

**UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEMPORARY FILIPINO
MIGRATION IN THAILAND**

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entitled
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ABSTRACT

The Asian region has witnessed a shift in the flow of people across boundaries, and the complexity in which it is occurring. The diverse profiles of migrants, the patterns of movement, and policies towards migration have been overwhelming. Labor and skills shortages in destination countries, growing labor surplus and the widening inequalities in origin countries have contributed to the migration trends in many countries in the region. Although Thailand, like many countries, has been managing migration through policies that provide legal opportunities for labor mobility and restrict irregular migration, the country has been experiencing an increasing trend. Moreover, for the last five years, Thailand has a growing stock of Filipino migrants, and that an increasing number of them are irregular.

This research is a pioneering work in Thailand. It adapted Drachmann's stages of migration process framework in analyzing the migration patterns and experiences of Filipino migrants in the country. It discusses the experiences of migrants, the actions taken and their passage from one stage to another by analyzing migration as a process; first, focusing on the various factors that facilitated the movement, the various resources employed in order to realize their expectations in migration, and then, shifting the analysis to the state of the migrant. This study used both quantitative and qualitative approaches and techniques, with a lot of data acquired from the survey of 354 Filipino migrants in various provinces and borders in Thailand, and from the perspectives of the surveyed migrants themselves through interviews, observations, and a survey of around 200 threads on online forums and blogs.

Findings from this research revealed new patterns of mobility, the characteristics of migrants and the different paths they took in order to move and remain in Thailand. Distance, perceived net benefits from migration, available resources, and socio-economic conditions prior to migration tend to propel migrants to migrate, as shown in both quantitative and qualitative data. Important life events were also seen to have propelled migrants to move as shown in the high concentration of migrants in particular age groups and educational level. Moreover, the availability of various forms of resources in all stages of the migration process has been significant in reducing barriers to opportunities and in realizing a migrant's prospects in migration; thus, sustaining and perpetuating the movement from the Philippines to Thailand.

KEY WORDS: MIGRATION PROCESS / TRANSITIONS / SEMI-REGULARITY
POST-MIGRATION / MIGRATION SYSTEM

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Research

Over a span of several decades, the increasing movement of Filipinos across the globe has created a culture of migration, characterized by a high rate of outmigration to diverse locations around the world (IOM, 2008; Asis, 2006). Moreover, the country has been viewed as a supplier of labour to more developed areas in Asia, and countries like the US and Canada. This led the Philippine government to establish the country's overseas employment program to regulate migration and to protect the rights of migrants. The Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) has shown in its report in 2011 that there has been a growing trend in the number of Filipinos leaving the country from 1981-2011. Filipinos are present in over 190 countries around the world (POEA, 2010). The migrants are classified as temporary, permanent or undocumented.

The temporary movement of Filipinos within Southeast Asia has also been documented, with much of the flows have been towards the more economically advanced countries of Brunei, Malaysia and Singapore. With the growing regionalism and development, richer countries have been increasingly reliant on labour from neighbouring countries within the region such as the Philippines to address labour shortages (Kaur, 2010). Thailand, for instance, has been a host to a significant number of unskilled migrants from Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia, while Singapore and Malaysia have its huge share of foreign labour, particularly from Indonesia and the Philippines. In its 2010 report, the Philippines Overseas Employment Agency (POEA) showed that Singapore was among the top ten destinations of land-based Filipino workers with a huge number of migrant workers although flows to non-ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) countries are still more substantial (2010).

The flows and the systems established from these movements have also been acknowledged by various exhaustive researches done to explain them. In fact,

there is currently a huge amount of scholarly works discussing the trends and trajectories of Filipino movements, and their problems in destination countries in various regions of the world like Southeast Asia. In Thailand, however, a lot of the research studies on migration generally focused on low-skilled migration and irregular flows from the neighbouring countries within the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS). Although policies for the recruitment of professional and skilled migrant labour were established in 1978, the agreements signed by the government were made with countries in the GMS under the guest worker program which constituted low-skilled and undocumented migrants (Numnak, 2005; Wongboonsin, 2006 in Kaur, 2007); thereby, neglecting the issues arising from the increasing presence of skilled foreigners in the country.

A shift in the trend of labour movements of Filipinos towards less-popular destinations within the region like Thailand and their increasing presence in the country, therefore, are underexplored despite decades of growing movement into the teaching and non-teaching professions. The first main reason for this is the insignificant volume of the movements which resulted to the lack of attention by policy makers and government agencies responsible for managing migration. Another reason is the less restrictive entry and exit requirements generally given to nationals of ASEAN member countries, which also allow Filipinos to visit and leave Thailand easily. Lastly, this type of migration also has been occurring outside the framework of the formalized system established by the Philippine government making it difficult for government agencies in both countries to account for the number of those who remained and settled in Thailand; thus, posing a huge challenge in distinguishing a migrant from a tourist, and to monitor their conditions.

This study of Filipinos in Thailand was of particular interest to me as a researcher due to the fact that I am a migrant myself and have settled in Thailand for 20 years. Over this period, a lot has changed in terms of the extent of the movement and the systems established that have perpetuated the increasing trend. The first research on Filipino migration I did for my master's thesis was on domestic workers in 2002; up to which time, prospects for work for teaching and non-teaching jobs were aplenty, and extending a visa in Laos and Malaysia was never an issue. In the last five years or so, some noticeable changes in migration policies have affected Filipino

migrants significantly. For instance, policies regarding the extension of visas in Laos and Cambodia changed several times between 2009 and 2011. This view is based on the conversations with other Filipino migrants, and interviews done with travel operators and Filipino migrant respondents in two separate researches during 2003 and 2012.

Requirements such as medical certificate, TOEFL or teacher training certificate, and Thai culture training certificate for foreign teachers in both public and private schools are unheard of 10 years ago. Nowadays, securing a work permit as a teacher in several primary and secondary schools has also created some difficulties among regular Filipino teachers, particularly those with non-teaching backgrounds because of the constant changes in the requirements. Apart from these, departures from the Philippines to Thailand have become more difficult in recent years as the Bureau of Immigration has established stricter screening procedures for departing Filipino tourists. Stories of being held up or offloaded at airports in Manila have also been revealed by other migrants. The pre-migration and departure stage, therefore, has become stressful for some Filipino migrants bound for Thailand.

In view of Thailand's preparation for the launching of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) by 2015, it is essential to review the consequences of this strengthened integration within the ASEAN. Thailand's goal of becoming an Asian hub for international education, for instance, has certainly resulted to an increasing demand for foreign teachers or professionals proficient in English, and greater investment in the educational sector. At the same time, policy changes in the assessment methods and teacher employment to remain competitive have resulted to increased difficulties for less-qualified foreign teachers to secure regular employment tenure and/or benefits. However, despite the challenges, more and more Filipinos are finding employment opportunities in Thailand, as seen from the 6-year report of registered migrants provided by the Ministry of Labour.

There have also been a growing number of formal and informal organizations established by Filipinos in the country, recreating a space of an 'imagined home' similar to that which they had in the Philippines; highlighting also the increasing presence of Filipino migrants. Although a lot has been done in studying social networks and Filipino *diasporas* around the world, there is currently no research

done on their evolution and important role on the decision of Filipinos to move to Thailand, and on their conditions after moving. Projections for future migration trends from the Philippines to Thailand, therefore, could take into account the growth of these networks. Lastly, the increasing presence of Filipinos in the country is also accompanied by a steady increase in the number of irregular migrants and crimes involving Filipino migrants in recent years. Several visits made to the Thai-Cambodian borders, and information received from key embassy officials and pioneer migrants confirmed this observation. Not only that, the fluidity of the movements in the country has been surprising and alarming considering the risk factors involved.

Given the current landscape, this study provides insights to the movement of Filipinos in Thailand and the migration system that has evolved and sustained over several decades, yet overlooked. The various factors that facilitated migration, their experiences as they move from one phase to another within the migration process, and the different resources employed to make migration possible are also documented in this study utilizing some of its theoretical underpinnings and providing more substance through the data obtained from this research.

1.2 Research Questions

This study focused on the current trends of movement among Filipino migrants in Thailand, the different stages that Filipino migrants had to go through in order to make migration possible, their experiences, and the various factors that propelled them to move to Thailand and on their decision to remain in the host country. It aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What is the pattern of movement among Filipinos in Thailand and where are they situated?
2. What are the key factors that influence their decision to move to Thailand?
3. What are the challenges and opportunities that Filipino migrants face in Thailand?

1.3 Objectives of the Research

The general aim of this research is to provide insights into the evolution of Filipino migration to Thailand, their conditions and prospects in the country. Moreover, the specific objectives are:

- a.) To generate a general profile of Filipino migrants.
- b.) To find out the patterns and trends of Filipino migration in Thailand.
- c.) To identify the key factors that stimulated the migration trends among Filipinos in Thailand.
- d.) To analyze the migrants' experiences at various stages of the migration process.

1.4 Relevance and Justification of the Research

The study of Filipino migrants in Thailand is necessary because little has been known about the scale of Filipino labour migration in the country and its evolution, the profile of Filipino migrants, the reasons why they moved and their conditions. Due to its relatively small number and the undocumented migrant status of many others, their presence in the country is given low attention. Data provided by the Ministry of Labour in 2012 revealed that there were only around 7,000 registered Filipino workers in Thailand, but there was no account for the unregistered or those illegally working in the country. However, interviews at the Embassy of the Philippines in Bangkok showed that there are approximately 20,000 Filipino migrants in Thailand; more than half of them are undocumented or irregular (KI#1, April, 2012).

Documenting Filipino migration in Thailand reveals valuable information on the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of those who moved, and the migration system that has been developed by the migrants themselves over the last 40 years; thus, providing a starting point for future research studies. Since most of the migrants are educated, it is often seen that they moved in an unproblematic manner. However, results from previous studies by the researcher showed that the prospects for personal and professional success for those Filipinos in the study were difficult to achieve. By analyzing the different stages of the migration process, this research is

able to present an insight into the consequences of migration for Filipino migrants in Thailand compared to their counterparts in other places in the region and across societies worldwide, and unravel the gap between a migrant's aspirations and the actual migration experience.

Since both countries are members of the ASEAN, this research will contribute in assessing the impact of the ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint (AEC) on the current and future conditions of Filipino migrants in Thailand. By doing so, both governments would need to review their current migration policies and employ necessary changes relevant to skilled migration of Filipinos as well as irregular migration, particularly in the absence of any formal labour agreements between Thailand and the Philippines. This will ensure the proper management of flows and protection of Filipino nationals in Thailand.

1.5 Organization of the Study

This research is divided into nine chapters. In the introduction, the problems are explored and the reasons why it should be given attention are presented. Gaps in research in the context of Filipino migration to Thailand are also shown.

The next chapter provides the analytical framework, adapting Drachman's Stages of Migration model to better understand why migrants chose Thailand as their destination and to illustrate the fact that the migrants went through difficulties in the process of moving. The chapter is organized around the important topics relevant to the process of migration by starting with the theories of international migration and how migrants are classified. To better understand the complexity of this phenomenon within the Asian region, historical and contemporary movements are reviewed.

Chapter 3 presents the different approaches used in the data collection, the variables used, and analysis of results. The study areas and the methods applied in sample selection are also explained. Chapter 4 provides a more in-depth background of how labour migration in the Philippines came to be, by discussing the historical and cultural aspects of the movement. This section is followed by the presentation of the current patterns of migration among Filipinos, the reasons for moving, the current

issues facing migrants at destinations as well as the Philippine government's response to the problems confronting overseas workers.

Chapters 5 to 8 present the results and analysis of data gathered for this research. In Chapter 5, the Philippines-Thailand migration system is discussed. Trends in employment within Thailand and the characteristics of migrants are also shown based on the results. The different phases of the migration process are discussed separately in the next succeeding chapters. In Chapter 6, the factors that influenced migrants' decision to move to Thailand were enumerated and discussed together with the various resources employed to make the move possible. The next chapter illustrates the experiences of migrants after arriving in destination. Chapter 7 provides a detailed account of the different changes migrants had to go through during the first few years in Thailand as well as in later years. The last chapter is a discussion of the future prospects of the migrants after Thailand; looking at return, onward migration or settlement plans and the possible factors that may have influenced their decisions to stay, return to the Philippines or move again to another country.

The concluding chapter, Chapter 9, not only summarizes the results from the study, but also reaffirms the thesis and discusses the issues presented in the previous chapters. It also shows some of the limitations in this research and the need for a more comprehensive and inclusive research in the future.

CHAPTER II

RESEARCH FRAMEWORK AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Framing this research was quite challenging, particularly due to the fact that there are several approaches to the study of international migration or that of Filipino migration in particular. Moreover, the nature of the movement to Thailand is quite distinct since it is occurring outside the institutional framework established by the Philippine government to manage migration. However, several theories can be used to explain why migration occurs, offering various insights to explain the movement and its perpetuation. Various factors that cause migration are identified in the chapter, focusing on the structural and social processes inherent in the movement. This research made use of the macro-level approach to help in our understanding of the larger political, economic and social structures within which migration occurs, and the use of meso- and micro-level approaches to expand our insights into why some people move and some do not (Solimano, A., 2008; Kley, S., 2009). Particularly significant in this research is the use of migration systems theory to analyze the links between countries in the region and that of Thailand and the Philippines. Drawing on current studies and statistical data, the historical and contemporary movements within Southeast Asia in the context of strengthened political and economic cooperation between countries in the region are presented in the later sections of this chapter.

2.1 Theories of International Migration

According to Zolberg, international migration is by nature a political process that requires a movement from one state to another and the eventual association in an “inclusive political community” (in Hirschman, C., Kasinitz, P. and DeWind, J. (eds.), 1999, p. 15). In this line of thinking, Zolberg concluded that, international migration, to a significant degree is influenced by “the will of the world’s states”. Moreover, Massey (in Hirschman, C., Kasinitz, P. & DeWind, J., p14)

provided an analysis through his empirical projects and argued on the importance of the state in determining immigration and emigration flows. According to him, the state through its migration policies does not only regulate cross border movements, but also the “acquisition, maintenance, loss or voluntary relinquishment of membership” (p.15).

The world systems theory, an assumption presented by Wallerstein (in Hirschman, C., Kasinitz, P. and DeWind, J. (eds.), 1999), was built on a premise that migration is an inherent outcome of capitalist development in sending and receiving countries; wherein flows were generated due to the significant influence and control of markets on resources in the peripheral regions, e.g., loss of jobs in the agricultural sector due to mechanization. Proponents of the neoclassical migration theory highlighted the differential wages and opportunities between sending and receiving countries which have influenced the flows of population as well as their effect on the cost and benefit to individuals or households, and on their decision to migrate. On the other hand, contemporary researches on international migration have been firmly grounded on several structural determinants such as the continuous demand for labour, constraints in poorer regions or countries, and the networks of support established by migrants across borders. These theories were a huge development from the neoclassical migration theory which emphasizes on differences in the supply of and demand for labour between regions or countries as the cause of international migration which also resulted to significant differences in wages between labour-surplus countries and labour-scarce countries.

Globalization is also seen to have shaped the experiences of migrants and the conditions in which they move. Parrenas (2001) mentioned that the economy is reshaped through global restructuring, generated by transnational corporations and financial capitalism, wherein production facilities are maintained in new economic centers across the globe; resulting to a growing need for low-wage labour in cities worldwide and dominated by highly-specialized professionals. Moreover, Parrenas gave an example of the relocation of production and manufacturing activities to other locations that gave rise to multiple migration flows.

According to Hugo (in Cambridge Survey of Migration, 1995), a shrinking local labour force population resulting from declining fertility rates and rising

educational level in several countries led to an increasing trend in international migration. A report by the United Nations Population Division in 2000 supported his view, stating that demographic transitions in more developed countries such as Japan and the Republic of Korea will have serious consequences that would require the governments to realign their programmes including those relevant with international migration (Wickramasekera, 2002). With this, the Department for International Development (DFID) highlighted the fact that at the international level, migrants from developing countries are meeting the labour shortages or needs of several developed countries brought about by demographic trends like the growing ageing populations and low fertility. At the national level, growth in either rural or urban areas offers important economic opportunities for men and women seeking ways to improve their life (DFID, 2007). Suffice to say, migration arises as a response to certain stimuli within a larger system such as capitalism or social imbalances.

The role of the family or household and even communities in migration decisions have also been put forward to challenge the assumptions made of neoclassical theory, arguing that individuals within these units act collectively in order to achieve the most benefits (i.e., income) and avoid risks and overcome shocks. This is done by diversifying various sources of income through the diversification in the allocation of labour. Through these units, such as the households, funds may be obtained through borrowing for investment. Migration of any member of a poor family is a way of earning a living; a route out of poverty. For some individuals, this is an opportunity to obtain jobs elsewhere and make better use of their skills, or because there are just few opportunities to earn a living where they are; resulting to increased incomes for families, and improvement in their social status and quality of life (www.migration.drc.org).

Several researchers also argued that not only economic factors propel migrants to move overseas as pointed out by economists, but also, socio-cultural factors foster international migration. Moreover, the contemporary theories on migration show that the fundamental factors are also influenced by norms, social networks and household strategies; thus, making structure and relationships more meaningful. One useful approach to explain migration is by looking at the self-perpetuating characteristics of migration systems. Feedback mechanism is significant

in the formation of the migration systems as stressed by Mobogunje wherein information about outcomes of a migrant's move at a destination is transmitted back to the original place (1970, in Bakewell, 2012). Migration systems theory also shows the linkages between two or several countries based on socio-cultural, political or historical ties that allow migrant networks or communities to develop, and even sustained for generations (Castles, 2000). With this perspective, theories on ethnic niches and ethnic enclaves (Bonacich, 1973; Modell 1980, in Portes, 1997) provided the basis for the understanding of the migration path pursued by prospective migrants.

Glick Schiller, on the other hand, insisted on the re-conceptualization of migration as "transnational"; that is, unlike immigrants, transnational migrants are those who expand their social networks across boundaries, establish themselves in their host society by enhancing their social, economic and political conditions, while at the same time, pursuing ties with the society they have left behind (Hirschman, C., Kasinitz, P. & DeWind, J., 1999). Transnational institutions also emerged within which migrants function; in families, networks, community organizations, political groups or business enterprises. With this argument, transnational migrants are distinguished from immigrants, an alternative to the immigrant-state concept developed by Zolberg and Massey. Thus, the general concept, "transnational social field", was adopted to include the different processes international migrants engage in.

According to Thapan (2005), transnationalism shows the various ways in which a migrant constructs his identity, the problems he confronts and the strategies employed in making his life more livable while ensuring that he keeps his connections with his homeland through rituals, practices, relationships and family ties. Migration also promotes the transfer of new skills, ideas, attitudes and technologies through people, within which, communities are able to gain support; for instance, through the transfer of technology or international visits. However, the link between migrants and their communities affects as well as challenges the way people have originally lived according to the literature. For example, relationships with families and communities can break as migrants adapt to their new environments that are quite different from those they left behind; thus, changing their lives considerably.

The theory or model on individual choice proposed by Borjas and Todaro (see Hirschmann, Kasinitz & DeWind, 1999) argued that "individual rational actors

decide to migrate because a cost-benefit analysis leads them to expect a positive net return, usually monetary, from the movement” (Massey, 1988 in Guo)ⁱ. According to Sjaastad (1962, in Hirschmann, Kasinitz & DeWind, 1999, p.22), international migration has been seen as generally beneficial to human capital. However, before this can happen, migrants have to deal with various expenses such as the cost of travelling, maintenance prior to employment, language acquisition and cultural adaptation, adapting to a new labour market and the costs of leaving families and friends as well as in establishing new relations (Todaro & Maruszko, 1987 in Hirschmann, Kasinitz & DeWind, 1999).

Whatever is the reason for moving, studies showed that migration is beneficial to both migrants and their families as shown in the huge amount of money migrants send home. In Ghana, official remittances are of the same amount as aid flows, at approximately \$1 billion a year (www.migrationdrc.org), while in the Philippines, approximately US\$ 20 billion worth of remittances are received by migrants’ families (POEA, 2010). As a result, overseas workers are encouraged to pump in money in back home in order to generate growth in their countries. The World Bank estimates that by 2025, around US\$140 billion a year can serve the needs of people in poor countries as a result of migration (DFID, 2007).

Individual characteristics and life-course circumstances also shape the migration experience of opportunity. Younger and newly-graduated migrants, as well as the better-educated ones are more likely to move as suggested in human capital theory. Who will move within the age groups are influenced by education; that is, the ability to identify employment opportunities and the likelihood of success. Thus, lack of education is a huge limitation in the decision to move. This theory was also supported by Kley (2011) in her article whereby she included a life-course perspective in her analysis of decision-making and action. Moreover, socio-demographic characteristics such as partnership, age or migration experience also influence migration decisions (Kley, 2011).

