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Internal Migration: The Women Behind Bali’s Tourism Industry

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Internal Migration:
The Women Behind Bali’s Tourism Industry

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Abstract

Internal migration in constantly increasing in Indonesia and the island of Bali is a popular destination for many of these immigrants who wish to try their luck in Bali’s tourism industry. One the most significant trends in internal migration has been the participation of autonomous young women, however, often the migration discourse does not adequately address gender-specific facets. This study explores the expectations and realities of Indonesian women’s internal immigration to Bali and is predominantly, based on qualitative research methods. The study consisted of singular semi-structured interviews with four young women who worked in Bali’s tourism industry in the Badung region. Additionally, field research through informal interviews and observation via participation was conducted with the wider Indonesian population in this region for a relational approach. A postcolonial feminist framework was utilised to recognise women’s intersectional identities and value differences in women’s lives, uncovering agency in their decision to internally migrate. Participants’ reasons to migrate to Bali were largely influenced by optimistic reviews of the tourist destination. However, thematic analysis within participants’ stories of internal immigration demonstrated reasons that were varied and complex. The current context surrounding internal immigrants in Bali was examined with prejudices exposed between both internal immigrants and the local Balinese population. Women’s personal experiences of immigration to a “freer” Bali are discussed through their newfound opportunities and experiences, including ‘freedom of movement’. While generally the women in this study provided a positive assessment of their internal immigration and work within Bali’s tourism industry, the women discussed obstacles and challenges in their acculturation to new and different socio-cultural norms.
Internal Migration: The Women Behind Bali’s Tourism Industry

Introduction

Internal migration is constantly increasing in Indonesia; consistently the ‘Bali Forum on Population’ estimates that 45% of Bali’s population growth is due to internal migration from within Indonesia to Bali’s thriving tourism areas. Increasingly, autonomous young women are participating in internal migration, in what has been called one of the most significant trends in migration, the ‘feminisation of migration’. This study explores this important phenomenon through qualitative research methods drawing on postcolonial feminist thought, that aims to examine the expectations and realities of Indonesian women’s internal migration to Bali for tourism employment. Predominantly, data was collected from singular semi-structured interviews with four young women. Additionally, field research through informal interviews and observation via participation was undertaken as supporting evidence. The reasons behind young women’s decision to internally migrate are investigated and participants’ expectations prior to immigration are discussed with relation to the current realities of their life in Bali. The current context surrounding internal migration in Bali is investigated with prejudices uncovered between internal immigrants and Balinese people. While prejudices exist, participants presented differing socio-cultural norms as challenges for them to overcome. The women’s personal experiences of immigration to Bali from other parts of Indonesia are discussed through their newfound opportunities and experiences, obstacles and challenges, and hopes and aspirations. In general, the women in the study offered positive assessments of their lives as women working in Bali’s tourism industry. Commonly, participants reflected upon the newfound freedom and opportunities they experience in Bali in comparison to socio-cultural restrictions experienced in their places of origin.
Personal Approach

As a female Australian student pursuing my Bachelor of Social Work degree, I have attempted to apply theoretical knowledge to field research with the aim of strengthening my commitment to social work and feminist studies. Following social science research methodologies, the study was predominately based on qualitative research methods. As qualitative methods aim to seek understanding in the meanings, interpretations and experiences of individuals and groups in society, my position as a researcher places me as the main research instrument (Robson, 2011). The study therefore, considers how my own subjective experiences inform my interests and approach with the women who participated in the study. As a feminist and future social worker, I value social work’s dual commitment to human rights and social justice (Australian Association for Social Workers, 2010). Accordingly, I draw on postcolonial feminist thought throughout the research to recognise my position of power as a Western women and the necessity of analysis through an intersectional lens. Early on in my research I was reminded of the need to remain open-minded in my approach, to allow me to see things from the worldview of the women who participated in the study; “I asked some of my friends if they wanted to do (participate in the interview)… but they say many bulai (Caucasian foreigners) ask them to and they don’t want to (participate in research)… but these questions are ok, they are more open-minded” (Shasha, personal communication, April 14, 2015).

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

Mohanty (2003) challenges value neutrality through her statement, “there can, of course, be no apolitical scholarship” (p. 19). Accordingly, I strive for field research that considers my subjectivity and draws on postcolonial feminism, holding myself accountable to my position as researcher and valuing the importance of the research process. Postcolonial feminism emerged through ‘third wave feminism’ in response to Western mainstream
feminism that permeated through ‘second wave feminism’ (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014). Despite the connotation of ‘post’, postcolonial does not suggest a periodic shift to ‘after-colonialism’; rather, it connotes an opposing theoretical stance to mainstream knowledge formation (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014). Postcolonial feminism emphasises the intersectionality of identity, ethnicity, class and locality of women that Western feminism had previously not heeded (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014). Postcolonial feminism challenges Western feminist politics’ tendency to homogenise and universalise women’s experiences, which Mishra (2013) argues is utter ‘eurocentricism’. Moreover, postcolonialism contends that mainstream knowledge formation is rooted in colonial perspectives that advances this intrinsically ethnocentric Western world view to the exclusion and lack of recognition of ‘other’, non-Western views, values and practices (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014).

Abu-Lughod’s (2013) book ‘Do Muslim Women Need Saving’ significantly debates the Western representation of Muslim women which assumes “liberal culture is the acultural norm and should be the universal standard by which to measure societies” (pp. 84-85). Chambers and Watkins (2012) provide the premise, “we can no longer assume that the category ‘woman’ is unchanging, existing in a transhistorical state of othered oppression, patiently awaiting the intervention of feminists who have themselves somehow escaped this position” (p. 298). Postcolonial feminism offers a pluralistic approach towards gendered experiences that emphasises the importance of ‘local’ politics over the ‘universalizing’ feminisms of the West where differences are celebrated (Mishra, 2013). Abu-Lughod (2013) argues, “We need to consider how women’s desires and ideals of the human are formed differently, and formed by a long history of geopolitical entanglements among the specific groups that are represented today as so separate” (p. 87). This perspective recognizes the multiple identities of participants that can be used to understand and interpret their lived experiences that are shaped, influenced or constrained by structural and social dimensions.
Chambers and Watkins highlight the diversity and range of feminist work outside and also within the “Western” context where considerable successes have been achieved both politically and critically (Chambers & Watkins, 2012). This point was succinctly demonstrated to me through the opportunity I was given to participate in two women’s workshops in Bali. The women in these workshops are working hard for women’s rights in Bali and verified the diversity of feminist work in Indonesia, providing context and meaning to the study.

