us. Two Korean-Chinese people came the next day and moved us to another place. They gave us new clothes and brought us to several places to sell us to bride seekers. When we realized that we were deceived, it was too late for us to turn back.

In another case, what originally appeared to be another border crosser ended up being someone with ties to a trafficker on the Chinese side, and the study participant only realized this after the trafficker came to meet the border crosser on arrival. According to Mee-Yon, who was 51 years old when she crossed the border in 2009:

> I got help from a border guard and he let me cross the river with another border crosser who was smuggling items between North Korea and China. I met the border crosser just before the crossing and did not know him at all. After we crossed the river, a Korean-Chinese person came to meet us. The Korean-Chinese man had made a promise with the other border crosser. We spent a night in that man's house and the next day, the other border crosser left and the man brought two people to his house. I thought they

> would bring me to a place to work because I had asked him to find a job for me. However, the place where I arrived was the house of a disabled man's family. I was sold as a bride.

In this case, Mee-Yon believed that she crossed the border safely by offering a bribe to a border guard. However, it appears that the border guard, the other border crosser, the Korean-Chinese man, and the two-other people who sold Mee-Yon were connected somehow. In retrospect, the study participant did not doubt that she was deceived from the beginning by the border guard and the other border crosser.

C. Safe House Owners, Transporters, and Middlemen

There were safe houses in North Korea and in China. In a North Korean safe house, border crossers hid and waited for when darkness fell or for smugglers, traffickers, other border crossers, or bribed border guards. According to Min-Seo:

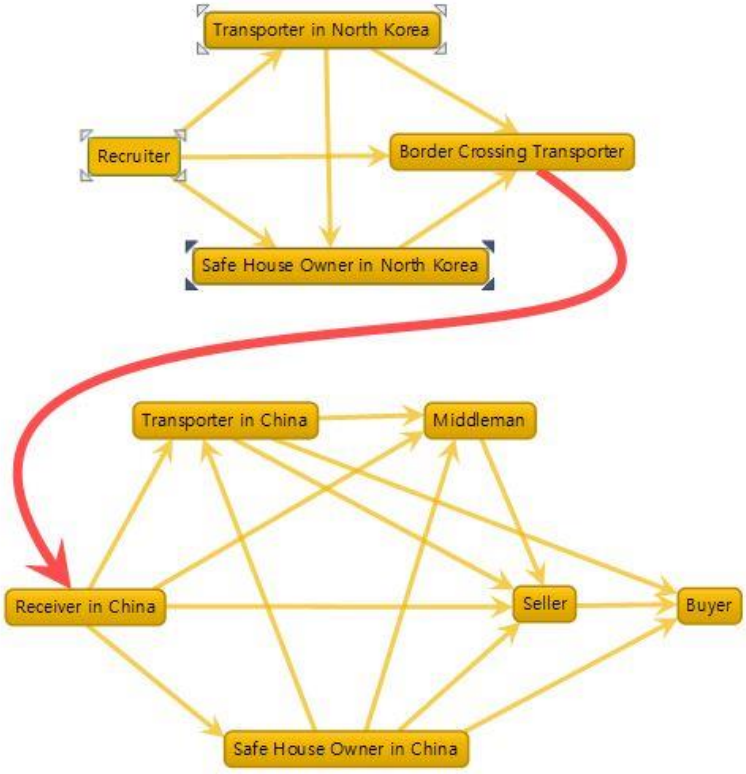
> I waited in a safe house in North Korea for a week because they [traffickers] needed to gather more people to meet the cost such as a bribe to a border guard. We waited for a week, but there were no other border crossers. At last, they decided to cross the border just with me.

Safe houses in China were used by traffickers as well. Among the 23 trafficking cases, there were 21 (91%) cases in which so-called safe

houses in China were involved. Safe house owners in China were well-connected to receivers, transporters, middlemen, sellers, and buyers in China. Some safe house owners also acted as receivers in China, sellers, or middlemen. Some receivers played the roles of transporters, middlemen, or sellers as well. Some traffickers acted as recruiters and border crossing transporters at the same time. Figure 5-1 illustrates the various patterns uncovered in my analysis. To illustrate these connections, consider the case of Sun-Young, who was 25 years old and single when she crossed the border in 2001 with two additional North Korean women. She described the presence of a boss who handled the whole operation from a safe house in China.

> I trusted the broker [trafficker] at the beginning but he changed his attitude after we crossed the border. He brought us to a house where there were a couple [i.e., partners], two ethnic Chinese, and two to three Korean-Chinese. A Korean-Chinese [man] told me that he managed everything and if I follow his words well, I would be rich. Then, he tried to rape me, but I resisted by yelling. The people in the house looked like they were part of a criminal organization. I asked an old Korean-Chinese housekeeper to find my relative but failed because she told them my request. They brought many men and had parties every day. They asked us to select a man to marry but I refused.

Figure 5-1: Network of Traffickers



As the cases discussed in this section reveal, the roles of Korean-Chinese individuals are very important in the trafficking of North Koreans. Study participants noted that most receivers in China were Korean-Chinese. Even though North Koreans can recruit victims in North Korea, they cannot act freely in China because of their status. Alternatively, ethnic Chinese have difficulties in communicating with North Korean victims. Consequently, Korean-Chinese often act as

translators and that eases the anxieties of North Koreans. Korean-Chinese are also Chinese citizens who are well-embedded to their local communities and thus in a much better position to exploit North Korean victims.

5.3 Conclusion

The risks of border crossing and punishment if caught and repatriated, the importance of bribing border guards, and the processes of crossing the border were discussed in this chapter. Moreover, findings about travel companions, greeters, smugglers, and traffickers (including safe house owners, transporters, and middlemen) were presented as well.

NKMCs tried to elude the observation of the border guards or coordinate with them, as they believed that otherwise there were risks of being arrested or even killed. Therefore, 43% of the study participants (25 of 58) offered bribes to the border guards and 92% of the study participants (46 of 50) crossed the river at night. The findings about travel companions, smugglers, and traffickers showed that traffickers usually crossed the border in pairs and transported two to three victims at a time on average. As for

smugglers, on average, a smuggler crossed the border with two border crossers without the involvement of another smuggler. The findings of this study also suggest that North Korean traffickers who crossed the border with victims had connection with Korean-Chinese traffickers. A more detailed discussion of traffickers will follow in Chapter 8. In the next chapter, the victimization of NKMCs and the characteristics of trafficked versus non-trafficked NKMCs will be examined.

CHAPTER 6

LIFE IN CHINA: PROCESSES AND RISKS FOR VICTIMIZATION

As mentioned in Chapter 5, there were four ways in which my study participants crossed the border: (1) non-assisted or self-smuggled, (2) assisted by an altruistic helper, (3) helped by a smuggler, and (4) aided by a trafficker. Those who were aided by one or more traffickers have a different experience after the crossing because they were under the control of their traffickers right from the start. In the other three scenarios, study participants had to find a way to survive in China on their own and thus they were less likely to be victimized right away. In section 6.1, the processes of NKMCs' settling in China, for both originally trafficking and originally non-trafficking cases will be examined. In section 6.2, various types of victimization risks which NKMCs experienced in China will be discussed.

6.1 Processes of Settling in China

A. Individuals Trafficked into China

As described in Chapter 5, among the 23 study participants who were originally trafficked into China, there were 21 cases in which

NKMCs were kept in safe houses on arrival. Soo-Jung, crossed the border in 1998 when she was a 19-year-old single, said she was taken to a safe house an hour drive away from the border.

> After we (two traffickers and three North Korean women) crossed the border, we were greeted by two Korean-Chinese men. The man and the woman who helped us crossing the border went back to North Korea after they handed us over to the Korean-Chinese men. They brought us from Helong[13] to Yanji by car, which took about an hour. There was a Korean-Chinese woman waiting for us in Yanji, and after we met, she tried to sell us from her house. We were confined in the house until we were sold as brides.

In this case, the two Korean-Chinese men who greeted the three women near the border were transporters. Their role was to transport victims handed over to them by border crossing transporters to the other partner, in this case someone who would sell them. Usually, older female NKMCs were sold to bride seekers and younger female NKMCs to sex business owners. Hye-Ran[14], who graduated from high school and made

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[13] Helong is a city located near the upper Tumen River in Yanbian Autonomous Prefecture in northeastern Jilin Province.

[14] Hye-Ran crossed the border with the help of a former border guard and met her uncle in China, so her case is categorized as smuggling (at least in the process of crossing the border). However, her uncle refused to help her and left. Later, the former border guard tried to sell her to a karaoke owner.

money through selling items she made in her house[15] in North Korea, was only 24 when she crossed the border. She was brought to a karaoke lounge, but she refused to work there. Then, she was sold to a Korean-Chinese man as a bride. So-Yun, who was 21 and single when she crossed the border in 2009, was sold to a karaoke owner as well. Min-Ji, who was married and had four children in North Korea and was 32 when she crossed the border in 2000, was sold to a video chat business[16] owner. According to Min-Ji:

> After I crossed the border with a woman to find my younger sister in China, the woman contacted another woman by pager. The other woman came in a cab and we then left in her cab together. The other woman brought me to an apartment. I thought the people in the apartment would find my younger sister for me, but I also felt something was wrong. They said I needed to wait in the apartment until they would find my sister. There were three Korean-Chinese men, many young North Korean women, and a few computers in the apartment. The three men ordered me to take off my clothes in front of a web camera. I was very scared, and I followed their order.

The older female NKMCs were usually sold as brides. The bride seekers were mostly disabled men or lived in rural areas. According to Mi-

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[15] North Koreans make daily supplies such as soups, cosmetics, toothpastes, etc. to sell in the black market. Some North Koreans are said to make fake Chinese soups, cosmetics, and toothpastes.

[16] A video chat business is a business to provide video chatting to customers with women online. Some women take off their clothes to allure customers.

Young, a 47-year-old widowed teacher when she arrived in China in 1997:

> When we (three traffickers and seven female North Koreans) arrived in China, four Korean-Chinese men were waiting for us. All of us went to a house located two hours' drive away from the border. They separated the seven women into two groups. The four younger women, who looked like they were in their late teens, were brought to another place right after we arrived in the house. There were other people waiting to buy the younger women, but I did not know where they were taken. The three traffickers talked to each other in Chinese, so we could not understand. The three older women, including me, were raped by people in the house for three days. Later, I was sold to an old Chinese man from a rural area. He was in his late sixties and was paralyzed from the waist down. I thought I was going to work as his caregiver, but his family forced me to sleep with him. At that time, I could not speak Chinese and that was why I could not understand the situation.

Another characteristic of NKMC trafficking is that NKMCs were intercepted by the other traffickers while they were transported by their initial traffickers. That was what happened to Sun-Hi, a 32-year-old college-educated married woman with three children when she went to China in 1998.

> I was sold to a bride seeker in Panshi in Jilin Province for 5,000 Yuan ($604). A Korean-Chinese translator and an ethnic Chinese man who was the uncle of the bride seeker, were about to bring me to Panshi from Kaishantun, Longjing city. When we were waiting for the train to Panshi in front of the Jinlin train station, we ran into five men. One asked whether I was North Korean. I said I was not, but they threatened to report us to the police. Next,

> two of them took the translator and the other two took the uncle of the bride seeker, who were then both beaten. The other man put me in a taxi and brought me to his house, where I was confined in a locked room for a week. They threatened me to be sold as a bride or they would report me to the police. I was terrified, so I agreed. Then, many Chinese men came to see me, but I refused to marry because there was no one whom I wanted. Eventually, I was sold to a house as a baby-sitter.

Several NKMCs were sold to traffickers by the police after they were arrested. According to Hyo-Sun:

> I was handed over to a husband and wife in Heilongjiang by the trafficker whom I met in a safe house near the border area. They looked for a bride seeker and a man contacted them. When we met him, a police officer came and arrested us, as it turned out to be a trap. I thought that I would be sent back to North Korea. Approximately fifteen days later, the police officer let me out. A Chinese man gave 5,000 Yuan ($604) to the police and I was handed over to him and he sold me as a bride to a Chinese man with one short leg due to polio.

Su-Jin, who was single and age 22 when she migrated, was arrested by a police officer after she ran away from the husband she had been forced to marry on arrival in China. She was then handed over to another trafficker by the same police officer:

> We (a trafficker and six female North Koreans) walked all night and arrived at a house the next morning after we crossed the border. A Korean-Chinese couple was waiting for us in the house. The man who crossed the border with us then went back to North

> Korea. A few hours later, another Korean-Chinese man came to the house to collect us. With him, we took a train to Qingdao[17], followed by a bus ride for hours. I was sold as a bride to a Chinese man. I was scared to be caught and deported back to North Korea, so I lived with the Chinese man. However, I ran away from him six months later. Though I succeeded in running away, it was not long before I was arrested by a police officer. He did not deport me but took me to another trafficker who sold me to a karaoke club owner.

B. Forced Marriages among NKMCs Not Originally Trafficked

As described in Chapter 5, the 35 originally non-trafficking cases included 26 individuals who crossed the border without assistance, one with the assistance of an altruistic helper, and 8 who were assisted in crossing by smugglers. Among them, over a third ended in forced marriage, including 9 non-assisted border crossers and 3 who were assisted by smugglers. Many strangers approached NKMCs and attempted to exploit their vulnerability. Whether non-assisted or smuggled, NKMCs needed to find a way to survive in China. Consequently, some of them turned to begging strangers for food and shelter. While some were lucky to get help, others were not.

Hyun-Ok, who was single and age 27 when she entered China, said a Korean-Chinese stranger provided her with clothes, so that she

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[17] Qingdao is the largest city in Shandong Province on the east coast of China.

could go to her parents' house without being noticed, and thus lessen her risk for arrest or victimization[18]. On the other hand, Soo-Mi asked numerous strangers to help after she crossed the border at age 19 but was almost sold. She entered a house and asked the homeowner for help. The people inside provided food and lodging to her at first, but then they introduced her to a man who said he would bring her to her relative. She followed him because she believed that all these people were trying to help, but in fact it was just an excuse to sell her as a bride[19]. According to Eun-Hi, a 30-year-old single when she crossed the border in 1998:

> A Korean-Chinese woman said that she would find me a job. She connected me with a Chinese man and asked me to follow him. I soon realized that I was sold; however, by that time it was too late. I was afraid of being arrested, so I could not resist. I had no choice. I later learned that I was sold for 5,000 Yuan ($604).

Jin-Ah, aged 22 when she crossed the border in 1998, was deceived by a stranger as well:

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[18] However, after she arrived in her parents' house, Hyun-Ok's distant relatives deceived her family to introduce a good bridegroom to her and tried to sell her as a bride. Her story will follow later in detail.

[19] According to Soo-Mi, the man who was supposed to bring her to her relative's house brought her to a Chinese house and left. A Chinese father and his son were there. Even though she could not understand Chinese, she realized something was wrong. She showed them her relatives' address and the telephone number. Then they telephoned the man who brought her to their house and seemed to cancel the deal. He came back and let her go.

> My mother and I were begging for food on the streets in China. An old woman approached us and told me she would help me to find a job. This was an enticing opportunity, so I followed her and left my mother behind. She brought me to a house and a woman there later sold me as a bride. The house was used for connecting bride seekers and brides. I did not know the situation at the time because I could not understand Chinese.

Some strangers coerced NKMCs rather than deceived them. Sook-Hi said when she was working in a ginseng factory in China, a group of strangers came to her and coerced her to marry a man. Sook-Jin, a single 24-year old when she entered China, was coerced by a stranger to marry a Chinese man as well:

> After I crossed the border, I asked a stranger where I could take the bus to Yanji because I wanted to meet my aunt who lived there. She looked me up and down and said there was no bus at that moment. She asked me whether I came from North Korea and brought me to her house. I explained why I came to China and she promised to help me to find my aunt. However, she then forced me to marry a Chinese man.

Some study participants were threatened when they refused to marry. Hyun-Ok was reported to the police by a distant relative when she refused to marry. After she was arrested, the same relative bribed the officer for her release. She said she could not resist that relative anymore after that because she became convinced that her ability to stay in China

depended on his good will.

Yong-Suk, a 39-year-old widow when she arrived in China in 1998, was threatened with being reported to Chinese authorities by a stranger if she refused to marry a Chinese man:

> I crossed the border with my two children and we were waiting for a bus at a bus station. A stranger came to me and asked whether we were from North Korea. He seemed to know that we came from there by our clothes and our accent. He asked me whether I wanted to marry a Chinese man; I replied I did not. He left by motorcycle, then returned with another man. They said that they would introduce someone to marry and I again refused. Next, they threatened to report me to the police, but I resisted, saying that they could do whatever they wanted. While they were discussing what to do next, I and my children hopped in a taxi and fled.

Hye-Ran recounted how she was kidnapped by strangers and was sold to a Chinese man:

> After I crossed the border with the help of a former border guard, I asked him to help me to find my uncle in China. However, he refused. The former border guard then tried to sell me to a karaoke bar owner or a bride seeker, but I resisted. Later, I lived with a Korean-Chinese man, who was a friend of my elder brother, for a month for my own safety. However, one time when he was not home, a group of strangers broke down the door and kidnapped me. Eventually, I was sold to a Chinese man.

Some cases seem to be trafficking cases even though study

participants did not believe at the time that they had been deceived by their companions, smugglers, or others. As mentioned in Chapter 5, Mee-Yon's appeared to have been trafficked, though when she bribed the border guard to cross she was unaware of this. Soon-Ja, too, had a similar experience. A 32-year-old street vendor when she crossed the border in 1998, she noted that a woman approached her and urged her to go to China:

> I met a woman who was in her forties in front of the Chongjin[20] railway station. She said she had a relative in China and she had visited the relative before. Because I wanted to go to China, I followed her. There was another woman in her late thirties and we crossed the border together. After we crossed, we entered the house of a Korean-Chinese family in Yanji. They already had the experience of selling North Koreans because there had been many North Korean women there for approximately one year. The home owner provided us with shoes and clothes and began to contact bride seekers by telephone. I refused at first, but in the end agreed to marry a Chinese man. The woman I met in front of Chongjin railway station left to meet her relative and another woman was sold as a bride like me.

Soon-Ja believed she was not deceived or trafficked by the first woman she met even after the study interview. However, the woman approached Soon-Ja first, lured her and another woman to China, and led

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[20] Chongjin is the capital of North Korea's North Hamgyong Province and the third largest city in North Korea.

them to the Korean-Chinese man's house where they would be sold. All things considered, the woman who approached Soon-Ja is reasonably suspected to be a trafficker.

C. Non-Trafficked NKMCs Without Forced Marriages

Excluding the 11 male study participants, who were not at risk of being forced to marry, there were 24 female study participants who were not originally trafficked. As described above, 12 of these women (50%) ended up in forced marriages. Among the remaining 12, seven were successful in meeting relatives after they crossed the border and so were protected from victimization. Ji-Min's cousin in China came to meet her when she arrived, for example:

> My cousin's brother-in-law was a Chinese police officer, and he came to meet me in a police car, so I was safe. Afterward, I was connected with a job working as a companion in a house for an old woman.

Not all NKMCs who met relatives in China were safe from the risk for victimization. Mi-Kyung, 22 years old and single when she crossed the border in 2004, was introduced to a karaoke club owner by an acquaintance of her cousin:

> I crossed the border easily by bribing a border guard. When I arrived in China, there was a person who was sent by my cousin. The person sent by my cousin paid some money to the person who helped me to cross the river [and] was to bring me to my cousin's house. My cousin lived with a Korean-Chinese man and she appeared to be happy. I asked her to help me find a job. My cousin asked an acquaintance for help, who then found me a job in a karaoke bar. I did not know what a karaoke bar was before I started. When a client asked to sleep with me, I refused and quit the job. My cousin said she did not know that working in a karaoke bar meant selling sex.

In addition to the six female study participants who met family in China, three women already knew that they might be sold as brides in China and used the situation to escape North Korea. They had already made up their mind to marry Chinese men for their safety, which meant protection from being arrested and deported by Chinese authorities. After Hyun-Ju was deported from China and found that she was divorced by her husband in North Korea, she made up her mind to re-enter China and marry a Chinese man for her safety:

> I told my husband before I crossed the border for the first time that I would come back to North Korea and that he should wait for my return, and he said he would. However, after I was arrested in China, deported, and released from prison in North Korea, I found that he had divorced me. I thought that it would be better for me to go to China again, considering the situation I was in. When I crossed the border for the first time, I tried to keep the promise with my husband no matter how hard it was. However, after I realized I was divorced, I planned to marry a Chinese man for my safety in China.

As mentioned in Chapter 4, Yun-Seo crossed the border with the help of her husband's friend. After that, she went back to North Korea and re-entered China less than a month later. She thought at that time the only way to be safe in China was to marry a Chinese man.