Despite the motivations for migration and the various structural and social processes that make people move, pervading issues in international migration have become a primary concern for many governments. International and national policies on migration have created unequal benefits between migrant groups as well as

negative implications. For instance, gender-selective demand for labour and other factors in origin and destination countries are seen as having resulted to the increasing flows of women into specific sectors. Carling (2005) discussed the different ways in which gender relations is affected and affects migration, and its outcomes wherein certain conditions in favour of either sex or both sexes determine the possibility or ease of migration. He pointed out that gender has an impact on the desire and the choice to move as well as the realization of one's intention to migrate. Moreover, the Global Commission on International Migration also noted that: 'From an economic perspective irregular migration is actually quite functional for many destination states. As a result of deregulation, liberalisation and flexibilisation, there is demand for various forms of unskilled and semi-skilled labour employed under precarious conditions' (as cited in Koser, 2005).

However, improvements in the well-being of migrants and their households have also been achieved. The Department for International Development (DFID) reported in 2007 that increased incomes through remittances and transfers of knowledge can lead to better child health and reduced infant mortality rates as seen in various poor countries like Guatemala and Mexico. Moreover, greater equality between men and women is seen as women migrate and become more independent, or when they are able to manage the remittances from their migrant spouses; thereby, taking a more prominent role on financial aspects of household reproduction (www.migrationdrc.org). The report also stressed that managing migration is significant in the achievement of the MDGs; thereby, improving people's quality of life. Since international migration is also seen as a way to reduce labour-market and political pressures in developing countries, the movement of people across boundaries has characterized a more inclusive association between countries and regions like Asia.

2.2 Classification of Migrants

Who is a migrant? In general, distinguishing between a migrant and a non-migrant has become increasingly ambiguous. Attempts to identify migrant workers, tourists, refugees and displaced persons posed certain difficulties due to the complexity of the migration streams, and the way these terms are used today.

Moreover, not all movements imply migration. Some people cross borders or travel as tourists or business travelers without intending to stay. Definitions also largely depend on various sources, datasets and laws. Several dimensions, however, are considered such as the country of birth, duration of stay in another country, and nationality. Countries, too, have set their own categories because different definitions have significant consequences for data, both in terms of numbers of migrants and in analyzing the impact migration has on individuals. Thus, a universally accepted definition of a migrant is absent, according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM, 2011). However, IOM defines a migrant as:

The term migrant is usually understood to cover all cases where the decision to migrate is taken freely by the individual concerned for reasons of “personal convenience” and without intervention of an external compelling factor. This term therefore applies to persons, and family members, moving to another country or region to better their material or social conditions and improve the prospect for themselves or their family (p. 40).

The UN defines a long-term international migrant as a person who stays outside of his country for at least a year; thus, the destination country becomes his or her usual residence. The Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights has proposed that persons who are not legally protected while in another state, those whose legal rights or status have not been recognized by the host country, as well as those who do not enjoy legal protection intrinsic to diplomatic, visa or other agreements, should be considered as migrants (UNHCR, 2004). Moreover, migrants can be distinguished from non-migrants according to their reasons for moving, or legality. For example, some migrant may have been forced to move due to conflict or disaster while others may have moved for economic reasons.

Most countries, however, distinguish between a number of categories in their migration policies and statistics, indicating that there are no objective definitions of migration (Castles, 2000). However, Castles stressed that international migrants can be commonly classified as “temporary labour migrants, highly-skilled and business migrants, irregular migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, family migrants, forced migrants and return migrants” (2000). In Thailand, several types of international

migrants have been considered: temporary migrant workers, ethnic minorities, other persons without nationality or stateless persons and displaced persons (Huguet, J. and Chamratrithirong, A., 2011). Some distinctions have also been made among migrants on the types of movement such as forced or voluntary, temporary or permanent (ARROW, 2013). The United Nations also distinguish between voluntary and forced migrants:

Voluntary migrants include people who move abroad for employment, study, family reunification, or other personal factors. Forced migrants leave their countries to escape persecution, conflict, repression, natural and human-made disasters, ecological degradation, or other situations that endanger their lives, freedom or livelihood (IOM, 2000).

The International Labour Organization (ILO) also proposed several terms to refer to migrants “who enter countries on an irregular or unlawful basis: illegal, clandestine, undocumented or irregular” (<http://bravo.ilo.org>). However, the term ‘irregular’ was deemed appropriate to refer also to ‘documented/undocumented’ migration since undocumented migration does not cover all irregular cases according to ILO. For instance, persons who came as tourists and are therefore documented may violate the laws of a country when taking employment. Likewise, some foreign workers, despite having valid documentation, also violate the conditions of entry when such documents “were obtained from a thriving fake documentation industry” (United Nations, 1998). Irregularities in migration, therefore, can happen at different stages of the move, either at departure, transit, upon entry or return, and can be done by the migrant or against the migrant (Wickramasekera, P., 2002).

The above differences in definitions or classifications of migrants point to the difficulties of countries and international organizations in distinguishing between groups of migrants. One risk from this challenge would be the erroneous categorization of migrants that would lead to inappropriate response to their immediate needs.

2.3 The Migration Process

Migration happens for various reasons. It may include an unforeseen and insecure move of a political refugee to a country for asylum, a privileged move due to a job promotion, or a move to further one's medical treatment. Somehow, the reasons for migration can be endless. The story begins with the intention to move, and then, efforts are being made contingent with the individual's circumstance or that of the family wherein the decision to move becomes a collective action. The mode of migration can also vary considerably among migrants. Some migrate legally, others choose to be undocumented, while some are forced to move. Regardless of this, often migrants are unaware of the accompanying stress or insecurities the move may hold on them. Migration also carries risks particularly for those who had gone through irregular channels. On the other hand, the regularity of coping can vary among nationals, individuals and locations. It can also be culture-specific and may also depend on the level of geographical mobility. For instance, adjustments have become a part of already established modes within migrant communities, easing the ability to adapt and cope with the new environment, and thereby, making the move meaningful. Migration, however, requires that migrants pass through different stages before realizing their goals in migration.

Much of the Filipino movements have often been viewed as temporary; however, according to Zolberg (1983 in Ehrenberg and Smith, 1997), some migrants may stay permanently if reasons for leaving continue or the reasons for remaining increase because family members are able to join. Filipino permanent migrants generally found in the US, Canada and Australia brought their families with them or formed their own families in the host countries (Asis, 2008). Sherraden and Martin (1994) pointed out that the decision to migrate is most likely made by a family rather than an individual, after weighing their resources, opportunities, and risks. Moreover, they also revealed that in some cases, a whole family migrates, while in many instances, migration requires only one or two family members. Although some migrants may in the end return to their home country, others will start life anew in another country, away from their original families.

According to Mahler (1998 in Parrenas, 2001), mobility is not equally accessible to prospective migrants since it is highly influenced by the resources

available to migrants. Migration incurs cost, and so, monetary resources shape the propensity to migrate as well as the destination of prospective migrants. Expenses or costs are involved in the pre-migration stage particularly in the application process which migrants expect to recover once they start working abroad (SMC, 2005). The selectivity and persistence of migration flows depend also on social networks and migrant institutions (Goss and Lindquist, 1995 in Parrenas, 2001). Migrants in Indonesia, for example, had access to loans in their local community which made their migration to Malaysia possible (Asis, 2004). The realization of or migration in itself is highly dependent on other factors such as financial and social resources in order to operationalize the 'intention to move'.

In the Philippines, social networks, in fact, arrange, sustain and through time, intensify the flows of migration. Sarausad's study (2003) on Filipino domestic helpers in Thailand also revealed the different institutions that have significant impact on their decision to migrate, such as the family and networks that facilitate their out-migration and integration. A research project conducted by Scalabrini Migration Center (SMC) also revealed that at the pre-migration stage, migrants relied mostly on their personal networks such as relatives based abroad for sources of information or opportunities abroad. Lee (1996 in de Haas, 2008) argued that that pioneer migrants share information that facilitates subsequent migration termed as chain migration. Other factors such as economic resources accumulated by migrant family members are also seen as having directed migration decisions by individuals. With these factors, a culture of migration develops resulting to increased migration flows and sustaining those (Agunias, 2009). However, Drachman emphasized the different experiences would-be migrants had to go through during the preparation stage, such as anxieties brought about by the idea of moving and being separated from families and friends, and the decisions made as to who stays (1992).

Recruitment agencies also play a significant role at the initial stage. However, the job placement fees charged by recruitment agencies can be costly depending on the destination and the possible wages of migrants in the host country. SMC (2005) also found common violations of the standard placement fees required and many of the respondents did not have prior knowledge on the actual fees as well as the repayment and salary deduction methods imposed by recruitment agencies. In

Hong Kong, for instance, a prospective migrant is charged around US \$ 1000 in fees, while those who are bound for Singapore, are charged lower while in Italy, a potential migrant is charged twice or thrice more because of the higher salary and the greater risks involved (Parrenas, 2001).

Thousands of migrants from the Philippines have also become victims to irregular practices and schemes prior to migration, as shown in the number of illegal recruitment cases reported in the media and by the Department of Immigration in the Philippines. The POEA report (2010) also showed that from 2004 to 2010, the number of cases was increasing. Undocumented migration from the country, therefore, is also made possible by these agencies that are able to evade formal channels. On the other hand, some migrants themselves chose to be undocumented to avoid the formalities, long delays or to move to an unavailable destination (Asis, 2008; Hugo, 2005; IOM, 2005). Apart from the recruitment agencies, medical clinics, hospitals, testing and training centers have also sprouted up as a response to the government policies required in particular skills or job types. Other businesses, such as lending, travel and insurance agencies have also been linked with recruitment agencies (SMC, 2005).

The transit phase referred to by Drachman (1992) involves life-threatening circumstances in migration due to irregular movement or illegal employment such as following hazardous paths or journeys in order to reach their destinations, which has become a huge concern for many governments and international agencies. This type of movement has also been linked with human smuggling, trafficking and other organized crimes which created precariousness or uncertainties for many migrants during travel. The European Union, for instance, has engaged its member states in addressing and responding to the alarming trend of transit migration. A UN publication identifies transit migration with 'flows of irregular and illegal migrants from the Third World and from east European countries' UN/ECE (1993) and stresses that transit migrants reach their destination 'by means that are partially, if not fully, illegal'. Several research studies on migrants in Southeast Asia have investigated on the hazardous journeys migrants had to go through, particularly undocumented migrants, from the country of origin to their destination (Drachman, 1992); for instance, long crossings of illegal migrants from Myanmar to the borders of Thailand and mostly through unknown routes and for long periods. The transit flow of

undocumented migrants to the borders of Thailand constantly changes paths, depending on the conditions of their journey; for example, increasing border control policies leads them to find alternative routes to cross the border.

Since many destination countries have stricter immigration policies, travelling or the journey to these countries has become traumatic for many migrants especially when it entails a lot of risks. The experiences of many Filipino migrants' journey to Italy was said to be full of danger since they had to hide in cargo ships with no ventilation, storage areas of tour buses and trains or walked across mountainous areas (Parrenas, 2001). Similar dangerous journeys were also experienced by many Mexican migrants into the United States, and Burmese migrants entering Thailand. Many migrants especially women are unprepared to face the physical challenges of illegally crossing borders plus the fact that it entails more funds to pay for services or unanticipated costs along the way. Some migrants who could not provide adequate or valid documents were detained or deported when caught illegally crossing borders.

However, the experiences during travel by some migrants are straightforward or orderly (Drachman, 1992). Pathways or corridors established by migrants themselves ease the costs and risks of movement, and the ability to adapt. At the beginning, however, it is somewhat difficult for some migrants to adapt themselves with their new environment. In Sarausad's study of domestic workers in Thailand, it was revealed that the migrants experienced downward mobility and de-skilling and a corresponding upward mobility brought about by secure employment and regular income during the initial years after arrival—*the paradox of mobility*; referred to by Spitzer as 'transnational transitions' (2008). 'Spousal role reversal', whereby the wife becomes the wage earner while the husband stays at home, has also become a source of difficulty for the husbands (Drachman, 1992). In Drachman's study of Russian emigrants, she found that the loss of professional status is one of the most often expressed trends among migrants. Among them, men are more often unable to deal with this loss of status, have difficulty accepting and working in lower status jobs, and are more prone to depression resulting from the loss of professional status (1992).

The last stage of the migration process consists of different stages of adaptation or settlement, which lasts from three to five and even ten years (Segal, 1983; Stein et al., 1986 in Drachman, 1996). Another aspect is the reception and

degree of exclusion. Filipino migrant workers in many destination countries are considered temporary settlers; that is, their stay is restricted to the duration of their labour contracts. In Hong Kong, for example, domestic workers who escaped from abusive employers face deportation or repatriation once their contracts are not renewed. Researches done in Singapore revealed that Filipino domestic workers are barred from marrying or living with native citizens, while in the Middle East, they are not allowed to get pregnant (Arnado, 2010); termed by Ball and Piper as 'structural vulnerability'. However, in some receiving countries like Canada, Spain and the US, full citizenship are granted to Filipino domestic workers once they reach the two years of legal settlement (Parrenas, 2001). The host or receiving country's attitude towards the Filipina migrants, referred to by Parrenas as 'context of reception', contributes greatly on a migrant's ease or difficulty in integrating herself in the society.

At the initial stage of settlement or adaptation, migrants may also face certain constraints because of the different skills requirements of the host country; however, ease in adaptation is achieved as migrants invest into specific human capital (Chiswick in Dustmann, 1996). Dustmann, Schmidt and Pinske (as cited in Dustmann, 1996) found that migrants in Germany did not assimilate to the earnings position of native workers due to the temporary nature of their migration. Samers (2004) also emphasizes the negative consequences of the flexibilization of labour. That is, it prevents unionization, promotes informalization of jobs, and degrades wages continuously which is associated with the decline in conditions of employment; i.e., fixed-term contracts (Samers, 2004). In general, the abilities of a migrant are indicated by his wages, which rise with his age, education and years of work. Research studies indicate, however, that even well-educated migrants are occupying less-skilled jobs, with no options of increasing their skills or experience. For example, Filipino migrants are thought to be better equipped with human capital than other Asian migrants. Due to the increasing number of those who take up less-skilled jobs, they are often misconstrued as less skilled despite the fact that it does not actually reflect their definite level of education and skills.

There are also significant non-economic costs such as adaptation to the new environment or separation from families and friends. These costs are more prominent when migration is irregular or illegal. Migrant workers are more exposed

to multiple levels of vulnerability as a result of irregular migration or undocumented status. Unregulated migrant workers lack the necessary protection accorded to regulated migrants like appropriate travel documents, legal contracts and employment regulation of migrant work. In worse cases, migrant workers are not covered by labour laws in the host country; thus, subjected to (sexual) abuse by employers, long hours of work and sub-standard living conditions. However, regulated workers may still be subjected to abuses because of the nature and conditions of their work. Anderson (2000) affirmed that social invisibility results to vulnerability; that is, the greater the social invisibility of migrants, the greater the degree of vulnerability of workers; e.g., domestic workers.

Undocumented Worker Transitions (UWT) reported that Europe also shows that the share of the irregular employed migrant workforce differ between sectors, wherein, it tend to be huge in specific sectors such as construction, agriculture, tourism, the sex industry and domestic services; areas, which locals avoid because of their poor working conditions and low wage levels (Krenn and Haidenger, 2008). A shift towards a more constraining immigration policies is also seen in many countries, particularly in labour employment, creating irregularity and therefore, having negative impacts on the migrant workers. For example, changing labour migration policies can also lead to a change in one's status in a foreign country; that is, from being documented to undocumented.

According to Parrenas, migrants encounter various challenges as they manage themselves through social processes of migration, referred to as 'segmentations' in migration and settlement or the 'stumbling blocks and sources of pain' produced in this stage (2001). For instance, the notion that migrant workers are expendable commodities that can easily be terminated at will prevalent in many developed countries significantly increases anxieties for many migrants. According to Chang (2000), this is aggravated by the deliberate and intentional discrimination of individuals due to their ethnicity or ancestry. Similar feelings or challenges were found in Sarausad's study of domestic workers in Thailand (2003).

Social inclusion usually demands certain ways of behaviour, views, actions and expressions from the individual. In a new environment, a migrant may be required to adapt his ways to his present circumstances; therefore, in the process, he is

often in a dilemma on whether to remain connected with his roots, or tries to be as integrated as possible into the new one. The work of Park in 1930 (in Venturini, A., Faini, R. and Palo D. de, 2007) pointed out the linear path of assimilation among immigrants; that is, over time, migrants will assume similar behavior as that of the natives or locals while at the same time, maintaining their ethnic, cultural and religious traditions. However, Gibson's study of the Sikh community in California (in Santos, 2010) revealed that the group has acquired a strategy of 'accommodation and acculturation without assimilation'; whereby, immigrants learned about how to love their ethnicity, symbols and songs while at the same time followed the norms and practices of the Americans.

The concept of social cohesion referred to by Regina Berger-Schmitt (2000 in Khoo and Temple, 2008) showed that it is important in building strong communities due to the following dimensions: belonging, participation, inclusion, recognition and pluralism. Participation or membership in network communities entitles the migrants to secure benefits or have access to the networks' resources, and contribute greatly to the dimensions because of the influence they may have in promoting productive social capital which will in turn facilitate integration (Coleman, 1988). Integration into the host society has also been found to be influential in the decision to stay in a foreign country (Alba and Nee 2003). Meyer, in his study of highly-skilled migrants, has found that "expatriates have left mainly because they did not have enough supportive networks (institutional, infrastructural, technical, educational, social, financial, etc.) to build, develop, express, use and [...] cash in on their skills at home"(2001: 92). Therefore, migrants are likely to remain overseas because of the established networks through which they are engaged in and that provide valuable support for socio-economic mobility. The same can also be true for decisions made regarding migrating to another country (onward migration) or returning to one's country.

In all stages of migration, migrants experience various types of difficulties depending on their changing conditions. At each stage, coping mechanisms are made possible through available resources which can also influence the outcomes or experience of moving in each phase. Because of this, experiences vary among migrants or groups.

2.4 An Overview of Migration in Asia

Asian countries have been acknowledged as having contributed greatly to the increase in global migration. Compared to other regions, the Asian region has the maximum number of international migrants (Zlotnik in Jolly, Bell and Narayanswamy, 2003). Today, about 71 million of the estimated 232 million international migrants were in Asia, with a huge number considered as labour migrants(<http://www.un.org/esa/population/migration/index.html>). Recent reports by IOM showed that in 2010, 5 out of the top 10 emigration countries were in the Asian region, particularly Bangladesh, China, India, Pakistan and the Philippines (2011). Moreover, migration within the region to countries or regions such as Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong SAR and the Republic of Korea illustrated a significant stream of movements as mentioned in the report. A significant number of migrant workers from Bangladesh, Indonesia, Nepal and the Philippines migrated to Malaysia and Singapore, while Thailand was a major destination for migrants from neighbouring Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar (IOM, 2011). Although globalization has significantly contributed to these movements, history shows that migration has always been a fundamental part in its development due to the commercial exchanges within the region; for instance, between East and Southeast Asia, and South and West Asia (Asis, M., Piper, N., & Raghuram, P., 2010.). According to Asis, Piper and Raghuram (2010), colonialism has also transformed the structure of migration and the idea of development as it persisted beyond the colonial period, as what happened to the Philippines.

In the 1970s, a phenomenal surge in mobility among Asian workers to the Middle East provided opportunities for those who were not employed in their own countries. This led later on to the opening up of wealthy East and Southeast Asian countries as destinations for migrant workers, in which up to this day, an increasing number of people are moving, as reported by the International Labour Organization (Asis, M., Piper, N., & Raghuram, P., 2010.). Temporary labour migration flows towards the Middle East particularly to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries significantly consisted of approximately 97 per cent of migrants from India and Pakistan and 87 per cent of migrants from Sri Lanka in 2009 (IOM, 2011); however, current migration issues reveal the rapid growth of intra-regional migration in Asia

compared to other regions, with the stock of international migrants in Asia in 2010 was expected to have risen to 27.5 million, representing just below 13 per cent of the total world figure (UN DESA, 2009 as cited in IOM World Migration Report, 2010).

Newly-industrialized countries such as Japan, Hong Kong, South Korea and Singapore drew a huge number of workers from the less developed countries in the region to fill the labour shortages in these countries. In 2010, a huge proportion of the migrant force in East Asia is found in Hong Kong, China and Japan while in Southeast Asia, Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore are the main destinations for migrants (UN DESA, 2009 as cited in IOM World Migration Report, 2010). The Philippines, on the other hand, has been considered as the world's largest labour exporting country, with migrant workers ranging from the less-skilled to the highly-skilled deployed every year; there are more Filipino women than men employed abroad from 1981-2011 (CFO, 2010). The World Migration Report also showed a rising trend in the proportion of female international migrants in the Asian sub-region; with around 48% of international migrants in Asia are women (IOM, 2010).

Moreover, from the data published by the World Migration Report in 2010, the negative net migration rate for Asian countries persists, particularly in countries like Sri Lanka, Pakistan and the Philippines, with negative rates of -3, -1.6 and -2 respectively between 2005 and 2010. Although a huge bulk of the Asian migrants moves to the OECD countries, around 43 per cent move within the region. In fact, countries within Asia have become important destinations for migrants within the region; India, Hong Kong, Malaysia are among them (DRC, 2007). Another significant consequence of this is the huge bulk of remittances sent; a total of US\$170 million in 2009 coming largely from countries with negative rates of migration (World Bank, 2011a in IOM, 2011). Remittance flows to Bangladesh and the Philippines constituted a huge percentage of their GDP. However, in terms of percentage of GDP, at around 12 per cent while a smaller percentage for China and India (World Bank, 2011b).

