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**Transnational Social Networks and Development:
A Case Study of Filipino Nurses in Halifax, Nova Scotia**

By

Maxroxas Villanueva Tubo

A Thesis Submitted to
Saint Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts in International Development Studies

May, 2010, Halifax, Nova Scotia

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Approved: **Dr. Evangelia Tastsoglou**
Supervisor

Approved: **Dr. Pauline Gardiner Barber**
Reader

Approved: **Dr. Edna Keeble**
External Examiner

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Abstract

Transnational Social Networks and Development: A Case Study of Filipino Nurses in Halifax, Nova Scotia

By Maxroxas V. Tubo

This paper fleshes out Filipino transnationalism as experienced by migrant nurses in Halifax. The first part of transnational circle is the migration of professionals, traveling to Canada from the Philippines through Saudi Arabia; the second part involves economic and social remittances sent by the migrants to the Philippines. Transnationalism therefore refers to migration of people, funds, services and ideas remitted. As this thesis traces transnational networks utilized by the migrants and as it explores the impact of remittances in the Philippines, unequal transactions take place among parties implicated which amount to migrant exploitation. Payment of placement fees in exchange for overseas jobs becomes a necessity despite the fact that both laws of receiving and sending countries are violated. While exporting of high quality human capital comes at a short and long-term cost to individuals, families, communities and the country, it becomes a necessity in the context of Philippine development strategy.

May 18, 2010.

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To my beautiful wife, Isa, I dedicate this thesis to her. For her patience and love, she has been my inspiration all throughout. With a caring partner at my side, a good mother and an expectant woman (with our second baby), what else I am asking for.

To Jesus and Mary.

List of Recurring Abbreviations

ASEAN	-	Association of South East Asian Nations
BES	-	Bureau of Employment Services
BLES	-	Bureau of Labour and Employment Statistics
BSN	-	Bachelor of Science in Nursing
CHED	-	Commission Higher Education
CHR	-	Commission on Human Rights
COA	-	Commission on Audit
CRNE	-	Canadian Registered Nurse Examination
DFA	-	Department of Foreign Affairs
DOLE	-	Department of Labour & Employment
GDP	-	Gross Domestic Product
IELTs	-	International English Language Tests
IENs	-	Internationally Educated Nurses
ILO	-	International Labour Office
IMF	-	International Monetary Fund
IOM	-	International Organization for Migration
ISIS	-	Immigrant Settlement and Integration Services
KAKAMMPI	-	Kapisanan ng mga Kamag-anak ng Migranteng Manggagawang Pilipino, Inc.
LPN	-	Licensed Practical Nurse
MNC	-	Multinational Corporations
NAFTA	-	North American Free Trade Agreement
NGO	-	Non Government Organization
NSB	-	National Seaman Board
OECD	-	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OEDB	-	Overseas Employment Development Board
OFWs	-	Overseas Filipino Workers
OPEC	-	Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries
OWWA	-	Overseas Workers Welfare Administration
PCW	-	Personal Care Worker
POEA	-	Philippine Overseas Employment Administration
POLO	-	Philippine Overseas Labour Office
RCN	-	Royal College of Nursing
RN	-	Registered Nurse
RNAO	-	Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario
UNESCO	-	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WTO	-	World Trade Organization

**Transnational Social Networks and Development:
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Chapter 1 – Introduction

My interest in this topic can be traced back to a feeling of discontent upon learning firsthand about the experiences of a group of highly-skilled Filipino nurses recruited directly from Saudi Arabia in 2007 to work in Canada but in a much lower occupational status. Twenty nine experienced Filipino migrants were hired as personal care workers for a nursing home based in Halifax. About thirteen of them became my acquaintances through a nine-week orientation program in Halifax sponsored by the Capital District Health Authority of Nova Scotia. It is a program for internationally educated health care professionals prior to their becoming personal care workers or continuing care assistants, registered nurses, doctors and other health care professions. I happen to be a part of the group as a Continuing Care Assistant, working at Northwood Care, Inc., one of the nursing homes in Halifax. My initial curiosity was further inspired upon realizing that their journey was clouded by controversy. All of them were 'bilked' out of savings by unscrupulous recruitment agencies. They ended up paying exorbitant and illegal placement fees at an average of CAD\$2,500 in exchange for job prospects in Halifax.

Their predicaments remind me of another story from an article about Filipino caregivers working in Israel. Kav LaOved (2006) conducted a survey in September 2006 in cooperation with a Philippine NGO. He found out that all workers had been required to pay brokers' fees, collected in violation of both

Israel and Philippine laws. The Israeli Employment Bureau Law (1959) stated that “a private bureau cannot demand or collect or receive any payment, directly or indirectly, in Israel or abroad, from a person seeking work, or from a party acting on their behalf, in Israel or abroad as an employment broker”. On July 1, 2006, the same law was amended but only allowing the collection of fees not exceeding 3,050 Shekels or approximately CAD\$800. The Philippines law, on the other hand, allows the collection of up to about US\$1,000 from workers of which half goes to the job broker and half to the state agencies in charge of overseas workers. However, the average broker's fees in the survey showed that each Filipino migrant paid US\$4,256 for coming to work in Israel and were collected in the receiving country. They had to work an average of 7.5 months to cover their expenses loaned from various sources. Two thirds of loans were at a rate of over 5% per month where 1/3 of loans were at a rate of over 10% per month. Their average monthly salary is \$585 which is considered less than the legal minimum wage. (Kav LaOved, 2006). Similar cases were also happening to Filipinos heading for Hong Kong and Taiwan (see Centre for Migrant Advocacy, 2009).

This paper is my attempt to bring to the fore the plights of Filipinos who, despite the laws that should have protected them, have been subjected to various types of illegal activities. The practice of collecting fees in Canada is not only contradictory to the laws of both receiving and sending countries but it is non-obligatory. A foreign worker wishing to work in Canada only requires an

employer who can be contacted directly, thus there is no need for brokers. Once an agreement is reached, the employer can obtain a Labour Market Opinion (LMO) from the Human Resources Department and the foreign worker pays a standard fee of \$150 to get a work permit. Other expenses to be incurred are medical fees, plane tickets, etc., normally shouldered by the foreign worker. To reiterate, the collection of placement fees is unlawful both in Canada and the Philippines. The Worker Recruitment and Protection Act (2009) of Canada states that an individual who is engaged in foreign worker recruitment must not directly or indirectly charge or collect a fee from a foreign worker for finding or attempting to find employment for him or her. As a counterpoint, in 2006 the Philippine government through the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) issued a new directive informing the Filipino temporary workers heading for Canada not to pay any placement fees.

Recruitment of migrant labour done by formal social networks particularly the recruitment brokers and agencies is proven to be a good business. There is no way that recruitment of nurses in particular can be stopped in a society where profit is the dictum however these activities need to be regulated and monitored to safeguard the migrants' cause. Bach (2003), quoted the International Labour Organization (ILO) Deputy Director for Sectoral Activities Department regarding the recruitment of healthcare workers particularly the internationally educated nurses (IENs) in stating that the recruitment is not only limited to political actors

governed by States and by the key custodians of the global economy including the World Trade Organization (WTO) and various civil societies but also by the for-profit organizations such as private hospitals and private recruitment agencies. This implies that the events involving the participation of transnational social networks either as helpers or exploiters to these migrants are not a series of isolated activities but a confluence of economic and political factors, better known as the political economy of international recruitment, engaged in by a variety of actors, active both in the developed (destination) and the developing (source) countries.

Is this case a concrete example of ignorance to the laws protecting human rights or a clear blatant disrespect by some individuals and even organizations to the mandates of both sending and receiving countries to defend the cause of workers; or is this a typical large-scale incidence facilitated by global structural inequalities between a country of the Global South such as the Philippines and the more affluent countries of the Global North such as Canada where Filipino workers go? At the onset, it is my opinion that the culprits behind these illegal activities be brought to justice, charged and if found guilty, subjected to punishment, and finally the funds taken from the migrants be returned to the fullest amount. In the larger perspective, if recruitment activities are not monitored and regulated in the future more hapless victims heading for Canada will be exploited similar to what happened in Israel and Taiwan, and perhaps in other countries. Allowing these unlawful activities to go unchecked is to send a

message that it is alright to commit them again as long as nobody complains, that paying the placement fees is a “necessity” for migrants in a global recruitment industry where profit-making is the name of the game. It is unthinkable that such irregularities have been overlooked by the Canadian and Philippine authorities. The writing of this paper may not directly result in a solution of the problem but at least it is hoped that it will make the readers more aware about the existence of the problem.

Migration has become the solution for many people from developing countries including the Philippines to solve the problem of poverty – regarded by many as a product of capitalism and globalization. At first, the Philippines was at the front in believing that capitalism and globalization can mitigate the effects of underdevelopment and poverty. Unfortunately, very few countries especially from the First World benefited from such a belief while many Third World nations continued to suffer (see Oman, 1994; Schmukler, 2004). In 2007, more than a million temporary migrant workers left the Philippines to work in over 193 countries, each one bearing an employment contract issued and certified by the Philippine government. From factory and domestic workers to engineers and nurses, Filipinos occupy a wide range of jobs abroad. Their systematic exit from the country started in 1974 when the country adopted a policy of sending skilled and unskilled labourers for overseas employment but since that time the scale of positive and negative impacts and significance of international migration has escalated to unimaginable results – a growing number of migrants, a growing

amount of remittances and a growing incidence of labour and social problems.

Thirty five years later, the question whether the Philippines has really benefited from migration can be answered in the negative if the economic benefits are weighed against intolerable social costs.

The plight of migrant workers is a complex topic when it comes to the discussion of human right issues. Though the International Labour Organization (ILO) provides the protection of the economic, social, cultural, political and residential rights of migrant workers, its instruments seem to have been generally ignored by the international community, particularly by countries which migrant workers prefer (see ILO, 1999; IOM, 2003; Martin, 2005). Despite the growing labour mobility in the international field, it seems there is little agreement between countries of origin and countries of destination on how to effectively alleviate the social cost of migration. With inadequate protection from the receiving countries the migrants become easy targets for brokers and recruitment agencies. Reports of exploitation of foreign workers come from all migrant-receiving countries - from the Middle East to traditional migrant-receiving countries like the U.S. and Canada (see Agunias & Ruiz, 2007).

The preference of destination for migrant workers is largely influenced by migrant support networks (Vertovec, 2002). People are most likely to go to places where they will be helped by friends and relatives. Informal networks are important for helping migrants reach their new communities but as migration

becomes more formalized and professional networks come into the picture, it develops into a profit-oriented industry with predictable detrimental effects. For an individual migrant, searching for a job overseas with no contacts in the country of destination, it makes sense to approach recruitment agencies to arrange for a job, transportation and accommodation and to deal with the intricacies of applying for passports, visas and work permits. This, however, can become very expensive where some migrants have to pay the equivalent of two or three month's salary at once.

Early migration research predicted that migrants would cut their homeland attachments as they became integrated into the countries that received them. This is not the case. The frequent and widespread movements back and forth between communities of origin and destination, and the resulting economic and cultural transformations, have prompted some researchers to speak of a set of activities grouped loosely together under the rubric of "transnationalism" (Levitt & Waters, 2006). Transnationalism as a theory is based on the increasing globalization of communication, technology, and transportation, which enables migrants to maintain close links with their home communities and establish cross-border activities with relative ease. This study, centered on Filipino nurses in Halifax, is focused on the relationship of Filipino transnationalism to development. Its findings will also help expand the body of information concerning various social issues on migration and qualitative variations of social support networks used by the migrants.

One important and direct link to the study of transnationalism is economic remittances and their potential counterpart, social remittances. As the economic and social remittances of the migrants become so important to the socio-economic lives of many developing countries, they are considered the transporters of the most visible indicators and measurements of the ties connecting migrants to their home countries. Both types of remittances will be dealt with extensively in this paper.

There are three objectives of this study. The first is to map out the various transnational social networks that the Filipino migrant nurses identified and utilized in exiting the Philippines and finding employment both in Saudi Arabia and Canada. The second objective is to identify the implications of transnationalism for the development of the Philippines both in economic and social terms primarily at the micro-level involving the family and community. The third objective is to document and underscore the exploitation of Filipino migrant workers by agencies in collusion with the state and to highlight the international economic and political subordination of the country that tolerates to such an extent the exploitation of its internationally exported labour force. Objective # three is partly a further elaboration of how such networks work. This study is specifically about analyzing Filipino transnationalism; specifically the movement out of the Philippines through networks and back to the Philippines through economic and social remittances. It is also about the impact of transnationalism on development.

Three questions have been formulated to investigate the plight of the Filipino migrants. First, how do the social and economic remittances sent by the transnational migrants make an impact upon development in the Philippines both in economic and social terms particularly at the micro-level involving the family and community? Second, what are the social networks especially the transnational ones that the Filipino migrant nurses identified and utilized in finding employment both in Saudi Arabia and Canada? Third, how does the collection of illegal placement fees by unscrupulous recruiters and agencies take place and how does it affect the lives of transnational migrants and their families? What are the implications of such collection on the laws of both sending and receiving countries and on the global citizenship status of the Philippines as the sending society? What is the role of the state in these transactions?

The general layout of this study is as follows. Chapter 1 is an introduction to the study which begins with the major motivation for conducting the research and ends with the general layout of this study. This chapter also elaborates on the problem and provides the rationale and the need for the study. Chapter 2 sets the context for the study which is its theoretical framework. Specifically, this chapter talks about the theories of migration explaining why people migrate and it deals with transnationalism as a contemporary feature of migration. The history of migration is likewise being reviewed with emphasis on the existence of transnationalism from the 18th century onwards and the three major waves of

migration from the Philippines that explained Filipino diasporas. Two elements or backbones of transnationalism are also discussed, namely, social networks and remittances which are topics of utmost interest in this study. Finally, the chapter talks about the current state of international migration and its challenges paving the way for the identification of the problem of exploitation against the temporary migrant worker and the role of civil society as an advocate for migrant workers when the State fails to protect them.

Chapter 3 is the methodology chapter where I introduce the type of research approaches used, the research background, the research design and the research strategies namely interviewing, transcribing and coding, after making some introductory remarks. Lastly, brief profiles of the participants are provided in this chapter. Chapter 4 is the context of the case study where the regulatory landscape of the Philippine labour migration is outlined including migration costs and recruitment agencies. A brief glimpse of the profile of Filipino nurses both locally and globally is likewise provided. It also touches on the cost of Filipino transnationalism instigated by states, agencies and individuals. Also included in this chapter are the Philippines' emigration issues and Canada's challenges on migration. Finally, the Philippines' memoranda of agreements and Canada's policy on recruitment of foreign workers are incorporated.

Chapters 5 to 7 are the results of this study in the context of relevant literature, starting with the transnational social networks in Chapter 5, the economic and social remittances in Chapter 6 and placement fees in Chapter 7. Chapter 8,

which is a reflective analysis on the exploitation of the Filipino nurses is supplementary to Chapter 7 as it provides a thorough scrutiny of the case study involving placement fees and elaborates on the exploitation that transnational employment networks often entail. Chapter 9 is the conclusions of this study followed by recommendations.

Chapter 2 – Theoretical Framework

Migration includes a multitude of topics of growing interest, as witnessed in the increase of academic articles, university seminars and conferences devoted to exploring its nature. These topics are contemporary trends that require research and theorization on different scales and levels of abstraction. It is a useful exercise, therefore, to step back and sort out various ideas derived from migration. This exercise will lead towards an understanding of topics of interest for this study such as transnational social networks, remittances in economic and social forms, and placement fees. Areas that are discussed in this chapter are 1) theories of migration; 2) definitions of transnationalism; 3) transnationalism in the history of migration; 4) social networks and remittances: the backbone of transnationalism; and 5) current situation in international labour migration and its challenges.

A. Theories of Migration

The study of the theories of migration is important in this chapter as they help in explaining why people migrate across international boundaries. People move for different reasons and these differences affect the overall migration process. For the sake of this paper, understanding the theories of migration could also explain whether migration is driven by individuals or by structures. To deal with

individuals and structures is to talk about the micro and macro-forces of migration, which will be discussed in detail from one of the migration theories.

Stalker (2008) in his book "The No Nonsense Guide to International Migration", explains that the individual analysis or the 'human capital' approach on one hand, regards each migrant as a rational human being who carefully weighs up the available options, and looks at the destinations that offer the highest wage rates and the best prospects of finding work. Sometimes migration is not necessarily an individual decision, often a whole family will plan the strategy by sending one or two people overseas as a way of spreading risks (Stalker, 2008). The structuralist approach on the other hand, views the migrant as more like a ball in a pinball machine, knocked around by force beyond his or her control. These forces could be economic, social or political – pushing people out of one country and pulling them towards another. In the sending country the structural forces pushing emigrants out could be population pressure, land shortage or gender discrimination. In the receiving country the structural forces attracting the immigrant could be a shrinking population, a shortage of people to work on the land or the demand for domestic servants (Stalker, 2008).

1. The neo-classical economic equilibrium theory

The first theory of migration is the neo-classical economic equilibrium theory. It has its antecedents in the earliest systematic theory on migration from 19th

century geographer Ravenstein, who formulated the “laws of migration” (Ravenstein, 1885, 1889). He saw migration as an inseparable part of development and asserted that the major causes of migration were economic (Smith, 1776). Such ‘general theories’ emphasize tendencies of people to move from densely to sparsely populated areas or from low to high income areas or link migrations to fluctuations in the business cycle. These approaches are often known as ‘push-pull’ theories, because they determine that the causes of migration lie in a combination of ‘push factors’, impelling people to leave the areas of origin, and ‘pull factors’, attracting them to certain receiving countries (Passaris, 1989). ‘Push factors’ include demographic growth, low living standards, lack of economic opportunities and political repression, while ‘pull factors’ are demand for labour, availability of land, good economic opportunities and political freedoms (Castles & Miller, 1998).

The neo-classical economic equilibrium perspective is individualistic in its approach as it emphasizes the decision of the individual to migrate based on rational comparisons of relative costs and benefits between receiving and destinations countries (Hicks, 1932). Borjas (1989) claims that this approach leads to a clear and empirically testable categorization of the types of immigrant flows that arise in a world where individuals search for the “best” country. However, this theory has been criticized as simplistic and incapable of explaining actual movements or predicting future ones (see Boyd, 1989; Portes & Rumbaut, 1990). The push-pull model cannot explain why a certain group of

migrants goes to one country rather than another. It seems better, as Zolberg (1989) suggests, to analyze labour migration as a movement of workers propelled by the dynamics of the transnational capitalist economy, which simultaneously determines both the "push" and the "pull". This implies that migrations are collective phenomena which should be examined as sub-systems of an increasingly global economic and political system.

Though the neo-classical economic equilibrium paradigm hardly talks about the three topics of interest, to sum up, it does give the reader basic ideas about what caused the migrants to leave their countries of origin. This is a starting point in getting into discussion on the paper's main interests: transnational social networks, economic and social remittances, and placement fees.

According to the neo-classical economic equilibrium theory, it is for economic reason that migrants decide to travel abroad. With the clear motivation to earn better income, the migrants would have to find a way to get out of the country, as the theory suggests. They will begin to look for connections or personal networks whether from their family, friends or community members. These connections will lead them to yet another form of highly organized social networks which are either government-run or privately owned organizations that are authorized by the state to recruit. Aside from becoming sources of information, personal social networks also serve as resources for funding that will be used by the migrants for operating costs in traveling overseas. Based on their experiences or that of others, to get into these social networks also known

as recruitment agencies, they have to pay a price which is commonly described as placement fees.

However not all recruitment agencies are good; some are bad. They become bad because they charge fees that they are either not authorized by the government to collect or they collect too much. A 'migration industry' emerges consisting of recruitment organizations, lawyers, agents, smugglers and other middle-people (Harris, 1996). Such people can be both helpers and exploiters of migrants. Especially in situations of illegal migration or of oversupply of potential migrants, the exploitative role may predominate: many migrants have been swindled out of their savings and found themselves marooned without work or resources in a strange country (Stalker, 2008). Economic motivation as the main stimulus that drives labour workers to migration can also be translated into remittances that are sent back to their country of origin. In the Philippines, between 70% or 80% of the income of the migrants is sent back to their families and relatives, as mandated by the government, channeled through banks (see GMA News, 2010). Remittances are also examples of the "push factors" that compel the migrants to leave their family behind.

2. The historical-structural paradigm

In response to the neo-classical approach, a radically different interpretation of migration was provided in the 1960s by the historical-structural paradigm on

development. It has its intellectual roots in Marxist political economy and in world systems theory (Castles & Miller, 2003). Historical-structuralists postulate that migration is seen mainly as a way of mobilizing cheap labour for capital. It perpetuates uneven development by exploiting the resources of poor countries to make the rich even richer (Castles & Kosak, 1973; Sassen, 1988). Historical-structuralist analysts criticize the neo-classical perspective because its assumption of free choice for individuals is unrealistic (Hugo, 1993). Individuals do not have a free choice since they are fundamentally constrained by structural forces. Rather than a matter of free choice, people are forced to move because traditional economic structures have been undermined as a result of their incorporation into the global political-economic system (see De Hass, 2008). Massey et al., (1998) comment that historical-structuralists interpret migration as one of the many manifestations of capitalist penetration and the increasingly unequal terms of trade between developed and underdeveloped countries.

Frank (1966) was the frontrunner of the “dependency” theory, which hypothesized that global capitalism and migration as one of its manifestations, contributed to the “development of underdevelopment” (see also Baran, 1973). The dependency school that espouses historical-structural theory, views migration not just as detrimental to the economies of underdeveloped countries but also as one of the very causes of underdevelopment. According to this position, as De Hass (2007) argues, migration ruins stable peasant societies,

undermines their economies and uproots their populations. Instead of flowing in the opposite direction of capital as predicted by neo-classical theory, the idea is that labour follows where capital goes. Like the advocates of the neo-classical approach, historical structuralists have been criticized as well. They are being too determinist and rigid in their thinking of individuals as victims or “pawns” that passively adapt to macro-forces, thereby largely ruling out individual agency (De Hass, 2007).

To sum up the ideas behind the historical-structural paradigm in relation to the topics of interest: transnational social networks, economic and social remittances, and placement fees, nothing is really standing out. The other side of the “push factors” which is the “pull factors” mentioned in the previous chapter, I would say, is the best way to describe the historical-structural theory. In this case I have to borrow the idea from the neo-classical theory to satisfy what has been lacking in the historical-structural paradigm which in a way makes this theory subject to criticism. While the migrants are attracted by the dollars that they earn, they were likewise driven out of the country by what was mentioned earlier as structural forces. These forces, or known in technical terms as the “pull factors”, are macro-structures from the sending countries that are beyond the control of the migrants.

These pull factors could be categorized as unemployment problems, over-population, problems of peace and order or political instability, and in the case

of the Philippines, the unwarranted policies of the POEA, to be discussed later. To stay away from these issues, the migrants have no other options but to leave. As a result, they are forced to work abroad, which also means they have to accept the consequences of 1) leaving their families behind; and 2) paying placement fees against their will to recruitment agencies whose job is to link them to prospective overseas employers. It is also worth noting that the "pull factors" that drive them to migration could become a stronger leverage to earn in dollars that subsequently could result in sending economic and social remittances to their families back home.

What has not been emphasized sufficiently in this theory is the plight of the individual migrants, whom as critics say are treated in theory as passive pawns to the macro-forces. This painful definition of individuals as wagers if pitted against large-scale institutions comes into question when the role of the state is examined. It remains to be seen whether the states could assure a more balanced playing field in protecting the rights of individual migrants while keeping various macro-structures within its control, not letting profit overtakes service. It is important to mention the responsibility of the sending state, which in this case, is the Philippine government through POEA. The POEA was mandated to protect migrants by regulating the intricacies of migration of migration in two ways, first by educating the migrants on what to expect outside the country and second, by monitoring the activities of recruitment agencies and employers.

3. The migration systems approach

Both the neo-classical perspective and the historical-structuralist approach have been equally criticized as they seemed to be too one-sided to analyze the great complexity of contemporary migrations. On one hand, the neo-classical approach neglects historical causes of movements and downplays the role of states, while the historical-structural approach often places the interests of capital as all-determining, pays inadequate attention to the motivations and actions of the individuals and groups involved (Castles & Miller, 2003).

Out of such critiques emerged a new approach known as the migration systems theory which has been increasingly influential in comparative research.

Migration systems theory, like the historical-structural perspective, emphasizes international relations, political economy, collective action and institutional factors (Castles & Miller, 1998). A migration system is constituted by two or more countries that exchange migrants with each other (Kritz & Zlotnik, 1992). This means it examines both ends of the flow and studies all the linkages between the places concerned. These linkages can be categorized as 'state-to-state relations and comparisons, mass culture connections and family and social networks' (Fawcett & Arnold, 1987).

Geographer Mabogunje (1970), the founder of migration systems theory, defines it as a set of places linked by flows and counterflows of people, goods,

services, and information, which tend to facilitate further exchange, including migration between the places. He focuses specifically in his analysis on rural-urban migration within the African continent. Portes and Borocz (1989) and Kritz et al. (1992) broaden Mabogunje's earlier definition of international migration. International migration systems consist of countries that exchange relatively large numbers of migrants, and are also characterized by feedback mechanisms that connect the movement of people between particular countries, areas, and even cities to the concomitant flows of goods, capital (remittances), ideas, and information (Gurak & Caces, 1992). Migration systems theory also implies that any migratory movement can be seen as a result of interacting macro and micro structures (Castles & Miller, 2003).

Castles and Miller (2003) explain macro-structures as large-scale institutional factors while micro-structures embrace the networks, practices and beliefs of the migrants themselves. The evolution of production, distribution and exchange, within an increasingly integrated world economy over the last five centuries, as an example of a macro structure, has clearly been a major determinant of migration and of nation-building migrations and refugee flows (Portes & Borocz, 1989). The role of international relations and of the states, of both sending and receiving areas, another model of macro-structures, in organizing or facilitating movements is significant (see Bohning, 1984; Cohen, 1987). Examples of micro-structures, on the other hand, are the informal social networks developed by the migrants themselves in order to cope with migration

and eventually with settlement. Earlier literature used the concept of 'chain migration' to refer to this phenomenon (Price, 1963).