> When I crossed the border [the second time], I made up my mind to marry a Chinese man. With this in mind, I said to the man who received me from the Chinese side that I wanted to marry a Korean-Chinese man. After being brought to Harbin,[21] he introduced me to three potential grooms. Among them, I thought that a man who ran a rice-cake shop was the best option. However, the three people who were coordinating all this asked for 7,000 Yuan ($845) and my potential husband refused. I was later introduced to another man, but I ran away from them and went to the rice-cake shop and asked that man to marry me. Finally, after another round of negotiation, I was sold to him for 3,000 Yuan ($362).

Soo-Ah also knew that she would be sold as a bride, and she actively looked for a trafficker as she had no money to pay someone to help her to go to China:

> My cousin tried to force me to sleep with a South Korean businessman. He seemed to earn money using me[22]. After I refused to sleep with the South Korean, I went back to North Korea. There I ran a small business, but it failed. Consequently, I

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[21] Harbin is the capital of Heilongjiang, China's northern-most province.

[22] The details of this story are discussed further below in section 6.2.D.2.

> made up my mind to go to China again and looked for a trafficker who could sell me because I had no money to pay a smuggler. I crossed the border with a help of a trafficker. He handed over me to four Chinese men the next day. I followed them and was handed over again to a Chinese man and his Korean-Chinese wife. The next morning, I woke up earlier than them, got out of the house, took a taxi, and went to aunt's house. My aunt introduced me to a job and I worked as a babysitter. She also introduced me to a Korean Chinese man and I married him 6 months later.[23].

It is notable that these three cases, the women had previously migrated to China and returned to North Korea. Their decisions to consent to marriage on their next move to China were informed by these past experiences. In the third case, Soo-Ah tricked the trafficker into bringing her to China to be sold as a bride, then escaped before it could happen.

The remaining two non-trafficked women also did not experience any victimization. Seo-Hyun, married with two children in North Korea, met an old woman after she crossed the border and received help from her:

> I crossed the border alone and approached a house while begging for food. An old woman let me in. She gave me a meal and told me to go back to North Korea. Nonetheless, I asked her to help me find a job and her son-in-law located a job for me in a restaurant.

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[23] The cases of Yun-Seo, Hyun-Ju, and Soo-Ah are categorized as non-trafficking cases. It is not only because they consented to be sold but also because there was no threat, force, coercion, abduction, fraud, or deception involved.

After arriving in China, Su-Min and the other women she crossed with worked with other laborers in the mountains:

> I followed a woman who promised to find me a job in China. Before we crossed the border, the woman said that she knew a place where we could work, but when we arrived on the Chinese side, we could not meet the people who were supposed to be there to greet us. Because of this, we kept walking until we ran into a group of people who were working in a mountain location. Thy let us gather bracken and medicinal herbs, and I earned 500 Yuan ($60) a month.

In sum, there were three types of settlements in China. NKMCs who crossed the border with traffickers were under the control of the traffickers from the moment they arrived in China. Except for Min-Seo[24], all 22 female NKMCs who crossed the border with traffickers experienced forced marriage. Among the other 24 originally non-trafficked cases, 12 ended in forced marriage and 12 did not. The non-victimized cases will be discussed in chapter 8. In section 6.2, the victimization of forced marriage, sex trafficking, labor exploitation, victimization after initial trafficking and other forms of victimization will be discussed.

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[24] Min-Seo already knew that she would be sold as a bride before she entered China. Though she crossed the border with a trafficker, it was her choice and there were no methods of trafficking such as deception, coercion, confinement, assault, rape, and so on. Therefore, her case is categorized as crossing with a trafficker and not ending with forced marriage.

6.2 Three Types of Trafficking Victimization

A. Forced Marriage

As the previous section illustrates, in all, 34 of the 47 female study participants (72%) were subject to forced marriages in China, including five who experienced an attempted forced marriage but escaped the situation. Among the remaining 13 NKMC women, seven met relatives and found protection with them, four volunteered to marry Chinese men (though in one case not following through)[25], and two met good people in China who assisted rather than exploited them. In all, eight of the non-trafficked NKMC women did not marry in China while three married but did so without deception, coercion or threat. Table 6.1 summarizes the relationship between crossing types and marriage types in China for the 47 female study participants.

[25] They were Hyun-Ju, Min-Seo, Soo-Ah, and Yun-Seo. Soo-Ah did not marry the Chinese man after all.

Table 6-1: Crossing Types by Marriage Types for Female Study Participants (N=47)

Border Crossing Type:	Forced Marriage (N=34)	Non-Forced Marriage (N=5)	No Marriage (N=8)
Traffickers (N=23)	22	1	0
Non-Assisted (N=16)	9	1	6
Smugglers (N=7)	3	2	2
Altruistic Helpers (N=1)	0	1	0

Among the 34 victims of forced marriage, 22 were recruited in North Korea and the other 12 after reaching China. As Table 6-2 shows, young and single NKMCs were most vulnerable to forced marriage. Though approximately half of the women who came to China at age 30 or over experienced forced marriage, this was the case for nearly all of the women under 30. Likewise, NKMC women who arrived single in China were disproportionately among those forced to marry, compared to women who were married or widowed on arrival.

Except for the four NKMCs who agreed to be married to Chinese men when they left for China, most women who crossed the border with

traffickers thought that the traffickers were actually smugglers or altruistic helpers. These traffickers deceived them by saying they would help the women find jobs or connect with relatives in China. However, after they arrived in China, they were pressed to marry Chinese men and/or to work in the sex trade, a topic I return to in the next section.

Table 6-2: Age, Marital Status, and Forced Marriage Victimization (N=47)

Age	19-29 (N=22)	30-39 (N=17)	Over 40 (N=8)
Forced Marriage (N=34)	20 (91%)	10 (59%)	4 (50%)
Non-Forced Marriage (N=5)	1 (5%)	3 (18%)	1 (13%)
No Marriage (N=8)	1 (5%)	4 (24%)	3 (38%)
Marital Status	Single (N=25)	Married (N=17)	Widowed (N=5)
Forced Marriage (N=34)	23 (92%)	9 (53%)	2 (40%)
Non-Forced Marriage (N=5)	1 (4%)	4 (23%)	0

No Marriage (N=8)	1 (4%)	4 (23%)	3 (60%)

The most frequently used means of trafficking NKMCs into forced marriage was deception, though often this went hand-in-hand with threats, coercion, and even violence. Among the 34 forced marriage cases, 30 (88%) involved some form of deception. Twenty-six women (76%) were threatened with reporting to the Chinese police unless they followed the traffickers' orders, and 24 (71%) experienced coercion. In several cases, there was physical violence involved, including confinement, assault, and rape. These patterns are summarized in Table 6-3.

Table 6-3: Means of Trafficking for Forced Marriage (N=34)

Means		N	%
Deception		29	85
Psychological Abuse (N=29)	Coercion	24	71
	Threat	26	76
Physical Violence (N=14)	Confinement	10	29
	Assault	6	18

	Rape	4	12

* The percentages have been rounded.

As noted, deception involved either promises of assistance in finding employment or in finding relatives in China. Most NKMC women believed these goals would not be possible without local assistance and was the reason they believed and followed the traffickers willingly. Yu-Na knew before she crossed the border that there were traffickers active in China and that she might be sold as a bride. However, even though she was careful to avoid being deceived, eventually she was:

> I met a woman in North Korea. She said she would work in a restaurant in China after crossing the border and suggested that I go with her and work with her. I followed her, but after we arrived in China, she tried to sell me as a bride. I resisted, and she told me that the restaurant which she planned to work for was closed. I thought that I would not go back to North Korea because I wanted to earn money. There was no other way to survive in China without living with a Chinese man, so at last, I agreed to marry someone.

Among the 34 forced marriage victims, 4 NKMCs (Sook-Hi, Sook-Jin, Hyun-Ok, and Hae-Won) were not deceived, but later were coerced or threatened to marry by the people they met in China. Fourteen NKMCs experienced physical violence including confinement, assault,

and/or rape. Ji-Won, who had a middle school education, was married and had a son in North Korea, said that she was shackled by a stranger in China:

> When I and a distant female relative crossed the border, we met a stranger. He suddenly put shackles on my legs, and I thought he was a Chinese police officer. However, he brought us not to a police station but to a private house, and I realized he was not a police officer. He introduced me to an old man and asked me to follow him. At that point, the distant relative who crossed the border with me had disappeared. I suspect she conspired with the stranger.

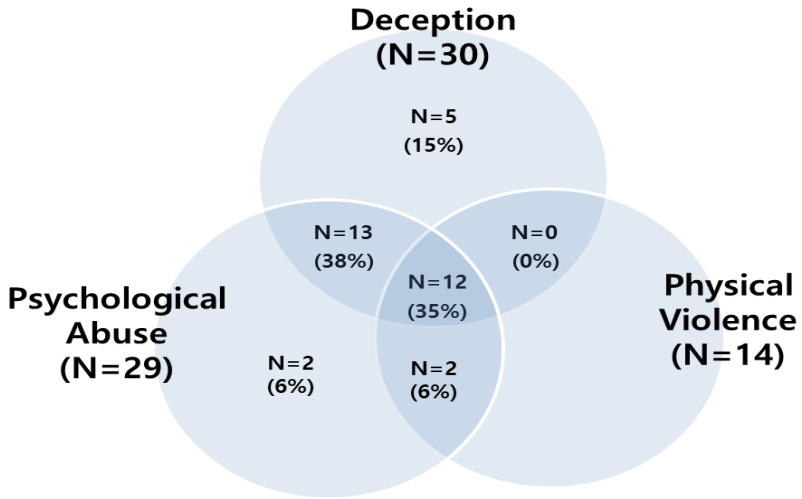
Mi-Young was confined and raped while she was in a safe house in China.

> When I was left with two North Korean women in a house in China, the three men who brought us from the border raped each of us in a room. It was so shameful that I could not open my eyes. I could see the others were raped by other men in front of my eyes because we were raped in the same room in the daytime. Another three men came and raped us the next day. The three men who brought us from the border area seemed to sell our bodies to others. We were raped like that for three days until we were sold as brides. We could not run away because they did not give us any clothes nor underwear. We were watched even when we went to the toilet.

Deception and psychological abuse (including coercion and/or threats) were used together in 25 of the 34 cases of forced marriage (74%).

As noted, traffickers approached NKMCs with the false pretense of helping to find jobs or relatives. And after they arrived with traffickers into China or after they agreed to follow traffickers in China after a non-trafficked crossing, these women were coerced and/or threatened by traffickers when they resisted. Among the 25 NKMCs who had been deceived and subjected to psychological abuse, 12 (48%) also faced confinement, assault, and rape. In other words, these 12 NKMCs experienced each means of exploitation for trafficking, including deception, psychological abuse, and physical violence.

Figure 6-1: Means of Forced Marriage (N=34)



* The percentages have been rounded.

Figure 6-1 provides a snapshot of how these overlapped in

women's trafficking for forced marriage experiences. Note that physical violence always went hand-in-hand with psychological abuse, and in all but six cases, more than one form of exploitation was employed.

B. Sex Trafficking

While forced marriage was the most common form of trafficking experienced by women NKMCs, some also experienced sex trafficking. In all, ten NKMCs were trafficked for the sex trade, with 9 of these women also later subjected to forced marriage. Mi-Young and Sun-Hi, for example, were deceived by traffickers and told they were being brought to work in a restaurant. Instead, they were forced into prostitution before they were sold as brides. Sun-Hi explained:

> I was told that I would work just for three months in China and then I would return to North Korea. A friend of my husband in North Korea deceived me. I never suspected him because he was close to my husband. There was another woman who crossed the border with us. After we arrived at a house in China, men came, and we were forced to have sex with them every day and night. It seemed that the traffickers received money from them. We needed to have sex with six to seven men a day. We were there for three months before we were sold as brides.

Three NKMCs, So-Yun, Hye-Ran, and Soon-Ok, were threatened to be sold to karaoke clubs if they refused to marry. Hye-Ran's case is

described above. So-Yun said she was brought to a karaoke club, where women were expected to have sex with clients:

> After we (two traffickers and another female border crosser) crossed the border, a man came to meet us. He brought us to his house and a woman and a man showed up the next day. I and another woman who crossed the border with me followed the woman and man and arrived in Shenyang. They told us that we would be married to Chinese men. We refused and were told that if we did not, we should pay them 22,000 Yuan ($3,221) each, which we could not afford. Next, they brought us to a different place. They made us put on revealing clothes and had us drink with men. The men caressed us and asked to sleep with us. I shouted and refused. The owner of the karaoke lounge beat us with a club that looked like a baseball bat for five days to force us to sleep with customers.

Soon-Ok was 25 and single when she crossed the border in 2001. She had been threatened to be sold to a karaoke lounge. She did not know what a karaoke lounge was all about and agreed to marry a Chinese man instead of working there. As described above, Mi-Kyung also said she had worked in a karaoke bar for a week before quitting, after her cousin's friend offered to find her employment:

> An acquaintance of my cousin connected me with work in a karaoke establishment, who deceived us both when she sold us to the employer. Customers selected their partners when we entered each room, and I was chosen by a Chinese customer. When I sat down beside him, he caressed my breast. I was shocked, but I endured because I was at a loss for what to do. He wanted to sleep

> with me, but I refused. I could not get my daily wage because I refused to have sex with him. The next day, I was chosen by a South Korean customer and he was gentle and quite different from the Chinese customer whom I met the day before. I went out with the South Korean customer and asked him to help me to go to South Korea. He said he would help me to find a way to go to South Korea. He said he would rent a room for me, so I did not have to go back to the karaoke lounge. However, I was eventually caught by the people from the karaoke lounge and the owner threatened me that she would report my whereabouts to the Chinese police if I ran away again. However, I was able to run away from the karaoke again with the help of a co-worker, a North Korean woman who had been sold to the karaoke as well. She was told to watch me when there was no one except us. However, when I begged her to let me go, she let me go.

Mi-Kyung's case is unique in my study participants as she crossed the border without anyone's help and had not been victimized from forced marriage but victimized from sex trafficking. Among 10 sex trafficking victims in my study, Mi-Kyung was the only one study participants who was not victimized from forced marriage.

Sun-Hi came to work in a karaoke bar after being deceived by a trafficker. She said she was confined and forced to sell sex to customers. The owner of the karaoke bar threatened to report her to the police unless she agreed to the terms. Su-Jin said she also worked in karaoke bars for about four years. She claimed she was brought there by traffickers who looked like gangsters:

> I did not know what a karaoke bar was or what I needed to do there. They said the only thing I had to do was sing. One of the gang members took me from my accommodation to the karaoke bar every day. These gangsters were not working for only one karaoke club, so I was brought to different locations. They watched me constantly, so I would not run away, and they often threatened to report me to the authorities. I earned 14,000 Yuan ($1,690) a month, but they took half the money, 7,000 Yuan ($845). They took the money saying that was their operating expense. I got 100 Yuan ($12) for sitting with customers and 500 Yuan ($60) for sleeping with a customer. I had to sit around three times a day and have sex with customers approximately three times a week. I sold sex in hotels or motels nearby after having drinks with customers.

So-Yun also was sold to a karaoke lounge, and said her debt increased because the owner charged her for clothing, food, and accommodation expenses when she refused to have sex with customers:

> Customers selected a woman to sleep with in a singing room. When I refused to sleep with a customer, the owner beat me with a wooden stick and put me in another customer's singing room. When customers did not select me to sit with them, I was pushed to come out of that room but had to enter another. Even when I was selected by customers, I was still asked to leave the room if I refused to sleep with them. The owner of the karaoke lounge scolded me that I ruined its image and charged me more for clothes, food, and accommodation. However, I continued to refuse to sell sex. Eventually, I was handed back to the trafficker and was sold as a bride.

So-Yun's victimization continued even after she left the karaoke lounge. After running away from the husband, she had been forced to

marry, she was led to a video chatting room.

> I met a woman while I was looking for a job, and she asked me if I could use a computer. I thought it might be a normal office work and so I followed her. When I entered the house, there were three other North Korean women who worked there. I did not know what I should do and when I heard more about what video chatting work was, I refused to do it. But the owner and other workers did not let me leave for a month and they said that I needed to pay 8 million South Korean won ($6,666) for the cost of the computer equipment and other fees. There were three to four locks on the doors and there was no other way out but to agree.

She said she needed to chat with South Korean customers online. When she started, she would not take off her clothes; however eventually she began to take off her underwear to encourage customers to stay online longer, thus allowing her to earn more money:

> They promised that if I worked there for a year, they would let me go to South Korea. I hid my face, so it would not be broadcast. At first, I did not take off my clothes and chatted with customers, but I realized that customers would leave my channel unless I took off my clothes, and I needed to earn more money. I thought that taking off my clothes was better than sleeping with customers. Sometimes, I needed to dance naked or do more shameful things.

Min-Ji, whose experience is described above, also worked in a video chatting room. Mi-Kyung, too, was another NKMC who worked in a video chat room, in this case after she entered China for the second time.

When somebody introduced her to the job, she agreed to do it because she needed the money to continue onwards South Korea:

> I came to know someone who operated a video chatting room. I thought that this work might be easier and safer than working in a karaoke bar. I chatted with South Korean men from 7pm to 5am. I seduced them with erotic words and showed my body to encourage them to stay longer. The longer they stayed the more money I earned.

Unlike the other women who's experiences in the sex industry are detailed in this section, Mi-Kyung worked at the video chat room of her own accord, primarily because she recognized it as the safest option for earning the money she needed.

C. Labor Exploitation

In addition to forced marriage and sex trafficking, NKMCs reported other forms of labor exploitation. While the former two types of victimization were experienced exclusively by women NKMCs, two men who migrated from North Korea were also subject to labor exploitation. Labor exploitation can be both broadly and narrowly defined. Broadly, for example, most NKMCs who had worked in China said their pay was less than half that of their Chinese counterparts, while some did not receive payment at all. Most NKMCs found their jobs without experiencing

deception, coercion, threat, or use of force, even when the conditions of work were exploitative. In three cases, a more narrowly defined form of labor exploitation was experienced, meaning that facets of trafficking were present. Jong-Min, who was only seventeen years old when he crossed the border in 2002, said he began work in a bread factory but was threatened by the owner:

> I met an old man after I crossed the border. I begged him for food and he brought me to his house. He fed me and let me stay for several days. I needed a job and his son introduced me to one. I was brought to a bread factory where I worked from 6am to 12pm for two years. There was no rest or vacation time. The owner of the factory told me that I should not leave, so I ate and slept there for a pay of 300 Yuan ($36) a month, though payment was often delayed. When I asked the owner to pay me on time, the owner threatened to report me to the police.

Min-Soo was brought to a restaurant by a Korean-Chinese man after he arrived in China. He worked from morning to midnight every day for four months but did not receive any pay. He could eat and sleep in the restaurant but when he asked for his wages the owner threatened to report him to the police. Mee-Yon was also introduced to a restaurant and also was not paid her wages for two months:

> I ran away from a forced married with the help of a woman. She was Korean-Chinese and let me hide in her house for a few days,

> where she also let me work in a restaurant until she found a way for me to go to South Korea. I worked in a restaurant for three months, but I received wages only for one. Because of this, I left the restaurant and went to the Korean-Chinese woman's house. She found another restaurant job for me, but the restaurant owner, a man in his sixties, did not pay my wages either and asked me to sleep with him. When I asked him for my wages, he threatened to report me to the police.

Though such cases were less common, they nonetheless illustrate the vulnerability of North Koreans who migrated to China. Three types of trafficking, crossing border type, along with general information about the study participants are in table 6-4.

D. Other Victimization

1. Victimization After Initial Trafficking

In my study there are 34 cases of forced marriage, 10 cases of sex trafficking, and 3 cases of labor exploitation. After they were trafficked, some experienced further victimization, including surveillance, threats, confinement, and/or assault. Among the 34 forced marriage victims, 19 said that they were subject to surveillance by their husbands or husband's family members and 15 said that they were assaulted after the marriage.

Among the 10 victims of sex trafficking, 7 were surveilled, 6 were confined, and another 6 were threatened with being reported to the police. Among the 3 victims of labor exploitation, two were threatened with

reporting. Table 6-5 provides a summary of these experiences.