According to IOM, irregular migration is significant in Asia and remains a priority issue within the region. Some of Asia's largest undocumented migration flows were considered to be among the largest overall contemporary flows, with the Bangladesh-India corridor alone having around 17 million undocumented persons

(Hugo, 2010). Malaysia, for instance, has been host to more irregular or undocumented migrants than documented ones. South Korea and Singapore are more able to control the number of irregular migrants. According to the World Migration Report, there is also an ongoing issue on the rising number of refugees in Asia; from 2.9 million refugees in 2005 to 3.9 million refugees in 2010, which represented for about 14 per cent of all international migrants in the region and almost a quarter of the world's refugees (IOM, 2010). The increase of the refugee stock in South-Central Asia is the largest of the subregions (UN DESA, 2009). A huge number of persons have also been displaced by natural disasters and related hazards that are increasingly occurring in Asia. Data also showed that in 2008, around 86% of all people displaced by the disasters were in Asia (IOM, 2010).

On the other hand, demographic changes in Japan and South Korea brought about by their rapidly ageing societies are predicted to increase the migration flows to these countries. Changes in migration policies in the future will compensate for future labour and social welfare costs that this process will have on them (IOM, 2010). Therefore, migration is seen to ease the consequences arising from demographic transitions.

2.5 Migration within the Southeast Asian Region

The World Migration Report stated that the integration of Southeast Asia into the global economy led to a significant restructuring in the member countries' economies (IOM, 2010). Significant changes were seen in the 1990s wherein strong economies in the region have become production centres for both foreign and local companies in need of more flexible sources of cheap labour (IOM, 2003). Labour shortages in some parts of the region developed as the labour supply is not enough to meet the demand of transnational corporations. As a result, several countries provided attractive opportunities for foreign labour. In fact, it is estimated that a large proportion of the labour migration took place in Southeast Asia. This growing mobility of people can largely be attributed to the growing political and economic interconnectedness among states which goes as far back as in the late 19th century

facilitating significant cross-border flows in the region (Kaur, 2010). Moreover, according to Kaur (2010), two principal migration corridors have been documented.

The two are the archipelagic ASEAN corridor and the Mekong sub-regional corridor. The first path consists of Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei as the major destination countries, importing workers largely from Indonesia and the Philippines. On the other hand, the second route comprises Thailand as the main destination for migrant workers from countries through which the Mekong River flows, specifically, Burma, Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam (Kaur, 2010).

Migration within the region is also made possible through an organized system which consists of a few destination countries and peripheral countries from which migrants originate (Battistella, 2002). According to Battistella, this system functions due to various types of linkages and differences that facilitate and perpetuate movements within the region. The Malay Peninsula consists of Singapore and Malaysia, both countries having a dynamic economy but with lower labour resource; thus, foreign workers constitute a huge percentage of the population in these countries (Battistella, 2002). Foreign workers from the Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand are also found in Singapore and Malaysia. In fact, Singapore has been receiving an increasing number of overseas workers from the Philippines, and was the 5th top destination country for Filipinos from 2004-2010 (POEA Report, 2010). Women from the Philippines, for instance, are an important part of the two countries' economy particularly in domestic work. Countries of destination have become more diversified in recent years. For instance, Chinese nationals have been moving to Philippines, South Korea and Thailand (Asis, 2008). Thailand, a host to a huge number of Burmese migrants and some Cambodian and Lao workers, is now accommodating an increasing number of Bangladesh migrants. In many parts of Southeast Asia, migration has been institutionalized, with employment agencies or brokers managing the whole process for the migrants.

However, flows within the region are generally seen as temporary labour migration or circular migration; wherein labour-importing countries like Malaysia and

Singapore rely on the guest worker program to fill labour shortages which prohibits the settlement of migrants (Kaur, 2010). In Singapore, for instance, this provides fixed-term employment contracts and repatriation for low-skilled migrant workers while professionals and highly-skilled migrant workers are given incentives like permanent residency and subsidies (Kaur, 2010). Legislations on migration controls and enforcements are in place in Singapore in order to deter irregular movement or unauthorized entry. Malaysia, on the other hand, has been accused of having a loose regulation of recruitment agents, and abusive labour laws and policies that 'support' poor labour conditions and labour trafficking (Kaur, 2010). In 2001, however, Malaysia was determined in curbing the increasing number of unauthorized movements into the country, detaining and repatriating many unauthorized Filipinos and Indonesians who remained in the country (Battistela, 2002).

Flows to Thailand have been increasing significantly since the 1990s, particularly due to the movement of people from the neighboring countries; Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos. The country has played host to hundreds of thousands of unskilled workers, refugees and trafficked women and girls from various countries within the region. Like Malaysia, it relies on bilateral agreements with its neighbouring countries, and with an established understanding that migration is temporary. Despite the fact that policies have been in place with regards to the hiring of foreign professionals, it does not have concrete policies regarding the hiring of unskilled workers, and lacks a solid framework in handling cross-border movements (Kaur, 2010). Thus, it is unable to absorb the influx of the huge number of people who are in unstable and insecure conditions, creating political and management challenges for the government.

Similar to the trends in other regions of the world, the growth of the labour markets in Southeast Asia is also accompanied by an increasing proportion of female migrants, particularly found in gender specific occupations such as care-work, facilitating the transfer of tasks from the privileged women to poorer migrant women. Indonesia and the Philippines have more than 50% of their overseas workers comprising that of women, generally found in the service and/or household categories. This has developed primarily through linkages between countries; for instance, bilateral agreements between the Philippines and Singapore on the employment of

domestic workers. However, some of women's works are regarded as low-skilled or unskilled. Unlike the formal and legal arrangements provided for 'female occupations' in countries like Singapore, these occupations are usually arranged in an informal manner, and are not part of the formal economy in several countries in Southeast Asia. In Thailand, for instance, salaries and conditions of employment for domestic work are negotiated between the employer and the female migrant worker (Sarausad, 2003). Because of the lack of standard contract, many migrant women suffer from or are vulnerable to abuse and exploitation.

Several measures have been in place to curb unauthorized entry and dependency on low-skilled or unskilled labour such as categorizing migrant workers and imposing levies on particular types of migrants, and detention or imprisonment of unauthorized migrants. Restrictive conditions regarding marriage with locals or family reunification particularly for unskilled migrant workers are also in place in Singapore (Kaur, 2007; Arnado, 2010). Because of highly-publicized cases against domestic workers in Malaysia and Singapore, measures were also taken by both countries to safeguard the welfare of domestic workers while labour-exporting countries like the Philippines imposes a ban from travel. However, this intensifies unauthorized or undocumented status of those who found their way around through informal channels.

2.5.1 Unauthorized Migration in Southeast Asia

Undocumented migration is increasingly an issue within the region, with a high incidence of irregular migration and illegal employment in several countries in the Southeast Asian Region. Due to geographical proximity and shared historical and political ties, some countries have provided transit points for cross-border movements; between Thailand and Myanmar, Indonesia and Malaysia, and Mindanao in the Philippines and Sabah in Malaysia (Kaur, 2010; Battistela, 2002). Countries in the Greater Mekong Sub-region are also sources of mostly unauthorized migrants, crossing into Thailand. Although the Philippines has formalized the employment of workers overseas, requiring every departing Filipino to register with authorized government agencies, a huge number of overseas Filipinos are still in irregular or undocumented status; the highest number within the ASEAN (CFO, 2010).

Thailand, like Malaysia, is also experiencing a huge number of irregular migrants. This can be attributed to the rapid economic development which led to an increasing need for low-skilled and undocumented foreign labour as locals shied away from low-wage sectors like fishing, garments and domestic services. A mass movement of people in various categories from Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia settled in the country with most of the number coming from Myanmar. This led to serious repercussions to the country's ability in handling displacement and irregular status confronting Thai society, and in exacerbating also the migrants' vulnerability to various types of exploitation.

Human trafficking has also increased noticeably, providing people for sweatshop labour, domestic work, marriage and prostitution (Kaur, 2010). Millions of women are trafficked every year worldwide, offering organized traffickers billions of annual earnings. An increasing trend in the trafficking of women and girls from Vietnam to Cambodia, within Cambodia or to neighboring countries like Thailand are also documented (IOM, 2008). IOM also reported that around 157,000 trafficked migrants from Myanmar are in Thailand. Trafficked women and girls were made to believe that they have legitimate jobs waiting for them. Trafficking of women and children across borders for commercial sex subjected the victims to slavery or debt-bondage; this involves serious health and other hazards including exposure to HIV/AIDS. Due to isolation and bondage, they cannot have access to legal provisions or any support structures. According to Archavanitkul (1998 as cited in <http://bravo.ilo.org>), girls are brought in from Myanmar, Cambodia, Lao PDR and South China for the sex industry in Thailand whereas Thai women were being trafficked for wealthier destinations such as Australia, Germany, Japan, Malaysia, the Republic of Korea, and the Taiwan province of China according to the UNDP.

In the case of the Philippines, not all overseas workers are officially deployed by the government, and many of them are unauthorized to work at their destination. As reported by the Commission on Filipinos Overseas, much of the irregular movements in Southeast Asia took place in Singapore and Malaysia, with 49,500 and 447,590 irregular migrants respectively in 2011). According to the IOM report (2010), a huge Filipino community consists of migrants with irregular status in East Malaysia, despite the regularization program initiated by the government in 1997.

Other factors are also seen to have promoted irregular or unauthorized migration intra-regionally. First, tolerance of some governments on irregular or unauthorized migrants, and weaknesses in their management system are seen as some of the factors that create a conducive environment for the perpetuation of unauthorized movements. Indonesia's borders, for instance, can be easily penetrated, and like its neighbours, informal channels promoted much of the undocumented migration happening between Indonesia and Malaysia (Hugo, 2002). Restrictive migration policies, high migration costs and bureaucratic procedures also led to the increase in unauthorized migration as people find ways to circumvent policies in order to move. Not only migrants, but also brokers and employers tried to find ways to arrange the movements outside the restrictive policy frameworks governing migration.

Much of the unauthorized migration also takes place within networks; families and closed-knit groups, and through the presence of irregular or informal channels which provide information, and facilitated the departure from their countries and entry into destinations; thus, intensifying this type of flow. The increasing development of the migration industry, such as the labour brokers, intermediaries and travel agencies, has been operating alongside institutions established to facilitate legal migration. For example, a former migrant in Indonesia, called a *tekong*, takes the role of an intermediary by facilitating the documents required for the move to Malaysia and accompanying the migrant to his/her prospective employer (Battistela, 2002). Curbing irregular movement, therefore, has become all the more a formidable task for most governments in the region.

Because of the serious problems experienced by irregular or undocumented migrants such as violations of their human rights, several initiatives have been presented to review current regional agreements in the ASEAN and bilateral agreements between countries. However, this was found slow and some governments resist any kind of binding agreements towards migration (Ball & Piper, 2006; Manning & Bhatnagar, 2006). According to IOM, there is a good prospect for ASEAN to play a strong role in migration policy; however, a number of bilateral issues have remained unresolved (2005). Scholars agree that labour importing countries in the region still have a say in negotiations related to migration policies particularly those that might have economic and security impacts in their countries (Ball 2004, Piper &

Iredale 2003, Kaur & Metcalfe 2006, Patcharawalai 2008), sidelining the interests of sending countries. To address these policy gaps, the continuing issues surrounding low-skilled migrant workers and unauthorized migrants have been the major focus of advocacy and have been the subject of comprehensive researches done to show the disadvantaged position of these types of migrants (Hutchinson and Brown 2001, Piper 2009, Piper 2010).

2.6 Stages of Migration Model: An Analytical Framework

Building on Drachman's stages of migration framework (1992; see Figure 2.1) provided a starting point to explain the reasons for the Filipino migrants' decision to move, and draws our attention to the process itself, and the social, psychological and economic substance of the movement. It can be argued that all migrants, whether migrating in groups or individually, have an experiential past which can be captured in different stages or phases. According to Cox (1985 in Drachman, 1992), some migrants undergo unexpected movement, whereas others go through a process of decision-making and preparing to move; wherein, a physical move is required and some transitions happen upon (re) settlement (p.75). It is increasingly important, therefore, to also understand what the Filipino migrants in Thailand had to go through in realizing their goals in migration.

Drachman's framework highlighted the circular process of migration and the need to create effective services to address traumatic or life-threatening experiences of migrants i.e., refugees, or challenges to their well-being. Critical variables associated with issues of safety and security, or life-threatening experiences, are presented in the framework that can assist in addressing particular conditions of migrants in all three stages: pre-migration and departure, transit and resettlement. Different economic, political and social factors are also considered in the analysis of the migration experience inherent in each stage such as sudden movements caused by conflict or disease at the initial stage; seen also as having an impact in their experiences at later stages (Drachman, 1992: 68).

Stage-of-Migration Framework	
Stage of Migration	Critical Variables
Premigration and departure	Social, political, and economic factors Separation from family and friends Decisions regarding who leaves and who is left behind Act of leaving a familiar environment Life-threatening circumstances Experiences of violence Loss of significant others
Transit	Perilous or safe journey of short or long duration Refugee camp or detention center stay of short or long duration Act of awaiting a foreign country's decision regarding final relocation Immediate and final relocation or long wait before final relocation Loss of significant others
Resettlement	Cultural issues Reception from host country Opportunity structure of host country Discrepancy between expectations and reality Degree of cumulative stress throughout migration process

Figure 2.1: Stage-of-Migration Framework (Drachman, 1992)

Also highlighted in Drachman's framework are the different issues arising from cultural and social differences upon resettlement in the destination country which is useful in formulating appropriate services or programs that assist different migrant groups. However, due to the geographical proximity between Thailand and the Philippines, and the accessibility of air travel to and from these countries, the migrants in this study are more likely in an advantaged position and in control of their mobility as opposed to the more traumatic and stressful movements exemplified by Drachman. With that assumption in mind, the framework was refined in order to reveal patterns or characteristics attributable to the migrants in this study.

The continuum of the migration process in this research can be divided into three significant phases: pre-migration and departure, initial years and later years, and post-migration prospects. Each stage generates different responses or coping mechanisms, has certain characteristics, and reveals certain types of constraints and opportunities. The new framework is further expanded to include socio-cultural, historical and structural aspects of migration in order to show that contemporary migration patterns are influenced by these dimensions. Filipino migration, for instance, has a long history of nationals moving within and across regions that has shaped current trends in migration. The forms of resources, seen as one important

aspect in migration that interact with or influence individual experiences at each stage, are also included in the analysis.

Several theories discussed in this chapter are applied to explain the future prospects of Filipino migrants presented in Chapter VIII, who are generally considered as temporary labour migrants and are therefore, expected to return to their country. Place-utility theory or the expected outcomes from migration, human capital theory and network theory are used to extend the analysis of the migration process to include post-migration prospects presented in the new framework; that is, in the settlement, return or onward migration decisions of Filipinos. The decisions of the migrants in the last stage are seen as having been influenced by the same factors or processes that also affected the initial decision to move. Thus, Drachman's stages-of-migration model has been reproduced and adapted as shown in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.2: The Stages of Migration Model: An analytical framework
Adapted from Diane Drachman's Stages of Migration Framework (1992)

ⁱ This idea was highlighted in Guo's paper, Living arrangements of migrants' left-behind children in China published online at <http://paa2009.princeton.edu>.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

In order to achieve the objectives of this study, it was necessary to use different approaches to understanding the migration of Filipinos to Thailand. It approached migration as a process which involves three phases; namely, pre-migration and departure, transitions during initial years and later years, and post-migration prospects in order to understand the dynamics of migration and the different systems and structures migrants had to go through. Multiple methods were used in data collection in order to reach as many migrants as possible. Migrants were surveyed using a questionnaire wherein much of the data was obtained that showed the general profile of migrants, migration flows and the paths taken by migrants in order to remain in Thailand. Key informant interviews (KI), in-depth interviews (IDI), direct observations, and surveys at the Thai-Cambodian borders and of social networking sites established and/or frequented by Filipino migrants in Thailand were done to support the survey.

3.1 The Study Areas

Considering the diverse characteristics and background of the Filipino migrants in Thailand, their geographical location, different methods were used to account for many, if not all, migrants from the Philippines who are in Thailand. The research was conducted in several areas in the country where a huge number of Filipino migrants were reported by officials from Thailand's Department of Employment and the Embassy of the Republic of the Philippines. Bangkok, Chonburi, Phitsanulok, Pathumthani and Chiangmai were the major provinces studied in order to find both irregular and regular migrants. The borders between Thailand and Cambodia: *Aranyaprathet/Poipet*, *Ban Pakard*, *Chantaburi / Phsa Prum* and *Ban Laem*, *Chantaburi / Daun Lem*, *Battambang* were also major points for investigation

in order to account for the average number of irregular Filipino migrants extending their visas. These borders are popular among migrants due to their short distance of approximately 4 hours from Bangkok compared to the borders between Thailand and Laos, and Thailand and Malaysia. Also, many migrants found it much easier to obtain a visa extension as they complained of the stringent issuance of visas in Laos and Malaysia. Figure 3.1 below shows the major border crossings between Cambodia and Thailand for visa run purposes that foreigners including Filipinos travel through to secure an extension of stay.

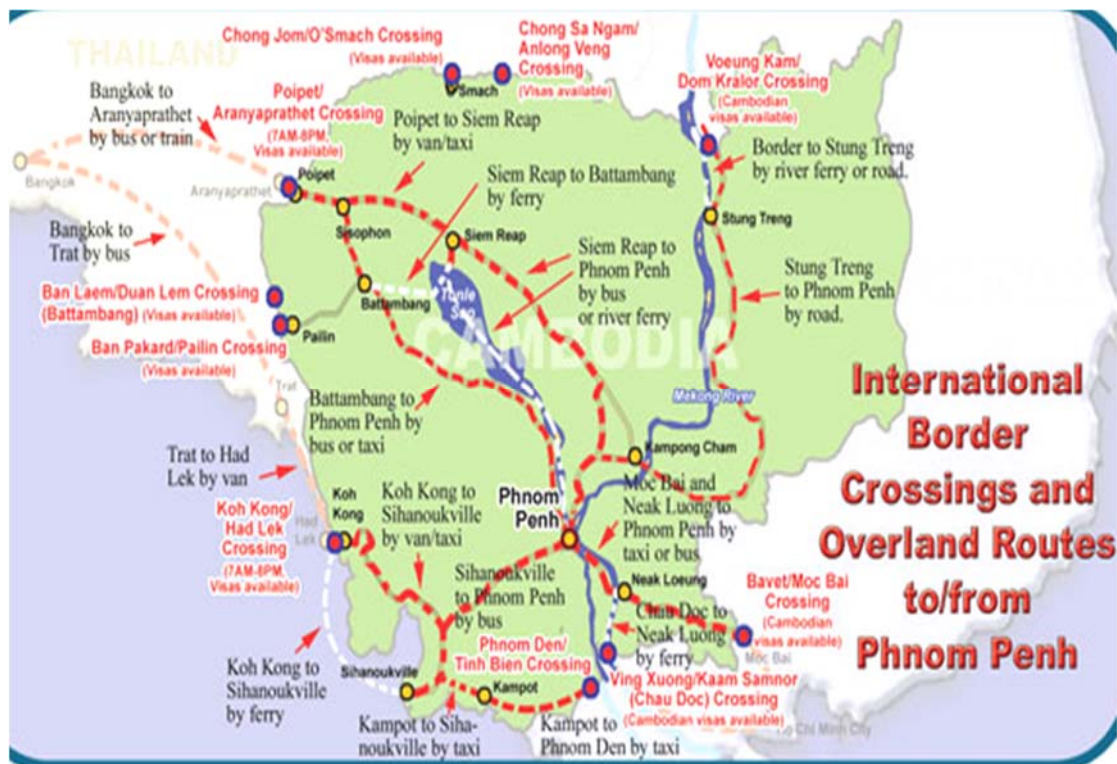


Figure 3.1 Thailand-Cambodia Border Crossings

Source: <http://www.canbypublications.com/cambodia/overland.htm>

3.2 The Respondents

Firstly, a *migrant* in the context of this study refers to a Filipino who has at least stayed in Thailand for one month and had extended his stay before the 30-day period of stay has elapsed. This term is used with due consideration to the motives or intention of staying at the time of the survey. To support the assumption of 'motives

or intention of staying', or the theory of planned behavior proposed by (Ajzen, 1991 in Kley, 2011), two questions were added in the questionnaire to verify that not only the respondent had stayed a month or more, but he/she had planned it, and that, necessary documents for employment were organized beforehand.

Q18. Why did you move to Thailand? (Survey questionnaire)

Q22. What documents did you prepare for your travel to Thailand? Why did you need to prepare them? (Survey questionnaire)

Other important terms are used in this research to classify the migrants. *Irregular migrants* refer to those who are working without a work permit. These migrants entered Thailand legally, as tourists, and have been allowed to stay and extend their stay for a specified period of time; thus, none of them can be considered as 'illegal'. In contrast, *regular migrants* include those who are registered as foreign workers with the Ministry of Labour or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and with an appropriate visa and work permit, those in non-remunerative works and residents of Thailand. A third category, *semi-regular migrants* has been added in this research to highlight the unstable migrant status of several migrants who moved from being regular to irregular or vice-versa, and those who have been moving in and out of the regular-irregular categories several times brought about by transitions in their work employment. Filipino migrants who came as dependents, students or for missionary work, but obtained employment which violated the conditions attached to the visa status are also considered *semi-regular migrants*.