Migration and the Feminisation of Migration

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2005) states, the ‘feminisation of migration’ is one of the most significant recent changes in the patterns of internal migration. The ‘feminisation of migration’ is the term used to describe the trend of the increase of women that are migrating independently on a global scale. The IOM (2010) reports that there are 214 million international migrants and 740 million internal migrants, resulting in the most people on the move today than at any other time in history. Migration is a significant demonstration of an individual’s right to development, and consequentially, “migration has become a private solution to a public problem” (Castles & Miller, 1998, p. 6). While the linkage between migration and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is complex, the IOM (2010) states, “there is a growing body of research on development, these studies demonstrate compelling the effects of migration on poverty, gender equality, health, education and the environment”. Until recently, single men dominated migration numbers, but women are now increasingly migrating for work rather than as accompanying spouses (IOM, 2005). The view that women do not migrate autonomously was widespread in a small village in Tabanan that lacked a flow of newly arrived immigrants; comparatively, in the tourism area of Southern Bali’s the number of autonomous women migrating to Bali was considered to be equal or more than their male counterparts. These comparative views
consistently demonstrate the recent trend of women’s autonomous migration in Bali and therefore changing socio-cultural norms that allow autonomous Indonesian women to migrate.

The IOM (2010) advocates, “female migration can challenge gender stereotypes and lead to greater independence and autonomy for women by increasing the proportion of women in paid employment situations”. Indeed, participants in this study asserted their reasons for migration to Bali involved a desire for new opportunities and experiences, which their work in Bali’s tourism industry has allowed them to do. The IOM (2005) argues, the reasons for autonomous female migration is complex and migration often provides women with an option to escape social control, gender discrimination or prejudices. Consistently, participants identified pressures in socio-cultural norms that they felt were restrictive, particularly the restriction of movement via the cultural rule of ‘jam malam’. UNESCO (2013) brings attention to the current discourse surrounding internal migration that often does not adequately address gender-specific facets of internal migration and the constraints women face. While the IOM (2010) recognises the potential for internal migration to increase independence for women they propose, “migration can also pose obstacles to the achievement of gender equality”. The women who participated in this study largely felt their migration to Bali from other parts of Indonesia had provided them with increased opportunities and freedom, yet participants also discussed obstacles and challenges. While these women had generally positive experiences due to their migration, a particular informal interview provided an opposing view that demonstrates the potential for internal migration to place women in vulnerable situations.
Understanding who Internal Migrants Are

The increase in internal migration due to globalisation is widely reported and the IOM (2013) discusses the difficulties in accurately determining the number of internal migrants worldwide and furthermore, who these migrants are. The *IOM*’s (2013) ‘Migration Policy Practice’ publication however, provides a profile on the likely demographics of internal migrants and provides five categories in order to give an understanding of who migrants are. Firstly, adults with a higher education are more likely to be internal migrants, although according to the *IOM* (2013), it is difficult to ascertain whether internal migrants attained their education prior to or after their arrival at their destination. Secondly, young adults were considered to be the most likely to migrate internally (*IOM*, 2013). Thirdly, first-generation migrants or “adults who were born in countries other than the ones they currently live in” are more likely to migrate internally than the native born; suggesting the correlation between international and internal migration (*IOM*, 2013). Fourthly, internal migrants are more likely to be employed full-time by an employer or participate in the workforce (*IOM*, 2013). Lastly, internal migrants are “more likely than their non-moving counterparts to provide financial help to others inside the country and abroad” (*IOM*, 2013). The participants in this study met four of these five categories; all four participants were well-educated young women who were employed full-time for an employer, and were providing financial assistance to their families in their place of origin. Participants’ independence increased due to their paid employment in Bali’s tourism industry and participants felt their salary was sufficient for living expenses and the provision of financial assistance to their families. While the demographics of internal migrants begin to reveal who exactly migrants are, the *IOM* (2013) assesses the need for further research in this area to understand the increasingly common phenomenon; the women in this study have therefore contributed to this understanding.
Migration in Southern Bali

According to Farré and Fasani (2013) internal migration is constantly increasing in Indonesia. Indeed Farré and Fasani remark (2013), “In 2000 about 20 million people in Indonesia were living in a province different from that of birth” (p. 50). Consistent with the wider national trend, Bali has experienced a steady influx of immigrants since the late 1990s (Norholt, 2007). Moreover, Erviani (2011) reported that Bali’s highest population growth rate in the last 50 years was recorded between 2000 and 2010. The high rate of migration onto the island has been stated as a main cause of the high population growth rate; the ‘Bali Forum on Population’ estimates 45% of Bali’s population growth is due to internal migration from within Indonesia to Bali’s thriving tourism areas (Erviani, 2012). Internal immigrants now account for 10 percent of Bali’s population of 4.22 million, with immigrants largely concentrated in South Bali in the Denpasar and Badung regions (Erviani, 2012). Significant population growth can be seen in these Southern regions due to the variety of job opportunities; often migrants settle in the southern and northern parts of Kuta to try their luck in the tourism industry (Erviani, 2011; Nordholt, 2007).

The ‘Ajeg Bali’ Movement. The ‘Ajeg Bali’ movement was created as a socio-cultural self-defense from the rapidly expanding tourist sector, along with the inflow of ‘foreigners’ in Bali (Nordholt, 2007). The focus of the Ajeg Bali discourse regarding their socio-cultural protection against ‘negative external influences’ has shifted since the October 2002 ‘Bali bombing’, from perceived negative globalising values, to the Indonesian ‘other’ (Allen & Palermo, 2005). This discourse seems to have permeated through Balinese society with Balinese people and internal Indonesian immigrants frequently mentioning tension between the two groups. While Indonesia’s national motto “Bhinekka Tunggal Ika,” translating to “Unity in Diversity,” presents positive attitude of tolerance, for individuals in this study, prejudices towards the ‘other’ were present. The IOM (2005) strongly suggests the
importance of internal migration in poverty reduction and advocates that internal migration not be controlled. However, the control of internal migrants in Bali has been applied through the use of seasonal identity cards or Kipem, for people from outside the island wishing to immigrate to Bali (Allen & Palermo, 2005; Erviani, 2010). Erviani (2010) referred to the current Governor Made Mangku Pastika of Bali, who has stated that the implementation of the Kipem has been “effective thus far in curbing the number of inhabitants on the island”. While the use of seasonal identity cards has been reported as a ‘strict control of non-Hindu and non-Balinese residents’ resulting in a decrease in migration, the participants asked in this study advised they did not have a Kipem and did not plan to obtain one in the future (Allen & Palermo, 2005).