Table 6-4: Border Crossing Types and Trafficking

Pseudonym	Gender	Age when s/he crossed the border	Year of Arriving in China	Facilitator in Crossing the Border	Forced Marriage	Sex Trafficking	Labor Exploitation
Chul-Soo	Male	37	2000	None	N/A	No	No
Eun-Hi	Female	28	1996	None	Yes	No	No
Eun-Jin	Female	28	1998	Trafficker	Yes	No	No
Eun-Mi	Female	48	2006	Trafficker	Yes	No	No
Ha-Eun	Female	52	1999	None	No	No	No
Hae-Won	Female	26	1998	None	Yes	No	No
Ho-Chul	Male	45	1998	None	N/A	No	No
Hye-Jin	Female	51	2007	Trafficker	Yes	Yes	No
Hye-Ran	Female	24	1999	Smuggler	Yes	Yes	No
Hyo-Sun	Female	37	1999	Trafficker	Yes	No	No
Hyun-Ju	Female	38	2000	Smuggler	No	No	No
Hyun-Ok	Female	27	1996	None	Attempted	No	No
Ji-Min	Female	34	2009	Smuggler	No	No	No
Jin-Ah	Female	20	1998	None	Yes	Yes	No
Jin-Hi	Female	29	2000	Trafficker	Yes	No	No

Jin-Ju	Female	35	2008	Smuggler	No, but marriage by choice	No	No
Ji-Won	Female	34	2000	Trafficker	Yes	No	No
Ji-Woo	Female	24	1998	Trafficker	Yes	No	No
Ji-Young	Female	29	1998	Trafficker	Yes	No	No
Jong-Beom	Male	30	1994	None	N/A	No	No
Jong-Min	Male	17	2002	None	N/A	No	Yes
Jung-Ah	Female	30	2000	Trafficker	Attempted	No	No
Jung-Ho	Male	31	1999	None	N/A	No	No
Ju-Young	Female	27	2000	Trafficker	Yes	No	No
Kwang-Soo	Male	42	2002	None	N/A	No	No
Mee-Yon	Female	51	2009	None	Yes	No	Yes
Mi-Kyung	Female	22	2004	None	No	Yes	No
Mi-Na	Female	30	2001	Smuggler	Attempted	No	No
Min-ji	Female	32	2000	Trafficker	Yes	Yes	No
Min-Seo	Female	39	2007	Trafficker	No, but marriage by choice	No	No
Min-Soo	Male	39	2008	Smuggler	N/A	No	Yes
Mi-Young	Female	47	1997	Trafficker	Yes	Yes	No

Myung-Sook	Female	30	1998	None	No	No	No
Na-Rae	Female	22	2004	Trafficker	Yes	No	No
Sang-Hoon	Male	23	1997	None	N/A	No	No
Seo-Hyun	Female	49	2003	None	No, but marriage by choice	No	No
Seong-Woo	Male	33	2004	None	N/A	No	No
Seo-Yoon	Female	20	1997	Trafficker	Yes	No	No
Soo-Ah	Female	32	2001	Smuggler	No, but marriage by choice	No	No
Soo-Bin	Female	64	2008	None	No	No	No
Sook-Hi	Female	39	1998	None	Attempted	No	No
Sook-Jin	Female	24	1997	None	Yes	No	No
Soo-Mi	Female	19	1998	Smuggler	Attempted	No	No
Soon-Ja	Female	32	1998	None	Yes	No	No
Soon-Ok	Female	25	2001	Trafficker	Yes	Yes	No
So-Yun	Female	21	2009	Trafficker	Yes	Yes	No
Su-Ji	Female	27	1997	Trafficker	Yes	No	No
Su-Jin	Female	22	2000	Trafficker	Yes	Yes	No

Su-Jung	Female	19	1998	Trafficker	Yes	No	No
Su-Min	Female	32	2003	None	No	No	No
Sun-Hi	Female	32	1998	Trafficker	Yes	Yes	No
Sun-Young	Female	25	2001	Trafficker	Yes	No	No
Ye-eun	Female	42	2005	None	No	No	No
Yong-Suk	Female	39	1998	None	Yes	No	No
Young_Chul	Male	28	1996	None	N/A	No	No
Young-Sam	Male	36	2006	None	N/A	No	No
Yu-Na	Female	30	2001	Trafficker	Yes	No	No
Yun-Seo	Female	28	1997	Altruistic Helper	No, but marriage by choice	No	No

Table 6-5: Victimization After Initial Trafficking

	Forced Marriage (N=34)		Sex Trafficking (N=10)		Labor Exploitation (N=3)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Surveillance	19	56	7	70	0	0
Threats	10	29	6	60	2	67
Confinement	6	18	6	60	0	0
Assault	15	44	1	10	0	0

* The percentages have been rounded.

Among the 34 victims of forced marriage, 15 were beaten by their husbands in China. Seo-Yoon said that she was beaten every other day, especially when her husband drank, and for no particular reason. She said she felt like a slave. Hae-Won said she was beaten and threatened by her husband as well:

> My husband threatened me, saying he would alert the North Korean regime to where my family was so that they could be harassed. I could not say no to marry him. He said he bought me for 5,000 Yuan ($604), so I should follow his commands. There was a mother-in-law who was disabled, and I cleaned and maintained a bedpan for her. I was beaten so badly my eardrum ruptured. One day, I bought a box of roach killer and swallowed all of it to kill myself, but it failed.

Likewise, Hyo-sun said she was confined and watched by her husband's family after the marriage:

> I was sold to a Chinese man. His family watched me, and when they went out, they locked the door so that I could not leave. I could not have even a bowl of noodles without permission from my mother-in-law. I was beaten when I did not follow her orders.

Seo-Yoon and Na-Rae said their husband's families followed them even when they went to the toilet. Na-Rae noted that she could not

run away because she did not have any money, could not speak Chinese, and did not know where to go. Mee-Yon said that she was confined in a room as well when she was married to a disabled man. Yong-Suk was also confined in a room for a month after she was deceived into marrying a man. She escaped through a window. So-Yun was another NKMC who was confined and watched by the family and friends of her husband after she was forced to marry him.

2. Other Forms of Victimization

A considerable number of study participants were victimized through forced marriage, sex trafficking, and labor exploitation, and many had experienced continued victimization after their initial trafficking. In addition, four female NKMCs experienced confinement, assault, or rape separate from direct experiences of human trafficking. Soo-Ah's cousin tried to force her to sleep with a stranger:

> I was in my uncle's house in China. The cousin brought his friends every night and we would eat together first and then go to a karaoke. His friends gave him some money, but he did not give any to me. He introduced me to a man from South Korea and attempted to force me to drink and sleep with him. I refused. He scolded me for ruining his business.

Myung-Sook revealed that when she worked in a dentist's office,

a customer recognized that she was North Korean and, taking advantage of her vulnerability, confined and raped her. Like Myung-Sook, Yong-Suk said she was confined and raped by a man for a year during a previous time she migrated to China:

> When I was working in a restaurant, a customer invited me to his birthday party. The owner of the restaurant told me that the customer was his friend and let me go to the party. I did not realize it was a trap; they had conspired. I could not get out of the house after I arrived. The customer was married, and I was a sex slave for a year. The house owner was his friend and kept me under surveillance, including keeping me in a locked room. The customer came to rape me every morning and evening. I was humiliated and deeply saddened because I could not see my children. He assaulted me whenever I refused any of his commands. I tried to run away but was caught and beaten severely, scarring my face. One day, when I was caught by him again, he reported me to the Chinese police, who deported me back to North Korea.

Hyun-Ok, too, said that she was raped by numerous people who recognized her as North Korean and she could not resist as she was afraid of being deported:

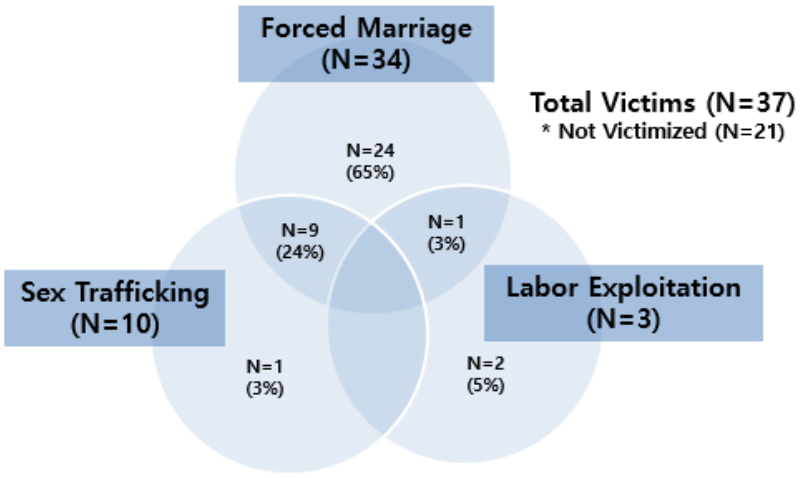
> After I ran away from the distant relative who raped me for a month, I and my parent moved around to escape being arrested by the police. Many Korean-Chinese men harassed and tried to rape me. If I refused, they threatened to report me to the police. I was raped by those people who recognized me around once a month until I married a Chinese man.

Thus, experiences of victimization occurred among not just those who experienced trafficking, but were a risk for other NKMC women, who still were vulnerable due to their status as illegal migrants in China.

6.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, the nature of NKMCs' victimization through forced marriage, sex trafficking, and labor exploitation were examined. Among the 47 female study participants, 34 were victimized through forced marriage, 10 through sex trafficking, and one through labor exploitation. Among the 11 male study participants, 2 were victims of labor exploitation. There were 9 women who experienced both forced marriage and sex trafficking and one woman who experienced both forced marriage and labor exploitation. These patterns are summarized in Figure 6-2. In all, 37 of the 58 study participants experienced some form of trafficking while in China, while only 21 did not. Among women, 35 of 47 (74%) experienced trafficking, compared to 18 percent of the men. In addition, 4 women – though not trafficked – were victimized while in China.

Figure 6-2: Types of Trafficking Victimization (N=37)



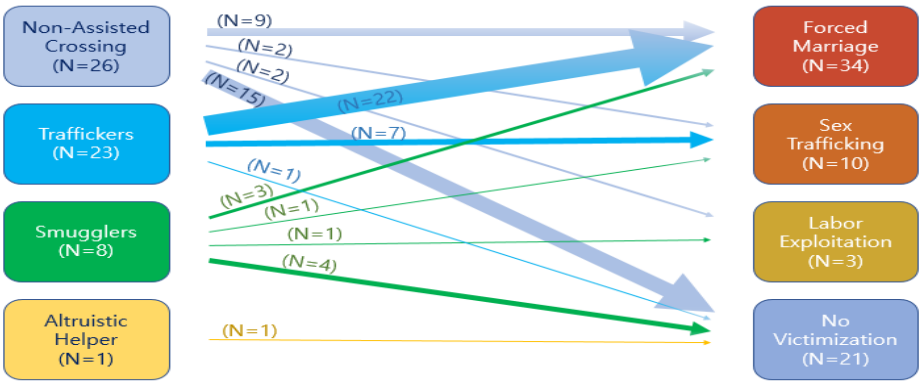
* The percentages have been rounded.

These experiences of trafficking victimization were patterned by both gender and the means by which the study participants crossed the border. Among the NKMCs who crossed the border without assistance, the majority (15 of 26, or 58%) did not experience any form of trafficking, while all 23 NKMCs who crossed with traffickers were women who were victimized in the form of forced marriage except one. Figure 6-3 maps these patterns.[26] The most frequent experience reported by study participants was crossing the border with traffickers and then being subjected to forced marriage (N=22). The second most frequent

[26] In Figure 6-3, wider arrows indicate larger numbers of NKMCs, to assist in illustrating the patterns.

experience was crossing the border without assistance and not being victimized in any form (N=15). Note, however, these 15 cases included 9 of 11 men, but just 6 of 47 women. Though my sample is disproportionately women NKMCs, my findings nonetheless suggest that women who leave North Korea for China face much greater danger than men who do the same.

Figure 6-3: Flow Chart from Crossing the Border to Human Trafficking (N=58)



Men were not targets for forced marriage nor sex trafficking. As for labor exploitation in China, my findings suggest this was less prevalent than expected, particularly when narrow definitional criteria – deception, coercion, or threats, and not simply dramatically low wages – are considered. It might be because trafficking men for labor exploitation was not cost effective. In other words, there was no need to pay traffickers to

hire North Korean laborers, who appeared willing to work for wages much lower than Chinese workers. Because male and female NKMCs themselves came to China to work voluntarily to survive, employers did not need to pay them much. If NKMCs resisted, they could be reported to the police. Consequently, the forms of trafficking that appeared prevalent in China meant that male NKMCs were less desirable targets.

Finally, it merits highlighting what distinguished those NKMCs who did not experience any of the three forms of trafficking victimization. In all, this included 21 study participants (36%), nine of whom were men and twelve of whom were women. They belonged mainly to three groups: one group was the eight female NKMCs who did not cross the border with traffickers and received help from or had relatives in China. Another group was the remaining nine male NKMCs of the eleven in the sample. The remaining group was the four female NKMCs who already knew and consented to be sold as brides (including one who did not go through with it). Among these 21 NKMCs who were not victimized, 15 of them crossed the border without any assistance, another four crossed the border with the help of smugglers, one crossed the border with the help of altruistic helper, and one voluntarily crossed the border with traffickers. In other words, and not surprisingly, NKMCs who were not recruited in North Korea had a better chance of avoiding victimization than NKMCs who were recruited

by traffickers in North Korea. Those recruited by traffickers were all women. Moreover, NKMCs who had relatives in China were less likely to be victimized than those who did not. Having relatives who could provide both information and protection appears to have helped them to avoid victimization. Moreover, though it was only four cases, it is notable that I found evidence that these NKMC women used traffickers for their own advantage, by volunteering to be sold as brides. They actively understood and made use of the situation, intending to survive or earn money by entering China to start their own new lives. I return to this key finding in Chapter 8.

CHAPTER 7
LEAVING CHINA FOR SOUTH KOREA

All of the study participants were interviewed in South Korea, having eventually left China and settled there. In this chapter, I will discuss the processes by which study participants migrated to South Korea. Often, this route was not direct. For example, some study participants ran away from husbands, sex business owners, or employers and then found a way to arrive in South Korea. Others left their victimizers after being arrested by Chinese authorities. NKMCs who had been arrested and deported back to North Korea were put into prisons such as *kwanliso* (political labor camp), *kyohwaso* (labor re-education center), *jipkyulso* (detention center), or *nodongdanryundae* (labor training camp). All the study participants who had been deported re-entered China again at some point and then moved on to South Korea.

Study participants who came to South Korea had crossed the border from China to other countries such as Mongolia, Vietnam, Thailand, and Laos. All of them received help from smugglers. After they arrived in a transit country, they were aided by the diplomatic office of South Korea there. After they arrived in South Korea, they obtained assistance from the government for resettlement.

In this chapter, I first discuss trafficked NKMC's experiences in escaping from their victimizers. Next, I examine the experiences of NKMCs who had been arrested and deported, and re-entered China. Lastly, I explain how NKMCs were smuggled from China to South Korea and how they settled in South Korea.

7.1 Escaping Victimization

As noted in Chapter 6, 37 of my study participants ended up in circumstances in China that fit the criteria for trafficking, including in forced marriages, the sex industry, and labor trafficking. A few others were not trafficked, but nonetheless ended up in violent marriages. Escaping victimization was not easy for NKMCs, who were not familiar with the new environment, could not speak Chinese, were afraid of being arrested by Chinese authorities, and had no money. Some study participants nonetheless were able to escape. Others attempted to escape several times before they succeeded and were caught by sex business owners or husbands who afterwards physically assaulted them. In this section, I discuss escaping confinement, being caught, and the hardships that followed in detail.

A. Escaping Confinement and Surveillance

As mentioned in Chapter 6, there were 12 cases of confinement after the initial trafficking, 6 in forced marriage and 6 in sex trafficking[27]. Three of these study participants escaped with the help of others. Mee-Yon said she ran away with the aid of a Korean-Chinese woman she met in a market:

> I did not know I was sold to a disabled man. They (traffickers) told me that they would find me a job and would come back for me. So, I waited for them in the house. After three months, I met a Korean-Chinese woman in a market and told her I was waiting to be introduced to a job. She said I was already sold to a disabled man and she would help me to escape from his house. She gave me a signal several days later and I got out of the house three months after being sold.

Mi-Kyung said she was able to flee from a karaoke establishment with the help of a North Korean:

> I did not know what a karaoke lounge was before I got there and once there I refused to sleep with customers. The owner of the karaoke lounge said that she would not pay the daily wage because I did not follow the customer's request of having sex with. So, I decided to run away. One day, when all the customers had left and there was only a North Korean colleague and myself, I told her I wanted to run away. She said if I really wanted to, she would help. I thanked her for the offer; she may have suffered later at the hands of the karaoke owner for letting me escape.

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[27] So-Yun had been confined when she had been sold as a bride and was confined in video chatting room as well. So, 11 NKMCs were confined victims even though there were 12 cases of confinement.

So-Yun left a video chatting venue with the help of a Korean-Chinese woman who had brought her there:

> I was deceived and was sold to a video chatting business. A Korean-Chinese woman whom I met said she would introduce me for a job. It was too late to leave the business when I realized what I had to do there. There were three to four locks on the door. They promised me that they would let me go to South Korea after a year but that was not true. After working there for one year, I asked the Korean-Chinese woman who sold me to the video chatting room for help, as she was a relative of the owner. She said she would help me as she felt pity on me and regretted what she had done. The Korean-Chinese woman and I argued with the owner for a month about letting me leave and finally he agreed, and I was able to depart.

There were seven cases in which study participants escaped the trafficked situation on their own. Yong-Suk said she took off by leaving through a window:

> I was deceived that I was to be introduced to a job but the place where I arrived was the house of a bride seeker. He confined me in a room for a month. When he went out to work in a farm, I broke a window of the house and came out through the window. After I ran away from him, I worked in a restaurant for a while and then came to South Korea.

So-Yun said she ran away from a forced marriage by herself on the wedding day:

> I was sold to a Chinese man. I cried every day and refused to eat or sleep with him for a week. He confined me in a locked room and asked his friends to watch me so that I would not run away. He said he would have a wedding ceremony with me and I lied, telling him I would sleep with him after the marriage. On the wedding day, I served guests of my husband and received some money from them and hid the money in my socks. I lied to my husband again, saying that I needed to use the bathroom in the backyard. Once there, I climbed over a wall behind the bathroom and ran away to the mountains where I walked and walked all night. I could not go far because I could not speak Chinese and was hungry. Eventually I went down to a village and reported myself to the Chinese police who then deported me back to North Korea. After I was deported, I was put into *nodongdanryundae* (labor training camp) in North Korea and my mother offered bribe to an officer so that I could come out from the camp in a month. I decided to enter China again because my black-market business was discovered, and I was at risk of being arrested.

Seo-Yoon, a 20-year-old in North Korea before crossing the border in 1997, said she managed to run away from her first husband by pretending to have a stomach ache:

> My first husband watched me all the time and even followed me when I went to the toilet. Fortunately, there was a North Korean woman in the same town. One day, I pretended to have a stomach ache as an excuse to leave the house and went to the North Korean neighbor to ask for help. She gave me the bus fare so that I could take a bus to Jilin.

Su-Jin, 22 years old and single when she crossed the border in 2000, said she ran away from her husband when she was pregnant but was

arrested by the police. Like Hyo-Sun, who were mentioned in chapter 6, she was handed over to another trafficker after she was arrested by the police:

> When there was no one watching me, I took off. I did not know the place and just followed the mountain road. I wanted help from every car which passed by, but no one gave me a ride. I walked all day and arrived at a market place. I was too hungry, and I stole food in the market and was arrested by the police. I wondered why the police did not deport me back to North Korea. I was transported to somewhere and I stayed there for several months. Then the police took me to another trafficker. The trafficker planned to sell me as a bride, but no one would buy me as I was pregnant. The trafficker let me undergo an abortion, which I agreed to as the pregnancy was not what I had intended. I was eventually sold to a karaoke lounge owner.

Hyo-Sun's case was unique in that she did not try to escape from trafficking but was abandoned:

> I was watched after the forced marriage. The family of my husband locked the door whenever they went out. However, after I gave birth to my baby, they let me work in a restaurant and earn money. One day, when my son was three years old, I came back from work and found that all my husband's family moved away. I was left behind and abandoned. They took my baby. I was used just for giving birth to their baby. After that, I worked in the same restaurant, but the owner did not pay my wages. I left for South Korea eight months later.

B. Attempted Escapes

Seven study participants among the 37 who experienced human trafficking victimization said that they did try to escape from the victimization but failed. Sun-Hi recalled how she tried to run away from a karaoke lounge three times without success:

> The staff of the karaoke were always watching us, but I was constantly looking for an opportunity to escape. I hid money in my underwear and planned to take off when no one was looking. One day, when I came out of the karaoke to say goodbye to a group of customers, I ran to an alley. However, I could not go far because I was caught by the staff of the karaoke. I was beaten by them after I was caught. After failing three times, I got out of the karaoke at last with the help of someone who wanted to marry me. He had a wife but wanted to divorce her and marry me. We lived together but his wife would not divorce him. At last, I left him.

Seo-Yoon, quoted above, was caught by the first husband's relative who was living in Jilin. Ironically, the relative of her first husband wanted to marry her. She agreed and said her second husband offered money to the first husband. Unfortunately, the second husband later beat her repeatedly whenever she tried to escape:

> I was unlucky enough to meet his relative in Jilin. He recognized me and suggested I marry him and promised he would compensate my first husband. The first husband received the money and let me go. I lived with the second husband until I came to South Korea. I tried to run away from the second husband more than twenty times but failed every time because many people in the town were either relatives or close friends of him. I was beaten

> almost to death every time I was caught. I finally was free from him because he left China for South Korea to work.