All of the migrants who first came as tourists had to do a *visa-run*, a term that is mentioned often throughout this research, which means leaving the country before the allowed period of 30-day stay runs out then returning for a renewed period of stay; succeeding extensions usually lasts 15 days. In Thailand, a *visa-run* to the borders can take only a day while a visa-run to a neighbouring country takes a few days.

3.3 Data Collection and Analysis

3.3.1 Survey of Filipino Migrants

The questionnaire consisted of multiple-choice questions and a few open-ended questions. There were altogether 62 questions, grouped according to the following categories: personal information, move to Thailand, remittances and settlement in Thailand (see Appendix D). Self-administered, paper-based questionnaires were used to build a general profile of Filipino migrants. Between August, 2001 and April, 2012, around 1,000 questionnaires were distributed to Filipino migrants in Thailand in the main study areas; provinces with perceived high concentration of migrants and two border areas between Thailand and Cambodia. Through the Consular Office of the Philippine Embassy, questionnaires were also distributed to Filipinos visiting the embassy's consular office in Bangkok over two months, from December to January. Questionnaires were also distributed in Chiangmai, with the help of the Mobile Consular Services provided by the Philippine Embassy to Filipino migrants in different provinces across the country.

Through the help of the key officials from the Department of Employment in Thailand and Embassy of the Republic of the Philippines in Bangkok, the main areas of concentration among registered migrants in specific areas in the country were identified. Also, registered migrants were identified through the assistance of some members of Filipino associations based in the main study areas. However, questionnaires were also given to those who were not registered workers in Thailand at the time of the survey. At the end of the survey period, 354 questionnaires were considered suitable for analysis. The sample consisted of 193 registered migrants, 147 irregular migrants (unregistered migrant workers) and 14 semi-regular migrants.

Answers to all items in the questionnaire provided the data necessary in analyzing the conditions of migrants prior to migration and during their stay in Thailand. Various factors (i.e., structural and social factors) that facilitate migration were also examined using the data gathered from the survey. Specific variables for particular conditions in the three stages of the migration process were also used in examining migrants' experiences and future prospects (see Appendix E).

3.3.2 Survey of Irregular Migrants at the Thai-Cambodian Borders

At the borders of Cambodia, a head count of Filipino tourists extending their visas was done during four (4) visits in 2011 as a primary source of data to estimate the number of irregular migrants crossing the borders of Cambodia and Thailand. The researcher obtained permission from a travel operator to join a convoy of migrants crossing the borders by van between Cambodia and Thailand in four (4) different occasions in September and October, 2011. Some migrants were also asked through conversations on the average number of vans and Filipinos with them each time they went to the borders. Distribution of the questionnaires at the two Thai-Cambodian border exits was also done during these visits. Questionnaires were given to all Filipinos extending their visas at the borders that were willing to fill them out considering the limited time during the one-day visa run between September and October, 2011.

3.3.3 Analysis of Primary Data from the Survey

Several variables were used in the analysis of the primary data from the survey. They were classified into several categories: demographics, socio-economic conditions before migration and upon departure, resources employed and/or acquired during migration, socioeconomic conditions while in Thailand, transitional phases and post-migration prospects. A complete list of the variables can be seen in Appendix E. Descriptive statistics were primarily used in the analysis of the data gathered from the survey. Frequencies and percentages are shown in table and graphical forms. Comparisons between groups are also made possible using descriptive statistics. Using the variables presented in Section 3.4, responses of migrants were disaggregated based on several considerations such as demographic and socio-economic variables. Values in the variables were grouped into various categories, presented in frequency distribution tables and graphs. For example, in order to find out about the skills of migrants, training, years of experience and educational qualification were tabulated and disaggregated by age, gender or migrant status. Cross-tabulations of selected variables were made to show possible relationships between them. For example, to find out whether migrant status is independent of social networks, cross tabulation of migrant status and each of the variables under social networks such as friends, family

and agency was done. The possible relationship between memberships in organizations and participation in social activities with length of stay in Thailand, and age, gender, education or employment status of the migrant was also examined using SPSS. Possible association between these variables and other relevant variables are shown in the next succeeding chapters of this research.

3.3.4 Survey of Social Networking Sites

The most-frequented social networking sites by Filipinos on Facebook, ajarn.com, siampinoy.net, Global OFW Voices, filipinosinthailand.com were also surveyed to obtain more information regarding the migrants' situation in the country, their main concerns and other issues related to their migration. I joined most of these networking sites in order to directly observe and analyze the topics discussed and the opinions of the members. Facebook pages of some Filipino associations in Thailand were also surveyed. Over 150 threads in these sites were surveyed and analyzed to strengthen the findings from the primary data. The researcher observed caution in asking questions or giving comments on these pages, maintaining professionalism and ethics in doing this survey. Permission for interviews was obtained from some members and confidentiality has always been maintained.

3.3.5 In-depth Interviews of Selected Respondents from the Survey

The interviews conducted were made possible through various strategies employed in order to obtain as much information as possible to enable the researcher to do an in-depth analysis of Filipino migration in Thailand. Firstly, interviewees were chosen from those who answered the questionnaire. They were identified through their mobile phone numbers. Those who wrote their contact numbers were randomly selected for the interview. Twenty-two surveyed respondents were interviewed by phone or face-to-face. During the course of this work, the researcher, through the help of another interviewee, was able to interview in person the oldest migrant found so far in Thailand, at 80 years old, still actively engaging in productive activities, and the youngest migrant, at 14 years old.

After randomly selecting the 22 interviewees from among those surveyed, each one was contacted by telephone to request for an interview and arranging the date

and time convenient for the respondent. There were no follow-up interviews; however, some answers of 5 interviewees were verified by SMS and telephone. For interviewees located in other provinces and were not free for face-to-face interviews, a phone interview was conducted. Another strategy employed in this method was to contact members of Filipino associations through the networking sites like Facebook. Through this site, the researcher was able to interview three (3) teachers. The interviews lasted, on average, for about 1.5 hours. The main questions probed into their conditions of work, worries, experiences and plans for the future. All interviewees were given the chance to ask about the research being conducted (see the Appendix B). A total of 25 in-depth interviews were done for this research which consisted of 12 males and 13 females.

Table 3.1 Profile of In-depth Interviewees (IDI)

Interviewee (IDI)	Age	Marital Status	Gender	Years in Thailand	Current Occupation	Location in Thailand
1	24	Single	Male	1 year	PS Teacher	Sa Sakiew
2	30	Single	Male	6	PS Teacher	Nonthaburi
3	30	Married	Female	4	PS Teacher	Rayong
4	28	Single parent	Female	1	Bar Singer	Trat
5	40	Married	Male	6	U Teacher	Buriram
6	31	Single parent	Female	6	PS Teacher	Nakhon Nayok
7	55	Single	Female	10	Missionary volunteer	Bangkok
8	65	Widow	Female	6	Domestic worker	Bangkok
9	24	Single	Male	1	Postgraduate Student	Pathumthani
10	80	Single parent	Female	40	Missionary volunteer	Bangkok
11	32	Married	Female	10	Freelancer	Pathumthani
12	62	Married	Male	7	PS Teacher	Bangkok
13	24	Single	Male	3	Postgraduate Student	Pathumthani
14	42	Married	Male	5	Technician	Pathumthani
15	39	Single	Female	9	Research Specialist	Pathumthani

PS = primary school; U= university; SS=secondary school

Table 3.1 Profile of In-depth Interviewees (IDI, cont.)

Interviewee (IDI)	Age	Marital Status	Gender	Years in Thailand	Current Occupation	Location in Thailand
16	46	Married	Male	16	Engineering Specialist	Pathumthani
17	14	Single	Male	2	Out of school; Dependent	Pathumthani
18	28	Single	Female	3	PS Teacher	Pathumthani
19	50	Single	Female	18	SS Teacher	Chonburi
20	40	Married	Male	6	Unemployed	Pathumthani
21	40	Married	Female	6	Financial Officer	Pathumthani
22	38	Married	Female	6 months	Domestic worker	Chiang Mai
23	63	Married	Male	40	Missionary	Chiang Mai
24	65	Married	Female	40	Missionary	Chiang Mai
25	40	Married	Male	16	Self-employed	Bangkok

PS = primary school; U= university; SS=secondary school

3.3.5 Direct Observation

Several areas frequented by Filipinos were identified in order to conduct direct observations. Through the help of other migrants in the survey, the researcher visited two Filipino restaurants frequented by migrants in Bangkok, a grocery shop owned by a Filipino family and three churches in Bangkok. Direct observation and participation were also done during religious activities such as retreat and anniversary celebrations of formal religious organizations organized by Filipino migrants. This was made possible through invitations by Filipino friends, who were also participants in the survey. Another important observation was made during a visit to a school in Bangkok operated by a Filipino couple.

Observations were also conducted in the Philippines. The POEA Office in Cebu City was visited for three (3) consecutive days in order to observe the number of migrants and overseas applicants coming to process the requirements for departure abroad, and the recent fees they had to pay. The researcher also conducted random, short interviews with some of the migrants while waiting for their turn to pay the fees and secure the certificates. Several questions related to their years abroad, socio-

economic conditions, dependents and remittances were asked. Another observation was conducted at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport in Manila. Notes were made regarding the process of checking in and boarding flights for tourists as well as the OFWs. Particular notes were made on the different sections OFWs had to go through prior to boarding such as queuing at a POEA and OWWA and DFA counters to verify the OEC certificate and get signatures. More notes were also done after observing several passengers going through immigration counters and were held up for a long time, trying to show the necessary travel documents and eventually interviewed in the office. Passengers being offloaded (or not allowed to board their flights) due to insufficient supporting documents or negative results after being questioned were also noted.

3.3.6 Key Informants Interviews

The data collection included interviews of officials in various organizations. Formal letters requesting for an interview were sent to the key officers, signed by the IPSR Director of Mahidol University. An appointed time was arranged for each interview. An official from the Ministry of Labour in Thailand was interviewed regarding the policy of the ministry regarding the hiring of foreign workers, number of registered and unregistered workers in Thailand and so on. Because of some constraints on the part of a senior manager in Philippine Airlines and another officer of the Immigration Office in Thailand, sets of interview questions were sent to them by email, and were returned with answers by email. Another key officer of Raks Thai Foundation was interviewed in person. Other key members of some Filipino associations were also interviewed personally and by phone (see Appendix C).

Table 3.2 Profile of Key Informant (KI) Interviewees

KI Number	Affiliation	Gender
1	Embassy of the Republic of the Philippines	Male
2	Officer, Ministry of Labour	Male
3	Officer, Raks Thai Foundation	Male

Table 3.2 Profile of Key Informant (KI) Interviewees (cont.)

KI Number	Affiliation	Gender
4	Pioneer Migrant	Female
5	Philippines-based Airlines	Female
6	Officer, Philippines-based religious association	Female
7	Officer, Filipino non-religious association	Female
8	Officer, Immigration Bureau	Male

3.4 Categories Used in Analyzing Qualitative Data from Interviews, Observations and Survey of Social Networking Sites

Interviews, observations and survey of social networking sites were done to generate qualitative data that would enhance the information generated from quantitative methods. Categories were constructed for all three methods. Using the social network analysis as the analytical approach in analyzing the relationships between members of various formal and non-formal associations including online associations, the following categories were formulated to understand the pattern of memberships, mobility and experiences of migrants: interpersonal relationships and interactions, patterns of ties, demographic characteristics of members, socio-economic characteristics of members, structure and composition of the associations, monetary and non-monetary contributions to the membership, monetary and non-monetary benefits from the membership, and the respondents' use of their free time or leisure; for example, their participation (frequency of visits/attendance) in social activities.

3.5 Secondary Data Collection

Several data were also collected from various government and non-government agencies, both in-print and online. In order to provide an overview of the current trend of Filipino migration in Thailand, a 5-year data on registered Filipino migrants from 2008-2012 were obtained from Thailand's Department of Labour. The number of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) was gathered from the website of the

POEA (Philippine Overseas Employment Agency) over a 6-year period. In addition, a 6-year data (2005-2010) on remittances of Filipinos abroad from the POEA was also obtained. The Stock Estimate of Overseas Filipinos, 2006-2011 (permanent, temporary and irregular) was also downloaded from the CFO website in order to analyze the historical and current trends of Filipinos moving abroad. Current issues and global and regional statistics on migration were obtained from the Statistical Report on Migration in the World Migration Report, 2010. The documentary report by AKSYON (www.pinoy-ako.info) was used as supporting evidence on the irregular migration of Filipinos occurring in Thailand.

3.6 Limitations of the Research

Although various methods and techniques were employed to generate as much information as necessary for this research, the methods of data collection did not allow the researcher to provide generalizable results. Because a list of Filipino migrants was not available at the time the research was conducted, non-probability sampling methods were used. This may have resulted to certain biases in the results, wherein other job categories may have been underrepresented or unexplored such as the entertainment and managerial works. Moreover, due to time and financial constraints, many Filipino migrants who are in other provinces and remote areas in Thailand could not be reached, and several respondents who could have provided vital information on their conditions in Thailand declined to answer the survey because of their irregular status; thus, the inability of the researcher to further enrich this study. Because of the accessibility and the availability of support in the distribution of the questionnaires in Bangkok, it can be found that the sample consisted of the highest number of respondents from this province resulting to overrepresentation of migrants from this area.

Several questionnaires were not completed by respondents due to lack of understanding, lack of time or the inability of the respondents to obtain explanation to some items in the questionnaire. This led to low-response rate, or non-response biases; that is, out of 1,000 questionnaires distributed, only 354 were completed and considered for the analysis. Obtaining information via email instead of face-to-face

interviews with a key official of the Immigration Bureau of Thailand and an official of the Philippine-based airlines company led to the inability of the researcher to make follow-up questions and to forego other important ones.

The lack of literature that explored Filipino migration in Thailand limited the amount of data available for this research. Mostly, information gathered from primary data has provided much of the evidence to support this phenomenon. Reports obtained from secondary sources were not accurate enough to capture the movement. Historical data about the trends of Filipino migration in the country is also not available, so the researcher relied only on accounts made by interviewees particularly the pioneer migrants. Thus, probably having an impact on the quality and accuracy of some of the information presented in this research.

Despite the limitations in obtaining a sample that would offer generalizable results, this research used multiple methods to data collection in order to cover as many areas and migrants as possible, as well as to present more objective results. The use of questionnaires for the survey enabled as much data as possible to be generated while being complemented by the findings from interviews and other qualitative approaches. A list of variables was created which was used in the analysis of primary data. Analyzing patterns in the data and relationship between variables and other variables was made possible through the use of SPSS and social network analysis.

CHAPTER IV

THE PHILIPPINES AND THE OUTFLOW OF LABOUR

This chapter explains the different flows of Filipino migrants across the globe over a span of several decades against the backdrop of a growing regionalism and development within the Southeast Asian region, as well as the evolution of migration systems in underexplored areas like Thailand. Changing trends in destinations and occupational mobility among Filipino migrants are also highlighted in this chapter in the context of intra-regional migration.

4.1 Historical and Cultural Contexts of Migration from the Philippines

Migration could be traced back to the early 1970s and during which time, the first groups of Filipino workers were mostly found in the construction industry together with seamen operating the world's marine ships. Their presence addressed the labour shortage experienced by Middle-east countries facing the building boom at time. They moved, not only to Asian countries, but also to other regions; however, the trend shifted to more service-oriented jobs, leading to a rise in female migration flows in the Middle East as well as in the newly-industrialized economies (Asis, 2004). According to Labour Secretary Patricia Santo Tomas (in <http://www.taipeitimes.com>), domestic workers are commonly found working in middle-class and wealthier homes in newly industrializing East Asia, the Middle East and Western Europe, and that, entertainers found huge opportunities in Japan. She also stressed that although sailors made up a big part of the annual deployments in the 1980s and towards 1990s, service-related sectors have evolved as opportunities for Filipinos in need of jobs; hospitals, nursing homes for the elderly, or hotel or tourism-related jobs around the world.

The increasing movement of Filipinos abroad prompted the government to establish the Philippine Overseas Employment Agency in 1982 through the Executive Order No. 797, to regulate and develop the overseas employment program of the Philippines and to ensure that the rights of the Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) are protected. With this initiative, more and more Filipinos have aspired to move abroad, as seen in the increasing trend from 1981-2011 of emigrants compiled by the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO), leading to what is commonly termed as a 'culture of migration'. From the data published by the agency, the annual number of registered emigrants increased from 48,867 in 1981 to 83,410 with female emigrants comprising around 2/3 of the total annual registered emigrants. Moreover, the total stock estimate of overseas Filipinos in 2011 was 10,455,788; 4,867,645 permanent migrants, 4,513,171 temporary migrants and 1,074,972 irregular migrants (CFO, 2011 see Appendix A). From the same report, it can be seen that The Americas/Trust Territories had the highest number of overseas Filipinos, about 90% of which were permanent residents. West Asia, and East and South Asia each had a very high number of Filipinos, at 2,987,923 and 1,449,373 respectively. In contrast with those in The Americas/Trust Territories, overseas Filipinos in Asia were mainly temporary migrants; 2,872,440 in West Asia and 621,400 in East and South Asia. The highest number of irregular migrants was also found in East and South Asia, at 543,327 with Malaysia hosting irregular or undocumented 569,081 migrants in 2011, a huge increase from 316,273 in 2010. On the other hand, Africa had only a total of 74,483 overseas Filipinos (CFO, 2011).

The CFO also reported in 2010 that over the last thirty years, the average age of those leaving the country is in their early 30s; 31-33 years old. Around 40% of them had a college or university education. There has also been an increasing trend among the employed and unemployed groups to leave the country, with a much higher proportion among housewives, students and minors (less than 7 years old). For the employed group, the highest proportion of emigrants is found among those who held professional, technical and related works prior to migration. Lastly, a general increase in emigration trend among those who were single, married, separated and divorced emigrants has been occurring over the last three decades; the highest was among single emigrants at 771,543, followed by the married ones, at 681,683 (CFO, 2010)

Although generally migrants move into particular occupations in destination countries, a gender dimension to this movement can also be seen in the increasing trend of Filipino women migrants compared to their male counterparts. Moreover, there is a clear demarcation between men and women's work due to the gender specific demand and supply of labour in the global market. 'Women's work' has reached an international level; Filipino women as domestic workers in the Middle East and Southeast Asia, entertainers in Japan and skilled workers in Europe and North America. Women took jobs which are extensions of their roles as women back home in the Philippines. Family obligations and expectations, personal growth and gender-specific demand for women's labour are some of the influencing factors of Filipino women's movement overseas.

4.2 Structural and Socio-economic Factors of Migration

Why are Filipinos more likely to move abroad for work? One of the most important factors is the income differentials (*income per capita*) with destination countries. It has been assumed that emigration propensity is low at very low levels of income since migration requires resources, information and economic transactions. However, in some countries like Bangladesh, the propensity to emigrate has been increasing over the years regardless of income fluctuations. The socio-economic aspects or the quality of life of the Filipinos in the country is lower compared to other countries having a similar GDP level with the Philippines (www.mohprof.eu). It is faced with the ongoing problem of high birth rates, one of the highest in Asia. Moreover, poverty threshold has increased with more poor families in the country, high unemployment and underemployment rates, as shown in the report, despite incremental economic improvements; resulting to less satisfactory household incomes and quality of life.

The inability of the government to provide adequate employment for its young population is another reason for the increasing trend of emigration. Thus, the high unemployment rate has resulted to the movement of highly educated Filipinos working in low-skilled jobs overseas. Another important factor that propelled migrants to move is the increasing international demand for labour from the Philippines,

particularly in the services sector. For instance, the country has been active in sending health professionals to various regions in the world in recent years. The increasing demand from more developed countries facing a shortage of health professionals to look after their aging population has led to considerable migration (www.mohprof.eu). As a result, the Philippines and other countries in need of nurses such as Canada and Bahrain had bilateral agreements in place.

The Philippines has always had an outward orientation, through export of goods and services. Not only do the unskilled workers moved to other countries, but also the highly-skilled Filipino workers move to various destinations (IOM World Migration, 2003). This is supported by the number of skilled and educated overseas workers worldwide. In neighboring countries like Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand, highly-skilled Filipinos comprise approximately 4-6% out of the total flows. However, within the ASEAN region, the dimension and character of these movements is quite difficult to monitor and assess due to the long-standing agreement among member countries for a visa-free admission.

The government also recognizes the importance of around US\$ 20 billion of annual remittances from overseas workers in the economy, which was thought to have supported the country during the 2008 global financial crisis. The POEA Report 2010 acknowledge the fact that remittances, which accounts for around 10% of the country's GDP, have increased the economic performance of the country by 7.3 % in 2010. In return, the government, through the POEA, is striving hard to support the deployment of overseas workers to various countries in the world by increasing bilateral and multilateral agreements with host countries in order to ensure the protection of Filipino workers abroad. Welfare and marketing missions have also been established to address migrants concerns in particular countries (POEA, 2010). Other types of assistance are Pre-Departure Orientation Seminars and Pre-Employment Orientation Seminars. Licensing of employment agencies and recruitment are properly regulated in order to reduce illegal recruitment and trafficking.