**Research Methodology**

**Theoretical and conceptual Framework: Rationale**

The rationale for my approach to this study was informed by social science research methodologies and therefore focused on a qualitative approach. A qualitative approach was employed to capture the complexities of social realities and the meanings and relationships involved in these complexities. A postcolonial feminist theoretical and conceptual framework was implemented and therefore allowed me to retain a relational approach; paying close attention to the local rather than universalistic claims. A relational approach additionally recognised the differences in women’s experiences and how women express agency in their socio-cultural ‘situatedness’, utilising an intersectional lens. This intersectional lens follows connections and relationships between groups that are engaged with one another and their interconnected social worlds (Desmond, 2014).
Recruitment

Participants for the study were recruited through purposive sampling, to identify women who had migrated to Bali from other parts of Indonesia autonomously for work in Bali’s tourism industry. Whilst initially I sought out participants in their place of work within the Badung region of Bali, I was met with difficulties; this method however, resulted to one participant agreeing to complete an interview. Due to my position as a Western woman, I felt this method of recruiting participants had the potential to create discomfort for women and therefore, I discontinued this pursuit. In recognition of this, I employed two third parties, who approached potential participants already known to them, asking their contacts if they wished to participate in the study; resulting in two more participants. Additionally, snowball sampling was used as a method where existing participants were asked to identify migrant women within their networks. Through snowball sampling, one existing participant identified and selected an additional participant for the study. Participants were provided with a verbal description of the purpose of the study and the interview questions were provided in English and Bahasa Indonesian prior to the interview appointment.

The final sample group for the study consisted of four participants that identified as females originating from other parts of Indonesia and who had migrated to Bali autonomously. The women were aged between 19-32 years old and worked within the Badung region of Bali in the tourism industry. Two of the participants worked in a restaurant/nightclub, one participant worked in a large chain hotel and the last participant worked in a retail outlet. Of the four participants, one identified as Christian and three identified as Muslim. However, of these three participants that identified as Muslim, one participant felt her views more closely aligned to that of Christianity. The participants’ places of family origin varied from West Java, Central and East Java through to Sulawesi.
**Data Collection Methods**

The sample does not aim to be representative of the wider internal immigrant women population working in the tourism industry in Bali. Instead, it aims to understand the meanings, interpretations and experiences of participants in the study. The study followed predominately qualitative research methods and focused on semi-structured interviews with participants. A single semi-structured interview was completed with four participants over a two-week period, with each interview’s duration ranging from thirty minutes to three hours. The four interviews were conducted in a mix of Bahasa Indonesia and English with each interview varying in the amount of Bahasa Indonesia and English used. The interviews took place in settings decided upon by the participants, to create an environment that felt comfortable for the participant. Consequently, one interview took place at a participant’s residence, two interviews took place in a restaurant of the participants’ choice, and the last interview took place at a participant’s work.

Field research included informal interviews and was completed in natural settings with people in Bali, exploring social meanings and including multiple perspectives of individuals that reside in Bali. These conversations focused on migration or women’s issues and were initiated by the individuals rather than myself. The individuals’ perspectives included in the study consist of an older Balinese woman, two male Balinese taxi drivers, a Balinese male that lived by the beach, a male who migrated to Bali from East Java/Timor and worked as a surf instructor, and a female who had migrated to Bali from another part of Indonesia, in the above order.

Field research through observation during my participation in two women’s focus group workshops provided additional data that helped to provide context to women’s issues in Indonesia. The first workshop, held by *Yayasan Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Indonesia* (LBH) or the ‘Bali Legal Aid Institute’ was a focus group on ‘The Negligence of the Country
Towards the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of Women’. In attendance were various women’s organisations and key people from the government. The workshop was held in Bahasa Indonesian and translated by Ella (SIT Study Abroad’s Bahasa Indonesia Teacher) through brief summaries of discussion speakers. The workshop demonstrated a critical debate surrounding women’s rights in Bali and the lack of government implementation in government policies. Women passionately spoke about their work with other women at the grassroots level and contested the Balinese government’s claims that implementation of government policies must be completed by the community. Through my attendance of the first women’s workshop I was invited to a second women’s workshop at Universitas Udayana. The workshop focused on Kartini’s involvement in women’s emancipation, celebrating Kartini Day on the 21st April and her contribution to the equality of women in Indonesia. The workshop consisted of a presentation detailing women’s movements in Indonesia by Retno who works for an Indonesian women’s organisation called Serikat Perempuan Indonesia. Additionally, students attending Universitas Udayana, consisting of mainly migrant women were invited to discuss current issues surrounding gender equality.

Ethical Considerations

The four women who participated in semi-structured interviews gave informed, signed consent to their participation in the study after information was provided regarding the purpose of the study, interview questions and the process through which the interview would occur. Confidentiality was discussed with participants and while one participant agreed to have her name printed the other three participants preferred their name to be withdrawn. For this reason one participant’s real name has been used and for the other three participants a pseudonym (first) name has been provided. Due to the lack of an appropriate process for referral or intervention for issues that may have caused the women distress, I attempted to utilise questions that remained fairly neutral.
For individuals who informally initiated discussion on their views about either migration or women’s issues, my position as a student studying these topics was disclosed once I asked further questions. The use of individual names will not be identified in the study due to lack of signed consent and in a particular case due to the potential of harm this may cause.

**Data Analysis**

Certain themes emerged in the process of analysis of the collected data, which were selected upon the frequency of themes and inherently my interest as the researcher. Due to the frequency of themes that arose in the interviews and as a foundational means for me to begin to engage in qualitative analysis, I have attempted to employ techniques from thematic analysis as a method of inquiry. Due to limitations in the research process resulting in two interviews that were unable to be transcribed (see limitations) I was unable to pursue thematic analysis in its truest form, and this study, consequently, has been written with this approach in mind. With this approach in mind the puzzle pieces of data collection have taken shape and have taken the relationships between the themes into consideration.