Five NKMCs mentioned that they finally gave up trying to run away from their victimizers after a few attempts. Mee-Yon escaped from her forced marriage, as mentioned above, but was sold to a restaurant owner afterwards. Several months later, she ran away from the owner of the restaurant but went back because she thought she might be deceived by someone else again and she did not have the confidence to live by herself and avoid being arrested. Hae-Won said she tried to run away from her husband many times but she eventually gave up:

> I was sold in a remote area as a bride. It was hard to run away because every neighbor in the town knew I was sold as a bride and they all watched me. Even the bus drivers knew who I was, and they told my husband when I tried to escape and where I went. I tried to run away several times, but I failed every time. When I had a baby, I gave up running away from my husband.

Soo-Mi also tried to vanish several times but whenever she tried, she was caught by the friends of her husband. Hye-Ran said she gave up after she failed several times:

> Family members of my husband always warned me that I might be caught by the traffickers and sold again to other bride-seekers.

> I tried to run away several times, but I failed. As time passed, I became less confident to live alone. I worried I might be sold to other places if I escaped because there were too many human traffickers in China. I thought I could not report my victimization to the police and could not get any protection from anyone in China. So, I gave up.

C. Choosing to Stay

While 20 out of the 37 study participants who were trafficked did escape or try to escape, 17 said they did not try to leave. The reasons were diverse. Some said they worried about being arrested and deported. Some said they felt they could not run away after they had had given birth to children. Eun-Hi recalled that after having a baby, she thought she needed to endure everything for her child and never thought about running away anymore. Similarly, Jung-Ah said:

> My mother-in-law promised she would let my husband and I go to South Korea after giving birth to a baby. In the past, when I was beaten by my husband, I left the house but returned soon because there was no place to go. After having a baby, I could not leave my child in China and go to South Korea all by myself. Eight years after I married my husband, I came to South Korea

So-Yun said she could not run away when she was in a karaoke lounge because she was too scared the staff would beat her:

> I could not run away from the karaoke because the staff stayed

> outside the door. When I refused the request of customers for sexual services, I was expelled from the room and the staff beat me with sticks. They never hit my face because if I had a visible bruise, I could not work. They beat me from head to toe, except my face. I was too frightened, so I did not dare to run away. If I had been caught escaping, I would have been beaten to death. I thought it would be better to follow their orders if I want to live.

Some study participants said they could not run away because they did not know where they were and there was nowhere to go. Some said they were afraid of being sold again by traffickers because the trafficking of North Koreans in China was so prevalent. Some said they could not run away because they were confined in a locked room and were always watched by their husbands' family members, relatives, and neighbors.

7.2 Arrest, Deportation, and Re-entering China

A. Arrest

Among the 58 study participants, 41 (71%) reported that they had been arrested in China. Some were reported to the police, while others were arrested after being identified during regular police checks. Specifically, among these 41 study participants, 17 (41%) had been arrested after someone reported them to the police. As will be seen, being reported to the police did not guarantee deportation to North Korea,

though this was an ongoing fear among NKMCs. Young-Chul, who was a 28-years-old worker when he crossed the border in 1996, described how he was arrested:

> My mother married a Chinese public official and from time to time when I was arrested by the police, my father-in-law helped me to be released. There were rewards given from the Chinese police to those who reported North Koreans. One day, a neighbor reported my family to the police and my family members were arrested. We said we were Chinese, and I called my cousin to let him confirm that we were his relatives, since he is Chinese. My cousin came and confirmed that we were his relatives and we were released.

Neighbors of NKMCs reported them to the police because of the rewards, which made NKMCs afraid of everyone they knew. Su-Ji explained:

> I was arrested by the police because a neighbor reported me to the police to receive a reward from the police. I could not speak Chinese well and so the police recognized me as a North Korean. My mother and father bribed them, so I could be released. Other North Koreans who were arrested were deported back to North Korea. I was lucky.

Five study participants were reported to the police by men who wanted to marry them but were refused. Yu-Na recalled what had happened to her:

> I was deceived and was sold to a Chinese man as a bride. I cried and refused to marry him. The Chinese man said he bought me for 5,000 Yuan ($604) and so I should live with him. I continued to refuse, and he got the money back from the trafficker and let me go. However, after that, the Chinese man reported me, and I was arrested and deported back to North Korea.

Sun-Young also was reported by a co-worker whom she did not agree to live with:

> When I was working in a restaurant, a Korean-Chinese man who also worked there knew I was from North Korea. He asked me to live with him and I did not react. He got angry with me and reported me to the police. I was arrested and deported back to North Korea.

Four study participants were turned into the police when they quarreled with others. Chul-Soo, who was 37 years old when he crossed the border in 2000, recounted such an incident:

> I was working as a laborer. When we finished the work, the owner gave me 50 Yuan ($6) instead of 80 Yuan ($9.7)[28] which was the amount paid to Chinese workers. He recognized that I was a North Korean and paid me less. I argued with him and he reported me to the police. I was arrested and was deported back to North Korea.

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[28] The exchange rate had been 8.28 Yuan per one US. dollar before July 2005.

Likewise, Ju-Young also noted she was reported to the police after she had an argument with a customer who did not pay for his food when she worked in a restaurant. And Sook-Hi said she was reported by her North Korean friend when she refused to lend the friend money.

According to my study participants, some Chinese individuals cooperated with the police to arrest North Koreans. Hae-Won was arrested after meeting someone who said he could help her to go to South Korea:

> I wanted to come to South Korea and I asked a woman I met in town for help. The Chinese woman introduced me to an old man. I asked him whether I could go to South Korea safely. He said he could help me to go to South Korea and suggested I meet him again a month later. I believed him and met him a month later. He said he would go to buy something and asked me to wait for him. While I was waiting, a police officer came and arrested me. I realized that the old man called the police and pretended to help me to go to South Korea.

In fact, Sook-Jin said that after she was arrested by the Chinese police, the officers suggested a deal with her to cooperate with the police to arrest other North Koreans. The Chinese police told her that if she would identify North Koreans by telling them she could assist in their migration to South Korea and then notify the police, she would be released.

While 17 study participants described being turned into the police

by others, 22 others (54% of the 41 participants who reported arrests) said they were captured by police checks. These study participants were arrested after being identified as undocumented North Koreans when questioned by the police. Seven of them were arrested when they tried to move from one place to another. Others were arrested when the police cracked down on North Koreans in general. According to Yong-Suk:

> When I was working in a restaurant, the owner told me to hide whenever there was a police crackdown. However, one time when the owner did not know when the police were coming to check the ID cards of the workers, I could not hide and was arrested and deported back to North Korea.

Alternatively, two study participants turned themselves in to the police. After So-Yun ran away from her first husband, she surrendered herself to the police and asked them to send her back to North Korea. Ji-Young also did the same:

> I was sold to a Chinese man and he drank and beat me every day. Every night there was sexual abuse and I could not endure all the humiliation. He harassed me all night and when I refused to meet his demands, he beat me. One day, he stabbed my thigh with a knife. That night, I tried to escape from him. That was four months after I gave birth to my child. However, I failed, and the daily beatings continued. Eventually, I reported myself to the police to escape from my violent husband. I really hated to leave my child, but I could not live with him anymore. I was deported to North Korea.

Among the 22 study participants who were captured during police checks, seven (32%) were arrested when they tried to go to South Korea. Sang-Hoon, who had been a soldier in North Korea, said many North Koreans who were arrested and deported to North Korea while they were on their way to South Korea were executed publicly. This knowledge shaped his own preparation for life in China:

> Some of the people who were sent to *kwanliso* (a political labor center) were executed by firing squad publicly on the riverside. Those who managed to survive *kwanliso* lived a life of extreme poverty after they were released. I thought that learning Chinese was the only way to be safe in China and I studied very hard and also had a fake ID card. When I tried to cross the border between Mongolia and China on my way to South Korea, I was arrested with my younger brother and my friend's mother. When the Chinese officers asked me where I was heading for, I lied with fluent Chinese that I was going to meet my friends. They believed me. However, my younger brother and my friend's mother could not speak Chinese well. Because of this, they beat us severely and pressured us to confess that we were North Koreans. However, we did not admit that we were North Koreans and eventually we were released.

B. Deportation and Custody

Among the 41 study participants who were arrested in China, 12 were released by the Chinese police. Of the twelve who were released, four of them bribed the police. Su-Ji said after she was arrested, the

mother and father of her husband came to the police station and bribed the police chief 20,000 Yuan ($2,415) to release her. Hye-Ran also said she was let go after her husband gave 8,000 Yuan ($966) to the police. Similarly, Soon-Ok said she was set free after her aunt sold her land and bribed the police.

Another three NKMCs were released because their husbands or relatives were connected to powerful people in China. Sun-Hi said she was let out in a day because a cousin of her husband was a high-ranking government official. Likewise, Seo-Hyun was liberated because her husband's nephew was a prominent government official in China. Another two NKMCs, Hyo-Sun and Su-Jin, as mentioned above, were turned over to other traffickers. Another three were released because one was pregnant, the other successfully insisted that he was not a North Korean, and the last one did not know why he was released. He assumed that it was because he was arrested in the southern part of China. He believed officials in southern China were not eager to arrest and deport North Koreans.

While 12 of the 41 arrested study participants were released, 29 (71%) were deported back to North Korea. As mentioned in Chapter 1, Article 63 of the North Korean Penal Code states that those who run away to another country shall be imprisoned at labor re-education centers for not

less than five years and the person whose "circumstances are especially serious" shall get life imprisonment or the death penalty (Kim, 2012; Margesson, Chanlett-Avery, and Bruno, 2007). According to Lee and Yoon (2006), deported North Koreans are sent to a regional *bowibu* (North Korean State Political Security Department). After being investigated there, they are sent to *nodongdanryundae* (a labor training camp) or *jipkyulso* (a detention center). Those who tried to go to South Korea or contacted Christian organizations might be sent to *kwanliso* (a political labor camp).

Study participants who were deported back to North Korea faced similar circumstances, although obviously none faced execution of served life sentences. According to Soon-Ja:

> I was arrested in Changchun[29] in my house and was sent to the Tumen *byunbanddae* (Chinese border guard) in Jilin Province. I stayed there for about a week. There were ten other North Koreans who were about to be deported like me. We were sent to the *bowibu* in Onsong[30] and I stayed there for several days. We were categorized into two groups, one group to be sent to a *kwanliso* (political labor camp) and another to a *nodongdanryundae* (labor training camp). I was sent to the *nodongdanryundae* in Onsong and stayed there for about a month.

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[29] Changchun is the capital and largest city of Jilin Province, northeast China.

[30] Onsong County is a county in North Hamgyong Province, North Korea, located near the border with China.

> Then, I was sent to the Chongjin[31] *jipkyulso* (detention center) and detained there for about seven months. I was put into hard labor from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. every day. I was beaten numerous times with leather belts and being kicked.

Most of the study participants facing deportation said they were beaten severely from the time they were arrested in China until they were released from incarceration in North Korea. Mi-Na, who was an unmarried company worker in North Korea and was 30 years old when she crossed the border in 2001, said:

> I was sent to the Tumen *byunbanddae* after I was arrested in Jilin. I stayed there for about a month. They tortured people with stun guns and separated attractive girls from others. It's clear what they did to those girls. When I was sent back to North Korea, they (the officers in North Korea) undressed us and made us jump 50 times to find out whether we had money hidden in our vaginas. Sometimes the officers put their fingers into our vaginas to find money. Some women wrapped money in plastic film and hid them inside their vaginas or anuses. When the money was found, the officer would keep it and wouldn't report it to his boss. When I was sent to a labor training camp, an officer made me run a lap around the track. After that, he slapped me across my face and forced me to run fifteen laps more. He demanded that I dance in front of other prisoners to humiliate me. I made up my mind that I would leave North Korea again because the prison experience made me hate the country even more.

NKMCs who were arrested while they were on their way to South

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[31] Chongjin is the capital of North Korea's North Hamgyong Province and the country's third largest city.

Korea had an especially great fear of punishment because migration to South Korea was considered an especially egregious betrayal in North Korea. Soo-Ah recounted his experience as follows:

> I was arrested in Inner Mongolia[32] when I was trying to go to South Korea. I was sent to a North Korean State Political Security Department and was beaten severely. I lied that I was in Inner Mongolia looking for work. An officer stomped on my head wearing military boots. My eyes bled and the scar from it is still on my face. I did not confess that I was trying to go to South Korea because if I said so, I would have been executed.

All seven study participants who were arrested on the way to South Korea said they thought they might be executed after being deported back to North Korea. Consequently, two of them fled when they were transported within North Korea. According to Chul-Soo:

> We (a broker and four North Koreans who wanted to go to South Korea) gathered in front of Yanji[33] railway station. I had attended a church in Longjing in Jilin Province and a member of the church arranged the journey. However, there were many Chinese police around the station and we were arrested. I think someone alerted the police about us. We spent a month in a Chinese border guards

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[32] Inner Mongolia is an autonomous region of China, located in the north of the country, containing most of China's border with Mongolia and a small section of the border with Russia. This region is one of the popular transit points for NKMCs.

[33] Yanji is a county-level city in the east of China's Jilin Province, and is the seat of the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture.

> camp and were sent back to North Korea. I got loose of my handcuffs and jumped out of the train when we were traveling from Musan[34] County to Chongjin city. I broke my leg in the process, but I think it was better than being dead.

Jung-Ho also said he escaped from the train on the way from Musan to Chongjin. He said he thought it was the same to die while running away as it was to die in prison. He hit his head on the ground when he jumped out of the train but managed to escape.

The circumstances of women NKMCs who were arrested on the way to South Korea were equally terrible as men's, and also involved sexual misconduct occasionally. Mi-Kyung said that she was arrested when she was crossing the border between China and Mongolia[35].

> They (brokers who brought North Koreans to the border area) said we should climb over several barbed-wire fences to arrive in Mongolia. We – one man and three women – were arrested after we climbed over two barbed-wire fences. Chinese border guards slapped the women's faces. They beat and kicked the man until he bled. They (male officers) inspected our naked bodies and interrogated us one by one. We stayed at a jail for about two weeks and were sent to the border guard unit in Tumen. We were questioned there as well and were beaten for about two months before being sent to a political security department in Onsong, North Korea.

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[34] Musan County is in central North Hamgyong province, North Korea. It borders China across the Tumen River.

[35] Mongolia is a landlocked unitary sovereign state in East Asia. It is located between China to the south and Russia to the north.

Mi-Kyung noted that officers in North Korea were more abusive than the officers in China:

> There were around forty women in a jail operated by the political security department in Onsong. One night, an officer demanded that we volunteer to help him for an injection. A woman raised her hand and left with him. About ten minutes later, she came back, and her face looked very bad. I heard from her a few days later that the officer beat and raped her as soon as they entered a night-duty room. A few days later, the same officer came in, looked around, picked me, and let me out of the room. He brought me to a night-duty room and asked me if I was willing to sleep with him. I was so scared, and I could not answer. He then threatened to hit me.

She explained how she avoided being raped at that moment by telling him she knew one of his colleagues.

> When I was sent to a political security department's jail, a friend of mine helped me. He bribed an officer in the jail and asked him to help me. One day, the officer called me and told me he would help me. He also told me that the officers there might rape me and when they tried, I should mention his name. So, when I was about to be raped by the officer who picked me that night, I told him the name of the officer who promised to help me. That worked; the officer changed his attitude and let me go.

Among the 29 study participants who were deported back to North Korea, 15 (52%) were released after they finished the terms of their

sentences. Eight (28%) study participants were released after offering bribes to officers or having personal connections with them[36]. Hae-Won said she stayed in Chongjin *jipkyulso* (detention center) for only seven months because her younger brother bribed the officers there. Sook-Jin said she was released after one week as the chief of the *danryundae* (labor training camp) was a friend of her brother. Sun-Young, So-Yun, Ji-Young, and Soo-Ah also said they were set free from the prison after offering bribes to the officers there. Soo-Ah recalled:

> My aunt ran a business with the chief of Hwanghae *anjeonbu* (Ministry of Public Security) as partner. My aunt also gave TV sets, tobacco, and beers to him for free. He helped me to transfer from *bowibu* (North Korean State Political Security Department) to *anjeonbu* (Ministry of Public Security), and to *danryundae* (labor training camp) faster than normal.

All the NKMCs in this study who were deported back to North Korea re-entered China at some point later. They said they could not live in North Korea anymore because they were already stigmatized as betrayers of their motherland. Among the 29 study participants who re-entered China, 14 (48%) crossed the border without anyone's help, 10

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[36] Five of them (17%) ran away from the prison before they finished their terms (one ran away before being sentenced) and one (3%) did not mention how she was released.

with traffickers (34%), and 5 (17%) with smugglers at the first crossing. Among the same 29 study participants, except for six who did not answer, 12 (52%) crossed the border with the help of smugglers, 9 (39%) without anyone's help, and 2 (9%) with traffickers at the second crossing.

Among the last two, one already knew before the crossing that she would be sold by her trafficker and decided to use the trafficker to cross the border. The other, Mi-Kyung, did not know that she was trafficked as the trafficker lied that she would help Mi-Kyung with good intentions. However, when Mi-Kyung realized the situation, she ran away from the trafficker. Consequently, compared to the first crossing, the number of study participants who were deceived by the traffickers decreased from 10 (34%) on first entry to 1 (4%) on the second.

7.3 The Journey to South Korea

All my study participants eventually migrated to South Korea, where the research took place. Their routes from China to South Korea were diverse. Some crossed the border between China and Mongolia, while others crossed between China and Laos, Myanmar, or Vietnam first and then continued to Thailand or Cambodia. Some of them proceeded by car, train, or bus to these countries while others travelled by sea to reach

South Korea directly. After they crossed the border into countries other than South Korea, NKMCs stayed in these countries to wait for the opportunity to fly to South Korea.

A. Preparation

Even after NKMCs arrived in China, many of them did not dare to go to South Korea because they had been educated that life in South Korea is more miserable than in the North. The other reason NKMCs were hesitant to go to South Korea was that the North Korean regime more severely punishes those who try to go to South Korea after escaping from North Korea. Su-Min said she did not think about going to South Korea until she heard about the availability of resettlement aid packages while in China:

> I did not think about going to South Korea because I had heard that all South Korean people lived like beggars and many of them died of starvation. However, when I worked in Qingdao as a housekeeper, a neighbor asked me why I did not go to South Korea. She said North Koreans who entered South Korea would receive resettlement aid and that the South Korean government provides an apartment to live in. So I became interested in going to South Korea, and I arranged a meeting with a smuggler.

According to Sun-Hi:

> A friend in China persuaded me to go to South Korea with her. She said after we get there, the government would provide a house and resettlement aid. I did not believe her, and I refused to go with her. She left for South Korea without me and achieved South Korean nationality. After three months, she came again and showed me her South Korean passport, South Korean ID card, and a lease contract for a rental house in South Korea. After this, I believed her and decided to go to South Korea.

All my study participants who migrated to South Korea did so with the assistance of smugglers. These NKMCs found smugglers through introductions from friends and neighbors in China or NKMCs who had already settled in South Korea. Seo-Hyun said she met a Korean-Chinese smuggler through her neighbor:

> One day, a North Korean friend who was also a neighbor asked me if I wanted to go to South Korea. I answered that I had no money to do so. She told me of a Korean-Chinese smuggler in Qingdao and was generous enough to give me 100 Yuan ($15) to travel to Qingdao.

Yu-Na said she looked for a smuggler who could help her go to South Korea:

> I wanted to come to South Korea and I looked for a smuggler, but it was hard to find one. After asking around, I met a North Korean woman through my neighbor who introduced me to a North Korean smuggler.

Sook-Hi, Soon-Ok, Soon-Ja, and Ji-Won found a smuggler from people they knew who had already arrived in South Korea. Ji-Won's daughter introduced a smuggler to her mother:

> I have two daughters. We decided to let my oldest daughter went to South Korea first because we did not dare to take the risk of being caught together on the way. My first daughter started two years earlier and after she succeeded in entering South Korea, she introduced a smuggler for me.

Soo-Mi found a smuggler through the internet. She said after she bought a computer, she learned how many North Koreans went to South Korea. Most NKMCs paid a portion of the smuggling fee for travel to South Korea and promised they would pay the rest of the fee after they arrived. All North Koreans who arrive in South Korea receive resettlement aids according to the *Act on the Protection and Settlement Support of Residents Escaping from North Kore*a[37]. Consequently, most of the basic resettlement aid was used to pay for their remaining smuggling fee.

According to the information reported by my study participants,

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[37] The basic resettlement aid for a single-person household is 7 million Won ($6,170). Four million Won ($3,526) is paid to North Koreans in South Korea when they get out of *hanawon* (Settlement Support Center for North Korean Refugees) and the remaining 3 million Won ($2,644) is paid quarterly. In addition, 13 million Won ($11,459) is paid as residential aid per single-person household.

the smuggling fees ranged from $2,171 (2.5 million Won) to $8,604 (8 million Won). The average fee reported for the Mongolian route was $3,073 and the average fee for the Thai and Cambodian routes was $3,427, probably because the routes via Thailand or Cambodia are lengthier than the route through Mongolia. Sook-Hi paid 9 million Won ($7,146) for two people because her smugglers charged her double for bringing along her newborn baby. The smuggling fee for the direct sea route from China to South Korea ($8,604) was most expensive.