4.3. The Philippine Overseas Employment Program (POEA)ⁱ

For several decades now, the government has deployed thousands of Filipinos for employment abroad in various fields. In order to manage the recruitment and protection of its workers, the POEA was established serving as the arm of the government. Hiring of workers is done through a systematic process where prospective foreign employers, in most cases, direct their labour needs through POEA-licensed employment and manning agencies. Private employment agencies are either be land-based agencies or manning agencies. Land-based agencies are licensed by the POEA to recruit land-based workers on behalf of or for a foreign employer/principal while manning agencies are licensed by the agency to hire seafarers carrying out maritime activities in international sea lanes. These agencies ensure that prospective workers are qualified and medically fit to work abroad.

An official list of licensed employment agencies can be obtained at Philippine embassies or consulates in various countries and in the POEA website. A prospective foreign employer needs to submit several requirements to the Philippine Overseas Labour Office at the nearest Philippine Embassy or Consulate after having identified the preferred Philippine agent which will supply his labour requirements. Foreign employers that are government-owned or government entities can direct its hiring through the POEA's Government Placement Branch (GPB). Some fees need to be paid by the foreign employer to the private agency for the hiring or placement of worker(s). Moreover, recruitment agencies are allowed to charge its hired workers a placement fee equal to her/his one month's salary. To ensure that an overseas worker is protected and can avail of benefits, the Overseas Employment Certificate (OEC) is issued after fee payment prior to departure. The certificate also serves as an exit clearance which must be presented at the POEA Labour Assistance Center and Bureau of Immigration counters at airports.

New POEA-registered overseas workers or OFWs have to undergo a pre-departure orientation seminar (PDOS) that provides them with important information regarding the destination country and how to conduct themselves while abroad (*OFW Guide*, GMA News, February 19, 2012). These seminars are conducted by the Overseas Workers' Welfare Administration (OWWA), another government agency mandated to look after the welfare and well-being of the OFWs.

4.4 Trends in Filipino Movement

Asis and Baggio (2008) stated that Filipinos are found in diverse occupational sectors and are widely dispersed in various parts of the world, e.g., domestic work, seafaring and nursing. Because of the rapid rise in the movements among Filipinos, the Philippine government formalized the migration process and regulated it through the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) in order to manage labour migration from the country (Battistella, 1999). The Philippines is the country with the largest and most developed overseas labour programme in Asia. Approximately 1.6 million overseas Filipino workers were deployed in 2010 in over 190 countries of destination (see Table 4.1). According to Siegfried O. Alegado of BM (GMA News 30 December 2012), POEA Hans Leo Cacdac said that there were 1,460,097 Filipinos sent for work overseas from January-November, 2012, with Saudi Arabia hosting much of the deployed workers (www.gmanetwork.com). Moreover, he also reported that apart from Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Singapore, Hong Kong, Qatar, Kuwait, Taiwan, Italy, Bahrain and Malaysia are some of the popular destinations of OFWs. The official 2010 report from the POEA also revealed that the Middle East continued to be a popular destination among Filipino migrant workers, with about 44% of all land-based workers (see Table 4.4). Hong Kong and Singapore, however, showed a significant increase in new hires in 2010. Even so, the ASEAN region does not constitute a major destination for Filipino migrants. In fact, POEA showed in its Overseas Employment Statistics Report 2010 that among the top ten destinations of land-based Filipino workers, Singapore is the only ASEAN country on the list with a huge number of migrant workers (see Table 4.4).

Table 4.1 Number of Processed Contracts for Filipino Workers, by type of hiring: 2008-2010

Type of Worker and Hiring	2008	2009	2010
Total	1,464,295	1,479,070	1,644,439
Landbased Workers	1,005,538	1,043,555	1,205,734
New Hires	394,977	362,878	424,977
GPB Hire	3,991	3,289	6,576
Private Agency Hire	358,792	335,814	398,452
Name Hire	32,194	23,775	19,949
Rehires	610,561	680,677	780,757
Seabased Workers	458,757	435,515	438,705

Source: POEA Report, 2010; GPB (Government Placement Branch)

The Commission on Filipinos Overseas classifies Filipino migrants as *permanent*, *temporary* or *irregular*. An immigrant or legal permanent resident overseas whose stay in the destination country does not depend on work contracts is a permanent migrant as defined by CFO (www.cfo.gov.ph). A temporary migrant, on the other hand, is a person who moved overseas for employment, and is therefore, expected to return at the end of his work contract. Migrants classified as temporary are referred to as Overseas Contract Workers. The term ‘Overseas Filipino Workers’ (OFWs) is often used to refer to Filipinos who are employed abroad, whether on a contract basis or within an unspecified period of time. Under the Philippine laws on migration require all departing migrant workers to register with POEA in order to ensure that they are protected while working abroad.

The table below also shows the major occupations engaged in by newly-hired deployed Filipinos abroad (see Table 4.2), with production and service workers having the highest numbers compared to other job categories, at around 3 times higher compared to professional, medical, technical and related workers category. Moreover, it can be seen from Table 4.3 that women migrant workers dominate the low-skilled to highly-skilled reproductive work category consisting of household service work, caregiving and nursing tasks. Male migrant workers, on the other hand, are found more in occupations viewed as ‘for men’ such as welding and plumbing.

Table 4.2 Number of Land-based OFWs by Occupational Category: 2004-2010 (New Hires)

Major Occupational Group	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Total	281,762	284,285	308,122	306,383	338,266	331,752	340,279
Professional, Medical, Technical and Related Workers	94,147	63,941	41,258	43,225	49,649	47,886	41,835
Administrative and Managerial Workers	565	490	817	1,139	1,516	1,290	1,439
Clerical Workers	5,323	5,538	7,912	13,662	18,101	15,403	10,706
Sales Workers	3,950	4,261	5,517	7,942	11,525	8,348	7,242
Service Workers	113,423	133,907	144,321	107,135	123,332	138,222	154,535
Agricultural Workers	632	350	807	952	1,354	1,349	1,122
Production Workers	63,719	74,802	103,584	121,715	132,295	117,609	120,647
Others	3	996	3,906	10,613	494	1,645	2,753

Source: POEA Report, 2010

Table 4.3 Number of Newly-hired, Land-based Overseas Workers, by occupation and sex: 2010

World Region	Male	Female	Both Sexes
All Occupational Categories - Total	154,677	185,602	340,279
1. Household Service Workers	1,703	94,880	96,583
2. Charworkers, Cleaners and Related Workers	2,612	9,521	12,133
3. Nurses Professional	1,828	10,254	12,082
4. Caregivers and Caretakers	543	8,750	9,293
5. Waiters, Bartenders and Related Workers	4,393	4,396	8,789
6. Wiremen and Electrical Workers	8,576	30	8,606
7. Plumbers and Pipe Fitters	8,391	16	8,407
8. Welders and Flame-Cutters	5,037	22	5,059
9. Housekeeping and Related Service Workers	701	4,098	4,799
10. Bricklayers, Stonemasons and Tile Setters	4,478	29	4,507

Source: POEA Report, 2010

The country has also developed in recent years as a major source of health professionals for various destinations such as North America, Middle-east, Japan and ASEAN. This led to an increasing trend in the number of nurses graduating each year for several decades now, being the largest group of health professionals working abroad; 73 countries for temporary migration and 25 countries for permanent

migration(http://www.mohprof.eu/LIVE/DATA/National_profiles/national_profile_Philippines.pdf). Since several graduates have shifted to the nursing profession, related fields like occupational therapy and dentistry have seen a decline in the number of professionals.

Table 4.4 Number of Newly-hired and Re-hired, Land-based Overseas Filipino Workers, by destination: 2004-2010

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
All Destinations - Total	704,586	740,360	788,070	811,070	974,399	1,092,162	1,123,676
1. Saudi Arabia	188,107	194,350	223,459	238,419	275,933	291,419	293,049
2. United Arab Emirates	68,386	82,039	99,212	120,657	193,810	196,815	201,214
3. Hong Kong	87,254	98,693	96,929	59,169	78,345	100,142	101,340
4. Qatar	21,360	31,421	45,795	56,277	84,342	89,290	87,813
5. Singapore	22,198	28,152	28,369	49,431	41,678	54,421	70,251
6. Kuwait	36,591	40,306	47,917	37,080	38,903	45,900	53,010
7. Taiwan	45,059	46,737	39,025	37,136	38,546	33,751	36,866
8. Italy	23,329	21,267	25,413	17,855	22,623	23,159	25,595
9. Bahrain	8,257	9,968	11,736	9,898	13,079	15,001	15,434
10. Canada	4,453	3,629	6,468	12,380	17,399	17,344	13,885

Source: POEA Report, 2010

Based on UN data and projections, moving overseas among Filipinos is quite significant as shown in the actual and projected negative migration rates. However, the UN's projections on trends in fertility, mortality and international migration indicated a declining rate of outmigration (www.mohprof.eu).

Table 4.5 Number of Newly-hired and Re-hired, Land-based Overseas Filipino Workers, bycountry in Asia: 2003-2009

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Asia	266,609	259,209	222,940	218,983	219,598	260,995	280,808
Malaysia	6,319	6,599	5,749	9,725	6,034	7,256	9,802
Maldives	142	180	365	910	774	874	681
Mongolia	32	48	45	68	86	87	238
Myanmar	139	152	92	94	126	186	194
Nepal	6	6	3	9	8	5	10
Pakistan	84	170	206	281	317	407	383
Singapore	22,198	28,152	28,369	49,431	41,678	54,421	70,251
Sri Lanka	293	362	231	365	276	265	249
Tadzhikistan	3	-	3	8	8	11	3
Taiwan	45,059	46,737	39,025	37,136	38,546	33,751	36,866
Thailand	1,750	2,401	2,497	3,144	3,750	5,009	5,133
Turkmenistan	29	41	26	53	49	75	228
Uzbekistan	5	3	4	5	5	7	10
Vietnam	783	1,103	1,348	1,972	2,785	4,126	4,056

Source: POEA Report, 2010

Although the flows and stocks of Filipino overseas workers have been towards the oil-rich countries of the Gulf, a shift in the flows were seen since the 1980s to the more developed countries within the Asian region such as Singapore, Taiwan and Malaysia, in service-oriented jobs with a higher concentration of female workers. The POEA Report in 2010 revealed an increasing outflow of Filipino workers to Asian countries over a six-year period, 2004-2010 (POEA, 2010).

For a long time now, recruitment agencies have been, most often, the intermediaries between the prospective employers and overseas workers. The Philippine Overseas Employment Agency was set up by the government to promote and oversee the overseas employment program and ensure that the migrants are protected. The agency also ensures that employment and recruitment agencies go through the legal processing and securing of documentation for their overseas workers; thus, preventing illegal recruitment or trafficking. Although hundreds of thousands of overseas workers from the Philippines have gone through this formal channel every year, hundreds of thousands of undocumented workers are still unaccounted for in many countries worldwide. Recent estimates show in 2011, there

were a total of 10,455,788 Filipino migrants worldwide, around half were permanent migrants. The data also showed that around 10% of the total number of migrants, were irregular. East and Southeast Asia had the highest number of irregular migrants compared to other regions with around 543,327 irregular migrants, about 50% of the total number of irregular migrants worldwide; the highest numbers in Malaysia, Singapore and South Korea (CFO, 2011). In countries with stricter penalties on overstaying migrants or irregular migrant workers, irregular Filipino migrants are unable to go home for an indefinite period of time unless they were caught or voluntarily left the host country.

Low or unpaid wages, long hours of work, and physical and verbal abuse are some forms of violations suffered by Filipino migrants from their employers, as reported by POEA (News Release, February, 2012). According to the report, the workers were found to have left the country using short-term visit visas. The report also mentioned that migrants with expiring short-term visa resorted to sub-standard employment contract, and physical and emotional exploitation.

4.5 Migration Outside of the Legal Channels

Filipino workers are found all over the world. They can be categorized as permanent, OFWs or undocumented. Permanent settlers have the right to citizenship or residency in the country of destination while the OFWs are in a particular country for work assignments and are therefore, considered temporary migrants. This particular group of Filipinos is found in particular niches, depending on the country of destination; for instance, as nurses in Europe and the US, or as domestic workers in Singapore and Hong Kong. Despite the strong government's regulation or commitment in controlling irregular migration, reports from the POEA and CFO revealed an increasing trend in the number of undocumented or irregular migrants as shown in the rising number of illegal recruitment cases of Filipinos abroad. Organized (illegal) channels operate and facilitate the movement of Filipinos overseas outside the formal institutions supported or initiated by the Philippine government. They are considered to be economical and allow immediate departure compared to the bureaucratic system and costly procedure established by the government. Because of

this, immigration and other government officials find it difficult to address the problem of irregular migration, particularly due to the support given to private agents and employers by corrupt officials and police.

Undocumented migration is seen to continue to rise despite efforts by both the Philippine government and destination countries to curb this type of migration. Many migrants move between different statuses, taking advantage of various mechanisms in the process. It is a fluid and flexible status, so migrants can take different paths; from irregular to regular, or vice-versa. Being denied or allowed departure or entry is at the discretion of the law enforcer; that is, the immigration officer. The CFO also acknowledged the presence of irregular migrants overseas, those not properly identified as migrants, or those without valid residence or work permits, or who are overstaying in a foreign country over a 10-year period (www.mohprof.eu).

The inability of the government to address the problems of migrants at destination countries led to various forms of abuses and victimization by employers, traffickers and agents. Reports of domestic workers being humiliated and violated by employers have been a regular occurrence in some countries. As a response to these human rights violations, various institutions in the country and at destination lobbied on the government to intensify its commitment in protecting OFWs. Thus, the Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act was passed. In line with this significant achievement, the deployment of workers in countries where cases of abuses and violations were reported was temporarily suspended. Moreover, measures were in place to increase and make information available to migrants or prospective migrants such as training programs and mass information campaigns. At the same time, cooperation between the government and its agencies, civil society organizations and the private sector was also strengthened. However, labour-importing countries have been reluctant in abiding by the multilateral mechanisms established by ILO and the UN as well as in collaborating through bilateral agreements with regards to the rights of migrants (Asis, 2008).

The Philippines was also classified under Tier 2 Watch list country due to its inability to curb human trafficking (CFO, 2011). Moreover, it has been known as a source, and to a certain extent, a destination and transit country for men and women

were trafficked for forced prostitution and forced labor. In order to address these issues, the government established a stronger participation and partnership with stakeholder and government agencies in tackling trafficking as well as in improving its mechanisms in responding to trafficking cases (CFO, 2011). Some of its programs are the establishment of a database for monitoring and law enforcement, skills training and prosecution of those involved in the trafficking.

4.6 Chapter Summary

The Philippines has long established itself as an important source of foreign labour. With the institutionalization of its recruitment system, migration for work has continued to increase. Along with this also is the continuing concern for the rising trend in unauthorized migration as shown in the reports published by the CFO. Migrants have increasingly found ways to traverse the laws as more unauthorized channels become accessible in the Philippines as well as in destination countries. The inability of the Philippine government to fully address migrants' conditions at destinations increases their risks to further exploitation and other forms of violations.

ⁱ A more detailed information regarding the hiring of Filipino workers through the POEA can be viewed on the POEA website: <http://www.poea.gov.ph/about/hiring.htm>

CHAPTER V

THE PHILIPPINES-THAILAND MIGRATION SYSTEM

The type of migration system established between the Philippines and Thailand is one that has evolved over the last 40 years, but has been overlooked. Despite the long-standing cultural, economic and political exchanges between the two countries, the migration paths usually taken by migrants from the Philippines are towards more familiar routes in the region; Philippines to Singapore, or Philippines to Malaysia. However, over the course of 20 years, a shift in migration patterns emerged, particularly as Thailand has been seen as having much higher economic growth compared to the Philippines (<http://www.asianpundit.com/2012/02/thailand-the-philippines-a-dismaying-study-in-contrasts/>). Governments in both countries have reported an increasing trend of not only Filipino *tourists*ⁱ, but also registered Filipino workers in Thailand. Despite the fact that a migration systemⁱⁱ exists, how it was developed presents some difficulties in explaining its internal mechanisms because unlike Singapore and Malaysia, no formal connections based on labour migration are present between the two countries. This chapter, therefore, will look at intervening factors such as migration policies and institutions to understand the functioning relationships within the system that direct migration decisions and flows of Filipinos in Thailand.

5.1 Immigration Policies of Thailand

Thailand, like the Philippines, is also a labour-sending country. The Government of Thailand also has in place a process to regulate the deployment of Thai workers to other countries despite the fact that it does not have a comprehensive policy on the overseas deployment of migrant workers like the Philippines. However, the recruitment and placement of Thai labour abroad is governed by the Recruitment and

Job-Seekers Protection Act of 1985, which was amended in 1994 and 2001. The Thai government has signed bilateral agreements with several of the main destination economies to regulate this temporary labour migration, and approximately 150,000 migrant workers have been formally deployed overseas each year since 1999. In the 1990s, there was a rapid expansion of the deployment of Thai workers overseas, from 63,000 in 1990 to a peak of 202,000 in 1995. After that, the number of formal deployments declined gradually to 161,000 in 2002 (Huguet and Punpuing, 2005). Annual deployments continued to decrease reaching 143,795 in 2010. Improved job opportunities in Thailand and the sustained economic growth of the Thai economy may have been the factors for this declining trend. Another factor could be the limited effectiveness of the Ministry of Labour (MOL) to identify employment opportunities abroad and to make arrangements for placing Thai workers (Huguet and Punpuing, 2005:25).

Foreign workers or migrants in Thailand are governed by two main laws: the Immigration Act B.E. 2522 and the Alien Employment Act B.E. 2551 (KI#2, April, 2012). The Alien Employment Act B.E. 2551 replaced the Alien Employment Act B.E. 2521 which was abolished in 2008. The Ministry of Labour oversees the implementation and enforcement of the Alien Employment Act B.E.2551 while the Immigration Act B.E. 2522 is managed by the Immigration Bureau of the Royal Thai Police Department and the Ministry of Interior (www.humanrights-mu.org). The previous Alien Employment Act B.E. 2521 enforced the policy that no foreigners are allowed to work without a work permit even with a visa. From the report, foreigners holding a work permit are allowed to work with only one employer (Huguet, 2009). Moreover, work permits were issued only for occupations with short supply of local skills (Huguet, 2009:19-20). This past policy is still enforced until now, with the Immigration Act B.E. 2551 legalizing low-skilled workers from GMS countries. Issued work permits can be extended and the new employment policy also allows change of employers, location, length, and type of job which was not possible in the previous act (Young et al., 2008:115).

Immigration Act B.E. 2522 further expects any foreigner who want to work and stay in the kingdom to have the appropriate visa. Although some countries are exempted from visa requirements, they can still be penalized or deported if found

to have violated the employment act. Citizens of the Philippines, for instance, are allowed to stay up to 30 days under the visa exemption rule when coming through an international airport. They are also entitled to a visa extension of up to 15 days if entering through a land border checkpoint from a neighboring country (KI#1, April, 2012). In both cases, travelers are required to have a confirmed travel itinerary and proof of funds.

Documented foreign workers are protected by the Labour Protection Act B.E. 2541 although these should apply to all types of migrant workers in Thailand, as highlighted by the Labour Protection Law, Social Security Law, and the Workmen's Compensation Law (Key informant interviews #1, 2 and 3, April-June, 2012). Similar interviews also revealed that every foreign worker of Board of Investments (BOI) registered companies and non-BOI registered companies must register with the Department of Employment, and must have both a work permit and a valid Thai visa. There are different non-immigrant visa categories that are given for specific type of stay and work. For example, highly-skilled professionals working in international organizations are given a Non-immigrant visa "F" (official) which does not require a separate work permit card (KI#1, April, 2012). Many foreign migrants obtain a Non-immigrant visa "B", which means 'Business' while foreign retirees are given a Non-immigrant visa "OA". There are specific conditions for every type of visas. However, having a visa to stay does not entitle one to work (Huguet, 2009:50). With the non-immigrant visa, "B", a foreign worker must also apply for a work permit, extend their Thai visa, and report to the Immigration Office every 90 days, a requirement for foreigners who are on a long stay visas.

Although naturalization through marriage or by birth is possible in Thailand, the process is complex, expensive, and slow. In fact, in 2006 and 2007, only around 300 foreigners were even given residency (Huguet, 2009:49). A person has to live in the country for a long time, have a good job with a certain income, and know the Thai language in order to be considered for a permanent residency or Thai nationality. The foreign population officially approved to stay was 300,194 in 2007. Of all legal foreigners in Thailand, around half are formally working. Registered Filipino migrants, however, are allowed to secure visas for their family members or dependents; thus, making their stay in Thailand more meaningful.

According to Huguet (2009), since 2003, Filipinos have been the fastest growing foreign population with visas and work permits. In 2007, the number of Filipinos with work permits ranked sixth among all foreigners, almost as high as Americans; with 2,337 Filipinos with work permits in 2002 to 7,525 in 2007. On the other hand, Americans had 7,838 people with work permits in 2007. The proportion of Filipinos with work permits also increased from 3.3 percent in 2003 to 5.6 percent by 2007. Filipinos in Thailand continued to have the highest growth rate of work permits held since 2004 until 2007 at 27.2 percent (Huguet, 2009:50-51).