**Results**

**Prejudices Towards Internal Immigrants in Bali**

Field research allowed examination of the multiple perspectives of individuals in Bali, providing a voice to Balinese people on the subject of immigration. Indonesia’s national motto “Bhinekka Tunggal Ika” advocates tolerance, however, discussions with immigrants and the local population in Bali show that prejudices have produced tensions and strained social relations between the two groups (Kosic & Phalet, 2007). Informal interviews permitted conversations that were not constrained by the formality of a more structured style of interviewing and allowed participants to move past the maintenance of an outward display of tolerance. One such informal interview occurred on my second day in Bali with an older
Balinese woman about the role of the *Pecalang*; which was described as a form of cultural police that maintain and protect Balinese culture. As the conversation proceeded, the woman discussed Balinese people’s desire to retain their culture and how Balinese people looked poorly upon people who do not uphold Balinese culture (Anonymous, personal communication, January 31, 2015). She continued, Balinese people often blame the Javanese people, at times wrongfully, for the destruction of their culture or for not following the Balinese way (Anonymous, personal communication, January 31, 2015).

As my time in Bali continued, similar prejudices towards immigrants arose in conversation with Balinese people. Two such incidents involved conversations with male Balinese taxi drivers who were forthcoming about their views regarding Javanese people living in Bali. “Balinese like orang Jawa [Javanese people] because they do the jobs the Balinese don’t want to do… Balinese are lazy. But if orang Jawa do well… we (Balinese people) get mad.” (Anonymous, personal communication, April 20, 2015); and, “There are a lot of Javanese migrant(s)… they are not a good influence on Bali because they are the ones committing all the crime… against foreigners” (Anonymous, personal communication, April 12, 2015). Additionally, Amita (personal communication, April 22, 2015), a participant in the study that has lived in Bali but originates from Sulawesi, expressed similar sentiments, “I don’t like there is stealing and crime. There is stealing from people outside of Bali… like orang Jawa but shhhh”.

Views held by both immigrants and the local population in Bali seem to reflect political and public debates where “immigrants are often depicted as trouble-makers” (Phalet & Kosic, 2006, p. 770). Nordholt (2007) provides two examples of the political and public discourse in Bali: “the *Bali Post* asserted that every 1.5 hours a crime was committed by a migrant”; and “the vice major of Denpasar in April 2002 stated, most of these people are jobless, they create a problem. They are criminals” (p. 39). Events such as the ‘Bali
bombings’ in 2002 and 2005 have only added further to the anti-immigration sentiment in Bali, spurring a shift in the ‘Ajeg Bali’ movement discourse toward the “influx of thousands of Muslim migrant workers” (Nordholt, 2007, pp. 1-39). Nordholt (2007) states, “Bali has become more Hindu than before” (p. 26); the inextricable nature of religion in Balinese life therefore, seems to add an anti-Islamic element to the anti-immigrant sentiment. When discussing immigration with a Balinese man at a beach in the Badung region, his views represented the similar ethnocentric view expressed by others however, for him aspects of religion were interconnected. He expressed that “orang local lebih bagus [local people are better]” in comparison to immigrants from other parts of Indonesia and that Muslim immigrants from certain parts of Indonesia are ‘extreme’ and therefore ‘not good’ (Anonymous, personal communication, April 22, 2015). While the man’s wife had emigrated from Yogyakarta herself, he was quick to inform me that the people and religion in Yogyakarta are good, unlike the people (and religion) from other parts of Indonesia (Anonymous, personal communication, April 22, 2015). Furthermore, he proudly stated that his wife has learned how to perform the rituals and offerings and is now a Hindu woman (Anonymous, personal communication, April 22, 2015).

**Women’s Internal Migration to the Tourism Industry**

Semi-structured interviews with four young women provided a relational understanding to the current context surrounding internal migration in Bali. Participants shared experiences of their immigration to Bali from other parts of Indonesia discussing their reasons for migration. I asked the participants’ about their expectations prior to immigration and the current realities of their life in Bali. I also inquired about participants’ new opportunities and experiences on Bali, obstacles and challenges experienced, and their hopes and aspirations for the future (Appendix A). In general, participants in the study offered positive assessments of their lives as women working in Bali’s tourism industry; commonly,
participants reflected upon the newfound freedom and opportunities they experience in Bali.

**Process of Internal Migration.** The decision for participants to immigrate from another part of Indonesia to Bali was deliberated through a process of comparison between the two places based on information available to the women. Farré and Fasani (2012) discuss, “networks are crucial to migration decisions as they provide information on the migration process, facilitate access to the job market and help to smooth integration upon arrival” (p. 48). The four young women in the study discussed their existing networks of friends and family as a main source of information about Bali, along with television and news sources. Media is a popular source of information about potential destinations and as Farré and Fasani argue, the expansion of private TV channels has provided Indonesian citizens with better information, which has the potential to shape internal migration decisions. For women in the study, Bali was represented through networks and media sources as an island of beauty where tourism thrives and as a “good place to come for a holiday” (Shahsa, personal communication, April 14, 2015). While for participants in this study generally information received regarding Bali was positive, their parents provided a conflicting view, conveying concerns regarding the negative effects of tourism in Bali and the widespread use of drugs.

Participants generally expressed their reasons for wanting to migrate to Bali were because it is a beautiful place and is ‘freer’ in comparison to their place of origin. Commonly, participants expressed that they were able to make more money in Bali and have new experiences that they would otherwise not have in their place of origin. While participants expressed their reasons for migration to Bali were similar to the information available to them, as the interviews continued, their reasons seemed to convey more varied and complex reasons. For one participant who had previously migrated to other parts of Indonesia and who had organically come to Bali for a holiday, “I didn’t have enough money to get a ticket back home so, I looked for work” (Shasha, personal communication, April 14, 2015). For Amita
and Aida however, their migration to Bali provided them with an opportunity to move on with their lives after problems within their immediate families and marriages. “My main challenge is coming from a broken home… this is not my life, I can change” (Aida, personal communication, April 23, 2015); and, “I am not stuck for anything… if you have a problem, you can move on here” (Amita, personal communication, April 22, 2015). Moreover, all four participants mentioned their ability to live a “freer” life without the constraints of family and socio-cultural pressures in their place of origin, which required them to uphold certain religious, cultural and social norms. In this light, participants felt they could ‘be themselves’ in Bali. One participant however poignantly noted the difference between her perceptions about Bali and her reality living there, “before I came to Bali I thought everyday is a holiday. In reality everyday is working” (Linda, personal communication, April 24, 2015).