Most NKMCs gathered together and moved with the guidance of smugglers. According to my study participants, smugglers often moved between four to twenty NKMCs in a group. Seo-Hyun said she started to move from Chengyang[38] with another NKMC and when she arrived at the Qingdao railway station she found three NKMCs were already there to join them. They travelled from Qingdao to another place (she did not remember the name of the city) by train and another fifteen NKMCs were waiting for them there. Similarly, Min-Ji said when she arrived in Shenyang with another NKMC to meet a smuggler, she entered a house and found twelve NKMCs who were waiting for them. The smuggler said they should wait until they get twenty NKMCs to act.

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[38] Chengyang is a district of Qingdao, Shandong Province, China.

Most of the study participants did not bring any identification, though some brought along their fake ID cards. Most smugglers involved in the smuggling NKMCs from China to other countries did not help them to obtain fake identification cards and some NKMCs produced these cards on their own. Only the smugglers who brought NKMCs to South Korea by sea made fake identification cards for NKMCs so that they could go on board.

B. Crossing the Border

Among the 32 study participants who answered the question on how they left China, 19 (59%) said they crossed the border to Thailand, 7 (22%) to Mongolia, 3 (9%) to Cambodia, and 3 (9%) to South Korea by ships or air. Among the seven study participants who were arrested on the way to South Korea, four were on route to Mongolia[39]. Based on the reports of my study participants, the route through Mongolia was the most dangerous while the sea route directly to South Korea was the safest. Sun-Hi said she had a miscarriage on the way to Mongolia:

> The smuggler brought eight of us to the border. It was one o'clock in the morning. There was a barbed-wire fence and after we crossed it, the smuggler told us to go straight north along the

[39] The other three did not mention the routes they took.

> North Star and we would run into Mongolian soldiers. The smugglers turned back, and we headed north in the dark with the aid of a compass which a man from Yanji brought. However, we found out in the morning that we had returned to the same place from where we had set out. There was no other way but to walk again and we did so all day. However, we realized we were in the same place in the evening as well. We spent three days wandering around and were separated into two groups, four people each. We did not bring enough food, so we were starved for three days. It was too cold, but we kept going through deep snow without eating. Suddenly, I felt something wrong and I found that I had a miscarriage.

It was not only her unborn child who died on the way. She continued her story:

> We thought we should carry something light to eat. So, we bought snacks, candies, and water before we crossed the border. There was a big snow storm just after we crossed the barbed-wire fence. Everyone was exhausted as we ran out of food and it was too cold. Because of this, there was a quarrel among us and we chose to split into two groups. We promised before we were separated that any group which found the Mongolian soldiers first would lead them to the other group. The two groups headed in the opposite direction. I heard after I arrived in Mongolia that after we were separated, two people in the other group said to the other two people that they were too exhausted to go forward. So, the two-people waited in a place for the other two people to come back with Mongolian soldiers. At last, when the other two people came back with Mongolian soldiers, they were found frozen to death, huddled together in the snow.

Sun-Hi said her friend had died as well and she herself was almost dead when she was eventually found by the Mongolian soldiers:

> My group also split because we could not agree what to do next. I and my friend went together. After I had a miscarriage, I kept walking even though I was crying all the time. That night, my friend said she could not walk any more. I could not leave her alone and so we lay down on the snow together. She slowly frozen to death, even though I tried to continuously massage and revive her body. After that, I cried and cried and fell asleep. When I woke up the next day I could not walk a single step. I fell asleep again and woke up at night. Then, I lost my senses and slept through another day. The following morning, I heard a dog barking. I yelled for help and a Mongolian soldier found me. I was rescued by the Mongolian soldiers, but they thought that I would die because my body was frozen. I was sent to a hospital and then transported to South Korea two weeks later. I had surgery for stomach cancer three months later and another surgery for foot chilblains two months later. I got my toes cut off because of the chilblains. I was t out of the hospital six months later.

Among the NKMCs who crossed the border between China and Mongolia, Soo-Jung also said two among the eight people who travelled together died on the journey. She said they wandered in the Mongolian desert for three days. Myung-Sook and Soon-Ja said they also wandered in the desert for two days but there were no fatalities. In contrast, Young-Sam, Su-Min, and Soo-Mi were lucky to be able to find a Mongolian patrol post within a few hours. As mentioned above, Soo-Ah, Mi-Kyung, and Sang-Hoon were arrested by Chinese border guards when they tried to cross the border between China and Mongolia. The surveillance at the border with Mongolia seemed to be stronger than that at the border with

Thailand, Vietnam, or Laos as there were no study participants, out of 22, who were arrested at the border with these three neighboring countries of China.

However, the routes through Thailand or Cambodia also appeared relatively dangerous. Seo-Hyun said five NKMCs died when their boat was capsized on the way to Thailand:

> When we (four female NKMCs, a male NKMC, and a smuggler) arrived in Zhengzhou[40] by train from Qingdao, there were fifteen NKMCs and three smugglers waiting for us. We traveled to Kunming[41] in four cabs for a day and a half. Then we transferred to a minibus and the smugglers who brought us to Kunming returned home. The other four smugglers rode on the mini-bus and we drove across a mountain range all night. Next, we arrived in a border area (she does not remember the name of the place) with Thailand[42]. We traveled in small dugout canoes for five hours. One canoe was hit by a rock and was broken. A smuggler and five NKMCs were drowned.

Regardless, the route through Thailand or Cambodia seemed safer than the route through Mongolia. Except in Seo-Hyun's case, no one died

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[40] Zhengzhou, a metropolis on the Yellow River, is the capital of Henan province.

[41] Kunming is the capital and transportation hub of Yunnan province.

[42] It is hard to understand Seo-Hyun's statement as she did not remember the name of the region. However, we can assume that she arrived in a region contiguous to the border of three nations: China, Myanmar, and Laos. To reach Thailand from this region of China, one should pass through Myanmar, Laos or both. Seo-Hyun seems to have passed this area through the Mekong River which flows between Myanmar and Laos.

on the way to Thailand or Cambodia.

Most NKMCs who used the routes to Thailand or Cambodia gathered in one place and met smugglers in groups. They traveled to Kunming by cabs, trains, or buses, and then climbed the mountainous border to arrive in Laos. They then headed for the Mekong River and crossed the river to enter Thailand. Min-Seo said:

> We (she and her friend) went to Changchun to meet a smuggler. He asked for 3.5 million Korean Won ($3,006) as a smuggling fee. We did not have money at that time, so we promised to pay the fee after we arrived in South Korea. After we signed the contract, we arrived at a house and found twelve NKMCs waiting for us. The smuggler said he waited for us because he wanted to start with at least fourteen NKMCs as it was effective in terms of cost. All of us plus two smugglers traveled to Shenyang by train and transferred to another train to Kunming for two days. Then we took a bus to the border area between China and Laos. Three smugglers who spoke Chinese and Lao greeted us there. The two smugglers who brought us there from Changchun left and we followed the three smugglers we met at the border. We trekked over a mountain for an hour and a half. Then, we met a Laotian soldier and one of the smugglers seemed to negotiate with the soldier about the amount of the bribe. Next, the smuggler asked us to give him $100 and an NKMC did. After we arrived in Laos we slept in a house and traveled for around four hours in a small truck to the Mekong River.

Only two of my study participants traveled by sea directly to

South Korea. Mi-Kyung and Jin-Ah sailed from Dandong[43], China and arrived in Incheon[44], South Korea directly. Mi-Kyung said:

> I met a Korean-Chinese smuggler in Shenyang. He attached my photo on the passport of a South Korean woman whose age was about the same as mine and gave it to me. He told me to remember the age and date of birth of the passport's owner. I boarded a ship with three NKMCs in the evening. I was scared to be caught on the ship and I pretended to be asleep. There was an announcement around 5 o'clock the next morning. I reported myself to a South Korean police officer that I was North Korean.

Jin-Ah said that her smuggler made a fake passport as well. She recounted:

> The smuggler told me to throw the fake passport into the sea after I got on a ship as it would not work in South Korea. He told me I could arrive in Incheon without the fake passport. After I got on the ship, a crew member did not check my passport but asked me to sign a document. When I did not know where to sign, he recognized me as North Korean. He told me not to worry and said I would be safe. I learned after I arrived in Incheon that there were nine North Koreans like me on board.

Neither of these study participants were arrested on the sea route to South Korea by Chinese officers, and both had fake South Korean

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[43] Dandong is a prefecture-level city in southeastern Liaoning province in China.

[44] Incheon, a South Korean city bordering the capital of Seoul, has long been a transportation hub.

passports, which may make going through Chinese immigration easier. They reported no risks of dying en route and it was a comfortable trip compared to other routes.

C. Traveling Through Transit Countries and Arriving in South Korea

All of the 19 NKMCs who arrived in Thailand were arrested by the Thai police. They were sent to jail and interrogated. After they paid a penalty[45] for illegally crossing the border, they were sent to a safe house operated by the South Korean Embassy. Usually, they stayed in the safe house for two to three months waiting for the opportunity to go to South Korea. In the meantime, they were probed by the South Korean government officers about how they crossed the border from North Korea to China and on into Thailand.

NKMCs who arrived in Cambodia were not arrested by the Cambodian police but were sent to the safe house of the South Korean Embassy there. They stayed in the safe house for around three months and then moved on to South Korea. They were investigated by South Korean government officers in Cambodia as well. NKMCs who arrived in

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[45] According to Thai law, the penalty is 20,000 Baht ($613) at most. Normally, North Koreans in my study paid between 2,000 to 6,000 Baht ($61~$184).

Mongolia were also sent to the safe house of the South Korean Embassy by the Mongolian authorities. The processes were all similar for Cambodia and Mongolia.

When NKMCs arrive in South Korea, they are sent to *hanawon* (the Settlement Support Center for North Korean Refugees), a refugee center under the Ministry of Unification. They receive education for social adjustment, emotional stability, career guidance and vocational training for three months. In addition, they go through the process of registering as a citizen of the Republic of Korea obtaining resident registration numbers and receiving resettlement aids. Many study participants said they wanted to do something for other North Koreans such as helping them to escape from China and to settle in South Korean. Many of them were happy to be settled in South Korea but reported difficulties in adjusting to a new environment.

7. 4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I focused on trafficked NKMCs' successful escapes from confinement, failed attempts to escape from victimization, and the reasons why some gave up trying to escape from their trafficked situation. I also explained how some NKMCs were arrested, deported, and

re-entered China. Finally, I described how NKMCs arrived in South Korea via the neighboring countries of China.

Among the NKMCs who had been victims of human trafficking, some escaped from the victimization and others gave up fleeing from it. In the process of escaping, some were caught by their victimizers, mainly husbands, sex business owners, and employers. After they were caught, they were beaten severely or were reported to the police and were deported back to North Korea. Consequently, many NKMCs were deterred from running away. Others did not dare to flee because they did not have money, could not speak Chinese well, feared being arrested, were not familiar with the place, or had their husbands' family members or neighbors watching them. They could not ask others for help because they had great fear of being deported back to North Korea and be harshly punished by the regime. Nonetheless, all of these study participants did eventually escape their trafficking situations, as all were interviewed after settling in South Korea.

NKMCs who were deported back to North Korea were put into prisons such as *kwanliso* (a political labor center) or others. Many of them suffered from mistreatment and sexual abuse. These NKMCs mentioned they did not have enough to eat and had to work hard in the various total institutions that detained them. Some participants reported that they saw

prisoners died in prison. Eight of 29 offered bribes to the officers to be released. After they were released, all of them chose to re-enter China because they could not live a normal life in North Korea post-incarceration as they were criticized and watched by their neighbors.

To arrive in South Korea, study participants crossed the border from China to Mongolia, or Cambodia, or Thailand. Some of them saw their friends, unborn children, or travel companions die of hunger, cold, or drowning. After they arrived in Mongolia, Cambodia, or Thailand, they received protection from South Korean diplomatic offices there and obtained support for resettlement in the Republic of Korea after arriving.

Through chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7, the movement of NKMCs from North Korea to China, their victimization in China, and the journey to South Korea were described. In the following chapter, I will further discuss the characteristics of traffickers, and the main factors my study identified that influence the degree of the victimization NKMCs experienced. I apply routine activity theory in my explanation of the victimization of NKMCs in China.

CHAPTER 8

EXPLAINING TRAFFICKING

In this chapter, I synthesize the findings from the previous chapters to further discuss factors that contribute to the victimization of NKMCs. To uncover the contributing factors, I examine characteristics of NKMCs, smugglers, and traffickers. As mentioned in Chapter 6, among my 58 study participants, there were 37 trafficking victims, including 34 victims of forced marriage (5 of which were attempted forced marriages), 10 sex trafficking victims, and 3 labor trafficking victims, with 10 study participants experienced more than one form of trafficking. Twenty-one study participants had not experienced any of the above three forms of victimization[46]. The differences between these two groups will be discussed in this chapter as well. Through these examinations, I will identify what appear to be key contributing factors in the trafficking of NKMCs.

In addition, I will revisit my examination of theories of migration/smuggling and human trafficking from Chapter 2, discussing

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[46] Even though they have not been subjected to the three forms of exploitation, they have not been free from other types of victimization such as rape, robbery, assault, and so on.

the suitability of these theories for explaining the exploitation of NKMCs. Finally, I will apply routine activity theory to assess its utility for understanding the trafficking of NKMCs.

8.1. Contributing Factors to the Victimization of NKMCs

One of the purposes of this study is to identify the factors contributing to the trafficking victimization of NKMCs. There may be numerable explanatory factors including victim characteristics, offender networks and motivation, and environmental factors such as communal, social, and national political-economic conditions. The characteristics will be discussed in the following section. The differences between victimized group and non-victimized group will be examined as well.

A. Characteristics of NKMCs, Smugglers, and Traffickers

1) NKMCs

The analysis of my study participants' experiences suggests the following factors, in addition to gender, contributed to their vulnerability

to trafficking: (1) their illegal status in China, (2) dire economic circumstance, (3) language barriers, (4) geographical unfamiliarity, and (5) fear of deportation. These five characteristics are not separated but interrelated with each other. For example, their illegal status was the primary cause for their fear of deportation. Dire economic circumstances, in both North Korea and subsequently in China, led to the willingness to risk migrating to China, where poverty was also perpetuated by NKMC's illegal status, language barriers, and fear of deportation.

These five factors made NKMCs, especially women, vulnerable to victimization. In other words, these factors made them attractive targets for motivated offenders. Assuming an offenders' perspective, there appears to have been little risk of being exposed and arrested by the police for the mistreatment of NKMCs. NKMCs who could not speak Chinese would not be able to report their victimizations to the police, even if they were willing to risk deportation to do so. In addition, NKMCs who were not familiar with their new environments found it risky to run away from their victimizers. Moreover, many NKMCs had no money, and thus could not move from one place to another as they could not pay for the transportation. Finally, approaching the police was extremely risky due to NKMC's legal status. The Chinese authorities could – and often did – simply arrest and deport them back to North Korea, or in several cases

turned them over to traffickers themselves.

The risks associated with deportation for NKMCs are quite distinct from deportation risks faced by those of other nationalities. When other illegal immigrants are deported back to their own countries, they lose no more than their money and time. NKMCs face imprisonment and might even lose their lives. Even if other illegal immigrants are punished by their government, the punishment is not as severe as that imposed by the North Korean regime. As a consequence, NKMCs' fear of deportation was very serious and acted as a critical factor for the vulnerability and ongoing victimization of NKMCs.

2) Smugglers and Traffickers

Through the accounts of NKMC's, I was able to gather information about what they knew of the individuals who smuggled or trafficked them into and within China. The nationalities and ethnicities of smugglers and traffickers appeared to be diverse. NKMC's reported that the smugglers they hired included North Korean, Korean Chinese, and Chinese individuals. Most of those who smuggled North Koreans from North Korea to China were reported to be North Koreans. According to study participants, many also were involved in cross-border illegal trade, and a few were active-duty or ex-soldiers. Only a small number of Korean

Chinese and Chinese individuals were involved in the smuggling of North Koreans into China. This is likely due to the North Korean regime's strict restrictions for foreign travelers entering North Korea. Alternatively, the smugglers who transported North Koreans from China to other foreign nations were all Korean Chinese or Chinese. The NKMCs in my study reported no North Koreans who acted as smugglers from China to other countries.

Traffickers were described by NKMCs as occupying a variety of roles, including as recruiters, safe house owners, border crossing transporters, in-land transporters, sellers, middlemen, and buyers. Recruiters were those who identified individuals who might be vulnerable to trafficking and encouraged them to migrate to China and/or go to specific places once in China. They were active in both North Korea and China. Recruiters in North Korea were North Koreans, and recruiters in China were North Koreans or Korean Chinese. It is likely that Chinese could not recruit NKMCs because of the language barrier. Some Korean Chinese or Chinese in China were reported to have kidnapped or confined NKMCs without the process of recruiting, with these events taking place in China rather than North Korea. Border crossing transporters were North Koreans, Korean Chinese, or Chinese. They brought NKMCs from the North Korean side to the Chinese side. They usually crossed the river

walking or running on frozen river at night. Most of them, according to the NKMCs I spoke with, did not have other jobs while some of them smuggled items between North Korea and China. So-called safe house owners in North Korea were North Koreans and safe house owners in China were described as both Korean Chinese and Chinese. They provided traffickers and NKMCs with shelter and food, but with knowledge of and/or participation in the trafficking. Some safe house owners in China also acted as sellers.

In-land transporters in North Korea were North Koreans and those in China were Korean Chinese or Chinese. According to study participants, their role was to bring NKMCs to other transporters, sellers, or buyers. Sellers were Korean Chinese or Chinese, and their activities took place exclusively in China. They invited potential buyers to the places where NKMCs were held to show them the NKMCs available. The process, as described by the NKMCs I spoke with, was the same as selling and buying items in the market. Buyers and sellers haggled over the price of NKMCs. Some sellers asked NKMCs whether they were willing to marry the buyers. If, in these cases, a NKMC refused to marry a buyer, the sale failed. However, study participants noted that when a NKMC refused to marry several times, the trafficker would begin to coerce her. If she continued to resist, her trafficker would threaten to report her to the police.

As indicated in Chapters 5 and 6, buyers were mostly bride seekers, and secondarily sex business operators. They were described as Korean Chinese or Chinese nationals.

One of the study participants, Young-Sam, said he had worked as a recruiter. His willingness to discuss these activities at length provided useful insights about the trafficking of NKMCs, offering evidence that corroborates the stories of trafficked study participants:

> I ran a business in North Korea. I had connections with high-ranking people in North Korea. I gave bribes and offered meals and drinks to them so that I could run my business freely under their protection. I brought timber from the mountains in North Hamgyong province and sold them in Musan City. However, I earned only a small amount of money, as I offered many bribes to high-ranking officials. So, I started to work with the Chinese. The Chinese wanted women. I used my connections with high-ranking people in North Korea at the time as well. I had around 10 men who were obedient to me absolutely. I ordered them to find women who wanted to go to China. They brought women whom they knew well to me. Some women were their relatives or siblings.

Young-Sam said that the help of high-ranking officers and border guards was critical for his success in the human trafficking business as a recruiter:

> I shared the money I earned with my men and with high-ranking people. High-ranking people protected my business. I could let

> women cross the border right under the noses of the border guards.

He said that younger women would be sold at a higher price than older women:

> The younger the women, the more expensive. From the age of 15, I sent them all. I transported 4 to 5 women at a time. I ran this business for three years and the business grew bigger and bigger. I trafficked up to 200 women in three years. In addition, I smuggled whatever the Chinese wanted to buy, such as medicinal herb, wild ginseng, and antiques.

Young-Sam characterized other traffickers in North Korea and China as follows:

> There have been many recruiters who recruited women in North Korea and sold them to China as I did. I had a connection to a seller in China. He was a Korean Chinese and he received women from me and sent them to other places. He had connection with buyers (for resale) in the remote areas. The buyers in the remote areas were North Korean women who were sold previously.

Explaining North Korean women's involvement in trafficking in China, he continued:

> Normally, when there was a request for a woman from a remote area, a seller would look for a woman and send the woman to that area. In the process, a seller might meet a female NKMC who was

> smart enough and willing to do business with him. Then, the seller lived with her for a while to establish an intimate relationship, having sex, and then he sent her to the remote area. The seller would share a small interest with her if a deal was made. This way, the seller could sell the other women for better prices than selling through a buyer.

He also speculated on why some female NKMCs would accept this type of arrangement:

> It's a win-win situation for both parties. North Korean women in China wanted to send money to their family members in North Korea. Traffickers near the border, like me, have connections with North Koreans in North Korea. Traffickers receive money from North Koreans in China and send the money through North Koreans who come and go between North Korea and China. North Korean women in China and the traffickers there needed each other to achieve their goals and that was why they cooperate.