5.2 History of Filipino Migration to Thailand and Emerging Trends

For more than 60 years, the Philippines and Thailand have shared a long-standing friendship and goodwill through shared political, economic and cultural activities, which have strengthened diplomatic ties between the two countries. Both countries were also co-founders of the Southeast Asian Treaty Organization or SEATO and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), a major regional organization (KI#1, April, 2012). Despite the decades of cooperation and linkages, both countries have never had any bilateral agreements with regards to labour migration.

Key informant interviews (KI#1, 2 & 4, April-June, 2012) revealed that Filipino movement to Thailand started in the 1970s where the number of migrants was very low and consisted of those who worked for international organizations or international firms, and a few missionaries and entertainers. Some Filipino women migrated due to marriage with Thai nationals. Up until recently, the movement was relatively insignificant, with very limited number of migrants because the flow was mainly for marriage, missionary work, entertainment, or postgraduate education (KI#1, April, 2012, IDI#10, #23 and #24)). The past twenty years, however, have shown a different trend in migration among Filipinos moving to Thailand for various reasons. According to a key informant, a new migration trend has developed, and in 2000, the Thaksin government has opened the way for foreign teachers to be employed in the country (KI#1, April, 2012) primarily due to the goal of the Thai government of building the English language proficiency of Thai students.

Despite the absence of bilateral agreements with the Philippines, the Thai government's support in improving its educational system through the hiring of Western and Asian English teachers led to high demand for cheap, English-speaking teachers for primary and secondary Thai students in government and private schools, creating opportunities for Filipino migrants in skilled occupations particularly in education and teaching. Interviews with key government officials prior to this research revealed that Filipino migrants are concentrated in areas where educational and skilled opportunities exist, such as in Chiangmai, Phitsanulok, Chonburi and Bangkok. Results from the survey also showed that educational attainment is an important factor in Filipino employment in the country as seen in the number of university graduates with non-teaching backgrounds and those in non-teaching occupations prior to migration who are in the teaching sector.

As reported by the Ministry of Labour, the number of registered Filipinos has continued to increase over the last five years, from 2008-2012 (MOL, 2012). The migrants are found in various occupational categories; with the highest concentration in the teaching sector. The data also revealed that the proportion of Filipinos in the teaching sector was highest, compared to those coming from Japan, the UK, China and India, and double that of the UK. Email communication with an immigration official also confirmed that the number of workers from the Philippines, China and India is increasing significantly; mostly, skilled workers (KI#8, September, 2012).

The number of tourists coming into the country in 2011 and 2010 has also been increasing; around 307,290 and 273,577 respectively (KI#1, April, 2013). There were altogether more than 4 million tourists from within the ASEAN region in 2010, according to the Immigration Bureau, with Philippines having around 254,000 tourists for that year alone (KI#8, email communication, September, 2012), an increase from 237,408 in 2009 (KI#1, April, 2013). From the same report, it was revealed that many tourists renew their visas at the borders between Thailand and Laos, Cambodia and Malaysia; many of them are working without a work permit. Out of the 818,275 Filipinos who came to Thailand from 2009-2011, a total of 13,081 remained or have not departed during that period (KI#1, April, 2013).

The presence of an increasing number of irregular Filipinos working in Thailand and those involved in crimes has become a burden to the Philippine

government primarily because of the financial costs it places on the government when they are in distress and need immediate assistance (KI#1, April, 2012). Media news and key informants interviews revealed that some Filipinos in Thailand were involved in drug trafficking, robbery and other crimes. In fact, the number of Filipinos in Thailand's prison has increased to 46 prisoners, with more female than male migrant prisoners (KI#1, April, 2012). The Philippine Embassy in Bangkok has been handling several legal cases against Filipinos in the country by providing lawyers and translators. Through the Assistance to Nationals (ATN) Fundⁱⁱⁱ allocated by the Philippine government to assist distressed overseas Filipinos, the embassy officials in Bangkok were able to provide legal assistance, repatriation and medical assistance to irregular migrants who do not have the means to support themselves. Moreover, during the 2011 flood crisis in Thailand, many Filipinos have been given financial and other forms of financial assistance through the ATN fund.

Despite some issues related to Filipino migration in Thailand, the country provides a niche for many Filipinos who dream of working overseas, with more and more migrants entering skilled occupations as shown in this research. The cost of the movement is generally low compared to the costs involved in moving to other countries in the Asian region. Moreover, bilateral and multilateral agreements between ASEAN member countries with regards to tourists have also paved the way for the relative ease of moving to Thailand. Because of the high concentration of migrants in high skilled occupations, many Filipinos find adaptation and integration relatively less difficult.

However, in the last few years, it appeared that the Thai government is making efforts in curbing irregular migration, not only among those from Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos but also among Filipinos, Africans and other nationalities (telephone communication with a travel operator, February, 2012). The travel operator revealed that policies on the extension of tourist visas or stay at the borders and at consular offices in Laos and Cambodia have been made as difficult as possible.

5.3 The Unregulated Movement of Filipinos in Thailand

The movement of several Filipinos to Thailand is seen as an individual personal mobility operating outside the Philippine government's labour migration framework. Results from this research show that much of the moves are primarily characterized by the desire to enter the country due to the availability of some social capital and with the hope to build their economic and human capital. How it operates generates an interesting reflection in this section.

A thriving migration industry composed of illegal recruiters, teaching agencies, travel agents, transport operators and small-scale entrepreneurs, play a prominent role in facilitating movements of Filipinos in Thailand.^{iv} Data obtained online from networking sites frequented by Filipinos and non-Filipinos, particularly teachers, show around 25 teaching agencies in Thailand; giving migrants more opportunities for employment. Moreover, travel agencies operated by Filipino migrants in Thailand also provide travel arrangements for prospective employees, relatives or friends of migrants as confirmed by all interviewees. There are also strong migrant networks that shelters or accommodates an increasing number of irregular or undocumented labour force from the Philippines. Some Filipino migrants work in enterprises owned by other migrants (compatriots) such as restaurants, Filipino-run schools and travel agencies; employers are of the same ethnic or national origin. These enterprises also have a strong ethnic concentration. The rising number of Filipino-owned small enterprises such as restaurants, shops and tour agencies around Thailand provided some forms of employment for those seeking a job abroad as waiters, shopkeepers, cooks and office assistants. However, these intermediaries not only facilitate movements but also perpetuate irregularity and intention to stay.

Although departure from the Philippines can be challenging for migrants posing as tourists, this research show that prospective migrants who have sufficient funds can easily purchase an air ticket and prove that they are 'tourists' despite the fact that their purpose may be for temporary employment. This is made possible with the help of family members, friends and colleagues already in Thailand who can provide supporting documents (sponsorship) for a tourist or dependent visa. They also provide the necessary information prior to departure such as how to answer questions posed by immigration officials and what documents to prepare. In some cases, arrangements

are made to have a friend, or relative accompany a prospective migrant during the travel to ensure that it will be smooth or that support is available should problems arise prior to departure.

Interviews also revealed that proper preparation for the trip is very necessary. First, it should be ensured that the flight itinerary gives the impression of a short holiday; for instance, a few days gap between the departure from and arrival to the Philippines. In some cases, hotel reservations are also made and 'show money' or proof of funds are prepared for the prospective migrants. They are also advised to pack lightly to avoid suspicions of intending to stay in Thailand. Many of the 'tourists' remained, and became regular or irregular migrants.

The timing of the move is seen also as important in ensuring that prospective migrants are able to secure a job immediately or within a short time after arrival. They either move after a job at the destination has already been arranged by their migrant friends or family members, termed as contracted migration (although they have not been formally contracted beforehand), or with the hope of securing a job in Thailand referred to as speculative migration (Tervo, 1998). Cheaper communications enabled migrants to transmit job information quickly before it spreads to others and the ease in air travel made these arrangements possible. On the other hand, the move can also be seen as something of 'a last resort' depending on the circumstances of the prospective migrant at that time; for example, moving because of unemployment in the Philippines.

Less-restrictive policies in entering Thailand and joining the labour market made migration less costly. Irregularity is not a major hindrance in finding a job, and hiring at the beginning in an irregular situation is common or well-accepted. Since the teaching sector is suffering from a shortage of local teachers, more and more Filipinos are joining this sector, as registered workers or in irregular status. Once the migrants have settled in Thailand, family reunification is easily possible because immigration laws in Thailand allow skilled migrant workers to obtain a dependent visa for their family members and dependents. In-depth interviews and key informant interviews revealed that many migrants have at least a family member with them in Thailand.

Once in Thailand, several visa options are available for those who wanted to stay and find employment opportunities. Responses from surveyed Filipino

migrants showed that many of them have extended their visas more than once, either at the borders of Cambodia and Thailand or in Laos while awaiting employment. Travels to the borders for visa extension is made possible only through travel agents, also transport operators, at a cost of around 700 Baht for a one-day visa run every 15 days at the Cambodian-Thai borders of Aranyaprathet/Pol Phet, and Baan Pakard. In fact, several of the migrants in the survey have been extending their visas at the borders and in Laos for more than 5 years. Three travel agents and transport operators popular among Filipino migrants can process various types of visas: tourist, student or retirement visas. A one-year student visa is available for those who do not want to regularly cross the borders for a fee of around US\$700 while older migrants who wanted to stay much longer in Thailand can apply for a one and a half year retirement visa for around US\$1,000 fee. Arrangements for a student or retirement visa can also be done by the agencies for those who intend to stay longer in Thailand and those who can afford the visa fees. Several areas in Bangkok, Pathumthani and Pattaya have become converging points for migrants leaving for visa renewals in Cambodia and Laos. It takes approximately 4 hours to get to the borders of Cambodia and Thailand and another 4 hours to return to Bangkok. Going to Laos for a visa takes all night, and visa application is processed immediately upon arrival by the agent. For those who were employed through placement agencies, specific procedures with regards to employment conditions and work permit applications are in place.

The relative ease in border crossings between these countries, or their mobility between neighbouring countries promotes migration and intention of temporary stay. Thailand has various border entry points, visa options and requirements. Nationals of ASEAN member countries are allowed to enter the country, with a 30-day permission to stay as tourists except for Myanmar. Extension of stay is allowed after the 30-day stay expires, either by visiting the Thai Immigration Office in the country or crossing the Thailand/Laos or Thailand/Cambodia borders. Between Thailand and Cambodia, the *Aranyaprathet/Poipet* border is the most popular among irregular Filipinos intending to stay longer in Thailand, followed by *Ban Pakard*, *Chantaburi / Phsa Prum*, *Pailin* and *Ban Laem*, *Chantaburi / Daun Lem*, *Battambang*. About 50 Filipino migrants together with other nationalities arrive daily in these borders due to the availability of visa-run operators who provide quick visa

arrangements and accommodation, without any required documents other than one's passport. In the Thailand/Laos side, *Nongkhai/Vientiane* border is the most popular destination, with affordable and convenient mode of transport available to foreigners. Another border point for visa renewal is the *Mukdahan/Savanakhet*. Figure 3.1 in Chapter 3 shows the different points of entry between Thailand and Cambodia, and Thailand and Laos.

5.4 Demographic Characteristics of Surveyed Filipino Migrants

The table below shows the profile of surveyed Filipino migrants in Thailand. The sample consisted of 65.3% females and 33.3% males. Moreover, a greater proportion of migrants in the younger working age group of 20-34 comprise a majority of the total number, at 65%. However, the number of migrants decreased in higher age groups. Another interesting results generated from the survey are the concentration of migrants coming from similar backgrounds or shared regional similarities in terms of language and culture, such as those regions with similar dialects and socio-cultural backgrounds. Migrants from Regions V, VI VII and XI, are called *Visayans* because they speak several dialect distinctions that come from the same language, *Visayan*. This group has a combined proportion of 33% compared with those from other regions. Another group of migrants came from the *Tagalog* ethnic groups in regions such as the National Capital Region (NCR), Central Luzon and Southern Tagalog Region, with a combined proportion of 34%. This particular finding supported the fact that ethnicity and migrant networks play a major role in Filipino migration to Thailand, which will be discussed in detail in another section.

Another important finding in this study is that most of the migrants surveyed are educated, with around 80% of them have a university degree or higher. The other 20% have undergone vocational training of at least one year prior to migration. However, despite their educational attainment, around 50% of the migrants have salaries between 10,000 – 30,000 Baht (US\$330-US\$1,000) only. Moreover, a majority of them (around 50%) are in the teaching occupations, with very low percentages in other professional and engineering occupations. Employment in

private households showed a higher proportion compared to other job occupations after teaching, at around 10%.

The table also shows that on average, migrants spent between 1-4 years in Thailand (42%), while around 24% have been in the country for more than 5 years. Moreover, around 40 respondents have spent more than 10 years. Results from the survey of Filipino migrants in Thailand showed that more than 80% of the youngest age group, 20-24 was single, and the proportion of those who are not married decreased in older age groups. A reverse trend is seen among married respondents, wherein higher proportion of married individuals is found in the older age groups. More than half of the respondents reported having dependents; around 46% of them have 1-5 dependents.

Table 5.1 Profile of Filipino Migrant Respondents in Thailand

Main Categories	Sub-categories	Proportion of Migrants (%)	% of Males	% of Females
Gender	Females	65.3		
	Males	33.3		
Age	less than 20 years	11.0	1.0	1.0
	20-24 years	10.2	2.7	8.0
	25-29 years	20.3	3.9	16.6
	30-34 years	23.7	10	14.8
	35-39 years	12.4	6.0	7.0
	40-44 years	12.2	5.6	6.8
	45-50 years	7.0	2.7	4.5
	>50 but <60	6.5	1.2	5.6
	60 and above	3.4	1.8	1.8
Marital Status	Single	52.5	16	37
	Married	43.2	16.9	26
	Separated	3.4	1.1	2.3
	Others	0.6	0	0.6

Table 5.1 Profile of Filipino Migrant Respondents in Thailand (cont.)

Main Categories	Sub-categories	Proportion of Migrants (%)	% of Males	% of Females
Hometown/ Region in the Philippines	Region I (Ilocos Region)	3.4	2.5	3.9
	Region II (Cagayan Valley)	7.9	7.6	8.3
	Region III (Central Luzon)	5.4	7.6	4.3
	Region IV (Southern Tagalog)	18.6	22.9	16.5
	Region V (Bicol Region)	2.0	2.5	1.7
	Region VI (Western Visayas)	16.1	11.9	18.7
	Region VII (Central Visayas)	10.2	8.5	10.9
	Region VIII (Eastern Visayas)	4.0	2.5	4.8
	Region IX (Zamboanga Peninsula)	0.6	0.8	0.4
	Region X (Northern Mindanao)	2.8	1.7	3.5
	Region XI (Davao Region)	2.8	5.1	1.3
	Region XII (Soccsksargen)	1.1	0.8	1.3
	Region XIII (Caraga)	1.4	3.4	0.4
	National Capital Region (NCR)	10.2	9.3	10.9
	CAR (Cordillera Administrative Region)	4.8	3.4	5.2
Others	8.2	9.3	7.8	
Educational Attainment	Vocational Training < 1 year	3.7	1.7	4.8
	Vocational Training 1-2 years	5.6	7.6	4.8
	Bachelor's Degree	63.3	61.3	64.1
	Postgraduate Degrees (Master's/Ph.D.)	18.4	18.5	18.2
	Others	8.8	10.1	8.2
Location in Bangkok	Central +Bangkok	72.6	68.9	74.5
	West	0.6	0.8	0.4
	East	8.5	8.4	8.7
	North	13.6	16.8	12.1
	Northeast	0.8	0.8	0.9
	South	2.0	2.5	1.7

Table 5.1 Profile of Filipino Migrant Respondents in Thailand (cont.)

Main Categories	Sub-categories	Proportion of Migrants (%)	% of Males	% of Females
Present Occupation in Thailand	Teachers, lecturers, teaching professionals, associate operators in teaching	52.0	49.6	54.1
	Private households with employed persons	10.2	3.4	13.9
	Clerks and Officers	1.7	0.8	1.7
	Workers in arts, entertainment and sports	3.1	5.0	2.2
	Engineers	2.0	4.2	0.9
	Business professionals, journalists, singers, actors/actresses	.6	0.8	0.4
	Managers	3.4	5.0	1.7
	Technical engineers	2.3	5.0	0.9
	Doctors, dentists, vets, nurses and pharmacists	0.6	0	0.4
	Retired	0.6	0.8	0.4
	others	10.7	16.8	7.8
	Present Salary	less than 10000	9.9	10
10,001 - 30,000		39.3	37.8	39.8
30,001 - 50,000		9.6	9.2	9.1
50,001 - 70,000		1.1	1.7	0.9
70,001 - 90,000		0.6	0	0.9
more than 90,000		0.3	0	0.4
Number of years in Thailand		less than 1 years	16.7	11.8
	1 year - 4 years	42.4	41.2	42.9
	5 year - 9 years	24.3	25.5	23.8
	10 years - 14 years	5.4	6.7	4.8
	15 years - 19 years	3.7	4.2	3.5
	more than 20 years	4.2	4.2	4.3
Number of Dependents In the Philippines	Nobody	45.0	45	45
	1-5 family members	46.0	43.7	47.2
	6-10 members	7.1	7.6	6.9
	11 or more members	1.1	2.5	0.4

*Groups with higher/highest proportion of migrants are highlighted.

Incomes from the different types of occupations also significantly vary, with migrants in the professional and technical occupations having higher salaries compared to clerical and household work. However, it can be seen from the above table that regardless of the type of occupations and experience (indicated by age and years of work), many of the Filipino migrants are only earning between 10,000 to 30,000 Baht per month (US\$ 300 – US\$1,000).

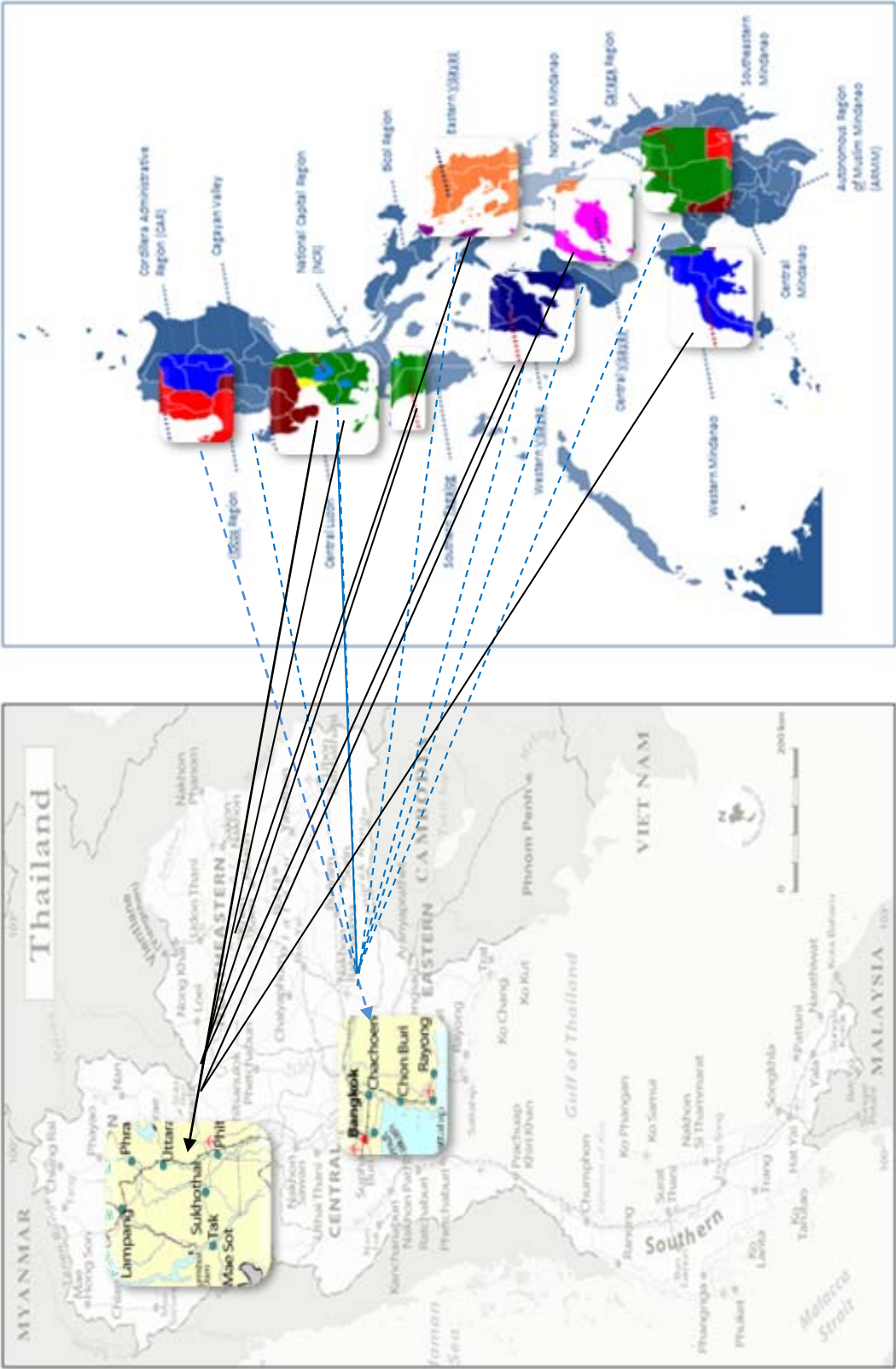


Figure 5.1: Migration Stream from the Philippines to Thailand; Source: Survey 2011-2012

The Ministry of Labour reported that compared to other nationalities (excluding Burmese, Laotians and Cambodians), the Philippines ranked 3rd in the overall number of registered migrants in Thailand at 8,188, after Japan (27,511), China (9,754), UK (9,108) and India (8,660), as of May, 2012. According also to the same report, the total number of registered Filipino immigrants (i.e., those who received work permits) was 7,515 under the general category of immigrants; the types of occupations are shown in the table below. However, as of July, 2012, only 355 Filipinos have so far renewed their work permits (MOL, 2012).