Prejudices Towards Balinese People. Although participants expressed their felt need to adapt to new socio-cultural differences in Bali, the women discussed certain experiences with Balinese people that resulted in prejudice against Balinese people. Kosic and Phalet (2006) state, “As people from different cultures interact with each other, they face not only different belief systems, values, customs, and behaviors, but unfortunately also prejudice towards each other” (p. 770). It seemed however, as participants’ time in Bali increased along with their contact with Balinese people, the further prejudice was broken down between participants and Balinese people (Burton, Westen, & Kowalski, 2012). Aida (personal communication, April 23, 2015) had lived in Bali as a child, until the 2005 “Bali bombing’, when her family moved back to Java due to the economic unsustainability of her parent’s business. She expressed her sadness when living in Java as she yearned to move back to Bali (Aida, personal communication, April 23, 2015). While she felt Balinese people were more “to the point”, she also felt she had many good Balinese friends: “I like the people of Bali and I have many friends in Bali and many connections” (Aida, personal
communication, April 23, 2015). Amita (personal communication, April 22, 2015) who has lived in Bali for five years, and has a Balinese boyfriend and Balinese friends with whom she has travelled around Bali spoke of the Balinese as “humble people”.

Contrastingly, Linda (personal communication, April 24, 2015) had lived in Bali for two years however, she considered her close friends to be from Yogyakarta rather than Bali, and stated she rarely travels far from her kos in Badung. Similarly to Amita, she felt Balinese people were “straight to the point” and when asked about her dislikes with respect to living in Bali, her response was, “Saya suka semua, kadang, saya tidak suka orang-orang kasar… yeah, ada yang orang Bali [I like all, sometimes, I don’t like rude people… yeah, they are Balinese people]” (Linda, personal communication, April 24, 2015). Similarly, Shasha (personal communication, April 14, 2015) who has lived in Bali for two years related, that she did not have any Balinese friends and has not travelled around Bali. She spoke of her experiences with Balinese people and had the most negative perceptions of Balinese people in the participant sample: “I don’t really have Balinese friends, they are dirty”; and, “they (Balinese people) are lazy and not good, they have time off for ceremonies but when you ask for time off… like my aunty is sick, you can’t have it off” (Shasha, personal communication, April 14, 2015). Whereas participants’ prejudices seemed to be broken down between themselves and Balinese people as their time in Bali increased, for a male immigrant from East Java/Timor that has lived in Bali for 18 years, he openly informed me of his prejudices against Balinese people. As a freelance surf instructor on a popular beach in Badung, he spoke of his relations with Balinese people that left him feeling uneasy, “Waktu orang Bali bicara dengan saya [when Balinese people speak with me], they speak nice but they mean something else in their mind… there is no trust, there is no relationship past acknowledgement… they don’t trust” (Anonymous, personal communication, April 24, 2015).
**Overcoming Differences.** The perceived differences and prejudices expressed by participants toward Balinese people began to represent certain socio-cultural norms that participants felt differed in Bali compared to their hometowns. Linda (personal communication, April 24, 2015) stated, “we have one country but we have much so much culture, Bali and Jogja [Yogyakarta] have different culture you know, the character of the people”. Three participants mentioned the socio-cultural norm for Balinese people to liberally discuss sex, which participants informed me left them feeling uncomfortable. “In Jogja they think it’s not good you know, but here, [but] they talk[ing] about sex with me, and I’m not nyaman mmm comfortable... [but], tapi lama-lama you know, saya terbiasa [but after a long time I have become accustomed] (Linda, personal communication, April 24, 2015). Linda (personal communication, April 24, 2015) continued, while she initially felt this was a form of sexual harassment, after she had spoken with her female Balinese friends they informed her this was only joking on behalf of her Balinese male colleagues. While Linda’s experience is gendered, an intersectional lens informs of socio-cultural norms that have shaped, influenced and constrained Linda’s understanding and response to the situation. Linda (personal communication, April 24, 2015) further explained that sex is considered a taboo topic in Yogyakarta where she is from and demonstrated agency in her response to “tell them that’s not good”.

**Acculturation.** Participants felt there was a process of acculturation or “adaptation” to these new socio-cultural norms and seemed to struggle with their ideals of freedom that also conflicted with the deeply embedded socio-cultural norms from their place of origin. Three participants talked about the ability in Bali for a man and a woman that are not married to stay together in the same room without any associated stigma. My time spent in more remote parts of Bali disputed their statements, as consistently a man and woman that were not married staying in the same room was referred to as taboo and atypical of ‘Balinese norms’.
However, participants in this study repeatedly referred to a man and a woman staying together in the same room as a totaling ‘Balinese norm’. Participants’ views varied on this subject with Linda (personal communication, April 24, 2015) expressing difficulties with what she considered to be negative influential habits, such as freely allowing a pre-marital couple to live together. For Aida (personal communication, April 23, 2015), the idea of a man and woman living together before marriage was initially an idea that she had negative feelings towards, she stated now however, she feels more open to the idea. Shasha (personal communication, April 14, 2015) seemed to present the idea in a negative light. However, she added that she enjoys the additional freedom in Bali.

The women in this study commonly produced explanations where their own individual effort was the most important factor in overcoming difficulties (Baker, 2008). Two participants presented new socio-cultural norms as an obstacle or challenge that they must overcome. Linda (personal communication, April 24, 2015) spoke of the obstacles of assimilation and the challenge to become assimilated into a new culture, “a little obstacles, but I try to enjoy it and the challenge is berbaur [be mixed] become one… and adaptation to the new culture, the new people, the new different character”. Furthermore, Aida (personal communication, April 23, 2015) spoke of women’s abilities to adapt to differences in Balinese life, “the women are more flexible, (it’s) different for men, it’s very hard for the (men to be able to) adapt[ation]. It seemed equally important however, for participants to retain aspects of their previous culture. Linda (personal communication, April 24, 2015) spoke of her disappointment in meeting Javanese people who, “sudah lama tinggal di Bali [have already lived in Bali for a long time]… they from Java for a long time, they live in Bali sometimes they forget culture from Java”.