As described in Chapter 2, Kim et al. (2009) denote four stages in the trafficking of NKMCs. These were "initial recruitment and border crossing", "intermediate traffickers", "final buyers and destinations", and "recycling of trafficking" (Kim et al., 2009: 162-166). Some of their findings were similar to this study while others were not. My analysis found that North Korean recruiters played an important role at the first stage, as Kim et al. (2009) also noted. They deceived victims through the use of false promises of finding jobs or helping victims to find relatives in China. However, unlike Kim et al.'s (2009) findings, I found no evidence

of Korean Chinese participating in the first stage of the trafficking process. In addition, Kim et al. (2009) made no mention of the safe houses described by my trafficked study participants.

In addition, Kim et al. (2009: 159) suggested that traffickers have evolved from "amateur-opportunistic individual offenders into a more professional-systematic organized crime network." However, I did not find sufficient evidence to propose the existence of a professional-systematic organized crime network. Traffickers seemed to have connections to each other but, based on study participants' accounts, there seemed to be no unified organization. North Korean recruiters had connections with Chinese traffickers, who received NKMCs and passed them to transporters, sellers, or buyers. Similar to Zhang and Chin's (2002) assessment of Chinese human smuggling, the traffickers of NKMCs appeared to have specialized roles and primarily dyadic connections with others who performed the next task in the chain of trafficking activities.

Defining such networks as organized crime would be an exaggeration. As Finckenauer (2005: 76-78) pointed out, it should be interpreted at most as "crime that is organized" rather than "organized crime." Several factors point to why the traffickers of NKMCs should not be consider members of criminal organizations. Trafficked study participants provided no evidence of well-structured hierarchies among

their traffickers. Instead, these networks were described as opportunistic with no identifiable boss or authority figures. Rather, their accounts suggested loosely connected sets of individuals who came together for specific tasks. While I cannot rule out that trafficked NKMCs were simply not exposed to the organizational workings of traffickers, their stories are consistent, and also in keeping with the account of Young-Sam, the one NKMC in my sample who had himself participated in the trafficking of North Koreans into China.

B. Key Contributing Factors to the Victimization of NKMCs

Identifying contributing factors to the victimization of NKMCs is very important for policy development. In Chapter 1, possible factors were discussed, including the demand for brides in China, the social and political environments in North Korea, and the lack of guardianship in China. Based on my analysis of study participants' accounts, these three factors did contribute to their victimization. Demand for brides in China created an opportunity for traffickers to provide marriageable female NKMCs, helping to explain why by far the most common form of trafficking was forced marriage and why so few male NKMCs experienced trafficking. As described in Chapter 4, the social and political environments in North Korea also acted as push factors for North Koreans

to leave, with women especially vulnerable to trafficking recruiters. On the other hand, lack of guardianship in China was found to be a very important factor in the contribution to the victimization of NKMCs.

What were the differences between NKMCs who did not experience any trafficking victimization and NKMCs who were victimized in one of the three forms of trafficking victimization documented in this study? As mentioned in Chapter 6, 21 of my study participants did not experience any trafficking victimization. This included 6 female NKMCs who had met relatives[47] in China, four who consented to be sold as brides, and two who were lucky to get help from strangers along with 9 of 11 men who did not report experiences with labor trafficking. First of all, men are at considerably lower risk. I found no cases of men who were victims of forced marriage or sex trafficking. As for labor exploitation, there were only two labor exploitation (18%) victims among male study participants.

In addition, most of the eleven women who met relatives in China were protected by their relatives or at least learned from their relatives the risk of being trafficked and how to avoid it; the exceptions were two who met distant relatives. Six were not victimized from any of the three types

[47] There were 11 female study participants who met relatives in China. Six were not victims of any of the three types of trafficking while three were subjected to attempted forced marriage, one to completed forced marriage, and one to completed sex trafficking.

of trafficking. As noted in Chapter 5, study participants who had relatives in China, such as Jung-Ah and Soo-Mi, managed to escape by telling traffickers that they had relatives in China and/or providing their relatives' telephone numbers[48]. As mentioned in Chapter 5, even though Soo-Ah's cousin used her to earn money[49], she was not trafficked at least. And though Mi-Kyung was introduced to a karaoke club owner by an acquaintance of her cousin, her cousin was said to be not aware of the acquaintance's intentions. On the whole, except the two cases of distant relatives and Mi-Kyung's case, the remaining eight female NKMCs appeared to be protected from trafficking by their relatives in China. In other words, female NKMCs who had no relatives in China were more likely to be victimized than those who did. In addition, guardianship refers not only to individual-level guardianship but also to communal, regional, and national level guardianships. In this respect, the roles of various levels of Chinese government should not be underestimated. The roles of the Chinese government will be discussed in the next chapter.

Other possible factors which were discussed in Chapter 1 were

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[48] Even though Jung-Ah and Soo-Mi did escape from the traffickers, their cases were categorized as attempted forced marriage. In other words, even though their cases were categorized as trafficking cases, it is true that they were protected from further victimization because of their relatives in China.

[49] Her cousin brought his friends over every day and coerced her to drink and go to karaoke with them.

lack of awareness of the situation in China and fear of deportation. Lack of awareness also appears to be one of the factors contributed to the victimization of NKMCs, especially women. Because of their lack of knowledge about China, NKMCs were easily deceived. As mentioned in Chapter 2, several reports suggested that NKMCs' fear of deportation is an important explanatory factor in NKMC's victimization. Charny (2005) explained that the lives of NKMCs are ones of constant fear of arrest and deportation. Chang et al. (2009) and Hawk (2003) also proposed that NKMCs' acute fear of arrest and deportation was important contributing factor to the victimization of NKMCs (Chang et al., 2009; Hawk, 2003). Moreover, the majority of Chang et al.'s (2009) respondents showed significant psychological distress due to their fear of being arrested and deported. Similar to the findings of Wookhwa Hong (2003), my study participants also said that because of their fear of arrest and deportation, they did not report their victimization. In sum, my study identified several pivotal factors in the victimization of NKMCs, mostly in keeping with the few previous investigations of the issue. Most notably, the demand for brides, coupled with NKMCs desires and desperation to leave North Korea, created the primary conditions conducive for trafficking. NKMC's legitimate fears of arrest and deportation sustained the circumstances of their victimization.

On the other hand, there are three important factors that contributed to the non-trafficking victimization of some study participants. First of all, male NKMCs were considerably less likely to become victims of trafficking. Men have very little risk of being victimized for forced marriage or sex trafficking, and there were no cases in my sample. As for labor exploitation, there were two male (18%) cases. The proportion of men's trafficking victimization in this study (18%) was considerably the proportion of women's (74%) victimization. Second, based on the findings of this study, NKMCs who had relatives in China faced lower risks of being victimized than those who did not. Among 11 female NKMCs who met relatives in China, 6 (55%) did not experience trafficking victimization. In addition, two female NKMCs (18%) were able to escape from forced marriage attempts because of their relatives. Among 36 female NKMCs who did not have relatives in China, 30 (83%) were victimized while only 5 out of 11 (45%) who had relatives in China were victimized, with only 3 female NKMCs (15%) who were unable to receive protection from their relatives. Third, among 29 NKMCs who had been deported back to North Korea, 10 NKMCs (34%) had been deceived by traffickers during their first crossing. However, only one of 29 (3%) was deceived by traffickers on their second crossing. And, among these 10 NKMCs who crossed the border with traffickers at their first crossings, no

one was accompanied by traffickers at the second crossing. In sum, being male, having relatives in China, and having prior experience can be said to be important contributing factors to non-trafficking victimization of NKMCs.

8.2 Application of Existing Theories

In this section, I will examine existing theories that explain transnational migration, including smuggling and trafficking. As mentioned in Chapter 2, several theories of international migration have been developed. Some focus on individual decision-making while others focus on structural causes of migration triggered by modern industrial economics or economic globalization (Massey, Arango, Hugo, Kouaouci, Pellegrino, and Taylor, 1993). Likewise, theories of human trafficking include those that are victim-centered, offender-centered, and macro-politico-economic-centered. These theories will be examined in relation to their fit for understanding the victimization of NKMCs. Finally, I will evaluate routine activity theory to see how suitable it fits in the explanation of NKMCs' exploitation.

A. Theories of Migration and Human Trafficking

1) Theories of International Migration

As mentioned in Chapter 2, neoclassical macro-economic theory, neoclassical micro-economic theory, and new economics of migration theory have been developed to explain international migration. Neo classical macro-economic theory focuses on differential wages and employment conditions, which cause workers from low-wage countries to migrate to high-wage countries (Harris and Todaro, 1970; Lewis, 1954; Ranis and Fei, 1961; Todaro, 1980). For NKMCs, differential wages acted as a push factor. Many study participants described economic concerns as their primary reason for entering China. However, it was more than simply wages that factored into NKMCs' decide to go to China; it was also a matter of survival. Thus, a comparison of wages between these two countries is not sufficient.

Neoclassical micro-economic theory focuses on individual decisions made by actors who calculate the costs and benefits of international migration (Sjaastad, 1970; Todaro, 1969, 1980, 1989; Todaro and Maruszko, 1987). According to this theory, immigrants consider the most productive place to move, the costs of traveling, the effort of learning a new language and culture, the difficulties in adapting to a new labor market, and the psychological costs of cutting old ties (Massey et al., 1993). As for NKMCs, they did not have sufficient information to know

how good or bad life was in China, how hard it would be for them to adjust to a new environment, and so on. In short, NKMCs were living in a country where ideas and information were tightly controlled by the North Korean regime, limiting the information from which they could calculate costs and benefits (Byman and Lind, 2010).

The new economics of migration theory emphasizes the importance of family or household decision-making processes in transnational migration (Harbison, 1984; Katz and Stark, 1986; Lauby and Stark, 1988; Stark, 1991; Stark and Levhari, 1982; Taylor, 1984). However, for NKMCs, discussing border crossings with their families or households was not common. In all, 65% of my study participants said they did not tell family members about their plan to go to China. This outnumbers the result of the survey conducted by the Database Center for North Korean Human Rights (2013), which found that 43% of their NKMC respondents did not inform their family members about crossing the border. The majority of the participants in the current study did not tell their families because border crossing was supposed to be a secret. Either they did not trust even their family members, they did not want them to be punished for not stopping their illegal border crossing, or they feared that, if revealed, their family members would not let them go. No study participant reported that family members first recommended leaving for

China to them. And while family considerations played some role – either to assist family members remaining in North Korea or depending on relatives already in China, the new economics of migration theory would need modification to explain the unique features of NKMCs' migration. In sum, differential wages and employment conditions, individual decisions involving cost/benefit analyses, and the role of family migration decisions are not enough to account for the migration of NKMCs.

2) Theories of Human Trafficking

As discussed in Chapter 2, theories of human trafficking can be roughly categorized into victim-centered, offender-centered, and macro-level explanations. Victim-centered theories attempt to elucidate the causes of human trafficking by focusing on victim characteristics, including whether they have a close relationship with their traffickers, whether they are repeatedly victimized, and their lifestyles (Van den Hoven and Maree, 2005). According to Van den Hoven and Maree (2005), three types of victims – innocent, precipitating, and provocative – are more likely to be victimized than others. In addition, these authors suggested that other factors such as the personality and the daily routines of potential victims, the absence of capable guardians, and the environment are each important.

Most participants in this study had met their traffickers for the first time either shortly before or after crossing the border. As a result, they did not have any close relationship with their traffickers. So, NKMCs' vulnerability to trafficking cannot be said to come from the intimate relationship with offenders. In addition, few of the NKMCs in my study reported repeat victimizations. Moreover, the relationship between NKMCs' lifestyles and their victimization seemed to be weak. As for the situation in North Korea, it is more reasonable to say that NKMCs' insufficient knowledge about China made them easy targets for deception than to say that their daily routines contributed to it. As for their victimization in China, it is reasonable to say that it was not their personalities or their daily routines but their fear of deportation which caused their victimization. As for the absence of a capable guardian, it is true that it contributed to their victimization. However, the absence of a capable guardian was due not to NKMCs' lifestyles but the result of the Chinese government's policy. This issue will be discussed in detail in the next section.

One offender-based theory of human trafficking is demand theory. It suggests that human trafficking exists because there are purchasers of sex and profiteers of prostitution (Hughes, 2004; Lutya and Lanier, 2012). It emphasizes the demand for commercial sex or cheap labor. Demand

theory can partially explain the forced marriage and sex trafficking of NKMCs. It is true that there has been a strong demand for marriageable women as well as foreign sex workers in China, particularly in the areas bordering North Korea. However, demand alone is not enough to explain the labor exploitation of NKMCs, as there are other important contributing factors.

Macro-level theories of trafficking include economic theory (Eagle and Betters, 1998; Lutya and Lanier, 2012; Persson and Siven, 2007; Van Liemt, 2004; Witte and Witt, 2002), socio-economic theory (Barner, Okech, and Camp, 2014; Danailova-Trainor and Belser, 2006; Laczko and Gramegna, 2003; Salt, 2000; Warria, Nel, and Triegaardt, 2015), and politico-institutional theory (Lasa, 2013; Sawadogo, 2012; Warria et al., 2015), each reviewed in detail in Chapter 2. These theories seek to identify the causes of human trafficking in economic, socio-economic, political, and institutional differences between countries. There are notable economic, social, and political differences between China and North Korea. However, it is not clear whether the differences between the two countries did contribute to the trafficking of NKMCs. Instead, China appeared to be the destination country for North Korean migrants and trafficking victims because of its geographic proximity and topographical features such as a crossable river. These macro-level factors alone are thus

not sufficient to explain the trafficking of NKMCs.

In this respect, I propose the development of a model that can integrate all the contributing factors that are related to the victimization of NKMCs. Overall, there are victim-related factors, offender-related factors, and socio-political factors. Victim-related factors include North Korean's economic difficulties, victims' unawareness of the situation in China, language barriers, geographic unfamiliarity, and fear of deportation. Offender-related factors include quick and easy money, the ease in exploiting especially female NKMCs, and the high demand for marriageable women in China. High demand for marriageable women is a socio-political factor as well. Socio-political factors include weak border control, corruption among some border guards, the Chinese government's policies related to the deportation of NKMCs, the harsh punishment imposed by the North Korean regime for migration, and NKMC victims' lack of guardianship in China. These factors are not separated but inter-related. Therefore, all the factors should be considered and explained simultaneously in a model.

B. Application of Routine Activity Theory

In an attempt to explain the occurrence of crime in everyday life,

Cohen and Felson (1979: 589) stated that:

> Structural changes in routine activity patterns can influence crime rates by affecting the convergence in space and time of the three minimal elements of direct-contact predatory violations: (1) motivated offenders, (2) suitable targets, and (3) the absence of capable guardians against a violation.

Cohen and Felson (1979) argued that criminal activities take place when there is a convergence in space and time of these three elements. NKMCs' trafficking victimization can be explained with routine activity theory relatively well because there have been motivated traffickers in both North Korea and China, suitable and vulnerable NKMCs, and the absence of guardianship in China. In this section, these three elements will be discussed in detail.

1) Motivated Offenders

Crimes cannot occur without the presence of a motivated offender and of course, there have been motivated offenders in the trafficking of NKMCs. Cornish and Clarke (2003: 71) explained that "a previously unmotivated offender becomes ready to commit an offense as a result of exposure to situational precipitators." For the recruiting stage in North Korea, when offenders were "exposed to the situational precipitators",

money in this case, they "became ready to commit" trafficking (Cornish and Clarke, 2003: 71). This money was given to them by traffickers in China, who in turn were paid by buyers in China. From the offenders' perspective, it would appear that in North Korea, potential NKMCs were easy prey because they were desperate for work and money due to severe poverty. They were also vulnerable because they did not have sufficient knowledge of the world outside of the country.

Recruiting NKMCs into trafficking situations in China occurred somewhat differently than in North Korea. NKMCs once settled in China were not as easy to deceive because they had gained some knowledge regarding the risk of being trafficked. As a result, offenders in China were reported to have used more aggressive methods, including coercion, force, threat, or abduction. The reason was that NKMCs in China were more vulnerable than prior to leaving North Korea. Moreover, they were easier to control in China than in North Korea because of the fear of deportation, unfamiliarity with the new surroundings, language barriers, and so on. These factors also allowed traffickers and buyers in China to transport, sell, and exploit NKMCs with ease. Because of the dramatic change in the level of vulnerability of NKMCs on arrival, traffickers were described as being quick to change their attitudes toward NKMCs right after crossing the border to China. These situational precipitators for motivated offenders

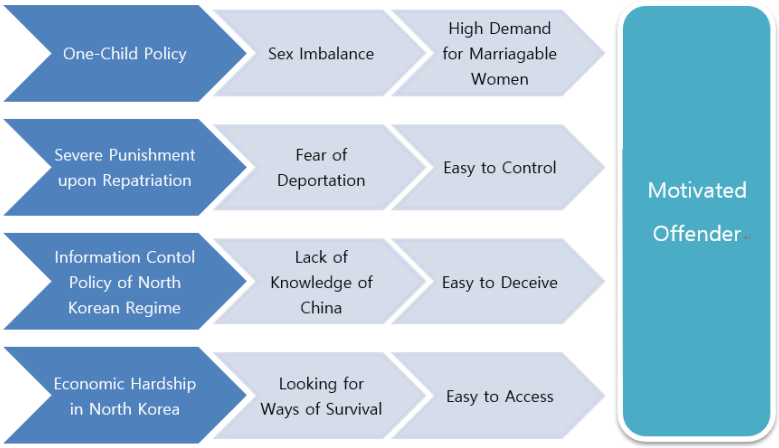
are summarized in Figure 8-1.

2) Vulnerable Victims

According to Cohen and Felson (1979: 591):

> Target suitability is likely to reflect such things as value (i.e., the material or symbolic desirability of a personal or property target for offenders), physical visibility, access, and the inertia of a target against illegal treatment by offenders (including…the physical capacity of personal victims to resist attackers with or without weapons).

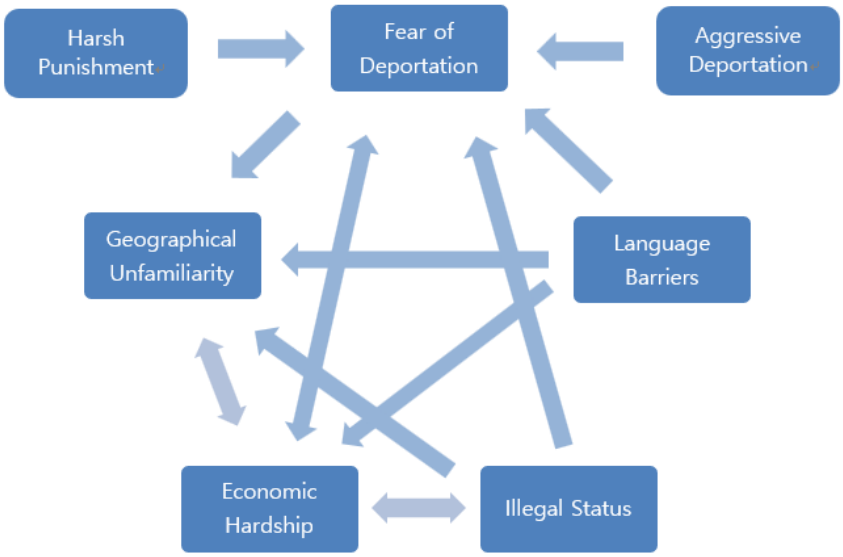
Figure 8-1: Situational Precipitators for Motivated Offenders



North Koreans who migrated to China were handicapped by their dire economic conditions and lack of knowledge of the outside world when they were still in North Korea. After they crossed the border, they

were undermined by geographical unfamiliarity, language barriers, fear of deportation, and economic difficulty. These factors made trafficked NKMCs susceptible to exploitation by their victimizers. Insufficient knowledge about the world outside was caused by Pyongyang's tight control of the flow of information and fear of deportation was the result of NKMCs' illegal status in China, along with China's deportation policies toward North Koreans and the severe punishment faced upon repatriation.

Figure 8-2: Risk Factors Associated with Vulnerable Victims



These risk factors influenced each other, as shown in Figure 8-2. For instance, fear of deportation was strengthened by the aggressive

deportation of NKMCs by the Chinese authorities and the harsh punishment meted out by the North upon their return.

Of course, it was triggered by the illegal status of NKMCs in China. On the other hand, fear of deportation might generate geographical unfamiliarity and economic hardship. Because of the fear of deportation, NKMCs could not move around freely, which hindered their ability to become familiar with their environment, and the fear of deportation might make it hard for NKMCs to enter the job market and earn money. In addition, language barriers and economic hardship may contribute to fear of deportation because NKMCs who cannot speak Chinese would be at a disadvantage in trying to 'pass' as Chinese or negotiate with the police, and economic success might provide the resources necessary to bribe Chinese authorities.