Informal networks include personal relationships, family and household patterns, friendship and community ties and mutual help in economic and social matters. Such links provide vital resources for individuals and groups and may be referred to as 'social capital' (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Social capital, as another important concept, will be discussed further in the subsequent chapters. Informal networks bind 'migrants and non-migrants together in a complex web of social roles and interpersonal relationships' (Boyd, 1989). The family and community are crucial in migration networks. Research on Asian migration, in particular, has shown that migration decisions are usually made not by individuals but by families (Hugo, 1994). However, social networks are complex and often ambivalent in character for some people, for both migrants and non-migrants can become facilitators or can serve as hindrance of migration.

The third theory, migration systems approach is rich with topics that directly link to the focus of attention in this case study, that is, transnational social networks, economic and social remittances, and placement fees. One of the implications of this theory is that migration can be seen as a result of the interaction of micro-structures. An example, as mentioned above, is the informal social networks that were formed by the migrants through family, friends and community for help in economic and social essentials. However, the purpose of

this study is not only to recognize the important roles that personal social networks play informally for migrants but also to identify the formal networks (i.e., recruitment agencies) that introduced them to their employers and eventually lead them to migrate. Very little was mentioned in this framework about formal transnational social networks that there is the need to explore other venues related to their existence. One way of effectively exploring these networks is through the experiences of the research participants.

Further, the brief descriptions provided above by the migration systems theory do not give the reader some of the basic details investigating economic remittances in migration, such as: 1) who are the recipients of the funds; 2) how the funds are being used; and 3) what are the impacts of this financial support to the lives of the migrants overseas and to their families back home? The relevance of the above questions is to emphasize the empirical studies of remittances, including but not limited, to flows of money as compared to the theoretical articulation of the term. In order to find these answers there is the need therefore to conduct an empirical inquiry independent from earlier studies. Discussion of social remittances has been lacking in substance with only limited descriptions provided by the framework of the migration systems theory. Recognition of the importance of social remittances needs to be emphasized by placing it on an equal footing with economic remittances.

B. Defining Transnationalism

The concept of 'transnationalism', while receiving greater attention through a range of approaches and disciplines, is an important feature of migration. The concept, according to Kivisto (2001), has entered the lexicon of migration scholars who are trying to capture the distinctive and characteristic features of the new immigrant communities that have developed in the advanced industrial nations, at the core of the capitalist world system (see also Roberts, 1995; Glick Schiller, 1997; Portes, 1999a; Vertovec, 1999).

One of the early popular approaches in transnationalism was contributed by cultural anthropologists Nina Glick Schiller, Linda Basch, and Christina Szanton-Blanc (1994, see Glick Schiller, 1997). Historically, they contend that there is something qualitatively different about immigrants today as compared to their late 19th and 20th centuries' counterparts. They also introduced the term transnationalism as referring to the process by which migrants build social fields that link together their country of origin and their country of settlement. By embracing this concept, scholars are discarding previous categorization of return, circulatory or permanent migration. Nonini and Ong (1997) however are critical to the creeping dilution of research by a cultural studies approach 'that treats transnationalism as a set of abstracted, dematerialized cultural flows, giving scant attention either to the concrete, everyday changes in people's lives or to the structural reconfiguration that accompany global capitalism' (Mitchell,

1997). This suggests that there is the need to focus more on the empirical studies of transnationalism, such as human mobility, social ties, channels and flows of money, commodities and information.

This study is leaning towards the political – economic definition of transnationalism much in line with the thinking of sociologist Alejandro Portes (1996a, 1999b; see also Portes, Guarnizo & Landolt, 1999). A variety of alternative versions of transnationalism, often specifically linked to transmigration, have emerged in the social sciences (see Kearney, 1991; Portes, 1996b). Rather than claim that earlier immigrants lacked a desire to be involved in homeland issues, Portes' argument is that what makes the situation different today is that improved communication channels and transportation systems make it possible to act readily on that desire (see Kivisto, 2001). Kivisto (2001) further clarifies Portes' positions identifying individuals and their support networks as the appropriate units of analysis, thereby excluding communities and more overarching structural units such as governments. The last version is the most rigorously systematic theoretical articulation of the term by political scientist Thomas Faist (1998, 2000a). Faist's overarching theoretical intention seeks to offer a new model of migration that accounts two quandaries: 1) why so few people migrate (slightly more than 2 per cent of the world's population according to some estimates) and; 2) why are so many migrants from so few places? His perspective entails an effort to weave together network analysis and the concept of social capital (see Kivisto, 2001).

Despite the differences in their theoretical starting points on transnationalism, a sense of convergence is showing among migration scholars. One sign of convergence is the tendency to conceive transnationalism as something to celebrate, as Smith and Guarnizo (1998) claim, an expression of a subversive popular resistance “from below”. Transnationalism from below or popularly described as transnational grassroots politics is the ‘vision’ of migrants, social movements and coalitions. This concept, according to Glick Schiller et al., (1992) in contrast to transnationalism from above, generates multiple and counter-hegemonic powers among non-elites. It is the creation of a new social space that is fundamentally grounded in the daily lives, activities and social actors (Glick Schiller, Basch & Szanton-Blanc, 1992). Smith (1992) further supports that cultural hybridity, multi-positional identities, border-crossing by marginal “others,” and transnational business practices by migrant entrepreneurs are depicted as conscious and successful efforts by ordinary people to escape control and domination “from above” by capital and the state. Moreover, transnationalism from below describes the ways that the everyday practices of ordinary people, their feelings and understandings of their conditions of existence, often modify those very conditions and thereby shapes rather than merely reflect new modes of urban culture (Smith, 1992).

Kivisto (2001) enumerates different ways of expressing transnationalism from below as 1) “local” resistance of the informal economy; 2) ethnic nationalism; and 3) grassroots activism. While the present thesis is about transnational

social networks of migrants and transnationalism in the broader sense, I would also argue that it has in embryonic form an element of “transnationalism from below”: By collaborating with me as the researcher and allowing their plight to be documented, the migrant workers in this case study have, to an extent, engaged in a form of resistance to one aspect of an informal, global capitalist economy. Their actions could serve as a starting point to challenge in particular the charging of placement fees. Beyond this very preliminary, embryonic engagement however, this thesis does not deal with “transnationalism from below” as defined in the literature.

Guarnizo and Smith (1996) contrasted “transnationalism from below” to “transnationalism from above”, namely: 1) transnational capital; 2) global media; and 3) supra-national political institutions. They added that transnational capital has negatively led to the globalization of capitalism with its destabilizing effects on less industrialized countries. On the positive note, the global media has revolutionized technological means of transportation and communication and political institutions created global transformation through the decolonization and the universalization of human rights (Guarnizo & Smith, 1996). With the expansion of social networks that facilitate the reproduction of transnational migration, economic organization, and politics, there is the clamour to curtail the power coming from the corporation and state levels also described as transnationalism from above. The element of change is expected to be instigated by the activism from below.

In sum, there are various descriptions of transnationalism by different scholars. Some authors focus its definition on activities of people across national borders, resulting in flows of goods and money (Vertovec, 1999; Portes et al., 1999). Others emphasize the importance of immaterial things such as multiple engagements and feelings of solidarity across boundaries (Clifford, 1994; Levitt, 2001a). Other scholars in cultural studies have also been at the forefront in the analysis of transnational practices and processes (Appadurai, 1990; Bhabha, 1990; Hannerz, 1996). However, it was Aron (1966) who first proposed the notion of a “transnational society” – the movement of ideas, people, goods, and organizations across borders – in turn generating a “transnational” politics reducible neither to the relations between states nor within them. What these different viewpoints have in common is the emphasis on linkages that bind people together in different countries (see Kabki, 2007).

While there are proponents of the concept of transnationalism, there is also a list of critics. Opponents argue that the concept does not add much to the existing theories, mainly because people have always traveled. They contend that the increased scale of the phenomenon does not justify the existence of a whole new body of literature (Kabki, 2007). Levitt and Waters (2006) want to emphasize that some critics claim transnationalism has become a catchall category used to describe everything under the sun. Finally, while some scholars acknowledge the importance of transnational ties among the first

generation, they predict that they will quickly weaken among their children (Levitt & Waters, 2006).

Despite these criticisms, a major contribution of transnational studies has been to initiate a shift in thinking on migration and migrants' lives. Scholars of transnationalism broadly emphasize three elements that make the lifestyles and the social networks of migrants 'transnational'. These are firstly their mobility, secondly the technological advancements that enable migrants to lead multi-sited lives, to communicate and remit, and thirdly being engaged in a number of different societies (see Guarnizo et al., 1999; Vertovec, 2001a; Mazzucato, 2005). Migration, they suggest, should no longer be seen as people leaving one country and settling in another, but as a continuous move between social worlds that spans more than one location (Vertovec, 2001). The lives of migrants are thus increasingly shaped by having one foot in one country and the other in another country, juggling between sometimes contradictory social norms, legal constraints and human interests (see Guarnizo et al., 1999; Basch et al., 2003; Levitt & Glick Schiller, 2004).

C. Transnationalism in the History of Migration

The term transnationalism did not start when various popular approaches came about, defined by cultural anthropologists, social and political scientists, as mentioned in the preceding chapters. World history produces ample proof that

transnationalism existed side by side with migration as this section provides a concise glimpse of the past as early as the 18th century. This brief review of history does not only give the reader the first taste of real flesh and blood of the experiences of early transnational men and women, but it also provides an outline on how and when 'Filipino transnationalism' in three waves occurs in the history of migration.

1. 1600 to 1790

The discovery of the Americas in the 18th century stirred a stream of voluntary and involuntary migrants from Europe and Africa. This era is known as the period of contracts and coercion because it is through this means that labour migration is formed. According to Lovejoy (1983), by the end of the 18th century around eight million had crossed to the New World, but mainly as slaves from Africa and convicts from Britain whose migration was financed by others. Then, the decline in the supply of slave labour from Africa through the abolition of the slave trade in 1807 led to a revival of contract labour for work on plantations and in mines from South-East Asia to North and South America, which lasted until the start of World War I (Engerman, 1986). During this period, return migration and periodic visits to home communities have always taken place among free labour migrants and European colonizers. Like labour migrants, colonizers harboured dreams of riches and eventual return but their daily activities confronted them with the realities of a new country and in the process,

many became permanently settled in the colonies (Tinker, 1995). Though lacking the contemporary technologies of communications and transportation, Portes et al., (1999) observe that precursors of present immigrant transnationalism have existed for centuries, including this one.

2. 1790 to 1850

This period is known as the rise of the pioneer free settlers as the inflows of free settlers in the United States outnumbered the slaves by the end of the 18th century. According to Eltis (1983) it was in 1880s that the cumulative sum of European immigration matched the flow of coerced labour from Africa. These migrants traveled in family groups where a third of them were children under 15 often with the intention of starting or joining new communities at the New World's frontier (Erickson, 1994). Transnational entrepreneurs continue to thrive as well during this era. As an example, the foreign enclaves established by the Venetian, Genoese and Hanse merchants throughout medieval Europe as identified by Pirenne (1970) with the revival of European trade symbolize early "economic transnationalism" but under difficult political conditions. Likewise, enclaves of commercial representatives engaged in various forms of transnational trade were established by the Portuguese, Dutch and English in successive stages of the European colonization of Africa and the Americas (Dobb, 1963; Arrighi, 1994).

3. 1850 to 1913

It was not until after the middle of the 19th century that mass migration from Europe to the United States can really be said to have taken hold. There were also substantial movements within Europe including the Irish moving to Britain and East Europeans moving to Western Europe, sometimes merely sojourning before embarking for the New World and sometimes remaining permanently. These movements are some of the examples of economic and political transnationalism in past histories. They include what Curtin (1984) labels as 'trade diasporas' or communities composed of itinerant merchants who settled in foreign jurisdictions in order to engage in commerce. As Portes et al. (1999) clarify: those who simply settled abroad and became progressively integrated into local ways fit more appropriately the definition of immigrant entrepreneurs. Yet those who self-consciously preserved their distinct identities as members of a trading diaspora by cultivating their networks across space and traveling back and forth in pursuit of their commercial ventures can legitimately be dubbed as transnational entrepreneurs (Portes et al, 1999). While most dreamed of going back one day, this long-term goal was countermanded by the concerns and needs of their new lives and, for many, eventually faded away (Handlin, 1973; Thomas & Znaniecki, 1984).

4. 19th to Early 20th century

Asian emigration begins in this period from the 19th and early 20th centuries. The increased globalization of the political system through the spread of European colonization in the 19th century to Asia, Africa, and the Pacific and Indian Ocean islands resulted in increased intercontinental trade with primary products being produced in the colonies, much of it for export to Europe and North America (Chiswick & Hatton, 2002). In the absence of slavery, the new source became Asia especially from India, China and Japan. Enclaves of commercial merchants engaged in various forms of transnational trade were also present during this period; among them were the Chinese merchants. The overseas Chinese represent a typical example of a community of transnational traders (Freedman, 1959; Lim, 1983). By and large, early examples of economic transnationalism were of an elite type, involving merchants and commercial representatives of some means who maintained a firm affiliation with their home offices and communities, and who relied on long-distance networks for their own economic survival (Portes et al., 1999).

5. 1906 to 1945

This is the period of war, depression and restriction. This is also the time when the first wave of Filipino migration started. The first mass migration began when sugar workers from the Ilocos Region in Northern Philippines went to work for

the Hawaii Sugar Planters Association in 1906 and continued through 1929 (Garchitorena, 2007). Initially, the Filipinos were averse to traveling to Hawaii because of the distance and the wild rumours of alleged animals roaming the islands and devouring the people; but after the initial hesitation, Filipino migrant workers came to Hawaii because they perceived the islands as *glorya* (glory), a paradise of happiness and prosperity (Alegado, 2001). According to Philippine historians, many of them came for the purpose of saving money to return home and live comfortably, i.e., to be able to buy their own house and lot, till a small farm, and get married (Cariaga, 1936). This observation only proves that early Filipino migrants did not sever their connections back home. After a union strike in 1924, many Filipinos were banned in Hawaii thus migrant labour shifted to the U.S. mainland (Vera Cruz, 1994). Thousands of Filipino farm workers sailed to California and other states. However, the Great Depression of 1929 slowed Filipino migration to the United States thus they sought jobs in other parts of the world. Filipinos were hired as seamen by the Netherlands and other maritime countries. Later, many were hired by countries ravaged by the Second World War (Sicam, 2003).

6. 1946 to 2000

After the population dislocations following the Second World War, the intercontinental migration resumed. According to Chiswick and Hatton (2002), there were three structural changes in the pattern of migration during this period:

1) the decline in Europe as a source of emigrants and the rise of Asia as a source of immigrants; 2) the transformation of Latin America from a destination to a source region, the mirror image of Europe's (and Japan's) transformation from a source to a destination; and 3) the increase in immigration from Asia and the beginnings of immigration from Africa. It was also during this period that the Philippines began to send its second wave of labour migrants to the United States. According to Garchitorena (2007), this second wave was small and short-lived; however, it started the phenomenon now known as "brain drain" as it attracted some of the best and brightest graduates from the top Philippine universities. While the first wave of Philippine labour migration to the United States in 1906 to 1929 was based on skills needed in the farms, factories, and military facilities, the second wave during this period was comprised of educated professionals. Doctors, nurses, and engineers traveled to the United States in the 1960s to support its booming economy while young American men were busy fighting in the Vietnam War (see Garchitorena, 2007).

7. 1970s to Present

The development of oil production and exports in the Middle East led to a large increase in the demand for foreign workers. The revenues from exported oil among the Arab states and members of OPEC increased from less than \$200 billion in 1971-1975, to over \$600 billion in 1976-1980 (Abella, 1995b). A third wave of migration began in the early 1970s when the Philippine government

actively encouraged migration (Garchitorena, 2007) to work in the construction, trade and low-skilled service industries as well as for highly-educated professionals such as teachers, engineers, and doctors. It was in 1974 when President Ferdinand Marcos facilitated overseas employment in the Middle East. This was embodied in the Presidential Decree 422 of the Labour Code as an effort to ease domestic unemployment and to stabilize the country's dollar reserves (see Garchitorena, 2007). Historical data from the Bureau of Employment Services (BES) show that from 36,035 Filipino workers deployed in 1975, the number ballooned to 282,506 in 1981 (Institute of Labour and Manpower Studies, 1984) and the numbers continue to grow up to the present generation.

D. Social Networks and Remittances: Backbones of Transnationalism

1. Social Networks

Based on the works of various social scientists over the past few decades, there are a considerable number of studies on the perspective of social networks in relation to international migration (see among others Kearney, 1986; Vertovec & Cohen 1999; Brettell, 2000). Social networks are widely recognized to be very influential in migration decisions. A large literature has established that more extensive friend and family networks of previous migrants encourage migration (Gottlieb, 1987; Massey & Espinosa, 1997; Winters et al., 2001). Yet

there has been little research investigating the mechanism by which networks exert such effects and tend to attract migrating members to the same geographic area (Bartel, 1989; Dunlevy, 1991). Networks provide channels for the migration process itself. Tilly (1990) claims, 'the effective units of migration were (and are) neither individuals nor households but sets of people linked by acquaintance, kinship, and work experience'.

Boyd (1989) neatly sums up much of the network approach to migration, stating that networks connect migrants across time and space. Once begun, migration flows often become self-sustaining, reflecting the establishment of networks of information, assistance and obligations, which develop between migrants in the host society and friends and relatives in the sending area. These networks link populations in origin and receiving countries and ensure that movements are not necessarily limited in time, unidirectional or permanent (Boyd, 1989).

Concepts of social networks are also clearly linked to those of social capital (see Coleman, 1988; Lin, 1999; Putnam, 1995), mentioned earlier in Chapter 2.

Scholars generally understand social capital to be the quantity and quality of resources (i.e., individual, group or community) that individuals can access through the various social networks in which they are embedded (Lin, 2001).

Social capital is a concept that refers to connections within and between social networks as well as connections among individuals. These connections have value. The basic idea of social capital, that one's family, friends, and associates

constitute an important asset who can be called upon in a period of need, as leverage for material gain, is true to most individuals (Moser, 1996). What is true for individuals, moreover, also holds for groups. Those communities endowed with a rich stock of social networks and civic associations will be in a stronger position to confront poverty and vulnerability (Narayan, 1997), solve common problems, resolve disputes (Schafft and Brown, 2000), and/or take advantage of opportunities (Isham, 1999).

While there are debates on social capital from various sociologists, anthropologists, political scientists and economists in terms of their differences, there is a common agreement that social capital is relational. As Portes (1998) sums up, "whereas economic capital is in people's bank accounts and human capital is inside their heads, social capital inheres in the structure of their relationships. To possess social capital, a person must be related to others, and it is these others, not himself, who are the actual source of his or her advantage". Coleman (1990) views it in another way but with emphasis on relation, "social capital is an attribute of the social structure in which a person is embedded, social capital is not the private property of any of the persons who benefit from it". Narayan (1997) is saying that it exists only when it is shared. "Social capital is embedded in social structure and has public good characteristics".

For migrants, social networks can facilitate migration in different ways: 1) through providing information on the migration process itself, such as crossing the border; 2) through providing information on destinations and jobs, and aiding integration after arrival; and 3) through helping finance the cost of migration [and settlements] (Dolfin & Genicot, 2006). As Poros (2001) points out, local labour markets can become linked through specific networks of interpersonal and organizational ties surrounding migrants. Connections with earlier migrants provide potential migrants with many resources that they use to diminish the risks and costs of migration, such as information about procedures (technical as well as legal), financial support, job prospects, administrative assistance, physical attendance, emotional solidarity (Meyer, 2001). The networks utilized by migrants vary considerably depending on local histories of migration, national conditions and communal socio-cultural traits. In any case, 'the forms and characteristics of these networks may depend on their composition – friends, relatives, kin, acquaintances, professional colleagues, etc.' (Vertovec, 2002).

2. Remittances

Remittances are generally defined as that portion of a migrant's earnings sent from the migration destination to the place of origin. Although remittances can also be sent in-kind, the term 'remittances' usually refers to cash transfers transmitted by migrant workers to their families and communities back home

(Van Doorn, 2001). Remittances to developing countries make up a significant proportion of world financial flows. Taken together, they are greater than the flows of official development assistance, larger than capital market flows, and more than half of foreign direct investment flows to these countries (Naim, 2002). Remittances also seem to be more stable than private capital flows and to be less vulnerable to changing economic cycles (Ratha, 2003).

Remittances also play an important role in the situation of many developing countries and are crucial to the survival of poor individuals and communities around the world. Some states use the promise of future remittances to secure international loans (Guarnizo, 2003). The economies of countries such as Albania, El Salvador, Tonga, and Lebanon would collapse if remittance flows dried up (Becker, 2004). Several international donor groups have allocated resources that are tied to remittance related practices (Orozco, 2003). In the Philippines, the Asian Development Bank recently commissioned a consultant report on Worker Remittances as a Development Tool in the Philippines (Mellyn, 2003).

One thing that is missing in the brief description of economic remittances above is its failure to identify the motivating factors behind why migrants send part of their income back to family and relatives in the country of origin. This study will try to provide the missing link which will hopefully lead the reader to the understanding of the three schools of thoughts on the motivation of the migrants

to remit. Very briefly, sending of remittances is not purely altruistic. There are other reasons though not mentioned in this section, why migrants send remittances not just for philanthropic reasons but also as investments and insurance against risks. These motivations will be explained in detail by the two schools of thoughts.

While neo-classical economic equilibrium and historical-structural paradigm exist among the theories on migration, there also exist neo-liberal-functionalist and historical-structuralist perspectives on remittances in relation to poverty alleviation which the description of remittances above failed to capitalize upon. Finally, the impact on gender on remitters and recipients was not mentioned in the remittance section though recent findings of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in 2004 recognized that female migrants have accounted for a high and increasing proportion of all migrants for the last 40 years. There is also a trend of increasing numbers of females that are migrating independent of partners or families. More discussions on feminization will occur later.

Many of the changes that migration gives rise to have not resulted from monetary remittance flows only. Other kinds of catalysts of equal importance are also at work, among them social remittances. Social remittances are usually defined as the ideas, practices, identities and social capital that flow from receiving to sending country communities (Bruno, 2004). Social remittances are

transferred by migrants and travelers or they are exchanged by letter or other forms of communication, including by phone, fax, the internet or video (Levitt, 1996a). They may affect family relations, gender roles, and class and race identities, political, economic and religious participation.

Scholars of migration traditionally believe that most migrants severed ties to their countries of origin as they assimilated into the country that received them. Recent work, however, suggests that at least as many individuals remain oriented toward the communities they come from as toward the communities they enter. This sustained and constant contact between communities of origin and destination prompted scholars to speak of what they have alternatively termed as "transnational migration circuits" (Rouse, 1989, 1992), "transnational social fields" (Basch, Glick Schiller & Szanton-Blanc, 1994; Mahler, 1997), "transnational communities" (Smith, 1995; Nagengast & Kearney, 1990; Mountz & Wright, 1996) or "bi-national societies" (Guarnizo, 1994). As connections between sending and receiving countries strengthen and become more widespread, a transnational public sphere emerges (Soysal, 1997). A public sphere is a space where citizens come together to debate their common affairs, contest meanings and negotiate claims (Habermas, 1984). Social remittances constitute a neglected local-level counterpart to macro-level global monetary and cultural flows, although they are the keys to understanding how migration modifies the lives of those who remain behind (Levitt, 2001b). However, according to Goldring (2004), social remittances can be on a macro level also.

Political involvement in transnational social fields is a form of such social remittances and is a highly gendered one.

Social remittances are equally important with economic remittances. What this study hopes to capture from the responses of research participants, are the unique types of social remittances that involve the Filipino migrants. Likewise this study will try to establish whether poverty alleviation at the community level has been the concern of the migrants in addition to the social support normally extended to families, relatives and friends. Finally, to easily categorize the strength of social remittances among Filipino transnational migrants, several key factors need to be used as its primary framework. Social remittances are oftentimes in the form of abstractions that need to be deciphered in order to resolve intellectual impasse. Levitt (2001a) can offer these key factors based upon her study of the transnational migration networks created between Miraflores in the Dominican Republic and the Jamaican Plain in Central Boston, USA. These primary frameworks will be explained further in the following chapters under Results and Discussions.

However, other studies adopting a macroeconomic approach on remittances point in the opposite direction. Puri and Ritzema (1999) suggest that remittances fail to help the economy and decrease the likelihood of an improved economy in the future. The transfer of funds can be deceptive if it creates dependence among recipients, encourages continued migration of the working

age population and decreases the likelihood of investments by the government or foreign investors because of an unreliable workforce. Dependency on remittances leaves the households vulnerable to temporary and unnecessary consumption benefits as explicitly explained by Ballard (2001), a high share of remittances tend to be spent on non-productive investment and short-term consumption gains. If spent on imported consumer goods rather than locally produced ones, the potential multiplier effect may decrease while simultaneously increase import demand and inflation (see Puri & Ritzema, 1999). This opinion is based on the assumption that the inflow of family remittances creates dependence among the recipients and encourages continued migration (Schonauer, 2003). Since funds are supposedly often spent on imported consumer goods rather than on locally produced ones, it is further stated that the potential multiplier effect is low and import demand and inflation increase (Schonauer, 2003). On social issues, remittances can initially increase inequality between households within the community by comparing those with access to remittances against those without; Levitt (2001a) have contributed to the negative transmission of cultural practices that reduce the local quality of life.