Restrictions and Freedoms. Participants significantly discussed Bali as a place of freedom, a place where particularly women are able to take advantage of additional freedoms. Abu-Lughod (2013) raises an important question however, “What does freedom mean if we accept the fundamental premise that humans are social beings, raised in certain social and historical contexts and belonging to particular communities that shape their desires and understandings of the world?” (p. 40). Abu-Lughod (2013) debates the value of free choice due to the limits we face as individuals, that is largely determined by the family we were born into and that we did not choose (p. 218). While for the women in this study their choice to migrate was undoubtedly influenced by many socio-cultural factors, they have demonstrated agency in their decision to migrate to Bali. For the women in the study, freedom was manifested through new experiences and opportunities in Bali, that their work in the tourism industry allowed. Frequently the women compared freedoms in Bali to their Islamic religion, the culture of their hometown and social and family relations. Two participants enjoyed the ‘freedom of movement’ in Bali and spoke about the restriction of movement at night in their places of origin. The IOM (2005) discusses the large scale of internal migration in South East Asia where cultural factors are responsible; in Bangladesh “the practice of plurdab [socio-religious seclusion of women] reduces women’s freedom of movement” (p. 23). Linda (personal communication, April 24, 2105) and Aida (personal communication, April 23, 2015) spoke about the nighttime aturan or berlaku [rules], known as ‘jam malam’ [night time], in their places of origin, which are unwritten ‘cultural rules’ created by the people for the people. Aida (personal communication, April 23, 2015) explained when women go out past 8pm “they (people in Java) think oh that’s a bad woman”. Aida (personal communication, April 23, 2015) questioned these perpetuated cultural norms that stigmatised women for staying out late at night and felt that the “thinking in Bali is more positive”.
International Interactions. When participants were asked how their lives had changed since moving to Bali and what new opportunities and experiences this had brought them, all four participants talked about their interactions with people from outside of Indonesia. “I have new experiences with friends from different countries… we can talk and swap stories” (Amita, personal communication, April 22, 2015); and, “(in Bali you can) talk[ing] with people from (an)other country, in Jogja it’s difficult to meet people from different country, here (in Bali) I can see everywhere” (Linda, personal communication, April 24, 2015). Three out of the four women spoke of their hopes in the future to internationally migrate to places such as New York or Germany. On the other hand, the fourth participant, Linda, spoke of her desire to move Malang or Yogyakarta as she was soon to be married and hoped to live close to her family. Linda (personal communication, April 24, 2015) mentioned her future plans included having a “happy family with anak-anak [children]”; comparatively, the three women who wished to migrate abroad were in ‘new’ relationships with their partners and did not include their partners in their future plans. The women mentioned future plans that deviated from their current life in Bali with two participants explicitly stating that they viewed themselves as ‘not yet successful’. Amita (personal communication, April 22, 2015) stated, “When I am successful I want to go back home for a holiday, maybe… I am not yet success”. Placed in context, her statement seems to reflect that potentially she feels at this time in her life she would in some way feel embarrassed if she were to return home, due to problems with her previous marriage and her new life in Bali.

Amita’s feelings of not wanting to return home until she felt she was successful are resonant of an informal interview with an internal migrant woman that I had early on in my study. My conversation with this woman came about due to difficult circumstances that resulted from an instance of domestic abuse with her Western partner. This woman spoke to me about her experiences with her abusive partner advising she was left feeling “worthless”
Anonymous, personal communication, April 13, 2015). She informed me that she did not have a support system within Bali as she perceived ‘Indonesian culture’ to be one where people would listen to her story, only to laugh behind her back (Anonymous, personal communication, April 13, 2015). She spoke of at times wanting to move back to her place of origin within Indonesia, however, felt embarrassment in returning to her family if she were to separate from her partner (Anonymous, personal communication, April 13, 2015). Chambers and Watkins (2012) explain, relationships between people of different races and cultures are complex and contain “difficult patterns of domination and exploitation and unequal distributions of power” (p. 297). Additionally, the IOM (2005) advises, migration has the potential to create obstacles in gender equality, concerning issues of vulnerability for female migrants. This woman had stopped her work within the tourism industry at the request of her partner, increasing her vulnerability; demonstrating that women at risk of vulnerability are often unseen. Applying an intersectional lens shows that not only was this woman suffering from her gendered experiences, but also from cultural experiences that had decreased her social networks through her migration to Bali and created an obstacle in her return home due to stigmatising cultural norms.

**Limitations**

There are a number of factors that have limited this study; the overarching limitations however, were those of time and language. The minimal time allowed for completing the study proved to be the most profound challenge; the restriction of time impacted the recruitment of participants, arranging interviews and following up with participants. Initially, I sought to recruit participants for the study in their place of work within the tourism industry in the Badung region of Bali. I approached women in spas, hotels and restaurants; however, women in these situations seemed less than willing to participate in the study. As I reflected on Shahsa’s (personal communication, April 14, 2015) initial comments regarding the many
bulai that had asked her friends that worked in the tourism industry to participate in research and had their confidentiality breached, I decided to discontinue the recruitment of participants through women’s places of work. The study therefore suggested the best method of participant recruitment was through the use of existing networks and trusted sources for participants. The employment of third party networks for participant recruitment resulted in a sample of women that were genuinely interested and willing to participate in the study. Additionally, the recommendation from a known and trusted source allowed for additional time to build stronger relationships with women, which is necessary to reduce potential power imbalances throughout the research process.

Of participants that had been initially identified and selected, some cancelled at the last moment, which seemed to reflect a lack of availability on their behalf or lack of interest to participate in the study. The lack of recruited participants and scheduled interviews in the initial phase of the study impacted on the later phases, as the study timeline was delayed. I was unable to organise secondary interviews with participants and additionally unable to receive participant feedback throughout the writing process impacting on the final result. The restriction of time also hindered participant availability, as all women were busy with work commitments. For one interview, the lack of time impacted on the interview as it was decided to complete the interview at her place of work. Completing the interview at her place of work resulted in an inaudible recording and a rushed interview. Interviews completed within quiet restaurants or the participants’ residences proved to produce the best results.