Geographical unfamiliarity was influenced by fear of deportation, language barriers, illegal status, and the lack of money. Because of language barrier, those NKMCs who could not speak or read Chinese could not go far as they could not understand signs or communicate in Chinese. Because of their illegal status, they tended to avoid public places and because they did not have money, they could not afford to take a bus or taxi. Husbands or owners of trafficked NKMCs did not give them any money to prevent them from fleeing. On the other hand, geographical

unfamiliarity also contributed to NKMCs lack of money, as it made it difficult to find employment. As for the language barrier, it also contributed geographical unfamiliarity and the lack of money. NKMCs found it difficult to find employment unless they learned Chinese. Of course, some could work in Korean restaurants or places where Chinese was not necessary. However, those job opportunities were very rare. Illegal status had an impact on all the risk factors mentioned above.

In sum, Cohen and Felson's (1979) concept of target suitability is especially fruitful in understanding NKMCs' victimization. Female NKMCs were desirable targets because they could be sold at high prices and were easy to gain access to because of their dire economic conditions. Moreover, trafficked NKMCs had limited capacity to resist their victimizers because of the fear of deportation, language barriers, geographical unfamiliarity, being without money, and their illegal status.

3) Absence of Capable Guardians

According to Cohen and Felson (1979: 593), "routine activities may occur (1) at home, (2) in jobs away from home, and (3) in other activities away from home." Most trafficked NKMCs were recruited in places away from home, such as North Korea's black market. And, no matter where the recruitment happened, because most victims did not tell

their household members about crossing the border, this resulted in the loss of an opportunity for household members to prevent the incident from occurring. This can be viewed as the "absence of capable guardians."

In addition, another important point is there appeared to be no effective "handlers" who, as Clarke and Eck (2005) suggested, controlled offenders' behavior in the exploitation processes of trafficked NKMCs. As Felson (1995) proposed, family, friends, or owners can discourage crimes by monitoring likely offenders. In the forced marriages of female NKMC, for example, study participants noted that family members of the bride-seeker/husband did not intervene to stop the crime. Instead, they helped the bride-seeker to find, and even pay for, the bride. Moreover, they kept a watchful eye on the NKMC brides after the marriage. None of my study participants reported any evidence of traffickers, in any stages from recruiting to purchasing, being discouraged by others. According to Felson and Clarke (1998: 4):

> The guardian was not usually a police officer or security guard but rather anybody whose presence or proximity would discourage a crime from happening. Thus, a housewife or doorman, a neighbour or co-worker would tend, simply by being present, to serve as guardian. Guardianship is often inadvertent, yet still has a powerful impact against crime. Most important, when guardians are absent, a target is especially subject to the risk of criminal attack.

For trafficked NKMCs in this study, it was extremely rare for strangers or citizens to question their mistreatment. Moreover, there were no Chinese authorities or any other formal organizations that addressed the prevention of or intervention on NKMCs' trafficking victimization. It may be that many people in the areas of China where NKMC resided do not consider the buying and selling of NKMCs as a crime. As Jiang, Zhang, and Sanchez-Barricarte (2015: 214) pointed out:

> Bride-price is an essential part of the marriage rituals in rural China. Chinese cultural traditions still require a bride-price to make a marriage official. Most rural residents recognize the bride-price as a norm and internalize it in their own cultural values.

Thus, it may be that some people, especially in rural parts of China, may consider the buying of brides as the equivalent of a bride-price. In this context, they may simply help one another to find a wife and to watch NKMCs after the marriage. As a result, study participants reported that very few Chinese individuals attempted to dissuade likely offenders. Through this study, the absence of guardianship has been found to be a salient contributing factor in the trafficking of NKMCs. First, I found little effective guardianship except among those NKMCs with relatives in China, who most often protected their NKMC relatives. In a few cases, other North Korean acquaintances or friends also provided

support in ways that could be viewed as offering guardianship. Most importantly, the most powerful guardianship in China might be the Chinese government, including the police. However, study participants noted that they did not pay much attention to the mistreatment of NKMCs. Rather, they readily deported them, which significantly facilitated the exploitation of NKMCs.

8.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, I examined and synthesized the factors that contributed to trafficking victimization among the NKMCs in my study. All the factors were interrelated, and included fear of deportation, illegal status, language barriers, being without money, and geographical unfamiliarity. The high demand for marriageable women was the most important factor in the development of a network of motivated offenders on both sides of the border. Harsh punishment by Pyongyang upon repatriation and sustained deportation by Beijing strengthened NKMCs' fear of deportation. NKMCs' lack of knowledge of the outside world and dire economic conditions exposed them to the offenders. Fear of deportation also enabled offenders to tightly control trafficked NKMCs, though eventually all of my trafficked study participants escaped.

Therefore, my study suggests that factors associated with victims, offenders, and social and political-economic inequalities should be considered simultaneously to elucidate critical factors that contribute to the trafficking of NKMCs and consequently, to develop an appropriate policy for supporting NKMCs, to prevent and intervene upon trafficking. In this respect, routine activity theory offers a good theoretical framework to understand the trafficking victimization of NKMCs. In the concluding chapter, I will discuss how best to define and understand NKMCs. This will follow by an examination of possible policy implications emerging from this research for different stakeholders, including the Chinese government, the North Korean regime, the United Nations, the South Korean government, and NGOs.

CHAPTER 9
CONCLUSION

This study aimed to explore the smuggling and trafficking of North Korean migrants in China (NKMCs). I identified the processes of migration, smuggling and trafficking of NKMCs from North Korea to China and from China to other countries in Southeast Asia or Mongolia and South Korea. Moreover, this study shed light on the many patterns of exploitation targeted at NKMCs, as well as some of the salient factors that contributed to their victimization, especially trafficking. Finally, I examined the applicability of routine activity theory to the understanding of NKMCs' trafficking.

In this concluding chapter, I will re-examine the research questions guiding this study and summarize my findings. I will also discuss the controversial issues surrounding how best to define NKMC, the possible policy implications emerging from this investigation, and my suggestions for future research.

9.1. Research Questions and Answers

A. Illegal Migrants, Refugees, or Trafficking Victims?

Six research questions were posed in this study. First: “How should we define NKMCs? Are they illegal economic migrants, refugees, or trafficking victims?” To answer this question, I examined the criteria for economic migrants, refugees, and trafficking victims to provide a nuanced understanding of this controversial issue. As mentioned in chapter 1, the Chinese government regards NKMCs as illegal economic migrants and repatriates them promptly because not only NKMCs cross the border illegally, but they come mainly to work and earn money. Human rights advocates have asserted that NKMCs are refugees because they are outside of their country and unable or unwilling to return to it owing to well-founded fears of persecution. Findings from this study show that some NKMCs might be considered as illegal economic migrants. NKMCs who did not experience any types of trafficking might be classified as economic migrants. However, if a NKMC is afraid of persecution because he/she is unable or unwilling to return to North Korea, there remains the possibility of being identified as a refugee.

One of the important criteria used to determine refugee status is whether the persecution is based on race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or holding certain political views. As such, in most cases, because the persecution of NKMCs is because of their illegal border crossing, defining NKMCs as refugee might not be appropriate. In

this respect, the conditions of persecution must be scrutinized. As mentioned in Chapter 1, the North Korean regime regards any illegal border crossing as a betrayal of one's motherland. On the other hand, NKMCs who contacted Christian NGOs or groups, or any South Koreans, can be executed (Charny, 2005). Almost all participants in this study also confirmed that they had fears of being executed. For those who are persecuted for contacting Christian groups, the cause of persecution can be deemed religious. Conversely, if they are persecuted for approaching South Koreans, the cause of persecution can be identified as membership of a particular social group or political opinion (Cho, 2008, 2010).

In this respect, some NKMCs who are afraid of deportation might be classified as refugees. On the other hand, NKMCs who are afraid of being repatriated merely for the reason of illegal crossing might not be classified as refugees. It is not easy to discern where the fear comes from. Findings from this study show that NKMCs who did not contact South Koreans or Christian groups were released after some amount of time in prison. However, most NKMCs were not aware of this fact and were convinced that there would be harsh punishment to all illegal border crossers. Thus, classifying all NKMCs as refugees is not appropriate. However, it is clear that NKMCs who are afraid of deportation due to their contacts with South Koreans or Christian groups should be recognized as

refugees.

This study also finds that some NKMCs should be classified as trafficking victims. They were trafficked for forced marriage, commercial sex, or labor exploitation. In sum, some NKMCs are illegal economic migrants, some are refugees, and some are trafficking victims. Some of the trafficking victims might be also classified as refugees because they were not only victimized but also was afraid of persecution as they had contacted South Koreans or Christian groups in China.

B. Human Smuggling

The second research question was: "What are the methods by which some NKMCs are smuggled from North Korea to China?" NKMCs were smuggled from North Korea to China by (1) traffickers (when they mistook traffickers as smugglers), (2) smugglers, (3) altruistic helpers, and (4) themselves. Many of them bribed border guards in North Korea to cross the border safely. Most of them walked or ran on the frozen river at night. There were no study participants who crossed the mountainous border. The border is not heavily patrolled on the Chinese side and no study participants mentioned any encounters with Chinese border guards after they crossed into China.

C. Human Trafficking

The third research question was: "Are NKMCs actually trafficked? If so, how are they victimized?" Some NKMCs (36%, 21 out of 58) were not trafficked in any forms throughout their movement from North Korea to China and then South Korea. They were nine males who experienced no trafficking; in addition, there were six females who crossed the border not aided by traffickers and had relatives in China[50], four females who had consented to be sold as brides, and two females who were lucky to get help from strangers in China. Non-trafficked NKMCs aside, I uncovered 34 forced marriage cases, 10 sex trafficking cases involving exploitation in karaoke clubs or video chatting rooms, and 3 labor exploitation cases. One case included both labor exploitation and forced marriage. One case was only sex trafficking. Moreover, some female NKMCs experienced more than one type of exploitation, accounting for more than one fifth (21%, or 10 of 47) of the women in my sample.

I uncovered sufficient evidence to suggest that the trafficking of

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[50] Among the 11 male NKMCs, there were three males who had relatives in China. One of these was subjected to labor exploitation by his distant relative. The other two did not meet their relatives.

female NKMCs was widespread. The most frequent pathway to victimization found in this study was women crossing the border with traffickers who posed as smugglers or good Samaritans and being sold as brides. In North Korea, most of these women were deceived by the prospects of landing a good job in China and believed they were being recruited for that purpose. Another common route to trafficking for women was crossing the border without the assistance of traffickers but being deceived, coerced, or kidnapped by traffickers they encountered in China and ending up in forced marriages and/or the sex industry.

NKMCs who were trafficked in the forms of forced marriage, forced prostitution, or labor exploitation also reported being subjected to coercion, threat, confinement, assault, and rape before or after the trafficking took place[51]. In addition, as described in Chapter 6, some women NKMCs who were not victims of trafficking also experienced confinement, assault, and/or rape.

D. Smugglers, Traffickers, and Victims

The fourth research question was a set of interrelated questions about the characteristics of the three groups of participants: "What are the

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[51] There was no coercion, threat, confinement, assault, or rape for the two male trafficking victims.

individual and group characteristics of the smugglers and/or traffickers and their accomplices? What is the relationship, if any, between smuggling, trafficking and organized crime? What are the characteristics of the victims of trafficking?"

There were 8 smugglers mentioned by my study participants. Half were acquaintances and half strangers. Seven were North Koreans and one was Korean Chinese. Most smugglers were involved in illegal cross border trades and they smuggled people when they had the opportunities to do so. As cross border traders, they were familiar with the routes and knew well how to cross the border. They also had good connections with border guards and had knowledge of how and how much to bribe. Smugglers who helped NKMCs travel onwards to other countries, such as Mongolia, Vietnam, Thailand and Laos, were Korean Chinese or Chinese. Study participants could not say whether they were full-time professional smugglers. Most smugglers who assisted my study participants to move from China to another country were not members of NGOs, Christian groups, or South Korea-based organizations.

In all, study participants provided me with descriptions of 22 traffickers in the recruiting stage in North Korea. Thirteen of them were strangers to the NKMCs before the encounters and nine were people they knew, including relatives, friends, and neighbors. Fourteen traffickers

approached study participants first to allure them to cross the border. In the other eight cases, study participants initiated the contact with traffickers for assistance, not knowing that they were traffickers. All of the traffickers who recruited study participants in North Korea were North Koreans.

Smugglers in China were not linked to smugglers in North Korea because the two groups were involved in unrelated activities. However, study participants' accounts indicate that traffickers in China were connected to traffickers in North Korea because they coordinated their activities in the recruiting, transporting, confining, and selling of NKMCs. Both smugglers and traffickers had some connections with North Korean border guards. Both offered bribes to border guards and some active-duty or ex-border guards were described as being involved in the smuggling and trafficking of NKMCs. Based on my study participants' stories, it appears that people involved in trafficking can be categorized as recruiters, cross border transporters, inland transporters, safe house owners, sellers, and buyers. They were connected to each other, but there is no evidence to suggest that they belonged to a criminal organization. In other words, the connections they had appeared only to be in separated joints and my study participants encountered no evidence of any boss or organization commanding the entire trafficking operation. The trafficking of NKMCs

appeared similar to a product supply system. Recruiters in North Korea deceived female North Koreans to cross the border and cross border transporters help the women to enter China. Inland transporters in China brought the victims to safe house owners and sellers put the women up for sale to bride-seekers or sex establishment owners.

Because of the tight control of the flow of information in North Korea, many North Koreans were unaware of the circumstances outside of their country and thus they were easily duped by traffickers when the two parties met for the first time. Many of them were told they would be introduced to work in restaurants or taken to their relatives in China. After they crossed the border with the traffickers, they came under the control of the traffickers as most of them were weakened by their illegal status, fear of arrest and deportation, language barrier, geographical unfamiliarity, and so on.

Among the 58 study participants, 21 (36%) were not victims of human trafficking. Among them, there were 12 females and 9 males. Male NKMCs were less likely to be victimized than female NKMCs because they were highly unlikely to be subjected to forced marriage and sex trafficking in China. Among the 12 females, 8 females received help from relatives in China. Four females already knew what would happen to them in China and consented to being sold as brides. In other words, they used

traffickers to help them to cross the border and used marriage to obtain security in China. Among them, one was not sold as bride as she ran away before being sold. These 12 females' experiences in China showed that some NKMCs knew how to protect themselves either by way of utilizing their human capital in China or making a rational, albeit bounded, decision.

Likewise, there was also evidence of NKMCs who became traffickers after being trafficked to China. As mentioned in Chapter 8, a trafficker I interviewed indicated that there were some well-established NKMCs who engaged in the buying and selling of the newly-arrived NKMCs after establishing intimate relationships with male traffickers. In this mutually beneficial arrangement, male traffickers would not have to outsource their "service" to other traffickers (thus making their operations more profitable) and female NKMCs could make some money, and more importantly, to take advantage of the male traffickers' connections to send money to North Korea.

There were also 29 study participants who re-entered China after being deported back to North Korea. Before their return to China, some of them were determined to marry a Chinese national or enter the sex industry as a survival tactic after learning what their circumstances were like in China after their first try. These NKMCs were fully aware of their

vulnerabilities in China, yet they decided to go back because they knew what to do to survive there.

There were also NKMCs who were involved in the so-called "jumping" practice – marrying a Chinese national and then escaping immediately. Their reputation for "jumping" could also be a factor for their being closely watched by their "husbands" and the neighbors. These incidences also support the notion that many NKMCs are capable of exercising their agency under the worst of circumstances.

Several NKMCs I interviewed also mentioned that other NKMCs (including those who were initially engaged in the trafficking of the study participants) helped them to escape from trafficking victimization. In these stories, we can also glimpse an aspect of human agency.

In sum, based on the above discussions, we cannot say that all NKMCs were completely passive victims without any human agency. Even though they were vulnerable, they also possess the ability to protect themselves and the ability to decide what to do to shape their experiences and life courses.

E. Contributing Factors

The fifth research question was: "What are the factors that contribute to the trafficking victimization of NKMCs?" Gender is the most

important factor in the human trafficking victimization of NKMCs: 74% of female NKMCs were victimized while 18% of male NKMCs were victimized by human trafficking. Dire economic conditions in North Korea acted as a push factor and the demand for marriageable women in China acted as a pull factor for the transnational movement of NKMCs, with the latter contributing specifically to the trafficking of women. NKMCs' lack of knowledge of the outside world also acted as a factor contributing to their vulnerability to deception. After they entered China, as mentioned above, fear of deportation and lack of guardianship acted as key contributing factors in the trafficking of NKMCs.

9.2 Policy Implications

The last research question of this study was: "What are the possible policy implications for the prevention of the trafficking of NKMCs?" As mentioned in Chapter 2, human rights advocates suggested that the Chinese government should offer NKMCs amnesty (Chan and Schloenhardt, 2007; Smith, 2005), temporary asylum or humanitarian status (Chan and Schloenhardt, 2007; Cohen, 2012; Gahng, 2009; Kim, 2010; Smith, 2005), prima facie refugee status (Kim, 2010; Smith, 2005), and free and unhindered access to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (Chan and Schloenhardt, 2007). Advocates also

have urged the international community to pressure China into accepting the recommendations of the UNHCR (Chan and Schloenhardt, 2007; Smith, 2005). The UNHCR has criticized the Chinese government for violating the principle of non-refoulement and has recommended that Beijing should follow the principle of international law, which prohibits the rendering of a true victim of persecution from his or her persecutor.

However, the Chinese government has insisted that the NKMC issue is an internal matter and has argued that NKMCs are illegal economic migrants (Gahng, 2009). Efforts by the UN and other international organizations to change the Chinese government's position have not succeeded. The recommendations of the UNHCR has no obligatory power and practically, there has been no way to compel the Chinese government to follow their recommendations. Defining NKMCs as trafficking victims instead of refugees might offer an alternative solution. From the position of the Chinese government, recognizing NKMCs as trafficking victims may be somewhat easier than treating them as refugees. In other words, for Beijing, arresting traffickers and protecting victims has less political liability than accepting NKMCs as refugees. In this context, this study suggests a criminal justice approach to the issue of the trafficking of NKMCs. Moreover, based on routine activity theory, this study suggests strengthening the guardianship of NKMCs. Among the

numerous contributing factors to the trafficking of NKMCs, few can be removed or weakened easily. Economic hardship in North Korea or in China for NKMCs and the demand for marriageable brides are some of the factors that are not easily eliminated. Pyongyang will not change its policy of controlling the flow of information or inflicting harsh punishment on illegal border crossers. Strengthening border control and preventing border crossings from North Korea to China is not sufficient because that does not help NKMCs who have already crossed the border and may already be subjected to trafficking, and it does not attend to the root causes of migrants' desires to leave North Korea.

From the perspective of routine activity theory, handlers and other guardians can hinder crime. Based on the accounts of my study participants, parents, family members, relatives, and neighbors of bride-seekers (one type of trafficking offender in my study) made little to no attempts to stop the offending before it occurred, and indeed often encouraged it. Moreover, victimized NKMCs had no informal guardians such as parents, family members, or relatives to protect them. In this respect, the Chinese government, as a formal guardian, should pay attention to the trafficking of NKMCs. In practice, this means the Chinese government should investigate, arrest, and punish traffickers of NKMCs and protect trafficking victims. If the Chinese government begins to

investigate the exploitation of NKMCs, this likely would have a major deterrent effect on the activities of the traffickers and the buyers. This would also encourage trafficked victims to report their victimization to the authorities and would have the potential to intervene on this vicious cycle of exploitation.

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APPENDIX 1

INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

I. PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS AND PRE-MIGRATION ATTRIBUTES

1. Subject's Sex:
    1. Male
    2. Female

First, I'd like to ask you some questions about yourself and your situations in North Korea.

2. How old are you? Or what year were you born?

Age: _____ Or Year born: 19 _____

3. What was your education level in North Korea?
    1. No formal schooling
    2. Elementary school (a. ___ some / b. ___ completed)
    3. Junior high school (a. ___ some / b. ___ completed)
    4. Senior high school (a. ___ some / b. ___ completed)
    5. College education (a. ___ some / b. ___ completed)
    6. Graduate school (a. ___ some / b. ___ completed)
    7. Other (Specify) _____

4. What was your marital status before you left North Korea?

    1. Single
    2. Married
    3. Divorced
    4. Separated
    5. Other (Specify) _____

    If ever married, how many children do you have in North Korea?
    Number of children _____

5. In which city or town and province were you living in North Korea?

City or Town: _____, Province: _____

6. Were you employed right before you left North Korea?

    1. Yes
    2. No (Skip to # 10)

7. What was your occupation? _____

8. Tell me about your job in North Korea? (Probe: What did you do for a living? How were the working conditions? Did you like your job?)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

9. What was your monthly income then?

   Monthly income (won) _____ (Skip to #11)

10. Why were you not working then? (Probe: No jobs available? You did not like the jobs that were available? You were planning to leave North Korea? You can't make a living by working? You were laid-off?)