E. Current Situation of International Labour Migration and its Challenges

Harris (2002) remarks: "For much of human history movement – migration has been the norm: an endless search for new hunting grounds, new pastures, new sources of goods to be traded, new means of work. The rise of the modern

state changed all that" (Harris, 2002). According to OECD (2004), recent research findings indicate five current trends in international labour migration: 1) the numbers of international migrants is increasing (OECD, 2004); 2) there has been a growth in the migration of skilled and qualified workers (OECD, 2004); 3) migration flows are becoming more diverse and complex for a range of reasons: for example, communications improvements facilitate greater information exchange; easier transport links (Stalker, 2000); international trade agreements; and immigration policies that have at times supported the entry of foreign workers needed to fill national or local skill shortages; 4) previously distinct categories of migrants have begun to blur (Stalker, 1997). There has been an increasing mix of temporary/permanent migrants (Timur, 2000), including a recent reported growth in temporary migration (Lowell & Findlay, 2002); and 5) female migrants have accounted for a high and increasing proportion of all migrants over the last 40 years, and growth has been particularly marked in labour migration flows to developed countries (Zlotnik, 2003). Increasing numbers of females are now reported to be migrating independently of partners or families (Timur, 2000). This trend is commonly known as the "feminization of migration".

Another aspect of migration which has received increasing attention from various scholars is the feminization of migration. As Piper (2002) observes, a new marker of migration in the last two decades particularly in parts of Asia is not only the fact that in many incidences women have outstripped the number

of male migrants, but also that women are migrating independently as temporary economic migrants, often as a family survival strategy. However, the term is deceptive if it simply means an increase of numbers of women working overseas as compared to its male counterparts. Zlotnik (2003) argues that the term is misleading insofar as it suggests an absolute increase in the proportion of women, when in fact by 1960 women already made up nearly 47% of all international migrants, a percentage that increased by only two points during the next four decades to about 49% at present. While the saying goes that charity begins at home, feminization, in search for a deeper meaning, starts at home as well. Tyner (1999) observes that underlying the feminization of migration particularly in Asia are long-standing patriarchal traditions and institutions that place young females in the lowest rank within the family. Consequently, female migrants are subject to various kinds and intense levels of prejudice, discrimination, exploitation and violence based not only on their sex, but also on class, nationality and ethnicity (Cox, 1997). Tastsoglou and Dobrowolsky (2006) capture the cause of migrant women in a much broader sense: "Indeed women experience the push and pull factors of migration differently than their male counterparts at all scales and stages of migration through familial expectations, labour market constraints, structural biases and globalized social reproduction.

Feminization has also caused global inequality of labour and resurrected the term "care deficit". Most of the members of the G-8 nations, that happen to be

the destination countries of most migrants, have aging population combined with low-birth rates and longer life expectancies. The aging population contributed to the shortage of healthcare workers – including nurses and caregivers (Jensen, 2006). These jobs are increasingly filled by migrants especially women. As poor women from the Global South become domestic caregivers, children are separated from the migrant mothers while women in families hiring domestic workers are freed to seek higher paying work in professional careers (Jensen, 2006). This creates a global division of labour based on gender and nationality. Care deficits, as depicted in Jensen's comments above, can also be seen in two ways. From the side of the sending countries, the role of grandparents as informal care providers enables countless migrant women to provide the unvalorized work necessary (in taking care of the children left behind) to keep the command functions of the global economy running smoothly (Sassen, 2002). From the side of the receiving countries, Hotchschild (2002) observes that the crisis in child care is an outcome of a "caring deficit" in North American society caused by males who do not contribute a fair share of emotional, caring and reproductive labour when the economic survival of the household requires and become dependent on the contributions of women.

Benefits of international labour migration are never one sided. All migrant workers (irrespective of their status) contribute to growth and prosperity in both countries of destination and countries of origin. In the words of the ILO Director-

General, Somavia (2000): "Migrant workers are an asset to every country where they bring their labour... "Migrant workers provide valuable services with their labour and furnish an often invisible subsidy to the national economies that receive them. They work in factories, produce food, provide domestic service, staff hospitals and contribute to a wide range of basic needs, often for low wages and with little recognition of the value of their contribution" (Somavia, 2000). They are by no means free riders as commonly assumed. As Galbraith (1979) once states, "Migration is the oldest action against poverty. It selects those who most want help. It is good for the country to which they go; it helps to break the equilibrium of poverty in the country from which they come. What is the perversity in the human soul that causes people to resist so obvious a good" (Galbraith, 1979)?

While international migration elicits valuable assets for migrants' families and to the countries which send and receive them, it also involves various labour and social issues. The International Labour Office (ILO) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), whilst recognizing the benefits of managed migration, have raised concerns about the possible detrimental effects of migration. These include the consequences of a brain drain of highly skilled workers, the dislocation associated with migration, the gender consequences of these trends and the need to safeguard the interests of a potentially vulnerable group of workers against exploitation (ILO, 1999; IOM, 2003). Exploitation of migrants in the macro-structures can be seen in multiple levels, which is more

pronounced in the global economy. Jensen (2006) explicates further that global economic policies, initiated through market liberalization and the structural adjustment policies (SAP) of the World Bank and the IMF are the major causes of the gap in income and employment opportunities, displacing workers from their local livelihood. For example, 1.7 million small-scale Mexican farmers were displaced by the flood of cheap agricultural products from the U.S. following the implementation of NAFTA (see Jensen, 2006).

Moreover, social concerns were not only concentrated to the macro-forces of migration but also to its micro-structures such as the individual plights of the migrants. In many situations there is a gap between human rights which regular and irregular migrants experience under international law and the difficulties they experience in the countries where they live, work, and across which they travel (Grant, 2005). This gap between the principles agreed to by governments, and the reality of individual lives, underscores the vulnerability of migrants in terms of dignity and human rights (ILO, 2004). This vulnerability derives from an alien status, often contrasts sharply with the determination, ingenuity and resilience required for migration process itself (Luca, 2007). As strangers to a society, migrants may be unfamiliar with the national language, laws and practice, and so less able than others to know and assert their rights. They may face discrimination, and be subjected to unequal treatment and unequal opportunities at work, and in their daily lives (Grant, 2005). This dilemma came to the forefront when a Filipino domestic worker in Singapore, Flora

Contemplacion, was convicted of murder and hanged in 1995 despite appeals for clemency by the Philippines (Battistella, 1999).

The Philippines' Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act of 1995 or Republic Act 8042 was created in response to the Flor Contemplacion case. The Act of 1995 unequivocally declares that "the state does not promote overseas employment as a means to sustain economic growth and achieve national development." As the act declares, the state will deploy overseas Filipino workers only in countries where the rights of Filipino migrant workers are protected. The Act also stresses the need to focus on sending skilled workers abroad who can protect themselves more effectively.

The civil society has a major role to protect the interests of migrant workers against abuses in the absence of government support. As a result of recent trends towards government decentralization and the changing role of the state from being the sole provider of social services to a facilitator and regulator, the 1990s witnessed an increasing use of the concept of civil society (Schonauer, 2003). Yet what do we understand by "civil society" and what is the role of civil society? Some authors, such as Derleth (2000) argue that the existence of civil society is often not much discussed in certain parts of the world because it is "simply taken for granted" (Derleth, 2000). In contrast, Carothers (1999) states that civil society everywhere is a "bewildering array of the good, the bad, and the outright bizarre".

However, Linz and Stepan (1996) provide a more balanced and informative definition: "By civil society we refer to that arena of the polity where self-organizing groups, movements, and individuals, relatively autonomous from the state, attempt to articulate values, create associations and solidarities, and advance their interests. Hence, civil society consists of organized citizens operating somewhere between the state on the one hand and the realm of the family on the other (Schonauer, 2003). Nevertheless, an important connection with the state exists as "civil society is also expected to participate in policy formulation, help with policy implementation and lobby activities" (Kopecky & Mudde, 2003). Civil-society groups therefore hold the crucial function of supporting and monitoring the state. Migrant associations form part of civil society. Migrant associations are of religious, sportive, political, cultural and/or economic character; they serve as intermediary organisms between the migrant and the new society or culture thus helping the migrant during his or her adaptation process though such association also holds the danger of an adverse affect: the creation of an "enclave culture" (Altamirano, 1996).

Chapter 3 – Methodology

A. Introductory Remarks

The interviews and surveys were conducted with the nine Filipino nurses selected among the migrants who came to Halifax from 2007 to 2009. Halifax was identified as a place where there were targeted participants meeting the requirements for the study. Levitt and Glick Schiller (2004) acknowledge that to study a transnational phenomenon, it seems intuitive that a multi-sited research agenda would be the best way to capture realities, perspectives and impacts across geographically distant social fields. However, they also propose that by asking questions of those living in a location about their transnational engagement, insight can be gained into the full breadth of their transnational experience (Levitt & Glick Schiller, 2004). This declaration is strongly supported by Vuorela (2002) stating that in transnational families with far flung membership, “telling the story here, primarily from the vantage point of only one of its members, adequately reveals the complexities of translational family dispersal and reunion. Therefore there is no need to travel to the Philippines or to Saudi Arabia to achieve better insights and implications of Filipino transnationalism in a foreign land as this study reveals. Doing research in Canada is sufficient enough. The value of conducting this extra research is not minimized, but as other authors have shown (Hondagneu-Sotelo & Avila, 2000;

Jones-Corea, 2000; Zontini, 2004), single-cited research of transnational issues can be very informative.

This methodology section will briefly describe the research in terms of its background, design and strategy and the profiles of the participants. Research for this paper has leaned heavily on a combination of qualitative semi-structured interviews, surveys contextualizing background information of the participants and both qualitative and quantitative secondary source of information. In deciding upon the interview strategy, a semi-structured approach was used to both ground the interview and ensure that it remained on topic while allowing both the researcher and the participants the spontaneity that is required for creating follow up questions or adding explanatory remarks and comments. According to Miles and Huberman (1994), a structured approach would be too rigid and would prevent the researcher from interacting with the participants and asking follow-up questions. It would also prevent the participants from spontaneously adding their own remarks and observations. Similarly, an unstructured approach was judged as unfeasible because it is simply too loose. If followed, the interview could very well get off track (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

The semi-structured interviews, accordingly, provided a space for the participants to share their personal experiences, starting from a set of suggested thematic areas. This study also aims to be exploratory while in the

process of collecting information in order to compare it with larger trends and phenomena in broader scales. Its sample size and the manner it was selected rules out the formation of sweeping statements or generalizations based on the data collected. The gathered information can be used to investigate and explore the experiences of the selected Filipino migrants to weigh against existing theories and literature and to recommend for further study but it does not stand on its own for the generation of new theories.

As Sekaran (2003) clarifies, a research methodology may be defined as academia's established regulatory framework for the collection and evaluation of existing knowledge for the purpose of arriving at, and validating, new knowledge. Cooper and Schindler (2005) maintain that the determination of the research methodology is one of the more important challenges which confronts the researcher. Research methodology occupies a position of unique importance. Acknowledging the definition of the research methodology above, this research poses a set of hypotheses, creates related questions and articulates a specified group of objectives as shown in the following research background.

B. Research Background

1. Research Objectives

- a. To map out the various social networks that the Filipino migrants particularly the professional nurses in Halifax identified and utilized in exiting the Philippines and finding employment both in Saudi Arabia and Canada.
- b. To identify the implications of transnationalism for the development of the Philippines both in economic and social terms exclusively at the meso and micro-level involving the family and community.
- c. To assess the exploitation of Filipino migrant workers by agencies and to highlight the international economic and political subordination of the country that cannot take action to protect its own citizens.

2. Research Questions

- a. What are the social networks that the Filipinos who are nursing professional migrants in Halifax identified and utilized in finding employment both in Saudi Arabia and Canada?

- b. How do the social and economic remittances sent by such transnational migrants make an impact upon development in the Philippines both in economic and social terms at the meso and micro-level involving the family and community?
- c. How does the illegal collection of placement fees by unscrupulous recruiters and agencies take place and how does it affect the lives of transnational migrants and their families? Why is such exploitation occurring?

C. Research Design

In comparing research methodology with research design as explained above, Creswell (2003) concurs that a research methodology references the procedural rules for the evaluation of research claims and the validation of the knowledge gathered, while research design functions as the research blueprint. Although research methodology and research design are distinct academic constructs, Punch (2000) maintains the former to be more holistic than the latter and, in fact, inclusive of it. Thus, a methodology does not simply frame a study but it identifies the research tools and strategies (i.e. resources) that will be employed, and relates their use to specified research aims. As Sekaran (2003) suggests, its importance emanates from the fact that it defines the activity of

specified research, its procedural methods, strategies, for progress measurement and criteria for research success.

The research design, functions to articulate the strategies (including interview strategies) and tools by and through which empirical data will be collected and analyzed. It additionally serves to connect the research questions to the data and articulate the means by which the research hypothesis shall be tested and the research objectives satisfied (Punch, 2000). In order to satisfy the stated end, the research design has to proceed in response to four interrelated research problems. These are (1) the articulation and selection of the research questions; (2) the identification of the relevant data; (3) determination of data collection focus; and (4) the selection of the method by which the data will be analyzed and verified (Punch, 2000).

The strategy for this study was formed based on the most appropriate ways of getting the required information to speak to the thematic areas identified. This implies accessing the living experiences of the participants and doing so in a manner that enabled them to feel at ease and safe in sharing their stories. Further, research strategy involves three steps in order to analyze the collected data while ensuring the correctness of the analysis, namely: 1) interviewing, 2) transcribing and 3) coding.

D. Research Strategy

1. Interviewing

The interviews were mostly directed towards identifying the social networks that the participants used in coming to Saudi Arabia and Canada and their role in sending social and financial remittances to their families and relatives back home. Since the study was about the Internationally Educated Nurses (IENs), the participants were to be drawn from among the Filipino migrants who came to work in Halifax from 2007 to 2009 by choosing those hired as nurses or with nursing background. Equal gender representation was not specifically emphasized in this study since it is difficult to find male Filipino nurses working in Halifax during the research period thus all the participants selected in the study were females. Without exception, all participants consented to confidential interviews. They insisted that their names and other information be kept completely confidential. I consented and assured all nine participants that confidentiality was going to be respected and that a summary of this study's findings was to be provided to them.

Following the advice of Miles and Huberman (1994), I thoroughly familiarized myself with the topic of the interviews. As Miles and Huberman (1994) write, interviews can only be constructive and fruitful should the interviewer have substantial prior knowledge of the topic of investigation. The literature review

chapter proved invaluable in this respect. Interviews were done using our local language, 'Tagalog' or Filipino and then during the transcription process the results were translated into English. Furthermore, throughout the interviews, as the researcher I have to exercise objectivity and not impose, or influence, any particular answers upon the participants. This may be confirmed through the interview transcripts which have been made available in Appendix B (Interview Guide) and its subsequent partial transcription result; and Appendix C (Background Information Sheet). Finally, in order to ensure the quality of the data gathered and the quality of its succeeding qualitative analysis, I applied the advice offered by Miles and Huberman (1994) that interview questions were set according to the requirements of the research questions and not in accordance with the conclusions that the researcher hoped to reach.

2. Transcribing

All nine interviews were done using a tape recorder with the permission of the participants. Even though the transcribing process was extremely time-consuming, it proved to be an invaluable activity. By personally transcribing the interviews, I was able to develop a high degree of familiarity with the interview material, recollect some of the issues and comments that the participants have made but which have been forgotten, and detect underlying meanings which have been missed during the interviews themselves. In

addition, the personal transcription of the interviews allowed me to sharpen my awareness of the issues. In brief, by following Miles and Huberman's (1994) advice to personally transcribe the interviews instead of a third party transcription in order to familiarize myself with them; I was able to acquire a more insightful understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. During the transcription, all participants were identified in the study using their chosen pseudonyms to protect their identity and respect confidentiality.

3. Coding

As do several research scholars (see Patton, 1990; Merriam, 1993; Sekaran, 2003), insist that following their transcription, interviews must be coded. Coding facilitates later analysis of the data and ensures both the accuracy and relevancy of the analysis. In other words, the coding process contributes to the quality of the qualitative data analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994). They further suggest that coding be guided by both the research's conceptual framework and research questions. The implication here is that the researcher needs to identify and define his key terms, precisely clarify what he is looking for and know why he is looking for particular terms. Although the coding process was time-consuming, as with the transcription process, it proved invaluable. Apart from the fact that it reduced the interview transcripts to manageable data which withstands thorough analysis, the coding process allowed me as the researcher

the opportunity for a closer and infinitely more thorough reading of the interview data.

E. Profiles of Participants

Sally was the most active participant in this research. She even suggested additional but relevant questions that could be asked at other participants in the ongoing research in order to elicit important information. Aside from being active she was also very transparent and straightforward in revealing the information on their status in the Middle East and how they ended up being recruited for work in Canada. She is married but separated from her husband. They have a daughter who is now under the care of Sally's parents back in the Philippines. She used to work in a clinic in Saudi Arabia as a nurse but then she decided to transfer to a government hospital after weighing the financial advantages that were offered to her. It is the same 'pull factor' she experienced in Saudi Arabia that brought Sally to North America. She wanted to earn in dollars. Before applying for Canada, Sally had an option of traveling to the US while waiting for her application to be approved. She ended up coming here instead. She currently worked as a Licensed Practical Nurse in a nursing home.

Marian stays in an apartment with another Filipino who happened to be one of my research participants. Both of them had been working together in Saudi Arabia as registered nurses. She finds comfort living with her friend at this time

because she is away from her family for the first time. She is 40 years old and is married to a Syrian national. Her husband and her children are all staying in the Middle East but she wished them to be here with her someday. Marian has a way of establishing constant communication with her family. She lets her Yahoo Messenger (YM) open for 24 hours everyday so that her children can call her anytime they want. At one time, my interview with Marian was briefly interrupted by a call from her children via YM. She first went to Saudi Arabia in 1993 as a staff nurse two years after graduation from a Philippine university. She used to be a Christian but converted herself into the Muslim faith for marriage. She decided to leave Saudi Arabia and accepted the offer to work in Canada to pave the way for a better education for her children and a future for her family. Her family has twice been denied a visa by Citizenship and Immigration Canada to visit her thus she was deeply heartbroken during the interview. At present she works in a nursing home as a personal care worker. She has taken the IELTS exam to qualify for the RN exam but she failed, not just once. Like most of her colleagues, she wanted to try again.

Inday was the youngest of the participants that I have interviewed and at 32 years of age she is still single which is uncommon among Filipino women. Her current status also means that her obligation to send money home, which she has been doing on a regular basis, is more directed to the needs of her parents and siblings. She is currently sending money home partly to support her brother in his studies. She was encouraged to travel to Saudi Arabia and finally to

Canada through the influence of friends though she was cautious about the job offer at first. She contacted the POEA, a government labour office that handles migrant workers back in the Philippines to make sure that the job offer was legitimate before grabbing the opportunity. She came here in July of 2007 to work as a personal care worker -- the lowest rank among regular staff in a nursing home though she was a registered nurse both in the Philippines and Saudi Arabia. One thing that she did not like in Saudi Arabia which eventually convinced her to move to Canada was the fact that she could not keep her passport thus she was not free to resign anytime she wanted to, or to accept extra job offers outside her original employment. It is a common practice for employers in Saudi Arabia to control their workers. Thus when she applied for a job in Canada it was hard to retrieve her travel documents because her employer did not want her to leave Saudi Arabia. Her other reason of moving to Canada was to earn a better income. She is truly a hardworking woman and to overcome her loneliness, being away from her families, she would rather spend her free days working in the nursing home, sometimes accepting double shifts.

JP was a silent type of person, serious and timid but once you ask questions of her she could right away provide the answer. At 33, she is married with children who are currently living in the Philippines somewhere in Iloilo, one of the provinces in the Visayas islands. The Ilonggos as they used to be called are considered very personable. JP belongs to the kind of family where the members are located in three different countries which is really a burden to her.

Her husband is also working in Saudi Arabia thus it is hard for them to be separated from their children who are under the care of their parents in the Philippines. Someday she wants her family to be together again by immigrating to Canada and her coming to Canada to work was her first step. She worked as a personal care worker in a nursing home partly owned by a Filipino-Canadian.

Drew is married, 36 years old from Manila who came first to Saudi Arabia in 2004 then to Canada in 2007. Financially, it was hard for her at first to decide to leave Saudi Arabia because she would be obliged to borrow money from an agency with a high interest rate to pay for the placement fees and plane tickets on her way to Canada. Borrowing money in Saudi Arabia was common among Filipino migrants wishing to enter other countries. She recognized right away the big difference in terms of her lifestyle back in Saudi Arabia compared with her current experiences in Canada. Unlike in Canada, there are lots of restrictions on her movement in the Middle East, she said. She can hold her own passport and anytime she wants she can go home for a vacation without jeopardizing her job. About 40% of her income was sent home every month for her husband, her children and siblings. Her husband is unemployed in the Philippines thus she cannot fail to send money back home regularly. She felt that she is better compensated in Canada than in Saudi Arabia and she is in a better position to send money as she is now earning in dollars. In terms of workload, her job as a nurse in Saudi Arabia involved both mental and physical requirements while in Canada the demand was more physical in nature. In a

period of three years in the Middle East she had the chance of visiting her family sometimes at the expense of the employer, but she has been here in Canada for three years without getting an opportunity to see her family thus she really missed her children. She is currently holding a temporary work visa. According to her, it is too expensive to travel, that she would rather send the money home than spend it. She is in the process of applying for landed immigrant status with her family through the provincial nominee program.

Cecon came to Saudi Arabia from Kuwait via the 'back door'. In a convoy of about 18 cars filled with Filipinos from Kuwait, she was driven out during the Gulf War in 1990 for safety reasons and through the persistence of the Kuwaiti and Philippine governments. Since her group was working in Kuwait close to the Saudi border, it was considered wise for them to enter Saudi Arabia; while other Filipino migrants went to Jordan to escape the war. Danger lurked en route to Saudi Arabia. According to her, they were the last group that was allowed to cross the Saudi border. After that the Saudi military started to plant bombs along roadsides and in the mountains bordering Kuwait and Saudi Arabia to serve as military fences thus preventing war evacuees and military personnel from the besieged country to spill over into their territories. It was during this transition that Cecon met her husband. Like most of those who left Kuwait, she received a couple of thousand dollars to pay for damages and the loss of income as a result of repatriation but according to her it was not enough to repay the losses. Besides, it took her a long period of time to get the money

from the Kuwaiti government. Back in the Philippines, Cecon came from the southern part of the Philippines, Cotabato City. Her family currently lives there. She had been a nurse since 1988. She left Saudi Arabia to work in Canada solely for economic reason. Currently she works as a personal care worker in a nursing home hoping to pass the qualifying exam as a registered nurse someday. At 51, Cecon is the oldest among my participants in this research.

Ikay speaks English very well relative to other participants that I have interviewed. According to her, it really helps a lot to be exposed to reading newspapers, starting at an early stage in life with her family. This habit of reading the newspapers everyday led her to go to Saudi Arabia to work as a nurse where she found the job offer in the classified ads. Ikay is married. She is 38 years old. Most of her family members are in the Philippines while her husband works in the U.S. She left Saudi Arabia for Canada for a better life and for the future of her family; however, she is also contemplating going to the U.S. if there is a better opportunity there. Despite the low occupational status she was currently holding as personal care worker in a nursing home, she accepted the job because life is better here than in Saudi Arabia. Though she used to work as a registered nurse in Saudi Arabia, she prefers Canada. According to her, the life in the desert was full of 'don'ts'. Women were not allowed to walk in the streets unaccompanied; they have to wear a veil in public places and are not allowed to talk with men in public unless related, to name a few of the restrictions.

Kate is married but separated from her husband who lives in the Philippines. She is 46 years old and presently working as a Licensed Practical Nurse in a nursing home. I find Kate extremely generous and caring. Despite their marital separation, she still sends a portion of her income to support her husband who is now living with another woman. Her children are now under the care of her sister-in-law where she channels her remittances every month. She has a house of her own in the Philippines where her children live and every time she sends money home, part of it goes to the payment of the house. Kate is highly educated. She finished three different degrees as a student back in the Philippines and including her nursing degree. She has been a nurse since 1991.

Poks worked as a registered nurse in Saudi Arabia from 2004. According to her, she decided to move to Canada in 2007 for better opportunities and earnings. She is married to a Filipino nurse who is still in Saudi Arabia. Someday she would invite him to follow her to Canada. Poks has children who are now under the care of her parents back in the Philippines. She regularly sends money back home to support the needs of her children and at the same time to provide assistance to her parents. She is one of the Filipino nurses who was able to work as a registered nurse right away in Canada after only one attempt at taking and passing the qualifying exams once from the College of Registered Nurses in Nova Scotia. It is uncommon for Filipinos to pass the RN qualifying exam without re-taking it. According to statistics, the percentage of internationally educated nurses to pass the exam once is 62%, while for

Canadians it is high, around 96%. She currently works in a nursing home for the elderly with other Filipino migrants who came with her from Saudi Arabia.

Chapter 4 – The Context of the Case Study

A. Regulatory Landscape of Philippine International Labour Migration

According to the statistics provided by the IOM (2004), the Philippines ranks third, next to China and India, as a top labour-sending country in the world.

Currently, about 10% of the country's population are working overseas.

Everyday, close to 3,000 Filipino men and women leave the country to become migrant workers (Centre for Migrant Advocacy, 2008). Yet, the question remains as to why labour-sending countries promote labour migration.

According to KAKAMMPI (1998), "Philippine overseas migration has become a pair of crutches for the local economy, serving two main objectives - to ease the unemployment situation and to generate foreign incomes to fuel the faltering economy". Filipino labour migration was originally intended to serve as a temporary measure to ease unemployment. In the long run, its perceived benefits included stabilizing the position of the country in terms of balance-of-payments and providing alternative employment for Filipinos. However, dependence on labour migration and international service provision has grown to the point where there are few efforts to address domestic labour problems (Villalba, 2002).

Constantly increasing overseas deployment figures manifest the worsening employment, unemployment, underemployment, contractualization and

consequent poverty in the Philippines. On one hand, the Philippines has too few jobs for its population. The unemployment rate has steadily increased from 8.4 percent in 1990 to 12.7 percent in 2003 (Bureau of Labour and Employment, 2003). In 2007, the government was short of the annual target of 1.6 million jobs in the country, with new jobs created declining from 700,000 in 2005 to 599,000 of 1.6 M target jobs (School of Labour and Industrial Relations, 2008). On the other hand, overseas deployment averaged 2,952 daily by 2007, 17% more than five years before and 30% more than ten years before. The number of officially deployed Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) in 2007, 1,077,623, was 21% more than those deployed 5 years before and 44% more than 10 years earlier (Jimenez, 2008).