Secondly, the overarching limitation of this study was that of language. While the interviews were completed in a combination of Bahasa Indonesia and English, my limited skills in Bahasa Indonesia created a barrier between the participants and me as a researcher. The research questions were asked in Bahasa Indonesia for three out of the four interviews and I welcomed participants to use Bahasa Indonesia for their answers. However, often
participants spoke in English, as it was understood that their ability to speak English was better than my ability to speak Bahasa Indonesia. The use of English resulted in missed nuances and subtleties in participants’ answers and frequently participants deferred to Bahasa Indonesia when they were unable to express themselves in the English language. While language was limiting, the combination of Bahasa Indonesia and English in the interviews was fairly effective in communicating responses and produced a far better result than if the interviews were conducted solely in Bahasa Indonesia without the help of a translator.

**Conclusion**

This paper adds to the growing body of research surrounding the rising global trend of autonomous female migration by focusing on the women of the internal migration movement in Indonesia. The four women in the study offered positive assessments of their process of internal immigration to Bali from other parts of Indonesia and reflected upon the newfound freedom and opportunities they experience in Bali’s tourism industry. The women were generally optimistically informed about Bali as a tourist holiday destination through networks of friends and family, and media sources. Their expectations before their arrival based on these facts, compared with their current realities vary as their focus shifted from notions of Bali as a holiday to the realities of work. An intersectional lens demonstrates the varied and complex factors that have contributed to the women’s decision to internally migrate and their agency in their decision to do so. For two of the participants, socio-cultural pressures from their places of origin had previously restricted their ability to move on from the stigmatisation they experienced due to issues within the family and previous marriage. The combination of physical distance and the differing socio-cultural attitudes of a “freer” Bali have offered them the opportunity to start over.

The participants of the study demonstrated a process of acculturation, presented through obstacles and challenges living and working in a “new and different culture”. For
participants who had internally migrated, and Balinese people the contrasting socio-cultural norms have led to prejudices between the two groups. The increasingly hostile context surrounding internal migration through movements such as Ajeg Bali have permeated through Balinese society. Balinese people often incriminated internal immigrants unfairly, while internal immigrants often felt tension with Balinese people and frequently described them as ‘kasar’. The women in the study presented socio-cultural differences as obstacles or challenges to overcome, placing importance on their individual effort and their abilities as women to adapt to new norms. The participants’ process of acculturation in Bali demonstrated the deeply engrained socio-cultural norms from the women’s places of origin in Indonesia and the importance the women still place in them. Bali has offered participants newfound opportunities and experiences; for two of the women who participated in the study, the freedom of movement in Bali was seen as a positive change from the restrictive unwritten cultural rules such as, ‘jam malam’ in their places of origin. Women’s access and participation in the international community in Bali tourism industry has offered new experiences and influenced their hopes to some day internationally migrate. For the women in this study, internal migration has provided them with paid employment to support themselves and provide financial assistance to their families, along with a “freer” way of life. However, the study is not comprehensive and importantly the vulnerabilities women face in their internal migration must not be overlooked.
Recommendations for Further Study

Due to the postcolonial feminist theoretical and conceptual framework I wished to employ throughout this study, my recommendations for further study would be to include multiple in-depth interviews with participants. Multiple in-depth interviews would provide a deeper understanding of women’s lives through a relational approach, taking into account intersectional identities of women and exploring these identities further. Interviews with participants on multiple occasions would allow for stronger relationships with women to develop, reflecting a feminist approach that values the research process. While this study provided an insight into women’s reasons and experiences regarding their internal migration, a comparative study for women that work in different sectors or areas may highlight differences within women’s stories. This study demonstrated women’s agency in their decision to internally migrate however, the separate incidence of domestic abuse with an internal migrant women revealed further vulnerabilities women may be exposed to due to migration. For this reason a study that focuses on women in areas that are harder to access would be necessary to identify women that may be experiencing heightened obstacles.
Personal Communications

Aida, personal communication, April 23, 2015
Amita, personal communication, April 22, 2015
Anonymous, personal communication, January 31, 2015
Anonymous, personal communication, April 12, 2015
Anonymous, personal communication, April 20, 2015
Anonymous, personal communication, April 22, 2015
Shasha, personal communication, April 14, 2015
Linda, personal communication, April 24, 2015
References


Appendix A

Interview Questions

Background Information
Informasi Latar Belakang

1. Name (siapa namanya or siapa nama Ibu/Mbak)?

2. Age (berapa umurnya or berapa umur Ibu/Mbak)?

3. How many brothers and sisters do you have (berapa (Ibu/Mbak) punya kakak dan adik (saudara)?

4. What is your religion (apa agama Ibu/Mbak)?

5. Where are you from ((Ibu/Mbak) berasal dari mana)?

6. How long have you lived in Bali ((Ibu/Mbak) sudah berapa lama tinggal di Bali)?

Study and Work
Studi dan Pekerjaan

7. Where do you work ((Ibu/Mbak) berkerja di mana)?

8. What is your job role ((Ibu/Mbak) bekerja di bagian apa/ sebagai apa )?

9. Have you completed study in your hometown or Bali ((Ibu/Mbak) menyelesaikan studi di daerah asal atau di Bali)?

   a. If yes, what did you study (kalau ya, jurusan/belajar apa)?

10. Do you want to study/continue study (apa (Ibu/Mbak) mau studi / melanjutkan studi (di Bali))?  

   b. If yes, what do you want to study (kalau ya, mau studi jurusan apa)?
Leaving Hometown and Family
*Meninggalkan Daerah Asal (Kampung Halaman) dan Keluarga*

1. Why did you leave your hometown? *(mengapa Bapak/Ibu meninggalkan daerah asal (kampung halaman) Ibu/Mbak)*?

2. Do you miss your family? *(Apakah Ibu/Mbak merindu (rindu) keluarga)*?

3. How often do you visit your family? *(Seberapa sering Bapak/Ibu mengunjungi keluarga Ibu/Mbak)*?

4. Do they visit you? *(Apakah mereka mengunjungi Ibu/Mbak)*?

5. What do you miss about your hometown? *(Apa yang Bapak/Ibu rindukan dari daerah asal (kampung halaman) Ibu/Mbak)*?

Move to Bali
*Pindah ke Bali*

6. Who did you come to Bali with, or did you come alone *(dengan siapa Ibu/Mbak datang ke Bali? Atau apakah Bapak/Ibu datang ke Bali sendirian (seorang diri))*?