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _

11. In general, how was life in North Korea just before you left? (Probe: Were you happy? Were you poor? How did you get by?)

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _

12. What was your impression of China before you went to China? How did you develop these impressions about China? (Probe: very affluent, easy to make money, a free society, crime ridden, good job market, tough to survive)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

II. MIGRATORY PROCESS I (LEAVING NORTH KOREA)

Now I would like to ask you a few questions about why you wanted to go to China, how did you manage to get there, and who helped you.

13. What prompted you to go to China? (Probe: For political reasons? For religious reason? To earn money? To get food? To meet your acquaintances or relatives? Or because of the recommendation of early-South Korea entered family?)

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _

14. What are the punishments for illegal crossing?

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _

15. Did you receive help from anyone to go to China?

    1. Yes _____

2. No, I went to China without anyone's help _____ (Skip to #22)

16. Who helped you in the process? How did you get in touch with people who helped you to come to China? How did you escape the vigilance of North Korean Police?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

17. What can you tell me about those people who helped you in North Korea? (Probe: What did they do for a living? Were any of them government officials? Were they local people or overseas North Koreans? Were they well-known in the community? Were they gangsters?)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

Now, I would like to ask you some questions about the arrangements you had to make before leaving North Korea.

18. During the first few meetings between you and the facilitators in North Korea, what did you discuss? (Probe: Did you discuss how much it will cost? How to pay? Routes to take? Risk? How long it takes to get to China? Contingency plans?)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

19. What types of arrangements had to be made before the facilitators said they would help you? (Probe: Need to provide the smugglers with down payment? Need to put up something valuable as collateral?)

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _

20. Did you and the facilitators discuss your working for them or the people they know after you arrived in China? If yes, did they tell you what you would be doing in this place and how much money you would be making?

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _

21. How long did it take the helpers to arrange your departure?

    Amount of time _____

22. How was the atmosphere in your family the day before you left North Korea? (Probe: Were your family members sad? Happy? Afraid? Worry? What did they tell you? How did you feel?)

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _

III. MIGRATORY PROCESS II (ENTERING CHINA)

Now, I would like to ask you about how you entered the China and what happened soon after your arrival.

23. In what year and month did you arrive in China?

    Year arrived: Year ____ Month _____

24. How did you arrive in China? (Probe: Did you enter China by car, boat, or on foot? Did anybody in China assist you?)

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _

25. Before your arrival in China, did you have relatives living in China?

    1. Yes
    2. No

    If YES, Please tell me how many of them and how they are related to you.

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _

26. Did you or the helpers bribe Chinese or North Korean government officials?

    1. Yes

2. No

If YES, how much? To whom?
_____
_____
_____
_____
_

27. Through which city/province did you enter China? _____

➔ **Who crossed the border without anybody's help, skip to # 29.**

28. How many North Korean migrants and helpers/facilitators were with you? Can you tell me somewhat about these migrants and helpers (how many, nationality)?

_____
_____
_____
_____

29. Did you possess any travel documents when you entered China?

1. Yes ____
2. No ____ (Skip to # 31)

30. What kinds of travel documents?

Kinds of visa _____ Genuine or fraud _____
Kinds of passport _____ Genuine or fraud _____
Where and how these documents obtained?
_____
_____
_____
_____
_ (Skip to # 32)

31. You said you did not possess any documents when you entered China. Did you have any traveling documents when you left North Korea?

    1. Yes ____
    2. No ____

    If YES, what have happened to those documents? (Probe: Lost them? Destroyed them? Returned to the smugglers?)

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _

32. How long did it take you to get to China? (if you had helpers, from departing to being separated from helper/facilitator)

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _

33. In general, how would you characterize the trip? (Probe: Were you comfortable? Were you well-fed? Were you worried for your safety? Any accidents? Delay?)

    _____
    _____
    _____

_____
_

34. During the trip, were you abused by others? (Probe: Were you physically assaulted? Robbed? Raped? Who were the people did that to you?)

    1. Yes
    2. No

    If YES, how did that happen?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

35. Did you see people like you being abused by others? (Probe: Were they physically assaulted? Robbed? Raped? Who were the people did that to them?)

    1. Yes
    2. No

    If YES, can you tell me about it?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

36. When you arrived in China, did anybody greet you at the point of entry?

    1. Yes ____

2. No ____

   If YES, who were they? (Probe: Were they North Koreans? South Koreans? Chinese? Which language did they speak? How did they treat you?)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

37. Were you stopped by any North Korean or Chinese government officials when you entered China?

    1. Yes ____
    2. No ____

    If YES, how did that happen?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

38. Were you arrested by any North Korean or Chinese government officials when you entered China?

    1. Yes _____
    2. No _____ (Skip to the direction before # 43)

39. How many times were you arrested by North Korean or Chinese government officials? How?

_____
_____
_____

_____
_

40. How long were you detained by government officials? (If you were detained more than once, can you tell me each length?)

    Amount of time _____

41. How were you treated while being retained? (Probe: Did they treat you well? Was the living accommodation good or bad? How was the food? Were you discriminated?)

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _

42. Why and how were you released later?

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _

➔ Who crossed the border without anybody's help, and who did not pay or promised to pay, skip to # 53.

43. Did you pay somebody for the help to cross the border?

    1. No, I did not get help from others. _____

       Then, how did you find the way to cross the border?
       _____
       _____
       _____

_____-
__ _____ (Skip to #53)

2. No, I got help from others but I did not pay for the help or promise to pay. _____

   Then, why did you not pay?
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____-
   __ _____ (Skip to #53)

3. Yes, I paid or promised to pay for help to cross the border _____

44. Were you retained by the helpers/facilitators after you arrived in China?

    1. Yes ____
    2. No ____ (Skip to # 49)

45. If YES, for how long were you retained?

    Amount of time _____

46. How and why were you released?

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _

47. Can you describe the place where you were being kept? (Probe: Clean or dirty? Cold or warm? How many people were kept together? Was it like hell?)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

48. While you were being retained by the facilitators in China, how were you being treated? (Probe: Were they rude? Did they yell at you or beat you up? Did you see others being beaten?)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

IV. ROAD FEE AND PAYMENT

In this section, I would like to ask you a series of questions on how much money you or your family paid the helpers and the ways the payments were made.

49. How much? _____ (Won or Yuan)

50. Where was the money from?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

51. How did you pay the helpers/facilitators? (PROBE: You paid before leaving North Korea; you paid after arriving in China; one payment or two or more payments; where was the payment actually made, in what currency)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

52. Did you ever get into arguments with the helpers/facilitators because of money?

    1. Yes
    2. No

    If YES, explain briefly what happened?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

V. LIFE AND WORK IN CHINA

53. How long did you stay in China (from arriving in China to leaving China)?

Number of years: _____ and Number of months: _____

54. What were the most difficult hurdles you had to overcome in China? (Probe: fear, financial difficulties, homesick, cultural barriers, language, employment, crime)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

55. What did you like most about China? (Probe: making money, freedom, affluence, high living standards, political stability, lifestyle, religious freedom)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

56. Since your arrival in China, what kinds of jobs have you been involved in?

    1. None (Skip to #63)
    2. 1st _____
    3. 2nd _____
    4. Others _____

57. Since your arrival in China, how often were you employed in China?

    1. Employed all the time _____
    2. Employed most of the time _____

3. Employed more than half of the time _____
4. Employed less than half of the time _____
5. Rarely employed _____
6. Other (Please specify) _____

58. What did you normally do in your off time? (PROBE: stay home and relax, go to a movie, go to gamble, hide)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

59. Approximately how many hours did you work a day when you were employed the last time in China?

_____ number of working hours a day
Approximately how many days did you work a week when you were employed?
_____ number of working days per week

60. Approximately how much money did you make a month while in China?

Monthly income _____ (Yuan)

61. How did you like your last job in China?

1. Like it a lot
2. It is alright
3. Do not like it

Why? (PROBE: have to work long hours, poor working conditions, low pay, no job security, no future)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

62. In general, how would you say your last employer treated you?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

VI. CRIME AND VICTIMIZATION

63. Did you engage in commercial sex work in China?

    1. Yes _____
    2. No _____ (Skip to #84)

64. At what point did you know that you will be involved in sex work? (Probe: back in North Korea, right before entering China, once in China, not long after in China, long after in China)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

65. For how long did you engage in sex work in China?

_____
_____
_____

_____
_

66. Has anyone used physical force (hit or threatened to hit you, slapped you, punched or kicked you, held you against your will, or made other physical threats, etc.) or abducted you to get you to do that work? If yes, how?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

67. Has anyone deceived you (told you that you would be doing some other kind of work, said it would only be for a short times, said you would receive more money than you do, etc.) to get you to do that work? If yes, how?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

68. Has anyone coerced you (threatened to report you to the police or authorities, threatened your family, said you are a criminal, kept your money, etc.) into that line of work in China? If yes, how?

_____
_____
_____
_____

69. If no to any of the above(#66~68), what prompted you to enter that line of work in China?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

70. Please describe the process of entering that line of work. (PROBE: How was it arranged? Did they train you? How did you find this job? What did it take to be in this line of work?)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

71. Tell me how the sex business was run. (PROBE: What type of establishment? How was the business organized and operated? How open was the business? What did you do?)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

72. How many people were helping to make it possible for you to be involved sex work? What role did these people play and how were they related? (PROBE: boss, driver, agent, pimp, guard, telephone operator, etc.)

_____
_____
_____

_____
_

73. Approximately how much money did a customer pay to have a date with you? How was this money distributed among you and the people who were involved in it? Do you think that type of arrangement was fair to you? Why do you say this?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

74. Approximately how much money were you making a month? What did you do with the money? (PROBE: sent back to North Korea, deposited in a local bank, spent it all, save in a private place, etc.)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

75. Describe your daily schedule (PROBE: What time you got up, what did you do after that, when did you go to work, when you were not with a customer what did you do, what time did you get out of work, what did you do after that).

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

76. On average, how many dates did you have in a typical day? Tell me who your customers mostly were. How would you characterize them? (PROBE: they were Chinese or Koreans, were they professionals or blue-collar workers, what's their age, how would you characterize the customer's attitudes towards you? Were you forced to do things you were uncomfortable with?)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

77. Has there been any violence inflicted on you by the customers? How?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

78. What were your major concerns in that line of work?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

79. Have you ever been arrested in China for sex work? If yes, how did that happen?

_____
_____
_____

_____
_

80. Were you free to move about as you pleased when you were in that line of work? (PROBE: Do you think you were being watched closely? Do you think you were being restricted?)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

81. If you arrived in China with travel documents, have you had access to your travel documents at all time? If no, who held them? Why?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

82. Describe how you have dealt with working in the sex industry. Have you ever used drugs or alcohol or taken medication. If yes, please explain.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

83. Did you try to escape?

Yes _____

No _____

If YES, how and what did happen?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

If NO, why?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

84. Did you marry a Chinese man when in China?

1. Yes _____
2. No _____ (Skip to #102)

85. At what point did you know that you will marry an unknown person?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

86. How long have you been in marriage in China?

Years: _____Months: _____

87. Has anyone used physical force (hit or threatened to hit you, slapped you, punched or kicked you, held you against your will, or made

other physical threats, etc.) or abducted you to get you to marry? If yes, how?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

88. Has anyone deceived you (told you that you would be doing some other kind of work, said it would only be for a short times, said you would receive more money than you do, etc.) to get you to marry? If yes, how?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

89. Has anyone coerced you (threatened to report you to the police or authorities, threatened your family, said you are a criminal, kept your money, etc.) into marriage? If yes, how?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

90. If no to any of the above(#87~89), what prompted you to marry?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

91. Please describe the process of your marriage. (PROBE: How was it arranged? Did they sell you? What did it take to marry?)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

92. Please describe all the family members in your new house. (PROBE: Who was the husband? How many family members were there? Who?)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

93. How was life in the new house? (PROBE: Happy or unhappy? Why? Did you work besides house chores? How did family members treat you? Food, room, clothing, etc.)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

94. Describe your daily schedule (PROBE: What time you got up, what did you do after that, what time you went to bed).

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

95. Did you have child(ren)? How many? How old are they? Son or daughter? Where are they now? How did the family members treat the children?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

96. Has there been any violence inflicted on you by your husband? Or family members? How?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

97. What were your major concerns in the marriage?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

98. Have you ever been arrested in China? If yes, how did that happen?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

99. Were you free to move about as you pleased when you were in marriage? (PROBE: Do you think you were being watched closely? Do you think you were being restricted?)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

100. If you arrived in China with travel documents, have you had access to your travel documents at all time? If no, who held them? Why?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

101. Did you try to escape?

Yes _____
No _____

If YES, how and what did happen?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

If NO, why?

_____
_____
_____

_____
_

102. Did you go to work in China?

1. Yes
2. No (Skip to #122)

103. Do you feel like you were exploited by your employer? If so, how? What kind of work were you doing? Tell me about your employer (Chinese? Korean?)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

104. Approximately how many hours did you work a day when you were employed?

_____ Number of working hours a day
Approximately how many days did you work a week when you were employed?
_____ Number of working days per week

105. How much money did you get from the work?

1. Same as other Chinese labors
2. Less than 100%, more than 50% as usual
3. Less than 50% as usual
4. None
5. Others (Specify)

106. What was the explanation about your payment? (PROBE: You worked worse than Chinese labor, the cost of food and bed was deducted, no explanation. Only report to Chinese police to arrest, etc.)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

107. At what point did you know that you will be labor-exploited?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

108. How long had you been in labor-exploited in China?

_____
_____

109. Has anyone used physical force (hit or threatened to hit you, slapped you, punched or kicked you, held you against your will, or made other physical threats, etc.) or abducted you to get you to be exploited? If yes, how?

_____
_____

_____
_____
_

110. Has anyone deceived you (told you that you would be doing some other kind of work, said it would only be for a short times, said you would receive more money than you do, etc.) to get you to be exploited? If yes, how?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

111. Has anyone coerced you (threatened to report you to the police or authorities, threatened your family, said you are a criminal, kept your money, etc.) into labor-exploitation? If yes, how?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

112. If no to any of the above(#109~111), what prompted you to work in that place?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

113. Please describe the process of getting to the work. (PROBE: How was it arranged? Did they sell you?)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

114. Did you live in the work place?

1. No _____ 2. Yes _____

If YES, How was life in the work place?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

115. Describe your daily schedule (PROBE: What time you got up, what did you do after that, what time you went to bed).

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

116. Has there been any violence inflicted on you by the owner? Or co-worker? Or higher staff? How?

_____
_____
_____

_____
_

117. What were your major concerns in the work place?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

118. Have you ever been arrested in China? If yes, how did that happen?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

119. Were you free to move about as you pleased when you work? (PROBE: Do you think you were being watched closely? Do you think you were being restricted?)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

120. If you arrived in China with travel documents, have you had access to your travel documents at all time? If no, who held them? Why?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

121. Did you try to escape from that work place?

Yes (Tell me how and what happened)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

No (Tell me why?)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

122. Have you been victimized by other crimes besides sex trafficking, forced marriage, and labor exploitation? If YES, How?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

123. In your opinion, what caused you to be victimized?

_____
_____
_____

_____
_

124. Did you report your victimization to the police?

1. Yes
2. No

If No, why? (PROBE: fear of being arrested and being deported, fear of revenge from offender, not trusting police)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

125. What will happen if you were arrested and deported back to North Korea?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

126. In China, have you met anyone who you think was being forced, coerced, or deceived into the sex industry, forced marriage, labor exploitation, or others? Describe their victimization.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

127. In China, have you heard anyone who you think was being forced, coerced, or deceived into sex industry, forced marriage, labor exploitation, or others? Describe their victimization.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

128. Have you ever received any government assistance in China?

1. Yes
2. No

If YES, what types of assistance?

1. _____
   _____
2. _____
   _____

129. What did you feel about the law enforcement agency in China while you were in North Korea (otherwise, delete the following question)? (PROBE: not fair, corrupt, kind?)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

130. Do you think your perception on law enforcement agency changed when you were in China?

1. Yes
2. No

If YES, how? Why?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

VI. MIGRATORY PROCESS III (LEAVING CHINA AND ARRIVING SOUTH KOREA)

Now I would like to ask you a few questions about why you wanted to leave China and come to South Korea, how did you manage to get here, and who helped you.

131. Did you receive help from anyone to leave China?

1. Yes _____
2. No, I leave China without anyone's help _____ (Skip to #138)

132. Who helped you in the process? How did you get in touch with people who helped you to come to South Korea? How did you escape the vigilance of Chinese Police?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

133. What can you tell me about those people who helped you in China? (Probe: What did they do for a living? Were any of them government officials? Were they local people or overseas North Koreans or South Koreans? Were they well-known in the community? Were they members of organized crime?)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

Now, I would like to ask you some questions about the arrangements you had to make before leaving China.

134. During the first few meetings between you and the facilitators in China, what did you discuss? (Probe: Did you discuss how much it will cost? How to pay? Routes to take? Risk? How long it takes to get to South Korea? Contingency plans?)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

135. What types of arrangements had to be made before the facilitators said they would help you? (Probe: Need to provide the smugglers with down payment? Need to put up something valuable as collateral?)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

136. Did you and the facilitators discuss your working for them or the people they know after you arrived in South Korea? If yes, did they tell you what you would be doing in this place and how much money you would be making?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_

137. How long did it take the helpers to arrange your departure?

Amount of time _____

138. What are your future plans? Do you plan to …

1. Make enough money and stay here in South Korea

2. Make enough money and invite family members in North Korea to come
3. Make enough money and leave South Korea
4. No plan for the future
5. Other (Specify) _____

139. Do you have any final thoughts about leaving North Korea and going to China? (Assuming you are talking to someone in your family who is thinking about leaving North Korea to go to China illegally, what would you tell him/her?)

_____
_____
_____
_____

READ: We have completed the interview. Thank you for your assistance.

APPENDIX 2

INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT

I am a Ph.D. candidate in School of Criminal Justice at Rutgers University, Newark. I assure you that your identity will not be taken and your answers will be kept anonymous. No identifiable information about you or any persons you mention or where you were victimized will be given to any government agency or community organization.

The data for this project will be kept anonymous and will be on password-protected computer in a home office of the Graduate Student office at Rutgers University, which is locked when it is not in use. Person who can access to the data is only me.

I would like to explain the study to you. This research project has been funded by the School of Criminal Justice at Rutgers University, Newark. The purpose of this study is to identify the social processes of the smuggling and trafficking of North Korean migrants in China.

I would like to ask you to be a respondent in this study. I will be asking you to provide information about the movement of North Korean migrants into China. I would like to ask you the life in North Korea, methods of crossing border, people who assisted you, your life and victimization in China, your escape from victimization, and the life in South Korea.

Your identity will not be known to anybody. Because my research is intended to bring about improved understanding of the experiences of North Koreans in China, it is extremely important that you provide me with information that is accurate and truthful as possible.

The interview will be recorded with the consent of you. You do not have to agree to be recorded in order to participate in the main part of the study. The recording will be used for greater accuracy. The interview will be recorded anonymous.

The recordings will be stored kept in password protected computer and will be deleted upon transcript. I will not use the recordings for any other reason

than that stated in the consent form without your written permission. Audio recording is completely voluntary and you may refuse audio recording at any time without penalty or prejudice.

The interview will be conducted by me. The interview will be one on one; no third party will present at the interview. As I talk with you, you may refuse to answer any questions if you wish to. You may also stop the interview at any time. If so, the whole interview will be canceled. During the interview, please do not mention another person's name and if you do, I will not record the person's name. If you request, findings from the study will be provided.

The interview will take no more than 2 hours. You will be paid $20 after the interview. I will seek to arrange the interview when it is convenient for you, in a place that you prefer, and I will communicate with you in the language or dialect in which you are most comfortable with.

The potential risk of participating in this study are that in answering the questions, you may recall and think about some upsetting times during your childhood and adolescence, and this can make you feel distress or discomfort. You will be asked about involvement in compensated dating and getting benefits in return for sex. If you want to see a psychologist or a social service provider after the interview, I will make the arrangement for you free of charge.

Let me repeat: Your participation is completely voluntary and you may refuse participation at any time without penalty or prejudice. Your refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefit to which you are otherwise entitled. The data for this project will be kept anonymous and your participation will not be individually identifiable in any report.

The results of this study will be used in a doctoral study. Then, results may be published or presented at professional meetings, but the identities of all research participants will remain anonymous. Do you understand this? Do you have any questions about the study? (IF NO MORE QUESTION:) Do you voluntarily consent to be a respondent to this study? If you consent, I will give you a copy of this informed consent statement.

If you have any questions about the research project after the interview, you can contact Hyoungah Park at (201) 364-3987(U.S.), 010-7494-8853(Korea), or email of seedmustard007@gmail.com. And if you have any questions regarding your rights as a research subject, you may contact the

Office of Research and Sponsored Programs of Rutgers University at (732) 235-9806(U.S.) or email to humansubjects@orsp.rutgers.edu.