Under the Philippines system, the protection of OFWs is a priority as the country's key pillar in terms of foreign policy. To this end, the government works to optimize the number of Filipino workers channeled through the system while ensuring adequate rights are safeguarded (Dimpalis-Baldoz, 2007). Looking back, the demand for temporary migrant workers increased in the early 1970s, fuelled mainly by the economic boom in the Middle East thus the Philippine government took advantage of the emerging contract labour market. In 1974 the country adopted the Labour Code of the Philippines (Agunias, 2008) for this purpose. The Philippine Labour Code in the 1970s was originally envisioned to complete government control of overseas recruitment by creating a large bureaucracy composed of three institutions: the Overseas Employment

Development Board (OEDB), the National Seaman Board (NSB) and the Bureau of Employment Services (BES) to replace private, fee-charging recruitment agencies which at the time were blamed for the increasing abuses against migrant workers (Agunias, 2008). When the number of processed contracts almost tripled in the first three years after the creation of these institutions, the government recognized that the private sector had contributed to the boom. Thus in 1977, it officially abandoned its plan to phase out private recruitment agencies by allowing these agencies to continue their activities under the strict regulation of BES. It also formalized the distinctive role and legitimacy of recruitment agencies in the Philippines. In 1982, OEDB, NSB and BES were merged into what is now known as the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration or the POEA (Agunias, 2008).

The Philippine has an exemplary record in creating directives and mandates to protect the rights of the migrant workers yet it remains a question why abuses against human rights are still happening. According to Wickramasekera (2006), the Philippine government is touted as a global model on labour migration because of its adherence to international human and workers' rights conventions that promote and protect the human rights of migrant workers. Based on the report made by the Centre for Migrant Advocacy (2008), the Philippines is also a party to numerous UN and ILO conventions and treaties, noteworthy of which are the following: International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), International Covenant on Economic, Social and

Cultural Rights (ICESCR), Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Optional Protocol on Trafficking, Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), Committee against Torture (CAT), Convention of the Suppression of Trafficking in Persons (CSTP) and the Migrant Workers Conventions as well as ILO Core Conventions including ILO Convention 143 and 97 on migrant workers (Centre for Migrant Advocacy, 2008).

At the national level, the Philippine Congress has enacted the following laws: Republic Act (RA) 8042 (Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act of 1995), RA 9189 (Overseas Absentee Voting Law); Anti-Trafficking Law; Citizenship Retention and Reacquisition Act of 2003, Comprehensive Tax Reform Law (1997). At the sub-region, the Philippines was also a leading party to the ASEAN's adoption of a declaration on the promotion and protection of migrant workers. In terms of bilateral labour and social security agreements, the country has forged agreements with 56 countries in the span of 38 years. Most of these bilateral labour agreements are on seafarers (Wickramasekera, 2006). As observed by the Philippine Migrants Rights Groups (2009), the Philippines is also taking the lead in advocating for mechanisms for the protection and promotion of migrant workers in the ASEAN. It has also forged bilateral agreements with a few countries that host OFWs and have various national and local legislations to integrate and complement its agreements. Despite the good

reputation of the Philippines in its effort to protect the migrants, stories of abused OFWs still abound.

B. Filipino Nurses Locally and Globally: A Brief Profile

The Philippines is one of the leading primary source countries for nurses internationally by design and of course with the support of the government. In fact, the country has been described as the leader “in global nurse emigration” (Brush, 1995) and as the “largest exporter of nurses worldwide” (Lorenzo et al., 2007). It has been estimated that by the start of the 21st century there are 250,000 Filipino nurses employed throughout the world (Ball, 2004). Filipino nurses are in great demand because they are primarily educated in college-degree programs, can communicate well in English and because governments have deemed the Philippines to be an ethical source of nurses (Aiken et al., 2004). However, precise figures on nurse migration from the Philippines are difficult to obtain and “generally underreported” (Barnet & Cavanagh, 1994). Data on migration, including that from the POEA, are often severely underreported because they cover only certain types of emigrants and because many nurses leave the country using other types of visas, such as student or tourist visas (Adversario, 2003). The POEA also does not include nurses that have returned to the Philippines or those who renew their contracts with the same employer (POEA, 2005).

According to the Professional Regulations Commission, the total supply of nurses in the Philippines as of 2003, adjusted for deaths and retirement, was 332,206 (Lorenzo et al., 2005). Fifty eight percent were employed as nurses either in the Philippines or internationally. No data was available on what happened to the remainder (42%) of the profession. Figures on Table 1 below provide the complete information on the distribution of Filipino nurses.

Calculated based on known positions in the domestic market and recorded deployment abroad, the data shows that majority or 84.75% of employed nurses are working abroad. Among the 15.25 percent employed in the Philippines, most were employed by government agencies and the rest worked in the private sector or in nursing education institutions (Corcega et al., 2004).

Work Setting	Number	%
I. Local/national	29,467	15.25
A. Service		
1. Government agencies	19,052	9.86
2. Private agencies	8,173	4.23
B. Education	2,241	1.16
II. International	163,756	84.75
Total	193,223	100.00

Table 1: Estimated Number of Employed Filipino Nurses by Work Setting, 2003
Source: Corcega, Lorenzo and Yabes, (2004).

According to CHED (2006), both domestic and foreign demand for nurses has generated a rapidly growing nursing education sector now made up of about 460 nursing colleges that offer the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program and graduate approximately 20,000 nurses annually (CHED, 2006). A motivator for the Philippines to produce more nurses for export is remittance income sent home by nurses working in other countries. Based on production and domestic demand patterns, the Philippines has a net surplus of registered nurses. However, the country loses its trained and skilled nursing workforce much faster than it can replace them, thereby jeopardizing the integrity and quality of Philippine health services. From 1992 to 2003, the major destinations of Filipino emigrant nurses have been Saudi Arabia, the United States, and the United Kingdom. These countries have employed 56.8, 13.14, and 12.25 percent, respectively, of the cumulative total of Filipino nurses sent abroad since 1992 (POEA, 2004). Other common destinations for deployed Filipino nurses were Libya, United Arab Emirates, Ireland, Singapore, Kuwait, Qatar, and Brunei (POEA 2004). The majority of nurse medics also go to the United States, United Kingdom, and Saudi Arabia (POEA 2004).

Re-trained doctors as nurses, also known as nurse medics, seeking overseas employment are a new and growing phenomenon. While the exact numbers are not available, a study on this trend showed that in 2001, approximately 2,000 doctors became nurse medics and by 2003, that number increased to about 3,000 (Pascual et al., 2003). In 2005, approximately 4,000 doctors were

enrolled in nursing schools across the country (Galvez-Tan, 2005) and in 2004, the Philippines Hospital Association estimated that 80 percent of all public sector physicians were currently or had already retrained as nurses (PHA, 2005).

Both doctors or nurse medics and nurses are leaving the country *en masse*. According to Lorenzo et al., (2005), nurses on one hand, leaving the country to work abroad are predominantly female, young (in their early twenties), single, and come from middle income backgrounds. While a few of the migrant nurses have acquired their master's degree, the majority have only basic university education. Many, however, have specialization in intensive care units (ICU), emergency rooms (ER), and operating rooms (OR), and they have rendered between 1 and 10 years of service before they migrated (Lorenzo et al., 2005). Based on Pascual's (2003) report, the migrant nurse medics on the other hand, are also predominantly female, but older, more likely to be married, and have higher incomes. The income bracket of the nurse medics in the Philippines ranges from US\$2,400 to US\$9,600 annually. The majority of them had practiced as doctors for more than 10 years. The United States is their top destination country (Pascual, 2003).

Lorenzo et al (2005), reveal that migration was perceived to negatively impact nursing in the Philippines by depleting the pool of skilled and experienced health workers thus compromising the quality of care in the health care system.

One concern among health services managers is that the loss of more senior nurses requires a continual investment in the training of staff replacements and negatively affects the quality of care (Lorenzo et al., 2005). The Philippine Hospital Association (PHA) recently reported that 200 hospitals have closed within the past 2 years due to shortages of doctors and nurses, and that 800 hospitals have partially closed for the same reason, ending services in one or two wards (PHA, 2005). Nurse to patient ratios in provincial and district hospitals are now one nurse to between 40 and 60 patients, which is a striking deterioration from the ratios of one nurse to between 15 and 20 patients that prevailed in the 1990s (Galvez-Tan, 2005). While previous ratios were not ideal, the current ratios have become dangerous even for the nurses, adding to the loss of morale and desire to migrate for those still employed in the Philippines (Lorenzo et al., 2005).

Further evidence of problems in terms of healthcare services provided to Filipinos can be observed in a report from the National Statistics Office. The proportion of Filipinos dying without medical attention has reverted to 1975 levels with 70 percent of deaths unattended during the height of nurse and nurse medics' migration in 2002–2003 (NSO, 2005). This represents a 10 percent increase in the last decade. Perhaps the most troubling indicator of declining access to health services is the drop in immunization rates among children, which have gone from a high of 69.4 percent in 1993 to 59.9 percent in 2003 (Galvez-Tan, 2005). While there are undoubtedly multiple factors that

impact this decline in immunization rates, the association between the lack of health human resources and immunization coverage is indisputable (Lorenzo et al., 2005). One health worker expressed this plainly when he said, “We are the one in need of better service yet we are the losers; those countries with better facilities enjoy better care from health professionals”.

C. Issues in Philippine Migration: Costs and Recruitment Agencies

Migrant workers are plagued with problems every step of the migration process – 1) before departure; 2) upon arrival; 3) on-the-job site and 4) eventually upon return to the Philippines. One of the specific concerns experienced by the migrants, which is also the interest of this paper, is the failure of the government to protect them from unscrupulous recruiters, agencies and even employers in collecting exorbitant fees more than what is allowed by the law. The Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA), tasked to uphold the plights of the OFWs, is deliberately mandated to regulate and monitor the activities of recruitment agencies and employers. Despite its mandate, migrants still fall prey to unscrupulous agencies as if they have no other options but to cling to this illegal activity. Perceiving that there is not much hope for a better future in the Philippines, they would like a chance instead overseas (Jimenez, 2008).

Many migrants pay enormous amounts of money to be able to work overseas. This has resulted in a subculture where OFWs and their families regard

excessive placement fees as a “necessity”. As a general rule, contracting a job overseas in the Philippines is mainly through the licensed private recruitment agencies. Recruitment agencies were allowed to collect from the worker a placement fee not exceeding the equivalent of one month’s salary (POEA, 2002). They can collect also a service fee from the foreign employer (Ibid...Rule V, Section 1). However, as of 2006 collecting of placement fees to a migrant worker is no longer in effect as stated in the POEA’s Governing Board Resolution No. 06, Series of 2006: Domestic workers are now exempted from paying placement fees under the Household Service Workers Policy Reform [POEA, 2006] (Philippine Migrants Rights Groups, 2009). Unfortunately, the POEA has been very passive in monitoring and taking legal actions against those charging “exorbitant” placement fees. Its lingering excuse is that there are few complainants. Take the case of Filipinos in Israel, mentioned in Chapter 1. Kav La Oved’s 2006 survey found that Filipino caregivers paid on the average \$4,000-5,000 placement fee (Kav La Oved, 2006). Israel’s law allows only US\$751.16 that should include fees paid in the Philippines (Safran, 2008).

POEA’s negligence occurs not only on the issue on placement fees. Its failure to protect the Filipino migrants is well established in the following findings of the Philippine Commission on Audit (COA). These findings were compiled by the Philippine Migrants Rights Groups and submitted to the UN Migrant Workers Committee during its 10th Session in Geneva in March 2009. COA (2008) made a scathing remark that “the government may not be considered effective in

regulating overseas recruitment agencies and providing sufficient responsive services to OFWs in view of the number of ineffective policies and lapses in the implementation of its Overseas Workers' Welfare Program". To name some of the findings:

- the Joint and Solidary Liability of RA 8042 (the Migrant Workers Act of 1995) can only be applied to run after a recruitment agency for excessive placement fees, etc. if an OFW has a recruitment agency. However, there are an estimated of 40% of the annual deployment that goes through an agency thus this act cannot assure protection to the other 60%;
- the POEA and its foreign offices have been found to not effectively register foreign employers nor to effectively document OFWs;
- the POEA's stricter regulations for administrative offences and penalties for recruitment violations by agencies and employers have not sufficiently addressed the collection of "exorbitant" placement fees;
- "the provisions of RA 8042 and RA 9422 (an Act to protect the rights of OFW as a worker and human being) requiring the destination countries a) to have existing labour and social laws protecting the rights of migrant workers; b) be a signatory to multilateral conventions, declarations or resolutions relating to their protection; c) have concluded a bilateral agreement or arrangement with the Philippine Government for their protection were not strictly enforced; and

- the policy of lifting suspension upon payment of fines ranging from \$500 to \$4,000 may not be effective in deterring commission of recruitment violations as such amounts could easily be recovered from prospective applicants as recorded in the repeated commission of violations by almost the same recruitment agencies.

Villalba (1997) summarized Filipino migration issues into four major categories. First is the structural issue which includes unskilled migrant workers in low-status jobs (i.e. 3D jobs – dirty, dangerous, and demeaning). Ethnocentrism and nationalism are not only on the rise in many host countries, but are also causing a protectionist backlash against migrant labour such as in Europe also have a weak bargaining position of Third World countries in the fight for the fair treatment of its workers with host countries (Villalba, 1997).

The second type of issue is the rights issues – the non-recognition of the rights of migrants and their families in both origin and sending countries (most especially the latter). Violation of the rights of the migrants has been observed by the Philippine Migrants Rights Groups (2009): “Whereas RA 8042 allows the deployment of OFWs only in countries where the rights of Filipino Migrant Workers are protected based on existing labour and social laws, agreements, declarations and resolutions, and other protective measures, nevertheless there are more than two million OFWs in many of the Gulf countries where their rights are very difficult to protect”.

The third type relates pre-employment issues which is the focus of this paper. Prior to migration, migrant workers face deployment-related problems including charging of exorbitant recruitment fees, illegal recruitment, illegal work contracts, among others. Once again, the Philippine Migrant Rights Groups (2009) criticized the Philippine government by arguing that that the POEA supposedly has a package of reforms. In response to complaints among migrant workers the issue of exaction of 'exorbitant' placement fees charged against them, has been met by developing stringent requirements which include among others the pre-qualification of employers (together with the foreign placement agency). Many cases, however, point to the failure of stricter regulations; high placement fees are even sometimes double-charged by agencies on both worker and prospective employer thus the OFWs and their families become resigned to illegal fees Philippine Migrant Rights Groups (2009).

The final type of issue is the inadequate services for OFWs. Villalba presented this in the context that the growing number of migrants is simply too many for Filipino diplomatic officials and staff to handle. The issue is pointed at the Department of Foreign Affairs, which is supposed to look after the welfare of its citizens in host countries (Villalba, 1997; also in AMEND et al., 2002). According to the Philippine Migrants Rights Groups (2009), under the present administration of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, a million migrant workers are targeted for deployment every year which is in contradiction to the declaration of RA 8042, Section 2c which states that "...the State does not

promote overseas employment as a means to sustain economic growth and achieve national development”.

D. The State, Agencies and Individuals: Cost of Filipino Transnationalism

Combining the results from the three waves of migration, as mentioned earlier in Chapter 2, beginning in 1906 to the present with the participation of its government, Filipinos are spread out across the globe with the largest concentration in the Middle East. The government statistics in 2007 confirm that the current number of OFWs includes 4.1 million documented and just under one million undocumented for a total of around 5 million Filipinos overseas (POEA, 2007). Despite the positive effects of migration from the Philippine government perspective, that is, easing the country's domestic unemployment and stabilizing its dollar reserves, migration has its scores of social consequences. These social costs are proven to be detrimental to the micro-structures of the country such as the individuals, families and the local communities. One of its negative results was the breaking up of families. Remittances, which will be discussed later, are the most palpable product of labour migration that breaks the families apart. The long-term development impact of remittances is multi-dimensional and still debated. Jensen (2006) explains that remittances can lift people out of poverty and stimulate economic growth, which has happened in other countries.

However, an over-dependence on remittances can exacerbate the brain drain, discourage investment in human capital and have serious social costs resulting from the separation of family members (Jensen, 2006). Reliable information about the number of families and children left behind is less available, but one recent estimate suggests that approximately nine million Filipino children, roughly equivalent to 27 percent of the youth population, are growing up with a transnational migrant mother, father or both mother and father (Parrenas, 2005).

On the part of countries of origin including the Philippines, international migration is increasingly seen as part of their development strategies. If in the past, according to Asis (2005), labour migration was seen as a temporary measure to relieve domestic unemployment and balance of payments problems, there is now a shift towards exploring how international migration can contribute to development. In view of the increasing demand for highly skilled human resources in the future, countries of origin are aiming at deploying more highly skilled migrants in the years to come. In general, the approach of countries of origin is centered on increasing deployment and the protection of their nationals based abroad (Asis, 2005). The Philippines has selected outmigration or temporary migration of highly skilled labour force as a development strategy in the context of trying to lift itself out of underdevelopment and poverty, caused, in turn by colonization and historical capitalist exploitation of the country. However, according to Scalabrini Migration Centre (1996), labour migration has not contributed significantly to easing the unemployment problem nor has it

contributed to improving human capital. On the contrary, there could even be deskilling as skilled and educated migrants take on jobs that are below their skill levels.

According to Roosblad (2005), private recruitment agencies play a crucial role in global recruitment, because employers do not have the channels to select potential employees abroad. They do not have knowledge of the local labour market, are not familiar with rules and regulations and do not have the language skills and the means to make a good selection. As a consequence employers are highly dependent on recruitment agencies. Recruitment agencies act as stimulators or active intermediaries in the process of international recruitment (Buchan, et al., 2003). However, employers hardly have means to check if an intermediary is trustworthy. They also hardly exchange experiences with recruitment agencies amongst each other. This way a recruitment agency which has proven it to be unreliable to one institute can easily render its services to the next institute. Practically all employers indicate that the choice for a source country is random. It is more or less determined by the offers of private recruitment agencies (Roosblad, 2005). There have been reports in some countries that some agencies have exploited nurses, by providing misleading information about pay and conditions in destination countries, or by charging large fees to enable nurses to move from one country to another (see Fritsch, 2001; Buchan, 2002). Like the transnational movement of migrants, recruitment is a transnational business with profits taken from the migrants at every level of

recruitment. In the case study, it is the Filipinos who recruited their compatriots. Fees are collected in Saudi Arabia before they step into Canada, their country of destination. Filipino-owned recruitment agencies play a key role as intermediaries in the international recruitment process of health workers.

E. Philippines Emigration Issues and Canada's Immigration Challenges

There has been recent debate that the growing global demand for Filipino nurses is so great that emigration of nurses could be threatening the country's health care quality (Prystay, 2002). In 2000, it is estimated there are more than 30,000 unfilled nursing positions in the Philippines (OECD, 2002). However, the government has a different plan as the Philippine Secretary of Labour and Employment commented: "It's an industry. It's not politically correct to say you are exporting people, but it's part of globalization, and I like to think that countries like ours, rich in human resources, have to contribute to the rest of the world" (Diamond, 2002).

Canada, on the other hand, is both a source and a destination country for international nurse migration with an estimated net loss of nurses. As a source country, it is projecting a significant RN shortage in the near future with a shortfall of over 100,000 by 2016 (Canadian Nurses Association, 2002). In the 1990s, Canada experienced emigration of its nurses to the South of the border. The problems were related to funding and restructuring restraints, fuelled in part

by the federal government's preoccupation with deficit reduction that prompted many Canadian registered nurses to consider migration to the United States or elsewhere (Nadeau, Whewell & Williamson, 2000; Baumann et al., 2004).

During the 1990s Canada witnessed a gross outflow of approximately 27,100 RNs through permanent emigration to the United States (Industry Canada, 1999). The total outflow of RNs to the United States was equivalent to more than a quarter of the 3,000 new RN Canadian graduates in 1995 (Zhao, Drew, & Murray, 2000). A further study indicates that 22 percent of RNs applying for licensure from 1997 to 2000 in the United States were educated in Canada (Buchan, Parkin & Sochalski, 2003). It notes that "In 1994 and 1995, 6,821 and 5,234 Canadian RNs, respectively, obtained temporary permits to work in the United States [Assess and Intervene, 2000] ... between 1993 and 1997, the proportion of baccalaureate graduates from the McMaster University School of Nursing that left Canada increased from 8.9 percent to 10.6 percent, showing the same effect in a single university cohort" (Rideout, Mallette & Coates [1998] in Baumann et al., 2004).

To solve the shortage of Canadian nurses after the exodus, there have been ongoing debates on whether to support or reject recruitment of nurses from abroad. As a destination country, Canada has major responsibility to provide health care service to its population thus it is positively responding to the critical situation of the shortage of nurses. In order to ensure a sufficient supply of nurses in the future, workforce planners in Ontario are urged to make

contingency plans that will “entail decisions about how much emphasis should be placed on increasing nursing school graduates and what efforts should be made to recruit abroad or to encourage resident internationally educated nurses (IENs) to become eligible to enter the workforce” (Blythe & Baumann, 2008).

Immigration has been suggested by some as an alternative policy lever to address the shortage. However, moral issues involved in recruiting IENs cannot be taken lightly thus Canada is now undergoing a moral tension arising from the case of nurses who want to migrate by using their human right to migrate and the unethical recruitment of nurses from abroad which is against the human right to health. The question whether to support the recruitment of IENs met two opposing positions.

Proponents of international recruitment argue that nurse migration provides health-care organizations and the community with the opportunity to improve patient safety and promote health by increasing staff in an efficient and cost-effective manner (RNAO Policy Brief, 2008). In addition, nurses have the right to migrate if they comply with the recruiting country's immigration/work policies (e.g. work permit) and meet obligations in their home country [e.g. bonding responsibilities, tax payment] (AFT Healthcare Program and Policy Council, 2003). The Philippines as the major source country is supported by the Canadian Registered Nurse Examination (CRNE) administrative data (Assessment Strategies Inc., 2004). Recruiting nurses from the Philippines has been recommended as a staffing strategy as there is a surplus of nurses

wanting to emigrate and nurse migration is an economic development strategy supported by the government of the Philippines (Gamble, 2002).

The counter argument in the recruitment of IENs claims that global economic and human health resources policies are inherently unjust and unethical in tearing families apart by encouraging nurses to leave their loved ones in order to give them a future. Migrant workers, particularly nurses have a basic human right to migrate but it should be based on an authentic choice rather than economic coercion. Promises not to disrupt the health system conflict with overwhelming evidence on how international recruitment of nurses is eroding access to health care in poor countries (RNAO Policy Brief, 2008). International migration has therefore been viewed as exacerbating shortages in source countries. In one particular case, the OECD report (2003) notes that the Philippines confronts a shortage of nurses so the policy of encouraging employment overseas may conflict with domestic priorities (this is an example of the costs of transnational migration and the export of skilled workers as a development strategy: the very strategy chosen undermines development).

F. Philippines' Memoranda of Agreement and Canada's Policy on Foreign Worker Recruitment

In 2007, the Philippine government, through the POEA, has made historical memoranda of agreements with four Canadian provinces namely, Alberta, British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Manitoba where the bottom line is the recruitment of Filipinos to work and eventually to live in Canada in the future. Canada has thus formally announced that it needs Filipino migrants especially temporary workers for some of its western provinces. To uphold the rights and protect the interest of prospective Filipino temporary workers heading to Canada, the POEA issued Memorandum Circular No. 03 (series of 2007) on the "no placement fee" policy to warn prospective Filipino migrants heading for Canada against unscrupulous recruitment agencies and employers in collecting placement fees.

In 2008, the province of Manitoba has made a parallel law protecting foreign workers from recruitment agencies and prospective employers which is clearly stated under the Obligations and Prohibitions of Canada's Worker Recruitment and Protection Act (15[4]). The Act states that an individual who is engaged in foreign worker recruitment must not directly or indirectly charge or collect a fee from a foreign worker for finding or attempting to find employment for him or her (The Worker Recruitment and Protection Act, 2009). Canadian recruiters or landed immigrants and other employers based in Canada will be held liable for

any fee or charge made to a foreign worker by the recruiter or anyone with whom the recruiter subcontracts.

Going back in history, Canada started a Temporary Foreign Worker program in the mid-1970s which initially concerned only skilled workers, namely managers, university- and college-trained professionals and technicians and workers with apprenticeship training. Over time, two occupation-specific components were added, the Seasonal Agricultural Worker (SAW) Program and the Live-In-Caregiver (LIC) Program. In 2002, the program was extended to all unskilled workers under the Pilot Project for Occupations Requiring Lower Levels of Formal Training (BCASW, 2010).

With major revisions done in 2009 of the Temporary Foreign Worker program, the general public is advised that Canadian laws and regulations prohibit the charging of recruitment and placement fee from workers seeking employment or from workers under the Pilot Project for Occupations Requiring Lower Levels of Formal Training regardless of the province of destination in Canada (POEA, 2006b). Through this project, hiring of foreign workers in occupations that usually require a high school diploma or a maximum of 2 years of job-specific training (level C and D) is covered by the prohibition on collection of placement fee. It is assumed that employers shall cover all recruitment costs related to the hiring of the foreign workers.

In Nova Scotia, the Employment Agencies Act passed in the 1920s, prohibits any person or company from collecting any fee from a person seeking employment or for whom employment has been secured (Nova Scotia Labour and Workforce Development, 2010). With the existing of the Pilot Project for Occupations Requiring Lower Levels of Formal Training of 2002 and the Employment Agencies Act of 1920, it is no longer a question whether Nova Scotia is covered by the advisory regarding the non collection of placement fees to foreign workers. Definitely, foreign workers are covered by the Canadian laws and regulations prohibiting the charging of recruitment and placement fees against them.