Table 5.2: Types of Occupations of Foreign Migrants in Thailand from the 5 highest Origin Countries and their corresponding numbers, as of May, 2012

Occupations	Japan	UK	Philippines	China	India
Total	12,314	8,338	7,515	7,188	6,906
Managers	6,786	2,415	998	2,211	3,401
Board Committee and Executive Directors	2,324	1,630	98	1,187	1,949
Teachers and lecturers	556	2,823	4,632	1,606	328
Business professionals, journalists, singers and actors/actresses	518	270	727	360	175
Production and operations managers	279	124	56	186	143
General managers	140	205	31	41	91
Tourism and travelling sectors	192	41	44	104	206
Architects and engineers	288	95	100	199	102
Arts, entertainment and sports	65	145	174	56	26
Financial sectors and trading	127	68	20	45	27
Others	1,039	522	636	1,193	458

*Occupations with higher/highest concentrations of migrants are highlighted.

Source: Department of Employment, Ministry of Labour, Thailand (2012)

The Philippines ranked the lowest in the number of migrants found in managerial and executive positions as shown in the above table. The trend of Filipino employment in various sectors in Thailand over a 5-year period, from December, 2008–May, 2012 is presented below. The data from the Ministry of Labour also showed that the categories of jobs for Filipino migrants have also changed over the last 5 years, from 2008-2012. In 2008, Filipino migrants were in 14 types of occupations; however, this was reduced to 9 categories in 2009. It can be assumed that the government has tried to regulate the recruitment of foreign labour, so as to ensure the employment of locals as well as to cope with the financial crisis that may have reduced domestic and foreign investments.

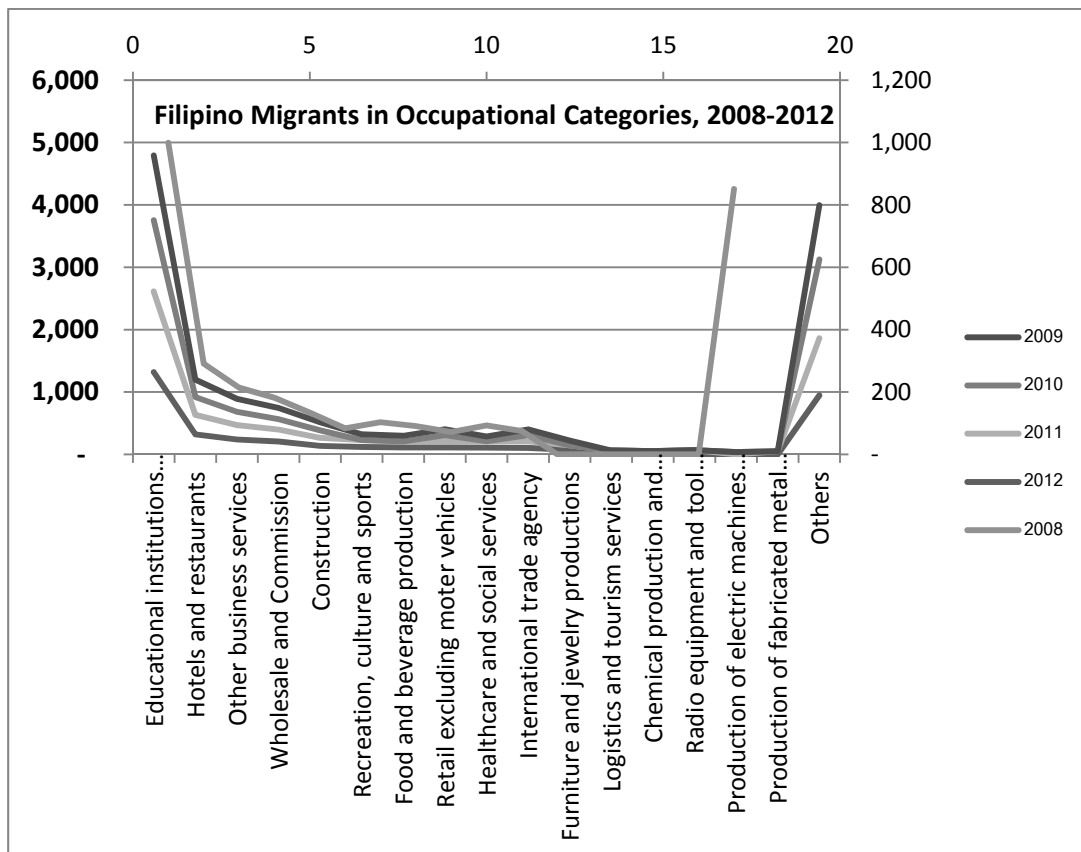


Figure 5.2: Filipino Employment in Thailand, by occupations from 2008-2012
 Source: Department of Employment, Ministry of Labour, Thailand (2012);
 Documents obtained during the key informant interview.

The data from the Ministry of Labour in Thailand also revealed the concentration of Filipinos in various provinces of the country (see Figure 5.3 below). From the figure, it can be seen that the registered Filipino migrants are highly concentrated in 8 provinces in the country in 2011, with the highest number found in the central region of Thailand, particularly highest in Chonburi. Another province with the highest concentration is Phuket, in the southern part of Thailand. The northern province of Chiangmai and northeastern province of Nakhon Ratchasima have the highest concentration in the regions with 71 and 51 migrants respectively, but much lower compared to those who are in the central and southern regions.

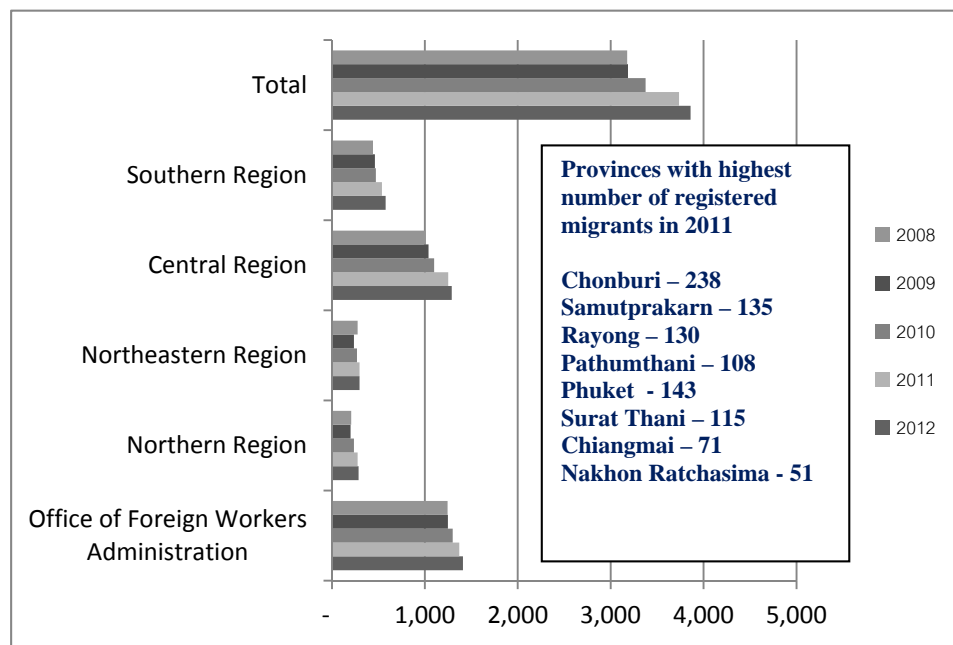


Figure 5.3: Concentration of Registered Filipinos in Different Provinces: 2008-2012

Source: Department of Employment, Ministry of Labour, Thailand (2012)

Findings from this survey revealed, however, some disparities in the results with the data provided by the Ministry of Labour. For instance, primary data from the survey showed that Bangkok has the highest concentration of Filipino migrants while data from the Ministry of Labour showed different results; that is, Chonburi has the highest number. This difference can be due to the fact that the survey included both regular and irregular Filipino migrants while the ministry only recorded

the registered migrants. Another reason could be is the overrepresentation of migrants in Bangkok during the survey.

5.5 Profile of Interviewed Migrants

A total of 25 interviews were conducted by telephone and face-to-face interviews. Twenty-two of the interviewees were selected from the sample surveyed, and the other three were chosen from a social networking site and interviewed online.

The interviewed migrants consisted of 13 females and 12 males, with the youngest migrant aged 14 years old while the oldest was 80. They were in diverse types of occupational categories and migrant status. Migrants were in jobs like entertainment, missionary work, engineering, teaching, domestic work and office jobs while three respondents were in postgraduate studies. Four of those interviewed were retirees and three were on dependent visas. Length of stay in Thailand varied among the interviewees; one respondent has been here for almost 40 years, others for about 5-10 years, while the newest migrants have been in Thailand for less than 2 years. Most of them have valid visas to stay in Thailand either through employment, educational institute, retirement visa, or as dependents. Three of the interviewees were irregular, working without the work permit.

5.6 Types of Filipino Migrants in Thailand

This research revealed the status-related flow of migrants and various mechanisms employed to change one's status; that is, from a tourist to irregular (illegally working), and then regular (registered worker) or vice-versa. Most of the respondents entered as tourists, and some changed to non-immigrant visas upon employment. There are those who became irregular due to termination or non-renewal of contracts, illegal recruitment and flexible employment. Findings, from the survey of migrants crossing the borders of Cambodia and Thailand as well as from the respondents in the questionnaire survey, revealed that most of the respondents had extended their visas at least once, either in Cambodia or Laos, prior to obtaining a non-immigrant visa, necessary for processing a work permit. Moreover, many of the

respondents also have extended their visas more than 5 times at the borders due to their condition of employment. Several of them are teachers in Thailand, but are unable to secure proper documents from employers because of the schools' inability to fulfill the requirements of the Ministry of Labour. By following the dichotomous classification of migrants, the migrants in this study were either regular or irregular as shown in the graph below.

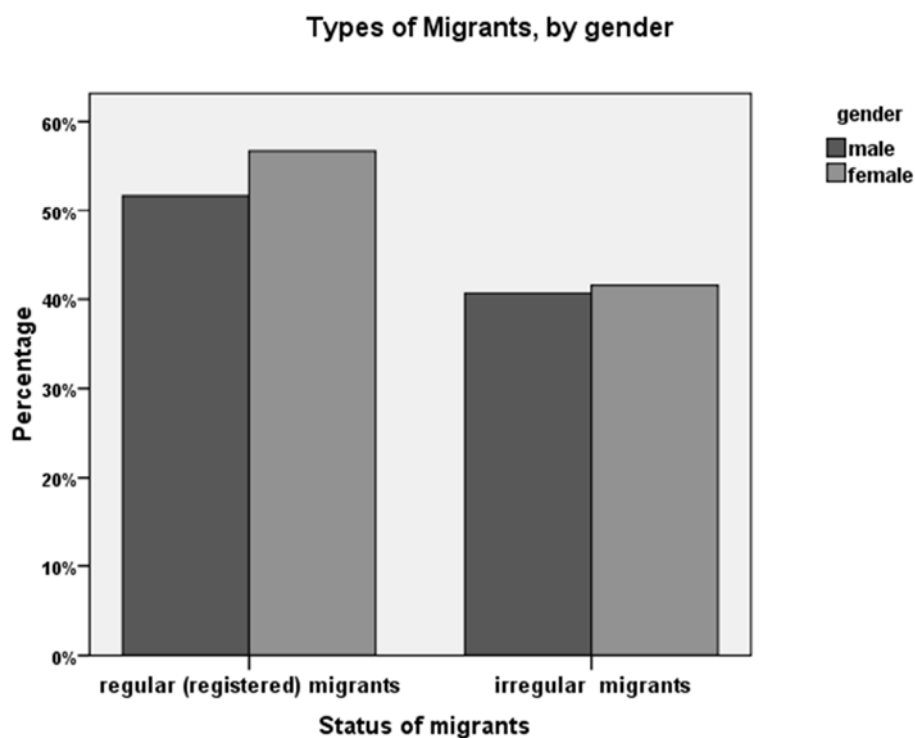


Figure 5.4 Types of Migrants

However, I expanded the classification of Filipino migrants in Thailand by adding 'semi-regular' as another category in the binary regular-irregular categorization of the migrants, following Kubal's view of conditions of semi-legality or 'not exactly legal' (2012). I also refrain from describing undocumented or irregular migrants as 'illegal' because of the problematic characteristics of 'illegality'. The migrants legally entered Thailand, and thus, have a legal permission to stay under certain types of visas. Moreover, Kubal highlighted the gray area in the binary categorization of migrants; legal or illegal, due to the conditions of those confined in the status of semi-

legality or 'not exactly legal' (2012, p.10). For instance, referring to certain situations wherein a migrant came 'illegally but residing legally', 'illegally entering, illegally residing but in legal employment', or 'legally entering, legally residing but in illegal employment' (Düvell, 2008: 488; Triandafyllidou, 2010 in Kubal, 2012). Categorizing migrants as 'illegal' according to the author has been overused and does not consider any indication of their being 'legal'. Moreover, categorizing migrants as 'illegal' stigmatizes them and will have implications on their ability to access services or facilities.

In this research, therefore, the surveyed migrants can be categorized into three main types: irregular migrants, regular migrants and semi-regular migrants (see Figure 5.5). Irregular migrants include those who, at the time of the survey, did not have the necessary work permit or legal documents that allowed them to work. Regular migrants, on the other hand, include those who, at the time of the survey, had the necessary work permit or legal documents that permitted them to work, stay, or undertake assignments in Thailand. However, findings from this research revealed a gray area in the dichotomous categorization of the migrants in this study. Several migrant respondents have legal visas to stay in the country, without the need for a visa-run to the borders; for instance, Non-immigrant Visa type 'O' (dependent visa), Non-immigrant Visa type 'B' (business visa) and Non-immigrant Visa type 'Ed' (education/student visa), but without permission to work; making them illegal or 'semi-legal', following the arguments made by Kubal (2012). There were also migrant respondents who were moving in and out of the regular-irregular status, depending on the condition of their employment; therefore, they are classified as semi-regular migrants.

5.6.1 Irregular Migrants

Irregular migrants include those who are working without a valid work permit. They regularly cross the borders to obtain an extension of stay for a month or so, and recently, for only 15 days. The chart below reveals that between male and female migrants, a higher number of females are in irregular category compared to men. Moreover, more women are in semi-regular status compared to their male counterpart.

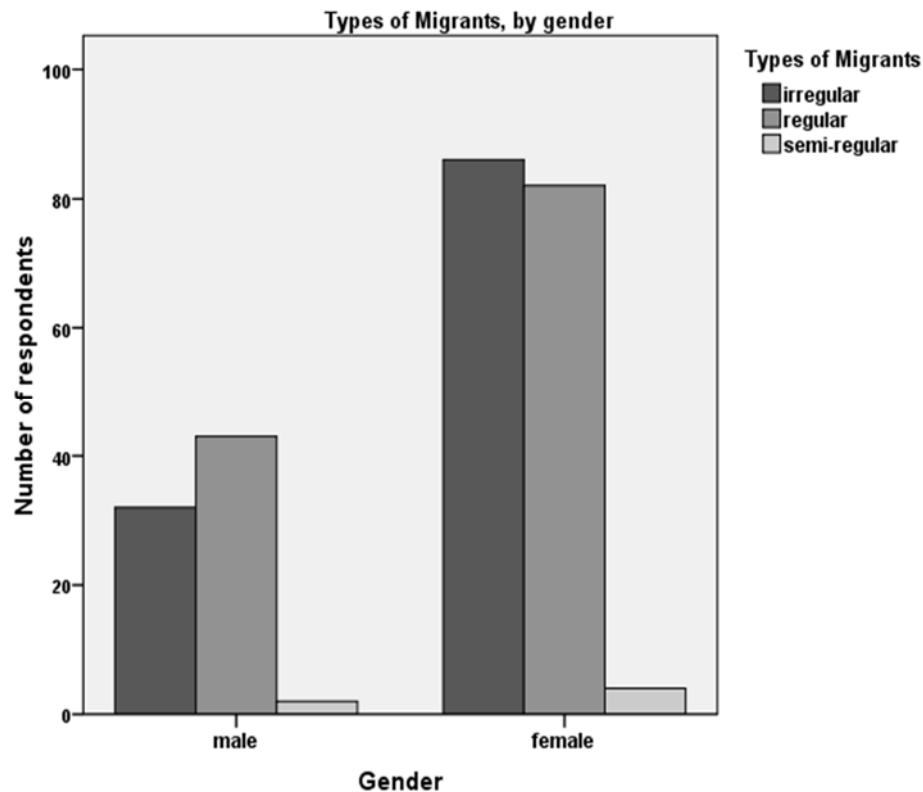


Figure 5.5 Types of Filipino Migrants in Thailand, by gender

5.6.2 Regular (registered) Migrants

Regular migrants are those who have a valid working visa or visas that allow them to undertake assignments in Thailand such as students and missionaries. They are, therefore, registered with the Ministry of Labour. Within this category of regularity, however, it can be seen that many of the regular migrants had been at one point in their migrant life, were irregular, or illegally working in the country, had extended their tourist visas several times in Laos and Cambodia, until a work permit was made possible, or had been in an regular-irregular-regular situation because of their unstable employment tenure. Some migrants who are in ‘non-remunerative’ occupations such as religious volunteers and missionaries, but are given an allowance to cover their cost of living in the country are also regular migrants. However, there were also some who came for religious reasons, but have found employment as teachers after staying in Thailand for some time. Filipino migrants in this study who are married to Thai nationals are classified as permanent residents.

5.6.3 Semi-regular Migrants

This research revealed another category of migrants that does not belong to the regular or irregular types of migrants. These are migrants who were moving in and out of the regular-irregular status, depending on the condition of their employment. Migrants who came through a dependent or student visa, but are engaged in employment are also considered semi-regular migrants. Although they are legally permitted to stay in the country, the type of visa they obtained does not allow them to engage in remunerative work or occupation.

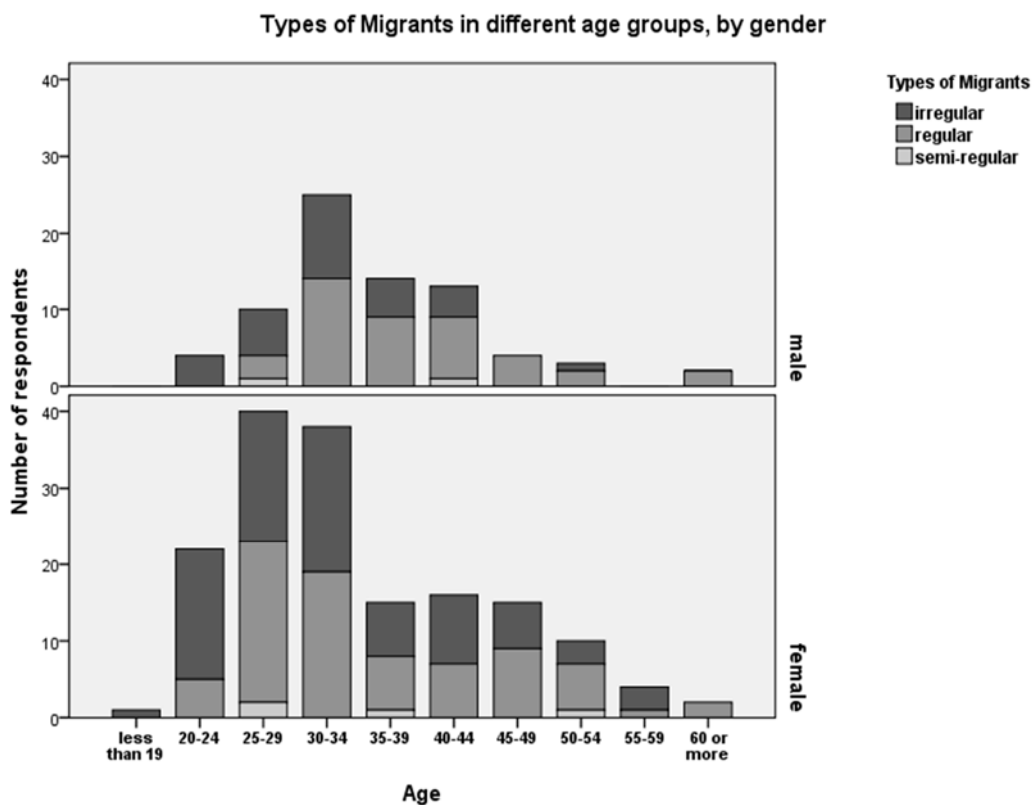


Figure 5.6: Types of Filipino Migrants in Thailand, by age and gender

The above figure also reveals the concentration of the types of migrants in specific age groups. For both male and female migrant respondents, a larger proportion of those in the irregular status are found in the younger age groups, 20-24 highlighting the fact that newly arrived, younger migrants were unable to secure regular status due to the lack of experience and skills. The female respondents also were more prominent in various statuses compared to men. Moreover, among the

female migrant respondents, it is clear that even in the older age groups, high proportions of females are still irregular. Recent policies on the hiring of skilled professionals particularly in the teaching sector have led to difficulties for some of those with non-teaching backgrounds to obtain stable employment tenure (IDD# 15, F/39, June 2012). Moreover, some teachers employed through agencies were terminated by the school or the agency without prior notice; making the migrant irregular once the work permit is cancelled, as revealed by the respondent.