7. Who do you live with in Bali *(Ibu/Mbak) tinggal di Bali dengan siapa)*?

8. Why did you come to Bali *(Mengapa Ibu/Mbak datang ke Bali)*?

9. What thoughts did you have about Bali before arriving? *(Apa yang Ibu/Mbak pikirkan tentang Bali sebelum tiba di sini)*?

10. What did you know about Bali before you arrived? *(Apa yang Ibu/Mbak ketahui (tahu) tentang Bali sebelum Ibu/Mbak tiba di Bali)*?

   a. How did you get/who provided you with this information? *(Bagaimana Ibu/Mbak mendapatkan informasi tersebut/ Siapa yang memberikan informasi tentang Bali)*?

11. Did you find work before coming to Bali? *(Apakah Ibu/Mbak mencari pekerjaan sebelum datang ke Bali)*?

   b. If yes, who was this through e.g. organisation, friend, yourself? *(Jika ya, melalui apa Ibu/Mbak mencari pekerjaan di Bali, misalnya melalui organisasi, teman, atau Bapak/Ibu sendiri)*
12. What was your family's opinion about your desire to move to Bali? Did your family support your departure? (Apa pendapat keluarga Bapak/Ibu mengenai keinginan Ibu/Mbak pindah ke Bali? Apakah keluarga Bapak/Ibu mendukung kepergian Ibu/Mbak?)

13. Did you know anyone in Bali before you came (apakah Ibu/Mbak kenal seseorang di Bali sebelum datang ke Bali)?

Living in Bali – General
Tinggal di Bali – Secara Umum

14. Do you speak Balinese (Apakah Ibu/Mbak bisa berbicara Bahasa Bali)?

15. Do you have Balinese friends? (Apakah Ibu/Mbak punya teman orang Bali?)

16. What do you enjoy about living in Bali? (Apa yang Ibu/Mbak sukai tentang tinggal di Bali)

17. What is easy about living in Bali? (Apa yang mudah tentang tinggal di Bali)

18. What do you dislike about living in Bali? (Apa yang Ibu/Mbak tidak sukai tentang tinggal di Bali?)

19. What are the obstacles or challenges you face in Bali? (Apa saja hambatan dan tantangan yang Ibu/Mbak hadapi di Bali?)

20. As a woman is it easier or harder living in Bali than a man? (Sebagai seorang perempuan, apakah lebih mudah atau susah tinggal di Bali, jika dibandingkan dengan laki-laki?)

Living in Bali – Differences
Tinggal di Bali – Perbedaan

21. How has your life changed since moving to Bali? (Apa yang berubah dari kehidupan Ibu/Mbak sejak pindah ke Bali?)

22. Do you have more or less freedom in Bali? Why? (Apakah Bapak/Ibu memiliki kebebasan lebih banyak atau lebih sedikit di Bali? Mengapa?)

23. What new opportunities do you have because you live in Bali? (Apa saja kesempatan-kesempatan baru yang Ibu/Mbak dapat (peroleh) karena Bapak/Ibu tinggal di Bali?)
24. What new experiences have you had since you began living on Bali? (*Pengalaman baru apa saja yang Ibu/Mbak sudah dapatkan sejak mulai tinggal di Bali?*)

25. What are differences in your hometown and Bali? (*Apa saja perbedaan antara daerah asal (kampung halaman) Ibu/Mbak dengan Bali?*)

26. Are there any aspects of yourself you have felt you needed to change to fit into life in Bali? (*Apakah ada aspek diri Ibu/Mbak yang dirasa perlu diubah agar sesuai dengan kehidupan di Bali?*)

Living in Bali – Work
*Tinggal di Bali – Pekerjaan*

27. Do more men or woman come to Bali to work? (*Apakah ada lebih banyak laki-laki atau perempuan yang datang ke Bali untuk bekerja?*)

28. Is the pay you expected for working in Bali the same or different? (*Apakah gaji yang Ibu/Mbak harapkan untuk bekerja di Bali sesuai atau berbeda?*)

29. Do you work with Balinese people? (*Apakah Ibu/Mbak bekerja dengan orang Bali?*)

30. Do you think the job opportunities in Bali are equal for migrants and local people? (*Menurut Ibu/Mbak, apakah kesempatan kerja di Bali sama besarnya untuk para migran (orang yang berasal dari luar Bali) dan untuk orang lokal?*)

Living in Bali – Lifestyle
*Tinggal di Bali – Gaya Hidup*

31. Have you travelled around Bali? (*Sudahkah Ibu/Mbak bepergian mengelilingi Bali?*)


33. Do you have a partner (*Apakah Ibu/Mbak sudah punya istri/suami/ pacar?*)

34. How are romantic relationships different on Bali? (*Bagaimana hubungan percintaan berbeda di Bali?*)

35. How is practicing your religion different on Bali? (*Bagaimana cara beribadah agama Ibu/Mbak berbeda di Bali?*)
36. How is your lifestyle on Bali different than your lifestyle at home? (Bagaimana perbedaan antara gaya hidup Ibu/Mbak di Bali dengan di daerah asal (kampung halaman) Ibu/Mbak?)

Future
Masa Depan

37. What are your hopes and aspirations? (Apa saja harapan dan cita-cita (tujuan) Ibu/Mbak?)

38. Where do you plan to live in the future? (Di mana Ibu/Mbak berencana tinggal di masa depan?)

Added Questions


2. Do you have a ‘KIPP’/‘KIPEM’ migrant identity card? (Ada KIPP/KIPEM?)
   a. If yes, were there any difficulties in obtaining a ‘KIPP’? (Apakah kesulitan dalam mendapatkan KIPP?)

3. What duties do you have in Bali? e.g. Social, religious or environmental. (Tugas apa yang anda miliki di Bali? e.g. Misalnya sosial, agama atau lingkungan.)

4. Are you a member of a ‘desa pabraman’? (Apakah anda aggota dari desa pabraman?)

5. How do you think the Bali bombs have affected Balinese attitudes towards migrants? (Bagaimana menurut anda pemboman Bali telah mempengaruhi sikap masyarakat Bali terhadap migran?)

6. What do you know about feminism? (Apa yang anda ketahui tentang feminisme?)

7. Do you think women have equality in Bali? (Menurut anda wanita memiliki kesetaraan?)
   a. In other parts of Indonesia? (Di tempat lain dari Indonesia?)
   b. Why/why not? (Mengapa/Mengapa tidak?)

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