Chapter 5 – On Transnational Social Networks

Transnational social networks have been identified in the previous chapter as having an influence in the decisions to migrate. For the migrants, social networks facilitate their movements by providing information on the process of migration itself, by giving information on the destinations and the kind of jobs they are searching for and even in helping financing their migration and settlement. Connections with earlier migrants provide potential migrants with many resources that they can use to diminish the risks and the costs of migration: information about procedures (technical as well as legal), financial support, job prospects, administrative assistance, physical attendance, emotional solidarity, (see for instance, Hammar et al., 1997).

However, just as little research has been done in investigating the mechanism by which transnational social networks attract migrating members to the same geographic area, just to mention some of its inadequacies, this chapter will try to provide additional information on what has been lacking in the description of social networks from the theoretical framework such as: 1) how social networks are linked to the three theories of migration namely, the neo-classical equilibrium, the historical-structural and the migration systems theories; 2) how transnational networks are related to chain migration; 3) how exactly the networks help the migrants in every stage of migration; 4) are social networks a

form of social capital; and 5) how transnational social networks become a profitable industry in the business of recruiting the migrants.

"From the Philippines I went to Kuwait and I was able to enter Saudi Arabia due to the gulf war at that time". - Cecon

"Every Sunday I was reading the section of classified ads in the newspapers and then I found out one agency that is looking for nurses so I contacted them". - Ikay

The responses derived from the research participants above fit into the descriptions of the neo-classical equilibrium and the historical-structural theories, the first two of the three theories of migration outlined earlier. In this chapter – the decision to migrate will be discussed in relation to the experiences of the research participants in particular and the Philippines as a migrant-sending country in general. One participant, as an example, decided to move to another country when the Gulf War broke out instead of going home since she knew that her job as a nurse is secure and highly in demand in the region coupled with a survival instinct that her future in the Philippines is rather bleak.

"It was my friend who told me and then I saw on TV for nurses who wanted to go to Saudi Arabia. It was free so I grab it". – JP

The decision to migrate has been discussed at length by proponents of the first theory which is the neo-classical equilibrium perspective. According to De Haas

(2008), the neo-classical equilibrium perspective which can be examined either at the macro or the micro level views migrants as rational actors who decide to move on the basis of a cost-benefit calculation. Nurses and other medical professionals are well-aware of the huge salary differentials between their earnings in the Philippines and what they could earn abroad (Scalabrini Migrants Center, 2004). De Haas (2005) assumed that if given the free choice and full access to information, migrants are expected to go where they can be the most productive, that is, they are able to earn the highest wages. This capacity obviously depends on the specific skills a person possesses and the specific structure of labour markets (De Haas, 2008). The statements above holds true based upon the declaration of some participants in this study.

"In the classified ad, they give me the numbers to call but I have to give some efforts in going to Saudi Arabia. It is only my responsibility to find out but they only give me the contact numbers (to call)". - Ikay

"When I was in Saudi I worked and got married. After 15 years in the Middle East, my husband and I decided to look for a better future by planning of going to Canada instead of going back to the Philippines". - Marian

A survey conducted by the Scalabrini Migration Center (2004) in Manila confirmed that migrants are the ones who decide to migrate. This is another common denominator of the neo-classical equilibrium perspective. This theory is individualistic in its approach as it emphasizes the decision of the individual to

migrate based on rational comparisons of relative costs and benefits between receiving and destinations countries. In relation to the experiences of the participants, there seemed to be a link showing that the migration of Filipino nurses especially, those heading to Nova Scotia, is focused more on individual or family decision making.

"In going to Saudi Arabia in 2001 to 2003 when I worked in the clinic, the job was referred to me by a friend. They cannot leave because they were still looking for one person in order to complete the group that would leave for Saudi Arabia. Within a month when I applied, we were able to leave through an agency". - Sally

"In the Philippines, it was my first to work abroad. I got a job through an agency after graduating for two years as a nurse. I came to know about the agency through my friends. In coming to Canada, it was my husband's relative who introduced me to an employer in Canada. It was his aunt who lived in Halifax who has a friend that runs a nursing home. It was more of a direct hiring". - Marian

Though the nurses came to Canada through the agencies that recruited them, at the end of the day it was still their decision to migrate that matters. According to the 'human capital' approach in contrast to the structuralist approach, each migrant is a rational human being who carefully weighs the available options, and looks at the destinations that offer the highest wage rates and the best prospects of finding work.

"I do not know the things needed to go abroad thus the agency helped me prepare everything from scratch". - Poks

"I never had any other options than to pay because I do not know". - Inday

"In my case in order to get funding to go to Canada I borrowed money from my family. Without them it would be hard for me to work abroad". - Ikay

What can be observed from above are negative responses from the participants which connote negative experiences. According to the historical-structural theories, the second theory, the negative experiences of the research participants could have been contextualized into the traditional economic structures of a country undermined by its incorporation into the global political-economic system. It appears that they are forced to migrate by major-structures that are beyond their control; one structure that contributes to their decisions is the inability of the country to provide them decent jobs.

To help improve the rising unemployment rate and the problem of aggregate balance of payments, the Philippine government in 1974 facilitated the placement of Filipino workers in overseas jobs. The annual number of Filipinos going overseas on officially-processed work contracts rose six-fold between 1975 and 1980 and more than tripled again by 1997 according to the Philippine Yearbook (2001). Ten years after, the number of OFWs has gone up to approximately 8.7 million by December 2007 (Dimpalis-Baldoz, 2007). The

trend continues, with the POEA reporting that for the first six months of 2008, it has already met 64% of the year's 1 million target.

Although the statistics above show a promising future for Filipino migrants, it should be noted that while the neo-classical equilibrium perspective in the previous paragraph depicted the "push factors" which are the driving the Filipinos into mass migration, the "pull factors" have equally attracted them to leave the Philippines. What really caused the exodus of Filipino migrants in increasing numbers during the last three decades? To say that it is the sweet smell of dollars that motivated the migrants to leave is too simplistic. As mentioned in my case study in Chapter 4, the Philippines has too few jobs for its population. Constantly increasing overseas deployment figures articulates with the worsening employment, unemployment, underemployment, contractualization and consequent poverty in the Philippines.

"In going to Saudi Arabia from 2001 to 2003 where I worked in a clinic, the job was referred to me by a friend. At that time, they cannot leave for the Middle East because they were still looking for another person in order to complete the group that would leave for Saudi Arabia. Within a month that I applied through an agency, we were able to leave".

- Sally

"In the Philippines, it was my first time to work abroad. I got a job through an agency after two years from graduation as a nurse. I come to know about the agency through my friends. When I was in Saudi I worked and after 15 years I got married. My husband and I

decided to look for a better future for our growing family by planning of moving to Canada instead of going back to the Philippines. In coming to Canada, it was my husband's relative who introduced me to an employer in Canada. It was his aunt who lived in Halifax who has a friend that run a nursing home. It was direct hiring". - Marian

During the interview, the participants were asked to identify the social networks that helped them to come to Saudi Arabia and Canada. Responses were varied but they eventually led to the understanding as framed by the migration systems theory – the third theory. One major characteristic of this theory is its close affiliation to the network theory. Network theory is independent of migration systems theory. It is a meso-level theory that explains how actual migration happens. International labour migration may begin for a variety of reasons. Although the truism holds that economic forces often play an important role as one of the root causes of migration and people tend to move to places where the standards of living are better, according to Salt (1987), this alone cannot explain the actual shape of migration patterns. This fact draws attention to the unique role of social networks, among others in creating new migration pattern.

Lee (1966) argued that migration facilitates the flow of information back from the place of destination to the origin, which facilitates the passage for later migrants. Bocker (1994) shows further evidence that the already settled migrants function as “bridgeheads”, reducing the risks as well as material and

psychological costs of subsequent migration. As evident from the responses of the participants, the Filipino migrants may more easily be able to obtain information and receive active assistance in finding employment and a place to live through the assistance of friends and relatives. Massey et al., (1994) define networks as sets of interpersonal ties that connect migrants, former migrants, and non-migrants in origin and destination areas through bonds of kinship, friendship, and shared community origin. In recent studies, this process is known as network migration which also used to be described as 'chain migration'.

"I ask for tips from my friends whether the agency that I was about to apply was legal so that I will not fall victim to illegal recruitment. From Saudi to Canada, my friends and my roommates who helped me find a job". - JP

Based on the response above, informal connections such as friends established by the migrants became their sources that eventually led to the formation of individual linkages to migrate. Earlier literature used the concept of 'chain migration' to refer to this phenomenon (Price, 1963). Relatives, friends and even neighbours among these migrants can profit from experiences, local knowledge and existing social and professional networks in the country of destination. In a chain migration system individual members of a community migrate and then encourage or assist further movements of migration. It may also be based on ethnic or family ties (commonly referred to as 'family reunion')

with members of the same family migrating at different times, usually with primary wage earners migrating first, followed by secondary or non-wage earners (Rezaei & Goli, 2005).

"Through friends who were with me in the hospital in the Philippines, which led me to work abroad. They were able to work in the Middle East. In coming to Canada, the same thing they were my friends who came in here first who helped me prepare myself to go to Canada". - Poks

What brings approximately 8.1 millions of Filipinos abroad to 193 countries connects to a product of a "culture of migration" and is a product of transnational communities. Another term that has equal footing with chain migration is the culture of migration. It is my opinion that a culture of migration can be a product of an undermined economy of a country; this negative description brings the reader back to the historical-structural paradigm. Yet, as Anonuevo (2002) quotes, there is increasing numbers of second and third generation migrants as earlier migrants themselves actively recruiting their relatives, helping them out with money, placement, and accommodations. As scholars suggest (Massey et al., 1994), the probability of international migration seems to be greater for individuals either related to someone with previous international experience or linked with someone already abroad. Therefore, the distribution of past and current migrants may be a good predictor of future migration patterns (Greenwood, 1975). On the positive note, either consciously

or unconsciously, the migrant worker is thus perceived as a role model. They become image-makers or advertisers of particular lifestyles and therefore are influential in promoting migration among their circles of family and friends (Garchitorena, 2007).

"The role of the networks is a package deal as long as you pay them, they will do everything. You have to pay in full and you are qualified as a nurse before they will entertain me". - Poks

"The agency in the Philippines looked for my employer. They have contacts such as hospital where I got a job. It was also their responsibility to look for our housing". - Marian

When a question was asked about how exactly their networks helped them to move and settle the responses gathered, as mentioned above, were lacking in specifics. This question was prepared with the hope of getting some empirical proof that transnational social networks help the migrants in moving and settling to receiving countries. For migrants, social networks can facilitate migration in different ways: through providing information on the migration process itself, such as crossing the border; through providing information on destinations and jobs, and aiding integration after arrival; and through helping financing the first cost of settlement (Dolfin & Genicot, 2006).

"The agency helped me all the way like orientation in terms of who will be our employer, what kind of work I will be doing, what are the things to bring that are necessary up to the airport. I paid for the air fare". - Drew

"The agency was able to provide me the employer. They provide us all that we need such as necessary papers and requirements that we need to submit. Once I paid to the recruiter they do everything from orientation, job placement and circulation. In Saudi Arabia I paid a certain amount to cover everything including plane tickets, dealing with my employer in terms of my pay, accommodation, number of years of contract. They also arranged in us meeting the employer. In going to Canada, we paid certain amount which does not include the tickets". - Sally

Vertovec (2002) identified three stages where networks of skilled labour are strongly present - the recruitment, movement and placement, and circulation stages. In the recruitment stage, Vertovec (2002) recognizes that schools and universities are a foremost source of skilled migrant networks, especially among people who have completed degrees abroad. Many studies show that the experience of being a foreign student significantly increases the likelihood of being a skilled migrant at a later stage (Li et al., 1996; Salt, 1997; Khadria, 2001). In the movement and job placement stages, he added that there are numerous specialist agencies that take care of exactly such forests of red tape. 'The recent proliferation of professional international intermediaries of this kind confirms the fact that globalization of the highly

skilled labour market does not occur without massive network investments' (Meyer, 2001).

In the circulation stage, Vertovec (2002) acknowledges that many social scientists and national policymakers have tended to shift from a discourse of 'brain drain' to notions of the globalization of human capital, brain exchange, brain circulation and the creation of a global mobile workforce. The idea is to accept the fact that skilled persons may want to migrate for personal, familial and career development, while seeking to encourage the skilled migrant's return, mobilization or association with home country development. Indeed, they are the transnational networks of professionals that are deemed crucial to realize such goals (Vertovec, 2002).

"Only in Canada I came to know about the existence of ISIS that helped immigrants". - Sally

"I do not know of any before and even now". - Inday

There are several institutions that help migrants to move over borders such as employers seeking migrants, public employment services that can match local workers with foreign jobs, private recruiters and most especially transnational social networks (i.e., friends and family who are or were living abroad) can help migrants cross borders and find jobs. Migrants may consult with and utilize the

services of more than one of these labour intermediaries. Eventually, the same networks that help these migrants to cross borders and find jobs can create “social capital,” meaning that some individuals with family and friends abroad can gain access to higher wage jobs abroad without using the services of fee-charging agents. These networks have received far more attention than private agents.

“My friends introduced me to the agency that led me to my employer in Saudi. It was her husband’s auntie who introduced me to the employer”. - Marian

From the viewpoint of prospective migrants, social capital consists of kinship or friendship that provides connections to jobs, people and resources at potential areas of destination. Early research done among Mexicans entering the U.S. found out that having a tie to a current or former U.S. migrant dramatically increases the odds that Mexicans will migrate to the U.S. (see Taylor, 1986; Massey, 1987). According to migration theorists, this effect occurs because social capital lowers the costs and increases the benefits of international labour migration (MacDonald & MacDonald, 1974; Boyd, 1989) thereby fulfilling Coleman’s (1998) dictum that social capital must facilitate action of actors. The quality of social capital is defined by how useful a specific social tie is in achieving the instrumental end of international migrant or foreign employment and the quantity of social capital is simply the number of personal connections at any given level of quality (Newman & Massey, 1994). The significance of the

study of social capital among the participants expose their cleverness in avoiding those social networks that require from them more economic obligations such as payment of placement fees which is another thematic area that will be discussed in the following chapters.

"I was not involved of any other sources that I believed will help me find a job in overseas. It was only in Canada that I realized that there are groups that can help me in my search for jobs". - JP

"If only I was well versed in the use of the internet I could have known more information about details of work and the agency". - Drew

During the interview, one of the questions asked was about their level of knowledge of other types of social networks that could have possibly helped them in getting employed overseas instead of going through the usual networks they already knew. The purpose of this question is to gauge the level of awareness among the participants about the presence of other networks outside their family, relatives and friends as their most common sources and to test their cultural logic of networking. Their answers came out in various degrees which reflect what Shah and Menon (1999) analyzed. The networks utilized by migrants vary considerably depending on local histories of migration, national conditions and communal socio-cultural traits. Qualitative variation has been shown in the types of networks used by different occupational classes (Shah & Menon, 1999). High occupational groups, for instance, rely more on

networks of colleagues or organizations and less on kin-based networks than unskilled workers. In any case, 'The forms and characteristics of these networks may depend on their composition – friends, relatives, kin, acquaintances, professional colleagues, etc.,' Meyer (2001) observes, 'the result is similar: most positions are acquired via connections.'

"It was through classified ads in a news paper that I found a job offer to work in Saudi Arabia. I was working in Manila at that time and it was my plan of working in Saudi. There was an ad where placement fee is free for nurses". "Aside from the classified ads, I also verified from the POEA so when I found out that the agency was legal under the POEA I pushed through with my application". - Inday

"Every Sunday I was reading the section of classified ads in the newspapers and then I found out one agency that is looking for nurses so I contacted them". - Ikay

As well, the responses from the participants prove that aside from family and friends the media through the newspaper becomes alternative options among the migrants, in finding their prospective employers. Scholars have highlighted the interconnectedness of societies through flows of media, capital and people (Held et al., 1999). Appadurai's (1990) work focuses on how media and travel influence identity, locality, and community creation. His notions of "ethnoscapes, ideoscapes and mediascapes" bring to light how social actors use resources and construct identities that transcend traditional political and social boundaries. Social theorist Shapiro (1991) calls for a mapping of the "competing situations,

local spaces, discourses, media, and genres... which affect the building of a person's consciousness of self and others." Among the different venues "through which people move as they form and reform their character and identity over time," Shapiro singles out such historicized and socially structured discursive fields as "educational space, military space, metropolitan space, [and] foreign ideational space." In Beck's (2000) cosmopolitanism, communication technologies become the key. Global media flows and consumerism lead to a new form of consciousness.

"When I was in Saudi Arabia I came to know more of sources of employment through friends then when I went home I decided to apply to a hospital from clinic to work as a nurse through another agency where there are better salary and benefits such as free transport two-ways, free accommodations, free uniforms, with food allowance, housing fully furnished. Besides, salary in the hospital is much higher as compared to working in a clinic". - Sally

"I can still remember the people who helped me get a job in Saudi. Through one of my patients I come to know about the job in Kuwait. From the Philippines I went to Kuwait and I was able to come to Saudi Arabia due to the gulf war at that time. Since we are closer to the border of Saudi Arabia from Kuwait we decided to work there. There were 11 cars of Filipinos who crossed the desert, a convoy. We were the last to enter the border with the permission of the police and after that nobody were allowed to enter Saudi since bombs were already planted along the way. Through this convoy, I came to meet my future husband. I got 5,000 dollars but it took me too long from Kuwait due to the relocation that happened to us. - Cecon

There have emerged a number of schemes and types of transnational social networks of expatriate professionals that can be tapped to enable their effective and productive role in a home country's development – even without any physical temporary or permanent return. These are what Meyer and Brown (1999) call 'distant cooperative work' within an intellectual diaspora. The idea of distant cooperative work has been used by UNESCO to soften the effect of the brain drain phenomenon among the diaspora networks. One of the strategies of the UNESCO Programme on International Migration in promoting the respect for the human rights of migrants and in contributing to peaceful integration of migrants in society is to strengthen the capacity, sustainability and effectiveness of diaspora networks. It is a means to promote brain gain - as opposed to the current brain drain.

"I contacted the POEA, a government labour office, to make sure that the offer to work in Saudi Arabia was legitimate before grabbing the opportunity" - Inday

"It was my friend who told me and then I saw on the TV for nurses who wanted to go to Saudi Arabia". - JP

According to Kingma (2006), recruitment of IENs across the globe is a profitable industry and a source of financial and political capital for a number of stakeholders, including the "Intellectual Manufacturing Sector" or Nursing Education. It is clearly understood that all stakeholders such as the for-profit organizations, public and private nursing educational programs and

entrepreneurs find educating nurses for export to be undoubtedly profitable. Kingma (2006) once quotes the Dean of the University of the Philippines College of Nursing, Leonor Malay saying "despite our Herculean efforts to stop the opening of more and more colleges and schools, we are helpless because the hospitals that open these schools are owned by doctors, who as a group are very strong and powerful".

Previously, recruitment agencies mainly served to broker information on employment opportunities, today some recruitment agencies are financing and offering scholarships and establishing educational institutions of their own (Kingma, 2006). Recruitment agencies in India have found that an investment of US\$4,700 to US\$7,000 in training a nurse can earn as much as \$47,000 once the nurse is placed abroad (Khadria, 2007). It is from this perspective that the evolving role of recruitment agencies should also be recognized as something positive.

Chapter 6 – On Economic and Social Remittances

As suggested in the theoretical framework, there is significant interest over the impact of economic and social remittances sent by the migrants back to their countries of origin. First, economic remittance flows to developing countries now surpass official development aid receipts in many developing countries (Ratha, 2005). In 2001 official development finance transfers to developing countries was about US\$57 billion (OECD, 2003). This compares with recorded global remittances of US\$72.3 billion the same year, up from US\$34 billion in 1990 (see World Bank, 2006). Second, available data focuses on pecuniary assets only yet we now know that the transfers also include goods and other social transmissions (see Bracking; 2003; Puri & Ritzema, 1999; Levitt, 1996; Russell, 1986). The importance of social and economic remittances in the household, community, national and international levels cannot be taken too lightly. Given the scale of remittance transfers, it is not surprising that from a development point of view, remittances can potentially have an impact on local livelihoods and development in the receiving countries. At the same time, not everything that is being “remitted” is positive. Remittances can have negative consequences as well.

This chapter will contemplate the implications of remittances through the testimonies of the research participants, analyzed in the context of relevant literature. It starts with the three schools of thoughts associated with the

motivation of the migrants to remit; leading into a discussion on how this money is generally used thus bringing into the spotlight the impact of remittance on the alleviation of poverty at the household and individual levels. It will then move into its general proposition that remittance transfers takes some time to be effective. After that it will provide caution regarding quick generalizations on the positive and negative impact of remittances based on empirical evidence. While discussions in this study have concentrated mainly on the economic aspects of remittance flows, social factors were also taken into account including the impact of gender on remitters and recipients. Briefly this chapter gives us a hint why some migrants cease to send remittances. Finally, it discusses the key factors to assess the breakdown of social remittances, namely, the density of the transnational networks; the level of contact between particular transnational migrants and the "locals" in their host community; the geographic distance between "home" and "host" communities and level of trust confided in the disseminator; and the social distance between the two communities.

Economic remittances

A primary question about remittances is why migrants send part of their income back to family and relatives in the country of origin. When the research participants were asked whether they provided financial support for family members at home or overseas, to what extent and how often, different responses were extracted. At the same time these diverse reactions lead to

discussion of the three schools of thought based upon relevant literature on the motivation of the migrants to remit. Chimhowu et al., (2003) classify the theoretical explanations for remitting behaviour into three schools of thought namely, altruism theory, the risk sharing and risk sharing/altruism schools of thought.

"Yes, I sent money to the Philippines while I was in Saudi Arabia. I was sending half of my earning of 20,000 pesos income every month. In the hospital, I sent 15,000 from my 30,000 pesos income. That was the max. I have an extended family. Since I have plans to transfer to US or Canada I started to save some of the remaining. As a med tech in Canada, I received \$1,050 every paycheck net from \$16.60 per hour. In one month I received a net of \$2,100. I less \$1,000 for my personal expenses here and the rest will be sent to the Philippines which is equivalent to between 30,000 to 40,000 pesos every month". - Sally

"I sent 60% of my income from Saudi Arabia until I arrived in Canada every month. My husband is in Saudi Arabia while my child was sent back to the Philippines". - Poks

"Yes I send money to my children (2). Though I am separated, I still send money to my husband. I send money to my sister in law who are taking care of my children. I send once a month for them but I have siblings who ask for money for help that I am willing to send". - Kate

"I sent money home to my family a financial support every month for my husband and my children and my siblings. I sent \$400 to \$600 a month which is 60%. Say from 1600 a month I keep \$1,000 and send \$600 to my family". - Drew

"I am sending funds for my brother in the Philippines who is still studying. Once a month I am sending money home but there are times when I send money twice in a single month".

- Inday

A common explanation of why migrants send part of their income is that migrants care for the spouses, children, parents, and other members of the extended family left behind. The responses above echoed the first school of thought – the altruism theory. This school considers remitting to be an obligation to the household. Remittances are sent out of affection and responsibility towards the family. The migrant is simply part of a spatially extended household that is reducing the risk of impoverishment by diversifying across a number of activities (see Banerjee, 1984; De Haan, 2000; Agrawal & Horowitz, 1999). In this model, migration is considered to be a family decision and remitting resources is part of fulfilling family obligations. This perspective suggests that the migrant is supported by an established network of migrants and remitting helps to keep these going for those still to join the bandwagon (see Chimhowu et al., 2003). The migrant makes use of established networks for migration and the transfer of funds and other resources. When motivated by altruism, remittances can vary depending on the number of household members that migrate and the poverty status of the receiving household. If more migrants remit, this reduces the amounts remitted by each migrant at any time.

"I am sending money for the townhouse that I bought. I also send for those who wanted to borrow money from me. Some of them are paid but it takes time. If I send money it is up to them to spread the fund but first for the townhouse then light and water (bills)". -

Kate

"I send money only for my nephew for his studies. Maybe someday he can help other family members when he starts to find a job". - Cecon

"I no longer send money home since I have my own family. I am not obligated to send anything to them. If ever I send money to the Philippines there is an occasion. I remember sending money home to pay for the loan I borrowed to be able to work in Saudi Arabia but after I settled my loan I no longer send money home". - Marian

"Since it is my husband who lives in the US that sends money home I no longer oblige myself to send funds to my family. If ever I send money it is to pay up my loans". - Ikay

The second school of thoughts as mirrored above, the risk-sharing school maintains that remittances are installments for individual risk management (Stark, 1991; Stark & Lucas, 1988). The elements of investment and risk are the essentials of risk-sharing theory of remittances. Van Dalen et al., (2005) explained that investment to start with is viewed as a repayment with interest of the principal invested by the family in the education of the migrant. The higher the investment, the higher will be the family's expectations of being repaid through remittances. Funds remitted are often used on education of siblings who may also migrate eventually (Yang, 2003), such as the case of a

participant above in supporting the studies of her nephew. The other element of risk-sharing theory that remittances function as an insurance against risk also points to a common household strategy in less developed countries. Van Dalen et al., (2005) added that emigration is viewed not only as a way for individuals to benefit from opportunities for higher income, but also as a household strategy for risk-diversification, an alternative to what insurance markets provide elsewhere. In this view therefore, remittances are part of a mutually beneficial and enforceable contract using social sanctions between the remitter and the recipients. Any altruistic behaviour is seen as coincidental to personal self-interest. One of the main problems of this approach is that it assumes that the migrant is a rational economic being devoid of feelings and emotions (see Chimhowu et al., 2003). It views remitting behaviour as motivated purely by rational economic considerations or self-interest thus overlooking altruism as a possible factor in remitting behaviour. Emerging evidence (for example Hadi, 1999; Kannan & Hari, 2002; Yang, 2003) shows that family bonds of trust do play an important role in the decision to remit. In addition, inter-generational effects should not be ignored.

"By sending money at home felt the sense of responsibility being the breadwinner thus I felt fulfilled". - Sally

"I do not falter in sending money since my husband is unemployed. Though sometimes I am out of budget the funds that I sent is lesser". - Drew

I am economically struggling here because I have to spend money to take the exams not just once but many times. These exams include IELTS, RN and LPN exams. One exam costs me \$500 dollars. Before taking the exam I have to process my documents so I have to spend again. I have friends in the Philippines who will process my documents but I have to pay them. - Sally

A third school sees both altruism and self-interest as playing a role in the motivation to migrate and remit (Ballard, 2001; Clarke & Drinkwater, 2001). This school can be further simplified by the responses of the participants recorded above. Remitting behaviour is motivated by both self-interest and altruism. While migrants are motivated by self-interest, this is usually within the context of existing kinship ties. De La Cruz (1995) observes that male migrants are more likely to follow self-interest compared to female migrants who, it is argued, remit more out of altruism than self-interest.

However, there is the problem in distinguishing genuine altruism from self-interest that is direct. Could there be a disguised altruism and an enlightened self-interest? One of the difficulties in testing the altruism theory is that it is hard to make its predictions distinct from the risk-sharing school as an alternative theory of remittance behaviour. According to Van Dalen et al., (2005), the common feature of the latter is the assumption that the real driving force behind remittances is self-interest - that what appears as mutually altruistic behaviour by the family and the migrant can equally well be interpreted as enlightened

self-interest, with remittances able to serve the interests both of migrants and their households in the country of origin. From this perspective, remittances are viewed as part of a mutually beneficial contract arrangement that is sustained over time (Lucas & Stark 1985; Poirine, 1997). Based on the explanation above, it is my contention and a challenge to the theories of altruism and risk-sharing that what appeared to be the responses of the research participants as manifestation of altruism are actually enlightened self-interest, characteristic of risk-sharing and vice versa. As an example, a migrant may have sent money home regularly not because she cares for her loved ones but simply because she is only paying back the money or investment that was spent by her parents towards her education, and as mentioned above, the higher the investment or the funds spent for her education the higher the expectations of the family being repaid more through remittances and the longer she will continue to remit.

"Personal expenses, allowance for my daughter, bills, education, maid, service, food, support to my sister with her four children, brothers with no job need my help, even my parents also received financial assistance from me. All expenses are itemized. If ever they plan to go somewhere, it is being itemized in which I have to add more funds". - Sally

"The funds I sent are for the tuition fees, books and other necessities in school that my brother wants as well as for my parents' needs including groceries and bills". - Inday

"I want to make sure that the funds sent will go the needs of my children who are still young". - JP

*"At first I know the breakdown of how the money is spent like school, food, power bills. Now I cannot follow up the expenses in the family. All I have to do is send money home".
- Drew*

"I send money to my parents, nephew and to my brother who has a cancer. He died already". - Cecon

When the participants were asked about how the remittances are spent, the above responses were drawn out. According to them, most of the funds were spent on education for the children, bills for home maintenance and food for the table. A review of literature on remittances (Meyers, 1998; Black, 2003) shows that most of the remittances are used for consumption. Such "unproductive" uses include satisfying basic consumption needs, buying medicines, building houses, and spending on conspicuous consumption (Black, 2003). Generally, a small proportion of remittances are used for savings and "productive investment" like income and employment generating activities. Ballard points out that this lack of "productive" investment of remittances should not be taken as an indication of lack of entrepreneurial skills of migrants and their kinsfolk but rather a consequence of structural obstacles operating at the local, national and international levels. Female migrants in particular are beginning to exert some influence in the use of their remittances while they are away from home, and

evidence of female preferences for expenditure on welfare enhancing consumption have been noted, for example, the education of younger siblings and the health of parents (De la Cruz, 1995; Yang, 2003).

"I feel better and comfortable in sending money home in Canada than in Saudi Arabia.

My salary comes every month in Saudi Arabia thus if there is an emergency from home that requires some funds they have to wait. My other option is to borrow money from some friends good enough so I can satisfy the needs of my family". - Inday

"I felt compensated here than in Saudi in terms of my income. I can send more money here than when I was in Saudi but only for personal consumption". - Drew

"I made phone calls all the time especially when it comes to decision making at home; they call me before they make their final decision". - Sally

Challenging one of the findings above, the research participants, who have no possibility of monitoring any productive enterprise, choose to send money to their loved ones for consumption purposes only. I stand with the position of Meyers (1998) and Black (2003) that most of the remittances based on the interviews are for consumption use. First of all, most of the income that the migrants earned is sufficient for their personal budget. They only sent whatever is left which is also good enough on immediate consumption needs and desired luxuries for families they left behind. Second, to invest on productive venture requires a large amount of money to start with; besides cash is not always readily available as buffer fund, as noted by one of the participants. Further,

dependency established between the sender and the receiver of remittance has not been limited to economic but also domestic routines, including decision-making. As Taylor (1999) and Ballard (2001) contend, the impact on households can vary from extreme dependence on the remittances or it can lead to increased prosperity especially when the remittances are used to finance productive investment such as businesses, houses, and infrastructure. A receiver who attempts a business enterprise needs to have an independent mindset apart from the sender in making decisions. Venturing into business involves risks that are economically uncertain. Such observations were supported by a number of surveys from a range of countries with fairly consistent results. The bulk of remittances, up to 80 per cent in some regions, are spent on consumption and welfare while only a small amount is invested in land and housing and new productive investments (Taylor, 1999; Gammeltoft, 2002).

The responses above also bring into the surface the examination of related literature on the impact of remittances regarding the alleviation of poverty at the household and individual levels focusing specifically on the social and economic factors and issues. The neo-liberal-functionalist position and the historical-structuralist perspective are depicted from the following responses of this study.

"I am happier here (in Canada) because I am sending much better now. Say I sent 30,000 while I was in Saudi Arabia now I can send 70,000 every month. I send more than 50 percent". - Poks

"With the kind of pay I am receiving in Canada, I feel that I can help more people in my family. Previously I limit my assistance to my children but now I can extend my support to my brothers and sisters as well". - JP

"By sending money at home I felt the sense of responsibility being the breadwinner thus I felt fulfilled". - Sally

"It was easier for me to send money back home here because within 24 hours my family can receive the money. In Saudi it takes a day or two before my family receives the money. Besides I send bigger funds back home than while I was in Saudi Arabia". - Drew

One side of the coin proposes that remittances develop an important part of household livelihood strategies. This view, shared among those of a neo-liberal-functionalist persuasion, suggests that remittances are beneficial at all levels particularly the individual, household, community and national level (Leon-Ledesma and Piracha, 2001; Orozco, 2002; Ratha, 2003). A key focus for neo-liberal-functionalist approaches is usually the individual household and local community. Apart from increasing disposable incomes and increasing effective demand for local goods and services, remittances are seen to play a crucial role in developing local level capital markets and productive infrastructure (Ballard, 2002; Keely & Tran, 1992). Remittances make a powerful contribution to

reducing poverty or vulnerability in the majority of households and even in communities. They have proven to contribute directly to increasing household incomes or expanding the opportunities to increase earnings that would result to the balancing of income and expenses as commented by Azam and Gubert (2002). This was further stressed by Kannan and Hari (2002) that increased household income helps in income and consumption smoothing. Remittances also allow household to increase their consumption of local goods and services. Yang (2003) confirms continuous flow of remittances resulted in improved access to health services and better nutrition which are potential for improved productivity. They are instrumental for better access to education according to Edward and Ureta (2001) and improved access to information (see Adams, 1991; Ballard, 2001). The same holds true in the community level according to Alarcon (2002) where remittances help improved local physical infrastructure. Adopting a community – and family – level approach, Chimhowu et al., (2003) have found that remittances enable better healthcare, nutrition, housing, and education which are some of the indicators of economic development.

However, to draw a conclusion on the extent to which remittances can be a broad strategy for poverty alleviation is not clear cut as was shown in the comments from some participants below, analyzed in the context of relevant literature.

"The bigger the salary will be the bigger the expenses. The more funds I earn the more people are expecting that I can send money more to them. Now they want to buy computer, ipod which were never been heard before". - lkay

"They are much happier from what I was sending to my family right now as compared to the funds I was sending while I was in Saudi Arabia. I am sending more to them which enable them to buy cell phones, appliances in addition to the basic needs they required. From my first job I only sent very few funds and I received comments from my family out of dissatisfaction from the funds that I sent before thus I decided to look for other jobs with better pay". - Sally

The other side of the coin, the historical-structuralist perspective, criticizes that remittance has negative influences upon the household lifestyles and helps in generating dependent relationships between the sender and the receiver. If seen in the larger perspective, remittances are considered by the historical-structuralist perspective to be responsible for creating dependent relations between the sending and receiving countries (see Portes & Borocz, 1989). Dependency on remittances leaves the households vulnerable to temporary and unnecessary consumption benefits. As explicitly explained by Ballard (2001), a high share of remittances tends to be spent on non-productive investment and short-term consumption gains. On social issues, remittances can initially increase inequality between households within the community. Comparing those with access to remittances against those without remittances, Levitt (2001b) shows, contributes to the negative transmission of cultural

practices that reduce local quality of life. An analysis of the contemporary literature suggests generally that historical-structuralists are critical of remittances which are seen as having a negative impact on developing countries. The implication is that they are embedded within structures that perpetuate poverty. The historical-structuralist approach emphasizes macro-economic relations and the structures within which the movement and flow of goods and services occurs on a global scale. Within countries, remittances are seen to generate inequality among households (Adams, 1991) while they also can generate macro-economic stability problems for countries with low GDP (Jones, 1998).

Despite the two conflicting responses, the overwhelming empirical studies, apart from the increasing effects of inequality and dependency, reveal that remittances have more positive than negative impacts. At the household level, remittances increase savings and asset accumulation (liquid and non-liquid assets), provide collateral security for loans and can be liquidated in times of crises (see Lucas & Stark, 1985; Hadi, 1999). At the community level, they help in the development of local level capital markets, availability of new services such as banking, retail and trade, travel and construction (see Ballard, 2002) and the development of new institutions such as local development associations (see Meyers, 1998; Ballard, 2002; Alarcon, 2002). At the national level, remittances improve foreign currency inflows; in some countries they constitute up to 9% of GDP (see Martin, 2001; Orozco, 2002; Ratha, 2003).

Finally at the international level, they results in the reduction in inequality among countries as remittances now exceed official development aid transfers in some regions (see Ratha, 2003). Literature from a neo-liberal functionalist perspective tends to find remittances beneficial to developing countries. Here, remittances are another form of global resource transfers that can help reduce poverty if managed well.

Based on the empirical studies above, it is also important to note that differential effects of remittances or inequality induced by remittances varies depending on the level of analysis. For example while at the household and community levels remittances increase inequality but at the international level remittances relocate resources from developed to developing countries and so in that respect help to reduce inequality. The position of differential effects holds true from the experience of some participant, depending on its level of analysis.

"Since it is my husband who lives in the US who sends money home I no longer obliged myself to send funds to my family; one time I donated some funds to a friend for the operation of one of her children with cleft pallet. She cannot afford to pay for the expenses in the hospital given that she still has other three children to raise". - Ikay

Two varying responses were solicited at one point from the same participant showing differential effects of remittances. This is a case of a non-poverty reducing impact towards a family member vs. poverty reducing impact towards

a community member who is not related to the migrant. In the response above, altruism was never expressed towards the needs of her own family which is considered a non-poverty reducing response, in the household level; but in the second response a different level of altruism was extended by the same participant to a friend out of responsibility to a community member so in this respect her generosity helps to promote a poverty reducing impact in the community level, in the broader spectrum, but not to someone related to her.

Further empirical evidence cautions against drawing quick generalizations on the positive and negative impact of remittances. De Sipio (2000) reiterates that remittances are unreliable and hence can only make specific contributions at a particular moment in time. In the long term, remittances cease altogether as the migrants either return to the home country or are integrated into the host community (De Sipio, 2000). Chimhowu et al., (2003) confirm that one of the features characterizing the literature on remittances and poverty is that there is scant literature addressing methods and techniques of assessing the impact of remittances on poverty. Due to the lack of record, Stark (1991) and Russell (1992) argue that there is no generic body of theory that encapsulates assessment of such impacts. Data are the most severe limitation in estimating the impact of remittances on poverty. It is important to recognise the implications of these unrecorded remittances for economic analysis as poor data frequently reduces the value of subsequent economic analysis (Nayyar, 1989). Finally, remittances alone are unlikely to lift people out of poverty: rather

it is their interplay with other economic, social and cultural factors which determine the scale and type of impact remittances can have on poverty reduction. Hulme et al., (2001) express it in another way: "Poverty is not only about cash income and consumption levels, but includes the capacity to accumulate assets that reduce vulnerability to financial shocks and to gain access to entitlements such as education and health that contribute to livelihood security and sustainability". The focus should be on what remittances can add to the process of moving people out of poverty or reducing their vulnerability to poverty. It is the benefits of these additional resources, more precisely, what remittances enable poor and vulnerable households to do that they would not have been able to do that is of interest in the emerging discourse on remittance flows and poverty (Adams & Page, 2003).

"Some of the money is used to pay for loans borrowed from the agency to be able to come to Canada. I would settle this first before I send something for my family". - Ikay

"In Saudi I earned at starting pay of 1,200 riyal a month then it went up. I worked there for seven years. When my husband was transferred to Riyadh from Al Khubar I have to resign and I started to work in the hospital. My net income in Canada is smaller as compared to what I earned from my last job in Saudi. It would be better for me to stay in Saudi Arabia than here because I ended up paying house rental and bills in Canada at the same time my family in Saudi is also paying the same thing. We ended up doubling our expenses".

- Marian

"I don't send money anymore since I came to Canada. Taxes are high and other deductions. My net income would not be enough to send some money home. My net income in Canada is lower as compared to my income in Saudi and Kuwait". - Cecon

The impact of remittance transfers takes some time to be effective. Migrants do not generally send remittances for at least the first six months as they need time to find employment and meet housing costs. They may also have committed a large part of their wages in the first few months, perhaps a year, to a recruitment agency. This has been attested to in the responses of the participants as quoted above. Similarly, received remittances may be absorbed in repaying agents' fees or bank loans taken out to finance the migration. Furthermore, even when remittances do start to be sent regularly, the full extent of their impact on the household takes time to emerge. The initial transfers may be spent on immediate consumption needs and desired luxuries. Only then do longer-term investment plans implemented and purchases of more sustainable assets, such as land and housing, or the injection of capital into start-up businesses take place.

"The fund goes to my daughter, my parents, my sister and her children and to my brothers who were jobless". - Sally

"My brother who lives in the Philippines receives the fund I sent coursed through my mother". - Inday

"My mother will receive the funds that I sent in which the money is for all who lives in the house". - Poks

"My sister receives the fund I sent to my family". - JP

"I made phone calls all the time especially when it comes to decision making at home; they call me before they make their final decision". - Sally

While the previous discussions have focused largely on the economic aspects of remittance flows, the impact of remittances is mediated by gender. The above responses project an image that mostly women are recipients of remittances sent by the migrants. Large numbers of receiving households in the countries and regions of origin are headed by women, (Kothari, 2002; Hadi, 1999), many of whom are elderly. In households where decisions are taken by women, including the allocation of financial resources, expenditure patterns can differ from those in male headed households (Simister & Piesse, 2003). In particular, this can result in important difference in choices concerning consumption versus investment. It was also mentioned in the previous sections that female migrants begin to exert some influence in the use of their remittances while they are away from home (see de la Cruz, 1995; Yang, 2003). While it is difficult to compare from this study given that most senders of remittances are women than men, it is obvious in this research that women have major roles in transmitting remittances back home since all of my research participants are women. From the remitter perspective, although regional

variations exist, women comprise a small but growing percentage of migrants and are generally considered to be the more reliable remitters in the short term. For this reason, single women are often selected by their families to undertake migration (de la Cruz, 1995; Dostie & Vencatachellum, 2002).

"I no longer send money home since I have my own family. I am not obligated to send anything to them. If ever I send money to the Philippines there is an occasion. I remember sending money home to pay for the loan I borrowed to be able to work in Saudi Arabia but after I settled my loan I no longer send money home". - Marian

"Since it is my husband who lives in the US that sends money home I no longer obliged myself to send funds to my family". - Ikay

"When I was single I send money home almost everything but when I was in Saudi where I started my own family I sent money but not regularly". - Cecon

As De Sipio (2000) and Ballard (2002) argue, multi-generational and kinship ties may allow for a more permanent dislocation where migration is a long-term strategy for the household. This is true in some cases for the participants interviewed in this study. The longer a migrant is away, the more likely they are to settle in the country where they work, establish a household and raise a family there. This subsequently reduces their remittances to their country of origin and successive generations are less likely to continue sending remittances. Frequently, the remittances cease altogether (De Sipio, 2000; Ballard, 2002).

Social remittances

"I send balikbayan box. It is a box full of goodies bought from Saudi Arabia". - Inday

"In Saudi Arabia I send package we call it sea cargo. Appliances in Saudi Arabia are very cheap so it was better for me to buy them there and send them home which were charged per kilo. Sea cargo is cheaper as compared to air cargo. In Canada I sent cargo back home called balikbayan box that cost me 125\$ per box no matter how heavy. I can send anything except for electronics. I gave advice to my daughter and my family. I made phone calls all the time especially when it comes to decision making; they call me before they make their final decision". - Sally

"Every year I sent goods to the Philippines through balikbayan box. I called home 3 to 4 times a week". - Poks

"I always call to the Philippines to my relatives thus I ran out of money. Now that the internet through chat I can talk to my family for free. I can give advice to my family all the time". - Kate

When the participants were asked whether they participated in the transfer of other types of remittances from abroad, on top of the economic remittances that they regularly transmitted such as gifts, personal advice, information among others, the abovementioned are their affirmations. These responses directly bring into being the nature and existence of another form of remittances. Levitt (1998) calls these exchanges "social remittances" and stresses their importance

for understanding the impacts of migration. When migrants transfer funds back to their relations they also convey information about the new life they are leading in their receiving community. Sometimes economic and social remittance go together as Levitt and Sorensen (2004) argue to the extent that social remittances flow together with economic remittances, changes in normative structures and general practices may be pertinent to ensure the continuation of economic remittances.

Transnational practices involve not only the geographical movement of people, but also multiple transactions of monetary resources, goods, symbols, and political and cultural practices (Faist, 2000a). The term 'social remittances' is suggested by Levitt (2001a) to refer to the ideas, behaviours, identities, and social capital that flow from the host society to the sending country. They are the social and cultural resources that migrants bring with them to the receiving country. Equally, 'social remittances' are ideas and practices that are transformed in the host country and transmitted back to original communities, generating new cultural products that emerge and challenge the lives of those who are left behind. These social remittances are intentionally and unintentionally transferred by migrants when they return, when non-migrants visit migrants in the receiving country, or through the exchanges of letters, videos, cassettes, e-mails and telephone calls. Social remittances are an under-utilized development resource that can potentially be purposefully harnessed to improve socioeconomic indicators in both sending and receiving countries.

Since migrants and non-migrants are embedded in transnational social fields, the forces shaping their socioeconomic status are also transnational (Levitt, 2001a).

"I did absentee voting while I was in Saudi at the Philippine Embassy". - Marian

"While in Saudi Arabia I was able to participate in the so-called absentee voting. I can elect government officials in the Philippines during election through the Philippine embassy in Saudi Arabia". - Sally

"I told my friends in Saudi to apply for a job here but they have to take IELTS exam and apply directly to the employer. I voted in Saudi through absentee voting". - Kate

"Every year I sent goods to the Philippines through balikbayan box. I have done absentee voting". - Poks

Remittance is beyond economic remittances as implied above. One direction in which the definition has been pushed is to include an element that is not strictly economic – by involving political suffrage. While Levitt (1998) uses the term social remittances to describe the diffusion of different social practices and transformations, mainly in migrant-sending areas, which accompany the migration process; others have focused on changes in political identities, demands and practices associated with migration (see Goldring, 2002; Fitzgerald, 2000), which one could refer to as political remittances. These

modifications would be consistent with an approach that analyzes migration as a complex and multi-dimensional process that encompasses multiple arenas, including the social, political, cultural and technological as well as the economic.

"I tell my friends the real score in working in Canada". - Marian

"I told my friends in Saudi to apply for a job here but they have to take IELTS exam and apply directly to the employer". - Kate

"I give information to my friends who want to work here as a nurse but my employer is not responding positively because there is a long list of applicants waiting". - Cecon

The above responses are examples of social remittances as the participants provided information to their friends who are planning to enter Canada someday to work. Information sharing lessens the vulnerability of other prospective migrants. Nichols (2002) emphasizes the importance of knowledge, skills, and technology brought "back" by returning migrants, which could be called technical and/or technological remittances. Sorensen (2004) added that social remittances may affect family relations, gender roles, class and race identity, as well as have a substantial impact on political, economic and religious participation. Social remittances constitute a so far neglected local-level counterpart to macro-level global monetary and cultural flows, although they are keys to understanding how migration modifies the lives of those who remain behind (Sorensen, 2004).

"When I was a member of the bisig ng kabataan (youth group) I was involved but since I became a nurse I was not involve anymore. When somebody approaches me for abuloy (welfare) from my neighbours, I would send funds to the Philippines through my relatives".

- Sally

"I helped an organization in the US, the Saint Jude research institute for children". -

Poks

"Before my mother helped the community especially the street children through her I was able to extend help as a nurse by providing medical aid, free vaccination, circumcision etc". - Inday

"Before I used to work with an NGO were the beneficiaries are tribal people. It is a government project managed by NGOs where the funds came from the government". -

Ikay

"No, I never had the chance of helping or getting involved in an NGO". - JP

At one point, the participants were asked whether they were somehow involved in any transnational group's efforts to alleviate poverty in the communities back in the Philippines, thus bringing to the fore the impact of social remittances towards the society and community in the alleviation of poverty. Different reactions were pulled out from the responses. Apparently, majority of them lack the exposures to networks and connections that would directly or indirectly link them up as participants on poverty-alleviation initiatives especially in the community and national levels. Commitments to their work, the inability of the

migrants to intermingle with other migrants in Saudi Arabia due to more strict social rules (women are not allowed to mingle with men in public if they are not related, consumption of alcohol is prohibited and the manner and type of dress they have to wear is regulated). Empirical studies on the impact of remittances on poverty have tended to be narrowly defined to formally transmitted monetary assets rather than physical and social assets (Gammeltoft, 2002). There is increasing evidence to show that remittances are much more than pecuniary assets (Clark & Drinkwater, 2001; Ballard, 2002; Orozco, 2002) and those official remittances comprise less than half of the total transfers (Russell, 1996; Puri & Ritzema, 1999; Bracking, 2003). The implication of this for developing a framework to assess the impact of remittances on poverty is that additional attention still needs to be paid to these often neglected areas of remittances, that is, informal and non-monetary forms of remittance transfers that also impact on poverty.

The transnational perspective compels us to study the implications of the networks and connections which migrants create and preserve across time, space and cultures. These relationships referred to as social remittances set in motion the sharing of information, practices and beliefs for the consideration of societies in various countries and cultures, occasionally advancing the transmission of new practices or ideologies. Sorensen (2004) proposes that the advantage of adopting a financial as well as a social definition of remittances is that it allows us to understand migration as a social process in which migrants are potential agents of economic, social and political change.

Levitt (2001b), in her study of the transnational migration networks created between Miraflores in the Dominican Republic and the Jamaican Plains, a community in Central Boston provides several key factors to assess social remittances. Some of her categorization affecting the strength of social remittance in transnational migration will be used as a primary framework. This includes 1) the density of the transnational networks (the number of people from one area to migrate to the same receiving area); 2) the level of contact between particular transnational migrants and "locals" in their host community; 3) the geographic distance between "home" and "host" communities and level of trust confided in the disseminator;; and 4) the social distance between the two communities (Levitt, 2001b). Obviously the extent of these factors surpasses the capacities of this study where some of them are not relevant to the research thus only three out of five factors will be considered to evaluate the potential strength of social remittances.

First, the level of transnational density present among the Caribbean immigrants in the U.S. is absent from this study. At first, it was more difficult for the Caribbean immigrants to assimilate into American society than other groups (see Foner, 1987; Pessar, 1995; Stepick, 1998) but as they reach critical mass, they are beginning to make their presence felt and gain political and economic strength. In the process, they challenge the American notion of a monolithic black, racialized identity and illustrate the diversity of Caribbean societies by displaying their unique ethnic identities. Such characteristics were not shown

among the sample of Filipino nurses interviewed in this study. One reason behind this is that the Filipino community in Halifax area is not as strong or definitive as the Caribbean immigrants in the U.S. Filipinos are quite few in the entire Nova Scotia population compared to the number of Filipinos in bigger provinces in Canada such as Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver. Filipinos in Halifax number less than a thousand and are broken into various small groups characteristic of the regionalistic tendencies, a social and cultural prototype deriving from the home country. Filipinos come to Canada from various parts of the country with different cultures and dialects. Further, most of the participants have been in this part of Canada only since 2007 where time is an important element to establish cultural and social roots. Density is evident only on the level of family members and close friends. When one area of a sending region develops organically into one particular receiving community the result can reinforce local pathways for social remittances.

The geographic distance between particular transnational migrants and "locals" in their host community is the second determinant in the strength of social remittances. When participants were asked whether they participated in political, social or internet-based organizations that alleviate poverty in the community or organize care for children other than their own families, most of the answers are negative. In the Miraflores and Jamaican Plain case study, the relatively short physical distance between the two communities allowed people to travel between them with relative ease, increasing the possibility for the generation of

social remittances (Levitt, 2001a). The long hours of flight, 16 hours, from the Philippines to Saudi Arabia resulted in a decrease in the intensity of remitting social values back to the country of origin. The Center for Alternative Development Initiatives (2010) publicly stated that cultural movements and civil society organizations (CSO) have a long tradition in the Philippines. There was a free association of Filipinos before there was even a Philippine government. Years before the 1896 revolution that ended nearly 400 years of Spanish colonialism and produced the first democratic republic in Asia, there were cooperative societies and other forms of citizen associations engaging in a variety of culture-based initiatives. This tradition has manifested itself in different ways throughout the last century. The civil society organizations are just beginning to realize the potential of cultural power in contradistinction to the political power held by the state and the economic power held by the private sector (Alternative Development Initiatives, 2010). One way or another, the individual Filipino migrants have inculcated into their psyche the spirit of participation for the promotion of development in the Philippines or in a country other than where they reside specifically in poverty-alleviation endeavours.

Third, the social distance between the two communities is another influence that defines the depth of social remittance. Social distance describes the distance between different groups of society which includes social classes. One of the causes and outcomes of social classes is the determinant of class position. Class position takes in acculturation including education. In this case,

language which is part of education is substantial between the two communities. Levitt's (2001b) general argument is that where there is a small social distance between "home" and "host" society (that of the US and Canada), one will absorb and adopt different cultural norms, ideas, skills, knowledge or ideas more easily, sometimes even imperceptible. This is not the case in the current study. Some participants are struggling in the English language, the *lingua franca* of Canada. According to them, they had difficulty in passing the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) exam to qualify to take another exam, the exam for Registered Nurses in Canada, before they will qualify to practice as registered nurses in Canada. As of now many of them are still working as personal care workers, a rank lower than a nurse. Some of them have taken the IELTS thrice but still could not manage the challenge. One reason behind this difficulty can be traced back to their experiences in Saudi Arabia. Sentiment can be felt from one of the participants as she was not able to practice well her English language while in the Middle East. In Saudi Arabia they speak a combination of English and Arabic. Back in the Philippines, Filipinos love to express themselves in "Taglish" which is a combination of Tagalog (Filipino) and English. To be able to break the language barrier is one major achievement in order to bridge the social distance between the migrants and the host community. Social remittances can be further strengthened if one absorbs and adopts different cultural norms, ideas, skills, knowledge or ideas with determination.

"I was struggling in passing the English exam. It took me almost a year before I was able to pass the exam. The exam is a requirement before I was allowed to take to the RN exam. While waiting I worked as a PCW which was very degrading since I worked as a nurse in Saudi Arabia. I find it hard to speak English because in Saudi Arabia we speak a combination of English and Arabic. I was not able to practice well my English knowledge while in the Middle East". - Sally

"I cannot pass the exams here such as English exams. I can stand the job as a PCW because nurses are very flexible". - Marian

"To pass the exam is my big challenge. I pass the IELTS exam. I am worried about the next exam, the RN exam. My other struggle is being away from my family". - Cecon

Chapter 7 – On Placement Fees: How Exploitation Takes Place and With What Consequences

It would be a mistake to discuss migration purely on economic terms for migration is not only linked to local, national and global economic prosperity but is also associated with various development issues such as international security, public health, national identity and, ultimately on human rights. This chapter is about a major concern relating to a human rights violation, namely that some recruitment agencies are engaged in illegal activities by collecting excessive placement fees for working in Canada.

One of the features of international labour migration is the role played by private fee-charging job brokers in organizing labour migration in the Philippines. Before it was abolished, The POEA authorizes recruitment agencies to charge migrant workers the equivalent of one month's salary as a fee for placing them overseas and handling all the necessary paperwork. As Asis (2005) mentions, migrants are expected to pay for a range of services—a placement fee for matching the prospective migrant with an overseas employer, job-training costs, medical examination fees, administrative fees, and transportation and housing charges—with fees varying depending on the popularity of the destination. However, violations of this rule are routine, with agencies charging considerably more (Asis, 2005).

"In Saudi Arabia, I paid P1,500 but I cannot remember if that was in dollars or pesos on my first job and 5,000 on my second job while in going to Canada I paid \$2,500 which does not include the plane tickets. My understanding is that the employer will pay for our tickets but it ended that I paid for the tickets in coming here". - Sally

Fees paid to recruiters are generally the largest expense of migrants seeking overseas jobs. Many of the migrants who know that there are more applicants than jobs are willing to pay more than the one month's wages abroad limit on recruiter fees or four percent of the wages expected to be earned under a 24-month contract (See Kuptsch, 2006). Though most agencies are based in the Philippines, the government could not successfully crack down on them especially when nobody among the migrants formally complained about the abuses.

"Aside from the placement fees of \$2000+ I was also collected of between \$200 to \$300 dollars. If I decide to back out I cannot get my money back". - Inday

Formal networks such as the recruitment agencies are sometimes called intermediaries which are the key actors in facilitating and driving migration within and across borders. According to Agunias (2009), by providing information and extending critical services in many stages of migration and in places of origin, transit and destination, legitimate intermediaries build migrants'

capabilities and expand their range of choice — the very essence of human development. However their value is, in many cases, overshadowed by the costs they impose on migrants, from charging exorbitant fees to outright abuse of basic human rights. It is difficult therefore to draw a clear line between a reasonable fee for valuable services and exploitative charges or practices, or between exploitation and criminal abuse. Numerous accounts of intermediaries taking advantage of the migrants they claim to serve suggest the need for more intervention in the operations of these recruitment agencies or intermediaries (Agunias, 2009).

"I paid 3,000 pesos in going to Kuwait. I paid 5,000 in going to Saudi since I went home to the Philippines before I started to work in Saudi Arabia". -

Cecon

The Philippine government through the POEA has never provided a limit to the number of agencies; this has resulted in unrestrained competition. To a certain degree, according to Agunias (2008), competition is necessary especially in a private-sector-driven industry but too much competition can increase the likelihood of abuses against the workers. Policymakers are afraid that in an overcrowded market, some recruitment agencies will not make good profits and instead of closing their business as they will try to recover their losses by breaking the rules (Agunias, 2008). The most common rule they break is through the charging of exorbitant recruitment fees against the migrants. On a

report submitted to the CHR, Pizarro (2002) was concerned to learn that many recruitment agencies were engaged in recruitment activities without a proper licence. Even licensed agencies commit violations such as contract substitution, exaction of fees above the established amount and advertisement of non-existent jobs.

"In Saudi Arabia I paid a month salary while in Canada I paid \$2,500 in going here. Though there were some who came in to Canada some were charged \$3,000". - Poks

In this profitable climate where a great deal of money is exchanged, exploitation and fraud may be found. Recruitment agencies may collect fees and charge the workers as well as the employers which constitute an illegal practice in many countries. According to Keely (1973), temporary Filipino labour migrants look to overseas connections to help in other ways: from sponsoring a tourist visa, to providing financial assistance to cover the costs of migration, to directly matching them with a willing employer so as to avoid paying a placement fee to a recruitment agency (Keely, 1973).

"I paid down payment of \$200 and then \$300 in order that the papers will be processed. This down payment is not part of the package. The purpose of the down payment is for the papers to be processed". - JP

One thing to abhor about the practice of recruitment agencies is the exaction of fees with no sense of ethics. Another thing is the increasing greediness of these private agencies in terms of charging fees to their recruits (see Binghay, 2006). According to Ty (2001), unlike in the past when the placement fee is paid directly, nowadays, a manning agency will just ask the prospective migrant to sign a document stating that he/she owes the agency a certain amount of money and this is done when he/she is already in the airport so as not to give the migrant much option but to sign on the document.

"Additional expenses are airfare which is P53,000 or \$1,200. I find it difficult because I have to get the money through loan from another agency. I paid the loan for a year with an interest of 2.5% per month. I get the loan to pay for the placement fee and the airfare. I also paid for the visa, medical fees". - Drew

Despite the criticisms, it cannot be denied that recruitment agencies play a central role in the labour migration process (Agunias, 2008). They legally generate revenue in two ways; first, by charging service fees to the principals or the employers and secondly, by collecting placement fees from the workers. Services fees include costs directly related to recruiting and placing workers. Unless otherwise provided, the employer is also expected to pay the worker's airfare, visa fee, POEA processing fee and Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) membership fee (Agunias, 2008). Though agencies were able to charge workers a placement fee equal to one month's salary,

beginning in 2006 POEA began prohibiting them from requiring placement fees from domestic workers as part of a special reform package for this sector. Therefore, agencies cannot impose additional charges on the worker without POEA's approval nor can they collect the placement fee before the worker receives a formal employment offer (Agunias, 2008). According to the POEA (2007), placement fees are at the center of most recruitment irregularities, with agencies charging excessive prices, collecting fees too early and failing to issue receipts.

"I paid 10,000 pesos in 1993. It did not take me long to get a job. I did not pay anything in coming to Canada". - Marian

"In going to Saudi the airfares were free but in Canada I paid my own". - Poks

"From Saudi I did not pay anything but in going to Canada I paid all in all \$5,000, \$2,500 for the agency, plane tickets at \$1,000, medical and the registration at the college of nursing. I have to pay the registration before leaving Saudi even the processing to the school, in taking the exam". - Kate

In principle, the involvement of private recruitment agents may be an efficient way of linking employers in the receiving country with foreign workers in the sending country and there are good arguments for arranging recruitment through private rather than public recruitment agencies (Ruhs, 2002). For example, as Bohning (1996) observes, some governments may not have the

financial and personnel resources to organize public recruitment. Private recruiters may also have greater incentives to actively search for as many clients as possible, rather than just wait for clients as it is often the case with public recruitment offices (Bohning, 1996). However, some recruitment agents have taken advantage of migrant workers' limited information about working and living conditions in the host country by misinforming them and charging excessive fees that bear little resemblance to the actual recruitment and placement costs incurred by these agencies (Ruhs, 2002).

"In going to Saudi I did not pay for any placement fees except that I have to pay for the medical fees. In coming to Canada I paid for medical (\$300), plane ticket (\$1000 one way), and visa (\$150) processing fees. The agency fee is \$2,500". - Ikay

The employment experience of migrant workers within the health sector especially among IENs varies greatly and a number of influences shape this experience. First, private employment agencies are becoming integral part to the movement of health workers but their role and practices have been subject to little investigation. They differ substantially in the fees they charge from workers and/or employers and in the degree to which they fulfil their contractual obligations. In some cases nurses anticipate that they will be working in general hospitals and are actually destined for employment as poorly paid care assistants in nursing homes (RCN, 2003). As Bach (2003) commented, there

are many well managed and responsible agencies but their image is tarnished by the poor practice of others. Much of the abuse associated with migration stems from the activities of these agencies. They facilitate unmanaged migration, often charging high fees and misleading applicants about their final employment destination and job (Bach, 2003).

"We never had any other options than to pay because we do not know". – JP

It has been observed by ILO (2003), that there is no transparency with regard to the spending of the accumulated fees charged by recruitment agencies. To combat them government should have transparent systems in place for licensing and supervising private recruitment agencies. There should be stiff sanctions against fraud and against the practice of charging workers excessive placement fees, while providing incentive for good performance and cutting down lengthy bureaucratic procedures through such measures as establishing "one-stop" contract registration processing centers (ILO, 2003).

"I have to go home first before going to Canada. I heard everyone has to go home; nobody came straight from Saudi to Canada except for one. I did not feel sorry to come to Canada despite the expenses because I wanted to come here. I believe I can get back the money in the future from my income. At first I did not know that I can come to Canada directly to the employer except now. An agent (actual name hidden) is the one who recruited us; there was misunderstanding between the employer and the recruiter. The employer was

mad because her nurses were being collected with huge placement fees. An agent (actual name hidden) even collected \$10,000 from some of my colleagues (actual name hidden) just to apply for provincial nominee. Even until now there was no result of their provincial nominee. They paid because they were in a hurry". - Kate

Recruitment agencies in the Philippines prey on the vulnerability and desperation of the migrants. These agencies are left unregulated and the government profits from the continued presence of migrant workers in receiving countries like Saudi Arabia and Canada. Agencies charge exorbitant fees as high as P260,000 (CAD\$5,200) depending on what services are included in the placement package and which country the worker is going to. Fees may either be paid in cash or by installments taken from the worker's salary (Philippine Women Centre, 1997).

"I do not have any options because even the agencies in the Philippines I have to pay as well. It is the same thing". - Kate

Sections 6 and 7 of RA 8042 or the Philippine's Migrant Workers Act of 1995 address the issue of illegal recruitment by private agencies. Some illegal practices mentioned in these sections include illegal exaction of fees; providing false or falsified information, notices, or documents; recruitment of workers in jobs harmful to public health or morality; contract substitution; and withholding workers' documents before departure in exchange for money or financial

consideration (See POEA, 2007). Penalties for illegal recruitment practices range from 6 to 12 years of imprisonment and include fines no less than P200,000 (\$4,000) and no more than P500,000 (\$10,000). While there are plenty of agencies that respect this decree, according to Center for Migrant Advocacy-Philippines, Inc. (2009) report, the most recurrent problem Filipino migrants encounter during the pre-deployment period is the violation on the part of the recruitment agencies of the standard placement fee. The report also found that placement fees Philippine agencies impose on future migrants fluctuate between 0 and P260,000 (\$5,200).

"I was recruited to Canada without going through the POEA. I have no options not to pay". - Cecon

According to UN (1976), for most migrant workers the national laws and procedures remain the principal support or barrier to the exercise of rights. These laws vary significantly, however, to the extent to which they protect the rights of migrant workers. A range of activities will help migrant workers better protect their rights. These include 'know your rights' training programs for workers who migrate. The better-informed workers are, prior to migrating, the better able they are to assert their rights. This is particularly the case for contract labourers who may have little idea of the wages or working conditions to which they are entitled (UN, 1976). Based on Martin's (2005) assessment, a number of countries have ratified conventions sponsored by the ILO specifically

protecting the rights of migrants. Forty-two countries have ratified the Convention concerning Migration for Employment (Revised) (No. 97), which obligates States to provide free and accurate information to migrants (Article 2), to prevent misleading propaganda (Article 3), to facilitate the departure, journey and reception of migrants (Article 4), to prevent discrimination against migrants (Article 6), and to permit remittances (Article 9). Eighteen countries have ratified the Convention concerning Migrations in Abusive Conditions and the Promotion of Equality of Opportunity and Treatment of Migrant Workers (No. 143). This Convention requires States to respect the human rights of migrants (Article 1), to investigate, monitor and suppress trafficking (Article 2, 3, and 6), and to provide equality of opportunity and treatment for in the areas of employment, social security, unions, and (Article 10) cultural rights (Martin, 2005).

"We never had any other options than to pay because we do not know. Due to lack of information I do not have any other options. I have access to the internet but I work 12 hours of shifts and by the time I am home I am too tired". - Ikay

Martin (2003) likewise observes that both receiving and sending countries have the powers and responsibilities to control the movement of migrants going in or out of their borders. States possess broad authority to regulate the movement of foreign nationals across their borders (Martin, 2003). Although these authorities are not absolute, States generally are able to exercise their sovereign powers to determine who will be admitted and for what period. In

support of these powers, Sohn and Buergenthal (1992) added that states may enact “internal law and regulations on such matters as passports, admissions, exclusion and expulsion of aliens and frontier control”. States vary in the types of laws and regulations adopted, with some being more restrictive than others, but all States adopt rules that govern entry into and exit from their territories (Martin, 2005). The Philippines and Canada are the two countries that have exercised their sovereign powers over the movement of the migrants.

“It was worth paying the money to the agency for coming to Saudi Arabia since everything was included such as plane tickets, etc. In the clinic I got free accommodation and housing as well as free housing and food allowance in the hospital. I was on live out since I was married. They like that kind of arrangement since the responsibility is borne by my husband. It was not worth in paying to go to Canada. The recruiters did not do anything at all. If only we have seen the advertisement earlier I should have applied directly. I found out that the later batch of recruits applied directly so they did not pay anything to the agency. The only advantage I got was that though I was not an English passer I still was able to go to Canada for the latest recruit they should show that they can speak English very well. Still 2,500 is cheap after all”. - Sally

According to Martin (2005), private agencies have come to dominate recruitment and deployment in many labour-sending nations, raising concerns that range from the equity of lower-wage migrants often paying the highest fees to the fact that private agencies may have interests that are different from those

of employer, migrants and governments. Most governments have adopted policies to get private merchants of labour to identify themselves by obtaining licenses, regulating the fees that they can charge, and educating migrants to ensure that recruitment regulations are obeyed (Martin, 2005).

"It was worth spending the placement fees and everything in going to Canada as compared to be staying in Saudi Arabia. If I compare the life here in Canada than in Saudi Arabia, though everything is free (rent, uniform, etc), in Saudi Arabia I do not have enough freedom to do whatever I want because the culture there does not allow me to do things by myself. For example I cannot go around in the park as a woman by myself because the culture does not allow me to do it. In Saudi I cannot work part time unlike here in Canada I can work according to my pace. I cannot work to any other jobs that are not within my contract in Saudi Arabia". – Inday

Despite its relatively pro-migrant rhetoric through its package of OFW entitlements, programs and services, the response of the government in the face of violations of migrants' rights has not always been appropriate, timely, gender-sensitive, and rights-based (Alcid, 2003). Though the Philippines has an exemplary record in terms of creating directives and mandates to protect the rights of migrant workers as mentioned in the case study from the previous chapter, there is obviously a lack of political will by the government in the consistent protection of the rights of the OFW. The government has been

ineffective in the enforcement of laws, policies, rules and regulation on labour migration.

"I find it satisfactory to pay the agencies because I was able to achieve what I wanted to achieve. I have a good income. Even though I spent, the money I paid was earned in six months. Since I did not find a contact to come to Canada and I did not trust the internet. I relied on the person to take me to this country even though I have to pay for the agency". - Poks

The recent history of strong out-migration, in the case of the Philippines, has become entrenched as a social institution and first-time Filipino migrants are increasingly turning to employment agencies found in newspaper advertisements or the internet to assist in processing their documents and finding overseas employers even when they have family and friends in the prospective recipient countries (Wee & Sim, 2003). Hence, is the recruiter merely meeting the migrant worker's demand for such service or do recruitment agencies have a role in conditioning such demand?

Heyzer and Wee (1994) show that labour recruiters can also actively create demand through various inducements. They may use monetary attractions as inducements, such as promising a higher salary abroad, or a guarantee that 'everything is provided for'. They also promise non-monetary inducements such as claims of a nice country to work in overseas and pledge of good and kind

employers in foreign countries. Such inducements interact with the aspirations of workers to obtain better-paying jobs and higher social status for themselves. As a result, recruiting agencies find two advantages – first, there is a ready demand for overseas employment among intending migrant workers and second the worker's lack of access to overseas labour market renders them vulnerable to whatever is offered by the agencies (Wee & Sim, 2003).

"In going to Saudi, I do not feel bad for going to Saudi. It gives me the experience to be abroad. I do not feel any regrets because I know that I will earn what I paid in the long run, though I have to borrow money to pay for the placement fees. There is an agency that loans money with interest with 2.5% per month payable in one year. The person (actual name hidden) who gives us the loan is also a friend of the agency. One member (actual name hidden) is in Saudi, another member is in Canada and another group in the Philippines who is connected to the agency and they are willing to lend you funds for going to Canada". - JP

The lack of job generation by the government and the promotion of overseas work make many OFWs and their families resigned to illegal fees exaction because they think it is worth it to find a job abroad or else suffer unemployment or underemployment and poverty in the Philippines. As population growth outpaces the capacity of industry to absorb new labour, urban unemployment and rural underemployment are compounded. In 2003, the Philippine economy generated 566,000 new jobs, of which 60% were in the services sector. Despite

this job creation, unemployment levels rose because the job market was inundated with 624,000 new entrants (ADB Outlook, 2004). This has resulted in a subculture where OFWs and their families regard payment of excessive placement fees as a necessity. The high costs of transaction/placement fees push migrants into a debt trap and predispose them to accept difficult working conditions (Asis, 2004). There is a need to identify a system that will link migrants and jobs without having to go through the profit-oriented migration industry.

"There was no regret in Saudi Arabia because it was free and I gained a lot of experiences. My only regret in Saudi Arabia is that the discrimination is stronger. - Ikay

"It is worth paying those placement fees though I find it hard to pay back the money. I was only earning in Riyal yet I had a loan in dollars so it was hard. At that time I have no other options because what is more important for me is to be working together with my friends". - Drew

Illegal and exorbitant fees extorted by the recruiters are unethical according to Esguerra (2008) because these recruiters have already received payments from the employers. He recommended that the government of countries absorbing Filipino professionals and skilled workers such as the United States and Canada should have a broad national policy against illegal and unethical recruiters as well as abuses on foreign immigrant workers (Esguerra, 2008).

"I find it difficult because I have to get the money through loan from another agency. I paid the loan for a year with an interest of 2.5% per month. I get the loan to pay for the placement fee and the airfare. I also paid for the visa, medical fees". - Drew

There are extremely high costs involved to migrate. Since the majority of Filipinos cannot afford these high costs, they have to borrow money either from relatives, an agency or from unscrupulous loan sharks to cover their air travel processing expenses and placement fees (Philippine Women Centre, 1997). Some loan sharks charge an interest rate as high as 20 percent which they apply daily, weekly or monthly. Interviews from migrants showed that for the first years of working abroad they could not even make enough to pay off their loan. They are caught in a cycle of debt, exploitation and oppression that they cannot get out of.

"In my case in order to get funding to go to Canada I borrowed money from my family. I have regrets in paying the placement fee because I realized through my employer that I do not have to pay after all only if I applied direct. My employer felt bad upon realizing that I paid for the placement fees thus she makes it sure that the next batch of nurses will not pay for anymore placement fees". - Ikay

In many cases, the monetary cost of migration is relatively high and has to be financed by family resources. The family might have to sell land and other

assets or else borrow to finance migration cost (see Lucas & Stark 1985; Stark & Lucas 1988, Poirine, 1997). Tan (2004) sees the large outlay for placement fees and other migration costs as an investment by the family. The financing decision could be seen as a portfolio choice where family assets are exchanged for investment in migration in anticipation of higher returns.

"It was worth paying the 10,000 to the agency in going to Saudi Arabia. Since I did not pay anything to the agency in coming to Canada I was very fortunate as compared to other Filipinos who paid fees to the agency. Some of them are still paying for the fees until now". - Marian

"From Saudi I did not pay anything but in going to Canada I paid all in all \$5,000, \$2,500 for the agency, plane tickets at \$1,000, medical and the registration at the college of nursing. I have to pay the registration before leaving Saudi. (I have to pay) even the processing to the school, in taking the exam". - Kate

According to a recent report in Verite (2005) which covers Vietnam, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, Taiwan, Jordan and Malaysia, the list of common abuses against foreign contract labourers were excessive overtime, improper wage payments and withholding of wages. Despite the widespread existence of legislation limiting fees, service, and placement or recruitment fees charged were nevertheless excessive in practice in two regards: they exceed legal limits and often accounting for a large portion of a worker's earnings. This

discrepancy between law and actual practice has to do with the absence of formal legal mechanisms for governing the payment of placement fees (with the exception of Vietnam). The report therefore concludes that the level of indebtedness of foreign contract workers can be considered to be 'debt-bondage' consistent with the definition of human trafficking.

"In going to Saudi I did not pay for any placement fees except that I have to pay for the medical fees. In coming to Canada I paid for medical (\$300), plane ticket (\$1000 one way), and visa (\$150) processing fees. The agency fee is \$2,500".

- Ikay

A 2004 survey conducted by the Scalabrini Migration Center in Manila suggest that many migrants are not aware of the standard fees and some of those who are aware would consider paying more just to get deployed. Standard fees are for "POEA's eyes and ears only," according to the survey. Some agencies even coach migrants about the "correct" fees in case POEA asks them. An interview with Rene Cristobal, owner of an established and highly regarded agency, also reveals that some agencies do not issue receipts to avoid a paper trail and evade paying taxes (Scalabrini Migration Center, 2004).

Perhaps there are hundreds or thousands of private recruitment agencies around the world that are legitimate and responsible in recruiting Filipino

migrants. However, there are also illegal and irresponsible recruitment agencies that have vested interests in earning as much money as the market will tolerate from every contract signed by the migrants. Since there is not enough Philippine staff, representatives or organizations that regulate and monitor the recruitment process, the traditional market motto –buyer beware, always applies (Kingma, 2006). Aggressive recruitment campaigns are on the increase. As more and more Filipino nurses migrate to developed countries, cases of exploitation against overseas workers multiplied. Contracts are manipulated, human liberties are threatened, and blatant fraud is not uncommon. According to Martin (2003), “the evolving migration infrastructure of agents and brokers that moves workers over borders takes a significant share of the earnings gap that motivates people to migrate, often 20% to 30% of migrant earnings, which often leaves migrants with lower wages and worse conditions than other workers where they are employed.”

The International Council of Nurses [ICN] (2002) observes that many migrant nurses are contracted under false pretences or misled as to the conditions of work and possible remuneration and benefits. Exploitation may already begin in the source country. It can, however, occur at any number of points along the recruitment process. In many cases, the entrepreneurs' drive for financial gain constitutes the motivating force behind these abusive practices (ICN, 2002). This drive is nothing else but the fundamental driving force of capital(ism). Career moves including international employment experiences advance the

quality of life of individual nurses and offer helpful opportunities for personal and professional development. However, nurses' career moves must be the result of informed decisions. Filipino nurses employed or seeking employment must have access to representative organizations both from sending country (POEA, POLO & DFA) and the receiving country (college of registered nurses, professional associations and trade unions) that will guarantee respect of their human and workers' rights.

Chapter 8 – Why Exploitation of the Filipino Nurses Takes Place and What Can Be Done About It

This chapter is supplementary to Chapter 7 and is intended to give emphasis on the third research question regarding the illegality of the act by ruthless recruitment agencies as it seriously affects the lives of transnational migrants and their families. This chapter, in a way, brings us back to the purpose of this study and that is to help the migrants resolve their problem and to give caution that this study is not exclusively an intellectual exercise. Its ethical objective is to wake up the minds of people that are directly and indirectly involved rather than make this as an ordinary case, gathering dust and simply forgotten. As a recapitulation, agencies operated by Filipinos who are landed immigrants in Canada recruited 29 Filipino nurses directly from Saudi Arabia to work in Canada particularly in Halifax as personal care workers in a nursing home. In the process, these agencies earned through placement fees an average of \$2,500 per person or a total of \$72,500.

Why are fees being collected? Based on the statements from the research participants, it was not reasonable to pay because they still ended up doing all the processing of their papers and other related activities before and after arrival to their destination. They were even told by their employer upon reaching Canada that they could have applied directly to the nursing home to avoid

paying the fees thus the interference of the recruitment agencies is not at all necessary but a waste of their hard-earned money.

What are the specific laws that were violated? Based on the laws that protect the foreign workers by both the sending and receiving countries, the commission to collect the fees was unlawful. In Canada, foreign workers are protected against individuals who are engaged in foreign worker recruitment through the Worker Recruitment and Protection Act of 2009. It also violated the laws attached to the Pilot Project of the Canadian Government. From the Philippines, the POEA has issued Memorandum Circular No. 03 (series of 2007) and Memorandum Circular No. 06 (series of 2008) which took effect on August 22, 2008 on the “no placement fee” policy for Canada-bound workers. Further explanations of the Canada Act and Memorandum Circulars from the Philippines are found in Chapter 4: The Context of the Case Study.

What was the impact from the illegality for the migrants and their families? It should be borne in mind that the effects of this act are both shouldered by the sender and the receiver however it is much felt back home. Funds that could have been used for personal consumption, for the education of a family member, to pay some loans back home or for small luxuries ended up in the pockets of unscrupulous individuals or groups. Likewise, as remittances make their way home and contribute to family survival, it is worth emphasizing that the demands to remit already causes significant drain on those who send them

more so if the burdens caused by the placement fees are added on top of it.

Both sender and receiver are caught in a cycle of debt, exploitation and oppression that they cannot get out of easily.

Is this an isolated case, a fluke that is not worth given special attention? While in the process of writing this paper I met a Filipino cook who just arrived from the Philippines. She and her colleagues were charged placement fees of \$5,000 by their recruiter before they could find a job in downtown Halifax.

Another group of Filipino nurses was recruited and charged the same amount by their employer who runs a homecare service provider in Dartmouth, similar to a story of eight Filipinos who found work at fast-food restaurants at IWK, after paying \$3,000 per individual. Whether these related stories are officially recorded or not, it shows that a pattern of collecting fees from the newly arrived migrants has been established and becomes an accepted arrangement. The consequence of not paying attention to the plight of these 29 nurses in the case study might also happen to other Filipinos, or other nationalities that are still coming to Halifax. In a worst case scenario, Canada might become a haven for illegal activities by recruitment agencies and employers similar to Israel and Taiwan, where migrants while systematically being charged through the broker system are experiencing slow death in the process.

How is the sending country responsible for such an anomaly? The Philippine government has to be directly blamed for this mess for many reasons. First, the

recruitment system is beset with loopholes. Migrant workers are hired in two ways – through the POEA's Government Placement Board or through private recruitment agencies. By allowing private recruitment agencies to recruit, the government exposes migrants to vulnerability and eventually to corruption. Second, the government has failed to legally protect the interest of the migrants by negotiating bilateral agreements to only 18 out of 193 labour receiving countries and territories as part of its labour export policy despite deploying almost 10% of its population. Third, the lack of protection to Filipinos abroad is shown in the creation of inconsistent policies. Contradiction appears in the formulation of the declaration of guidelines under Republic Act 8042 or the Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act of 1995. Its policy is filled with confusion – particularly two items under the law's Declaration of Policies. Under Section 2c, it says that: "the state does not promote overseas employment as a means to sustain economic growth and achieve national development, and that the existence of the overseas employment program rests solely on the assurance that the dignity and fundamental human rights of the Filipino citizen shall not, at anytime, be compromised or violated. However, under Section 2i, it says the opposite stating that: "nonetheless, the deployment of Filipino overseas workers, whether land-based or sea-based by local service contractors and manning agencies employing them, shall be encouraged (see Republic Act No. 8042, 1995). This contradiction points to the fact that the government will never admit an explicit policy on labour export to skirt a huge domestic unemployment problem; that it deliberately sends its citizens for

overseas work at the expense of the migrants. This also connotes that the export of nurses is a deliberate policy of the Philippine government. The state itself wants to have its own nurses exported as a result and it intentionally collaborates and takes the initiative in sending the nurses at their own risks. By colluding, initiating and facilitating the export of its highly skilled labour force, the Philippine state has to allow the loopholes in the laws and the safety valves of the system, so that exploitation can take place. The law is an insignificant epiphenomenon of the underlying political – economic realities and choices of the state that continues to be tied to the political and economic interests of global capitalism. Lastly, the efforts to prevent violation of overseas Filipino workers' rights are found to be wanting. The absence of Philippine embassy or an extension office or POLO in Halifax in particular allows the recruitment agencies and employers to go scot free after charging the migrants. Based on the findings by POEA (2007) there are only two personnel working in POLO office for the entire Canada that deal with 16,704 stocks of temporary migrant workers. The absence of offices and qualified staff in various countries would be difficult to educate the migrants on their rights and regulate the activities of the recruiters and employers.

In what way does the receiving country have a share of responsibility? Canada, in this case the province of Nova Scotia, is partly accountable by being complacent and unperturbed by the dilemma experienced by migrants. The receiving country is responsible in the sense of not doing as much as is

necessary; the same is true for other countries that benefited from the skills and knowledge of migrant workers based upon the 1949 Convention. Sponsored by the International Labour Organization (ILO), forty-two countries including Canada have ratified the Convention Concerning Migration for Employment (No. 97) in 1949. The same convention was revived by the Governing Body of the ILO Office at its 267th Session in 1996 obligating States namely, 1) by providing free and accurate information to migrants (Article 2); 2) by preventing misleading propaganda (Article 3); 3) by facilitating the departure, journey and reception of migrants (Article 4); 4) by preventing discrimination against migrants (Article 6); and (Article 9) 5) by permitting remittances (see Martin, 2005). Further, Article 7(2) of this Convention, Article 4 of Annex I and Article 4(1) of Annex II, state that the services rendered by public employment services in connection with the recruitment, introduction or placing of migrants for employment are to be provided free of charge (ILO, 1999). With the list of commitments as stipulated in the 1949 Convention, it remains to be seen how involved Canada is basing upon its current performance, as one of the forty-two countries that ratified the agreement to uphold the rights of the migrant workers.

What should be done by both the sending and receiving countries to find a solution to the problem? Concretely, it is my opinion that both governments should provide some form of protection to the migrants. Immediate solutions include investigating this and other cases, prosecuting the guilty parties and returning the funds collected from the migrants. The Philippines would not be

affected by agencies closing shops due to this stringent approach; new agencies would crop up that would take over, thus the profitability of the Canadian market of highly skilled human labour would not be an issue. Medium term solutions include, 1) aside from safeguarding the migrants, monitoring the activities of recruitment agencies and employers on the home turf should remain in place; 2) recommended actions in the receiving country include requiring recruitment agencies and employers to get clearance from POLO based in receiving countries, or from the POEA based in the Philippines before they can proceed in recruiting foreign workers; 3) there is the need to build more bilateral agreements between Canada and the Philippines, for the sake of smaller provinces like Nova Scotia, in recruiting future nurses and other professionals. This could parallel what other Canadian provinces did with the POEA on its plan to increase its workforce through migration. As a consequence of bilateral agreements the province and the POEA will be able to monitor the plights of migrants, from arrival to the country until their temporary settlement; assist temporary migrants from further exploitation at the same time promote the province as friendly and accommodating. Finally, 4) both countries should ensure that their employers applying for foreign workers agree to abide by a set of ethical guidelines in their recruitment practices or those of the recruitment agencies. An accreditation system should be introduced for international recruitment agencies.

What should happen if both States failed to protect the migrants? Experience suggests that sometimes governments never seem to accomplish anything. If the government of sending and receiving countries cannot assure that the rights of the migrants are protected then an alternative group should be activated and established. The States could involve or seek the support of civil society in any efforts to disseminate and promote the rights of the migrants. Proactive, ongoing relationship building and engagement with key civil society groups is crucial to improved management of labour migration. These organizations can be critical partners to other stakeholders seeking to further understand the presence of migrant workers in their supply chains, the conditions under which they work, and how best to improve their protections. The efforts of civil society groups include, 1) filing formal disputes and pursuing cases in labour court; 2) offering hotlines for reporting abuse; 3) providing community centers; 4) promoting social activities to grow awareness and provide support; and 5) educating the people. These activities are crucial mechanisms for supporting vulnerable communities of migrant workers that are focused primarily on advocacy and awareness-raising, grassroots response to worker mistreatment, and addressing grievances. Who are the members of the civil society? The churches, the universities, the Filipino Associations of Nova Scotia, the local communities, Immigrant Settlement and Integration Services (ISIS), formerly known as MISA, and various humanitarian and non-government organizations based in Halifax and other cities in Nova Scotia are the voluntary civic and social organizations and institutions that form the basis of a functioning society

particularly concerned to the affairs of the migrant workers. All social change comes from the passion of each individual and organization that are passionate to care (see International Labour Migration, 2008; Derleth, 2000; Linz & Stepan, 1996).

Chapter 9 – Conclusions and Recommendations

This study has explored the transnational experiences of Filipino nurses. The objectives of the study were 1) to map out how transnational social networks operate; 2) to find out what impacts remittances, both social and financial, have on their families and communities back home; and 3) to highlight the unequal transactions taking place in such networks and explore them in particular in the context of the exploitation of the Filipino nurses. The interview data provided by nine Filipino nurses have been analyzed to summarize and highlight the major findings in relation to transnational social networks, economic and social remittances and the issues on placement fees: how and why exploitation takes place.

Transnational Social Networks

The Canadian government's latest program on immigration and citizenship, which encourages Filipino migrant workers and landed immigrants to temporarily or permanently aim their migration plans to smaller cities like Halifax and Dartmouth, has finally shown some indications of improvement. Lately, the arrivals of many Filipino workers and their families have been noticeable. We meet them occasionally inside the metro buses, in various public facilities, at MacDonald's and even in different churches on Sundays. The success is directly related to the participation of various provincial governments by

adopting programs in cooperation with business organizations. It is their response to the efforts of the federal government of Canada to populate smaller provinces but also to address their own labour market gaps and needs. However, their move and effort to attract migrants are facilitated by formal and informal social networks as well. As pointed out in relevant literature and supported by the empirical study based upon the responses of the research participants, transnational social networks are widely recognized to be very influential in migration decisions. Migrants would prefer to go to places quickly where they will be welcomed and helped by friends, families and fellow citizens. Thus they are taking advantage of the communities and transnational links established by the first and second waves of migration.

In this case study, the migrants were arranged by a group of formal social networks, known as the recruitment agencies, that identified, recruited and finally sent them abroad to work in exchange for the payment of placement fees. As international migration becomes a formal business it has grown into a profitable industry. Numerous agencies find jobs for workers or workers for jobs. These agencies function at the sending and the receiving countries, in this case the Philippines, Saudi Arabia and Canada. They earn good money at both ends with neither a sense of ethics nor respect to the laws that should govern the legal movement of migrants. In order to take advantage of the benefits of the social network system, the agencies know their prospects through previous agencies or current employers and strike a deal that assures them and their

sources some form of capital gain. Through connections, these agencies know that it is not advisable to recruit their prospects directly from the sending country, in this case the Philippines, or send their recruits back to the Philippines from Saudi Arabia before heading to Canada. They have to make the transfer in the quickest and smoothest way possible and in the most profitable system by avoiding any legal means or the attention of State entities.

What has been commonly overlooked but is a very crucial factor in the growth of international migration is the proliferation of the migration industry. The social networks as its main instigators often include profit-oriented and privately-owned recruitment agencies. Their involvement has increasingly commercialized the migration process. They earn large profits by playing a decisive role in stimulating and facilitating international migration that could either be both legal and illegal. The old system of recruitment shows its continuity with the past where the migrants still rely heavily on recruitment agencies in terms of employment information, documentation and even financial sources. Migrants can hardly avoid the intervention of agencies during their migration process as, due to their contacts in source and destination areas, their knowledge in expediting migrants' documentation, their control over sufficient capital and up to date information, and these agencies are in the position to manipulate the flow of migrants to their own advantage. As the agencies monopolize the flow of information and access to the networks transferring migrants, the relationship between migrant and agencies is one of

dependency. Despite the one-sided affair, many migrants still chose the private, business-driven recruitment channels either because they are unaware of the safer and legal agencies or because they consider migration via these agencies faster and efficient. Moreover, as these agencies are considered to be more trustworthy than the government-run departments that send migrants overseas, they end up forming part of the migrants' social environment or personal networks. The payment of placement fees, even if they are illegal or astronomical becomes a seeming necessity.

The empirical study also establishes the connection between social networks with various migration theories. By doing so this connection not only recognizes the different levels of playing fields among these theories but also institute the migration-development linkage. The neo-classical equilibrium perspective examined in the micro level views the migrants as rational actors who are the ones to decide to migrate on the basis of a cost-benefit calculation upon information relayed by colleagues within their networks. The historical-structural perspective highlights the "pull factors" that attract the migrants to leave their country of origin which equally shows that the decision to travel is not purely based on the "push factors" that were enticed by both personal and formal social networks. To repeat what has been mentioned in the previous chapter - what brings millions of Filipinos abroad is a creation of a "culture of migration" which is a product of undermined political economy of a country. The migration systems theory invalidates the common saying that economic force is

one of the root causes of migration and that people tend to move to places where the standards of living are better as transnational social networks have a role in creating new migration pattern. "Chain migration", which has close affinity to migration systems theory, has more bearing among the migrants in deciding not only the destination. It also include other factors herein expressed in question forms such as who moves and who stays, for what purposes, under which conditions, exactly what and how much flows and through which channels.

Economic and Social Remittances

We are now beginning to realize that as new force in "the age of migration" (see Castles & Miller, 1998) is at hand which is not only characterized by unparalleled movements of migrants to every corner of the world but also by unparalleled growth in migrant remittances. Filipino migrants in particular are not benchwarmers in this era of incomparable mass exodus. They are one of the human vanguards that continue to break records not only in the area of having their presence felt abroad but also in sending economic and social remittances. The migrants and their remittances are seen by development practitioners as strategic resources that can resolve economic and social problems in their countries of origin. However, not everything depicts a rosy picture. While remittances sent by the Filipinos make their way home and contribute to family survival, the demands to remit causes significant drain on

the sender. As the families and friends of the migrants who are their invaluable supplies of support, they also become a supply of unlimited liabilities. The positions of the migrant within the family are essential features influencing the amount, pattern, function, use and beneficiaries of economic remittances.

Patterns of social remittances sent to the family should be given equal attention accompanying monetary flows. The term remittances is commonly understood as economic, one of the two kinds of remittances sent by the migrants to their families, friends, relatives and even the communities. The other kind is social remittances that can be in the form of information, suffrage and exchanges of ideas. There is no doubt that economically speaking remittances have greatly affected the recipients from the individual to the national levels positively but to some degree they have negatively impacted the individuals and families as they encourage dependency. The career move of the participants from Saudi Arabia to Canada has furthered their goals to send more remittances now when they are financially in a better position. Social remittances, on the other hand, affect relationships with the family, gender roles and class identity in the community as well as have a significant impact in both ways on political and civic participation.

Economic and social remittances are proof that migrants do not cut off their relationships with their families and communities. The continued link between the senders and the recipients and even the communities back in the migrants'

countries of origin illustrates the term transnationalism, coined by social scientists in different fields. If we use the concept of transnationalism to understand the history of migration, we will easily see that the phenomenon never really drifted away but simply changed its name in the course of history.

The empirical findings also point to the fact that there are various reasons why the migrants are sending remittances. Not all remittances are based on altruistic reasons. Some of their forms can be for investment or as an insurance against risks. Due to lack of empirical evidence, we cannot argue that remittances have a positive impact to poverty alleviation. Remittances alone do not save the people from poverty. It is in the interplay with other economic, social and cultural factors that remittances can make a difference to the receiver in making 'poverty a history'.

Through absentee voting, sharing of information, exchanges of ideas and other forms of social and political remittances, the link between migration and development is further revealed. While poverty from the country of origin is a "push factor" in the migration flows, the promotion of development by maximizing the impact of migrants' social remittances in particular can be an effective weapon against poverty. Civil rights through political suffrage allow the migrants to choose their own leader to govern effectively someone whom they believe will help in alleviating poverty in the countryside. Migrants have attained higher level of awareness, practical skills and professional experience aside

from financial gains that can add up to the accumulation of their human capital. This human capital, expressed in absentee voting in particular, can play a part in transforming social and political life if placed at the disposal of their countries of origin. On the other hand, sharing of information within their networks allows the migrants to make their living in another country tolerable while away from their loved ones. Getting the latest information about a job offer will help them get to their destinations as quickly as ever and as inexpensively as they could imagine. However, there is the need to encourage more migrants' participation in development policies and projects by drawing them into active roles in the development process through involvement in associations and other forms of civil society. The lack of involvement of the Filipino migrants in other forms of poverty-alleviation initiatives is alarming but can be transformed over time given proper socio-political awareness.

Placement Fees: How and Why Exploitation Takes Place

Currently, many Filipino nurses are interested in crossing international borders to gain access to the "pull factors". These are offered as subtle attraction from receiving countries such as better pay, professional development or the opportunity to experience life and work in a different culture with their families. The existing trend of high levels of nurse migration exposes the root cause of nursing shortages in developed countries, or what is termed as "deficit of care" in the North. This is combined with the existence of "push factors" from the

source country such as low pay, unsafe work environments and political instability. While the push-pull forces are driving labour migration, there are several signs of market failure associated with its related processes. One risk that has been associated with migration is the charging of exorbitant placement fees, among others.

A transnational recruitment network exists within the international labour migration spanning the sending and receiving countries and spreading through the local villages and towns down to cities abroad. Like the transnational movement of migrants, recruitment is a transnational business with profits taken from the migrants at every level of recruitment. In the case study, it is the Filipinos who recruited their compatriots. Fees are collected in Saudi Arabia before they step into Canada, their country of destination. Filipino-owned recruitment agencies play a key role as intermediaries in the international recruitment process of health workers. They have their headquarters based in the home country of the recruits and act as an agent on their behalf to identify employment opportunities in other countries. They also have offices based in destination countries and act primarily as agents of the employer seeking workers.

According to ILO (2006), in the last 20 years gross emigration of labour has risen at an annual rate of six per cent in the Asian region as a whole. This means that average migration growth in migrant-sending countries is more than

double than their labour force growth rate. One reason for this rapid increase is that labour migration is largely organized by private recruitment agencies known as intermediaries particularly in the Philippines with the blessings of its own government rather than state-run recruitment agencies. There is a degree of commercialization in this case that is not found in other regions. The involvement of private recruitment agencies may be an efficient way of linking employers in the receiving country with foreign workers and there are good arguments for arranging recruitment through private rather than through public means. However, some recruitment agents have taken advantage of migrant workers' limited information. This explains the rapid expansion and relative efficiency of the migration flows and has also lead to serious problems relating to fraud and abuse. Though considered as unethical, the payment of excessive or illegal placement fees becomes a necessity, an acceptable subculture among the migrants. Since a majority of Filipinos cannot afford these high costs, they have to borrow money and in some cases this has to be financed by family resources or external loan sharks. If uncontrolled, this perpetuates the development trap or simply said development poverty.

Experience suggests that the intervention of the states through proper regulatory institutions and processes are necessary to the efficient and impartial functioning of the international labour market. It is recognized that cooperation between the origin and destination states helps to maximize the potential benefits for the migrants derived from the international migration of workers.

Formalizing such cooperation through bilateral labour agreements is therefore a desirable step. On one hand, recruitment malpractices and abuses are widespread in many source countries including the Philippines that eventually spread to Saudi Arabia and Canada. To fight them, the source governments should have transparent systems in place for licensing and supervising private recruitment agencies. There should be stiff sanctions against fraud and against the practice of charging workers excessive placement fees while providing incentives for good performance. On the other hand, host governments should establish available devices in remedying grievances and minimizing violations of migrant workers' rights. Good practices for protecting their rights include the adoption of minimum standards for employment contracts, pre-departure training and information, monitoring the conditions of the new arrivals and the provision of migrants' support services.

However, new migration laws will mean nothing if the political economy of the Philippines as a major sending country does not change. It is definitely a big challenge whether new migration laws are going to work when the political economic options and choices of the country do not support such changes. If the underlying problem for the Philippines is one of colonialism and neo-colonial exploitation by the US and global capital, the measures for more effective laws for the protection of migrants may not be the only answer. The solution could somehow be a more independent politics for the Philippines, a re-evaluation of

its allies, a greater radicalism in economic decision-making, along with land reforms and other measures.

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Informed Consent Form (Appendix A)

As a graduate student at Saint Mary's University, I would like to invite you to participate in this study the objectives of which are:

- (1) To map out the various transnational social networks that the Filipino migrant nurses identified and utilized in exiting the Philippines and finding employment both in Saudi Arabia and Canada. This mapping takes place by identifying the support networks and the stages in the migration process and search for employment at which they operate. Social networks can either be families, friends, co-workers, organizations or communities that migrants come across within the three stages of their transnational migration which include the recruitment stage, the job placements stage and finally the circulation stage to prospective international employers; and
- (2) To identify the implications of transnationalism for the development of the Philippines both in economic and social terms primarily at the micro-level involving the family and community. This can be accomplished by analyzing the impact of economic and social remittances on the families and communities of the individuals interviewed. Remittances have become so important to the economies of many developing countries that they are currently considered the most visible indicators of the ties connecting migrants to their home countries.
- (3) To assess the exploitation of Filipino migrant workers by agencies and to highlight the international economic and political subordination of the country that cannot take action to protect its own citizens

This study is part of the requirements for the M.A. degree in International Development Studies that I am working toward. The research is being supervised by Dr. Evangelia Tastsoglou, Department of Sociology and Criminology and International Development Studies, Saint Mary's University.

I will interview you for approximately one hour, on issues related to your nursing experiences in Nova Scotia and overseas. After I have collected approximately nine interviews, I will transcribe them. By that time I will write up the data and make a summary report available to you.

I hope that participating in this study will allow you to have the opportunity to speak about your experiences and to have your voices heard. **Your participation is completely voluntary. You may withdraw from this study at any time without penalty.** In the unlikely event that you experience any discomfort after the interview, please feel free to contact me.

All information obtained in this study will be kept strictly **confidential and anonymous**. Before I begin the interview process you will be asked to choose

a pseudonym and it is by this name that you will be known throughout this process. No information that identifies you as an individual will be used in this study. Please do not put any identifying information on any of the forms I provide you. To further protect individual identities, this consent form will be sealed in an envelope and stored separately. Furthermore, no individual participants will ever be identified in any writing from this study.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me as the Principal Investigator, Maxroxas V. Tubo (Sonny) at my home at 404-7761; or my supervisor, Dr. Evangelia Tastsoglou at 420-5884 (Saint Mary's University).

This research has been reviewed and approved by the Saint Mary's University Research Ethics Board. If you have any questions or concerns about the study, you may contact Dr. Veronica Stinson at ethics@smu.ca, Chair, Research Ethics Board. Thank you.

By signing this consent form, you are indicating that you fully understand the above information and agree to participate in this study.

Participant's Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Please keep one copy of this form for your own records.

Interview Guide (Appendix B)

1. Can you identify the social networks that helped you come to Saudi Arabia and Canada?
2. How exactly did these networks help you move and settle?
3. How did you learn about these networks?
4. Are there other types of social networks that you did not utilize at the time or networks that you became aware of subsequently?
5. Which of these networks did you get assistance from in order to find employment in Saudi Arabia and in Canada?
6. Can you elaborate on the networks' roles during the recruitment, job placement and the circulation stages?
7. How much did you pay to these networks?
8. Did you feel it was worth paying such amount to go to Saudi Arabia and ultimately to Canada? Did you have other options?
9. Did you know your current employers prior to coming to work in Saudi Arabia and in Canada? Is your current employer connected to the networks that recruited you?
10. Do you provide financial support for family members at home (in the Philippines) and overseas? If yes, to what extent (how significant is the support) and how often?
11. To whom in particular is your financial support sent? In which country does the recipient reside?
12. Do you know how the funds are being used?
13. What is the impact of this financial support on you in Atlantic Canada?
14. How else do you participate from abroad in life in the Philippines (gifts, personal advice, information, vote, etc.) aside from financial remittance?
15. Do you provide / organize care for children in the Philippines or in a country other than where you reside? Do you organize care for others?
16. Are you involved in any transnational group efforts to alleviate poverty in the community where you come from in the Philippines?
17. Do you participate in organizations (political, social, internet-based, etc.) that are involved in the Philippines? In what ways?
18. How often do you visit the Philippines?
19. What contact do you have with your friends, family, village or community back in the Philippines?
20. Are there plans for other family members to move to Canada in the future through you?
21. Do any of your friends or relatives of your friends and members in your community would like to ask your help to move to Canada?
22. Did you go through POEA? Are you aware of the rules and regulations of the POEA?
23. How much is your salary per month? How much was collected from you? Are you aware that you can only be collected by your employer/recruiter/broker of up to one month's salary?

Background Information Sheet (Appendix C)

You may have already answered some of these questions during the interview, but I would like to have confirmation on these points:

Chosen Pseudonym _____

1. Male _____ Female _____
2. Year of birth _____
3. Place of birth? Rural __ Urban __ City/Town _____ Province _____
4. What was your previous job overseas? _____ Since when? _____
5. Why did you leave your previous job? _____
6. What is your job at present? _____ Since when? _____
7. What factors did you consider in moving to Canada? _____
8. How long have you been living in Canada? _____ In Nova Scotia? _____
9. Are you married? _____ If yes, since when? _____
10. Where does your spouse/partner come from? _____
11. Where do the other members of your family live? _____
12. What is your level of education? HS __ University __
Graduate/Professional School _____
13. Where did you acquire your education? Country of Origin/Level _____
Elsewhere/Level _____
14. Where do you work? Residential __ Nursing Home __ Full time __ Part
time _____
15. How would you characterize the financial resources of your family?
Low _____ Medium _____ High _____

If you would like to receive a copy of the findings from this project, please write your mailing address on a separate piece of paper and give this to the interviewer.

Thank You.



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The Saint Mary's University Research Ethics Board has issued an REB certificate related to this thesis. The certificate number is: 09-139 .

A copy of the certificate is on file at:

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