For all types of migrants, a higher proportion of male and female migrant respondents, on average, received salaries of not more than 30,000 (US\$1,000) as seen in Figure 5.7 while a few respondents in both genders received on average between 50000-70000 Baht per month (US\$1,700-2,300).

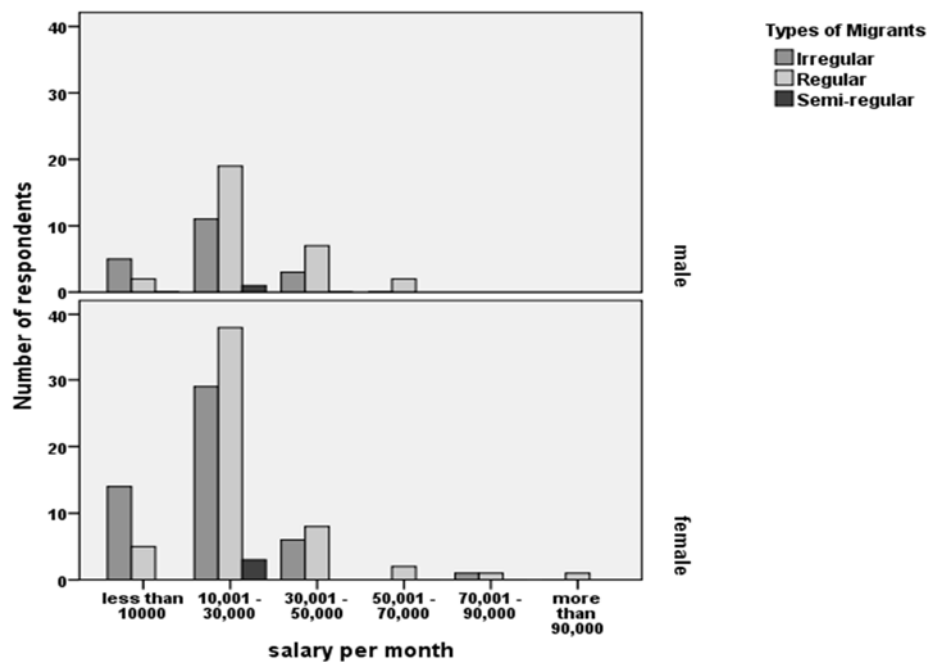


Figure 5.7 Migrants' salaries per month, by gender

The teaching category has the largest proportion of both regular and irregular migrants compared to other occupational categories as seen in Figure 5.8. Since some schools in Bangkok are unable to process working visas to their foreign teachers due to their inability to meet the requirements imposed by the Ministry of Labour, many Filipino teachers are in irregular status. Moreover, migrants in household work are less likely to obtain a working visa as seen in the higher number of irregular domestic workers compared to irregular ones. According to the

interviewed migrants, being irregular is not a hindrance for Filipinos to obtain skilled work. Being irregular was also considered as a transitional status until such time that a better job that provides a work permit is secured.

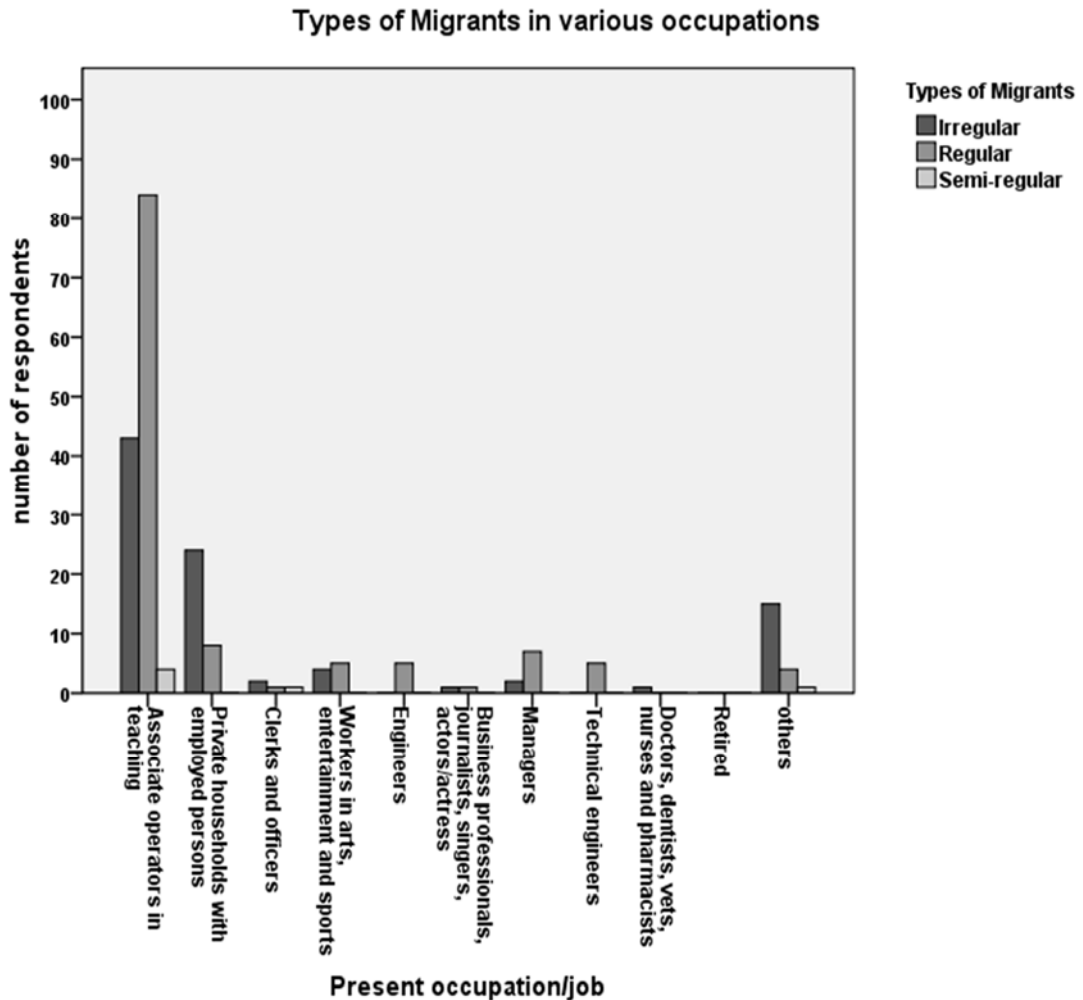


Figure 5.8 Concentration of migrant respondents in various occupations by status

In terms of educational level, most of the migrants are educated, with at least a bachelor’s degree. It can be seen that they are highest in the teaching occupation, with other migrants in various types of work (see Figure 5.8). The data also show that some migrants with postgraduate education (24 respondents) are in irregular status. Another important finding from this research is the income levels of migrants. The highest number of college-degree holders earned only between 10000-30000 Baht per month (US\$330-US\$1,000) as seen in Figure 5.9 below. Surprisingly,

some of those who have a postgraduate degree were also in the lower income level. However, the number of irregular migrants in higher income groups is much lower as more and more regular migrants are found in high-income groups.

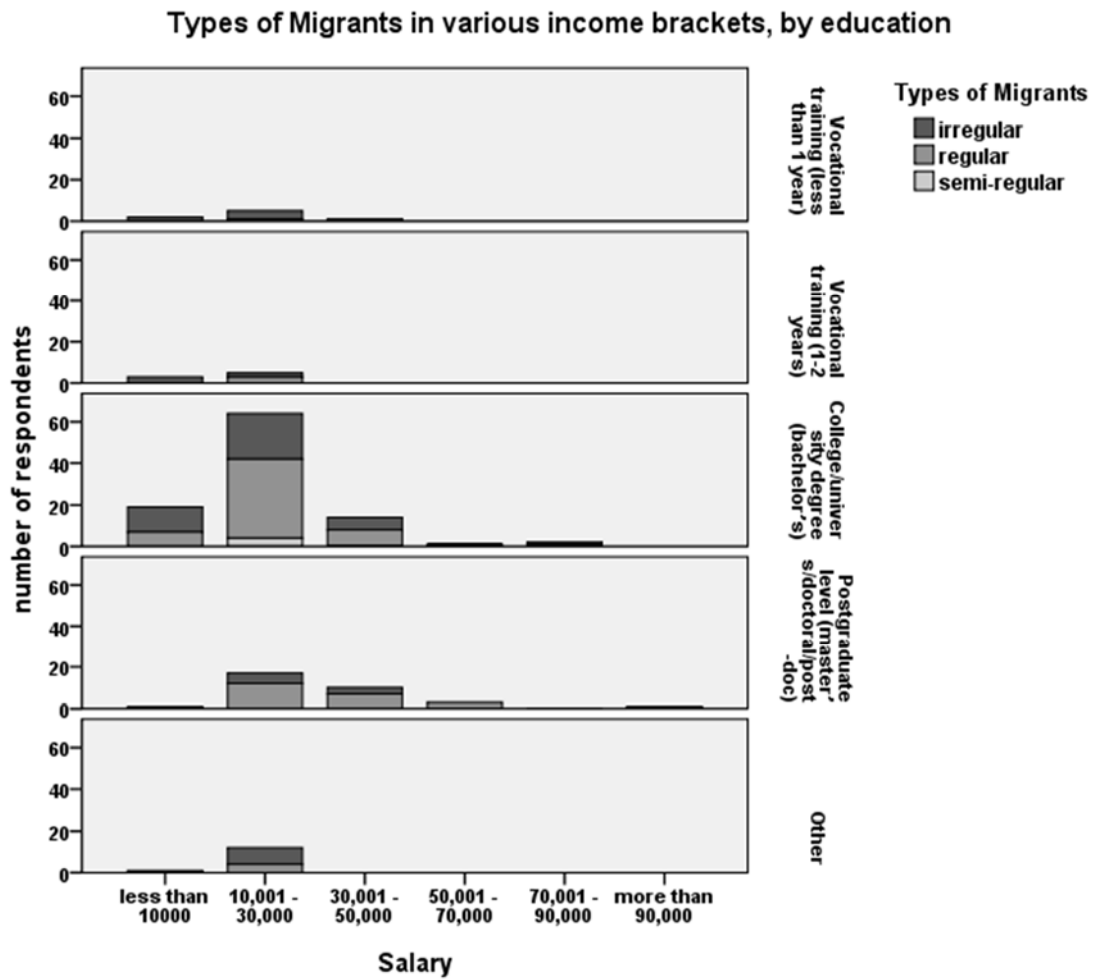


Figure 5.9 Types of migrants in various income levels, by education

The figure below illustrates that the highest number of irregular migrants have only been in the country for less than 5 years while those in the regular status have stayed and worked in Thailand for more than 4 years (see Figure 5.10). It is also important to note that a higher proportion of irregular migrants are found among those in their early years in Thailand and in the older age groups. The number of irregular migrants reduced significantly among those who have been in Thailand for more than

9 years. However, irregularity among Filipinos in this study is a reality among migrants regardless of age.

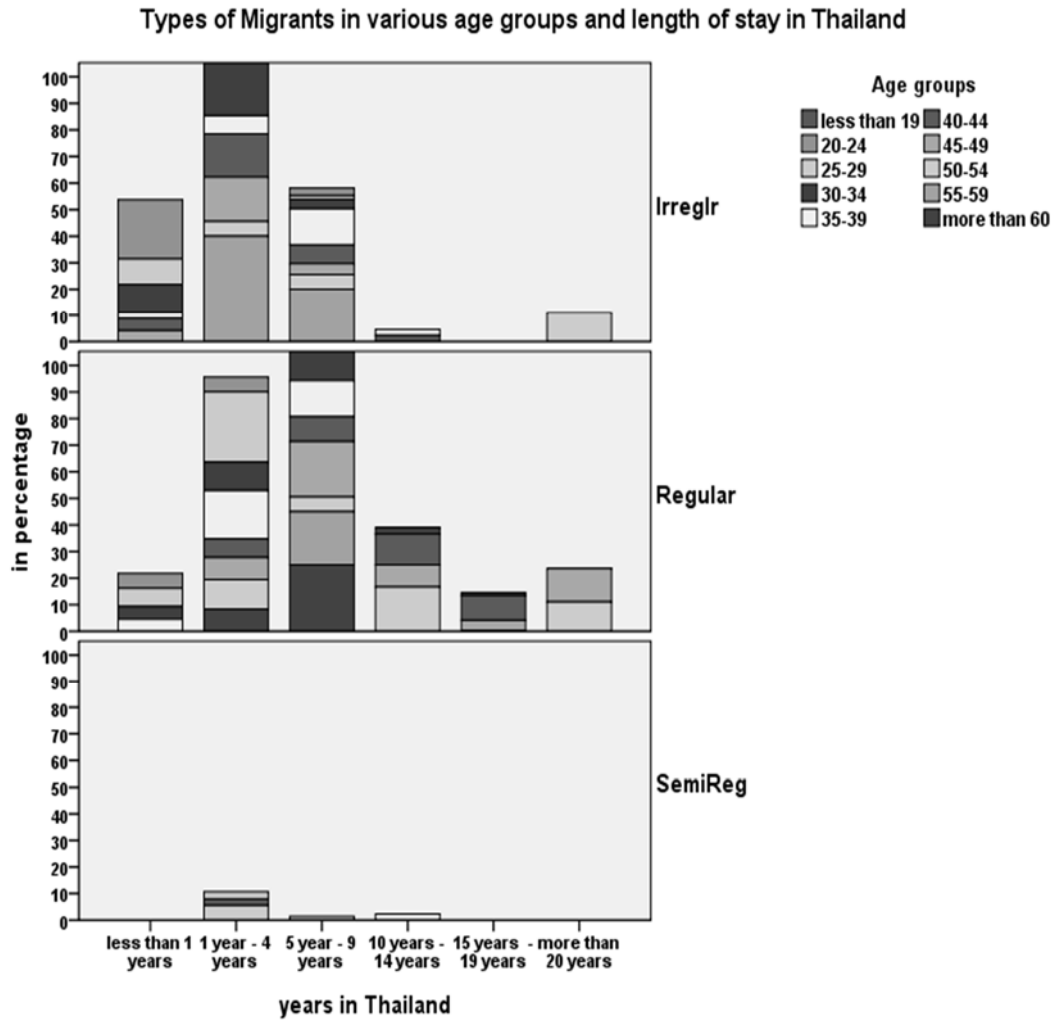


Figure 5.10 Migrants’ Length of Stay in Thailand by age groups

5.6.4 Migrants in Non-remunerative Work

As mentioned in the preceding section (5.4.2), regular or registered migrants also include those who are in non-remunerative occupations such as the volunteers, students and missionaries. Although migrants in this category are normally considered not working since they do not obtain income or salaries from performing certain tasks, they are registered migrants who are allowed to stay in the

country for specific purposes other than employment. This type of migrants obtains funds for performing certain tasks or assignments to cover the cost of living in the Thailand; however, it is not based on their qualification or experience. Volunteers, for example, do not get a fixed salary; rather, they are given some money to cover transportation, food and accommodation while in the country. Their tasks varied depending on which religious affiliation or organization they are in. For instance, three religious volunteers were tasked to visit Filipino prisoners regularly and provided them with monetary assistance or in kind, donated by others. Out of 354 respondents in the survey, 25 or 7.1% of them are in this category.

Figure 5.10 presents the categories of migrants who are in non-remunerative work. The figure shows that missionaries comprise the largest group of migrants who are in non-remunerative work, at around 11 migrants. This is followed by students and retirees. Overall, the missionaries have the highest number of years in Thailand; some of them have been in the country for more than 20 years. On the other hand, students have the least number of years in Thailand. There are a couple of retirees who have also been in the country for more than 20 years.

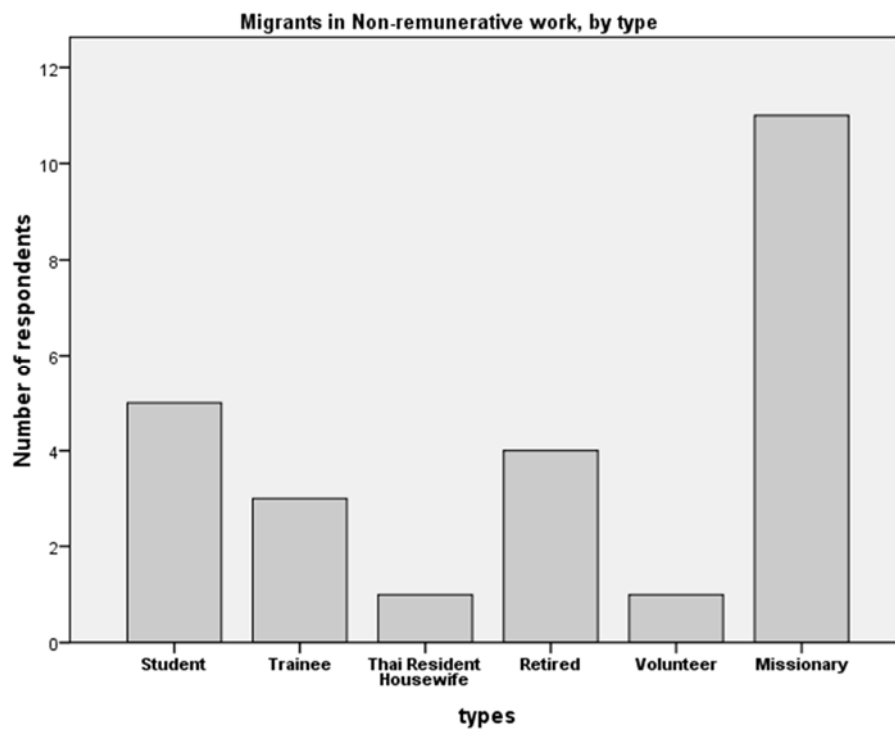


Figure 5.11 Registered migrants in non-remunerative work, by type

Around 80% of the migrants in non-remunerative work have at least a university education. Many of the migrants are in the older age groups, ages 34 to more than 60; the highest number in the oldest age group (more than 60 years old), with 7 respondents. More than half are married, and there are almost an equal number of men and women. Because of the non-remunerative nature of their work or assignments, migrants in this category worry about the lack of money and having no proper jobs that provide them with regular income (Survey, 2011-2012). The reason is that, some of them still remit money regularly to families in the Philippines.

In summary, the migration of Filipinos to Thailand was made possible outside the formal recruitment policy of the Philippines government primary because of the important role of social networks and migration policies in both Thailand and the Philippines. It is also necessary to highlight the importance of human capital and demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of migrants in migration decisions as shown, for instance, in the trends of movement among particular age groups.

ⁱ It is important to note that many Filipinos entered or enter Thailand as tourists with the intention of finding employment. Many of them continued being tourists while in employment due to the inability of their employers to secure a work permit for them.

ⁱⁱ Mabogunje's model is another approach used in explaining migration in Africa where he argued that the interplay of different control mechanisms and systems determined the propensity of individuals to move.

ⁱⁱⁱ The Department of Foreign Affairs, through diplomatic offices abroad, allocate this fund to assist distressed irregular migrants abroad who have no financial means. Registered or regular overseas workers are covered by OWWA through the fund paid by overseas workers prior to departure or upon renewal.

^{iv} Information was gathered also from the visits made to the shops, restaurants and school during the period of data collection.

CHAPTER VI

PRE-MIGRATION AND DEPARTURE

The pre-migration stage is considered to be a crucial step in a migrant's decision to move and the choice of destination. Since there has never been a bilateral agreement between the Philippines and Thailand regarding the hiring of workers (e.g., teachers) for work, much of the movements were made outside the formalized system of migration. That is, at the initial stage, migrants chose to be irregular. Although knowledge or experience plays an important part in deciding for the destination, many Filipino migrants have no knowledge about the risks or opportunities in Thailand. Support from migrant family members and friends and reliance on their experiences in Thailand is one of the main factors of migration. This provided prospective migrants with an assurance of lower risks and better opportunities. Because of the close proximity between the two countries, the costs involved in moving is perceived to be lower and going back home in case migration fails is also a lot easier; thus, the choice to move to Thailand. Resources are also seen as significant once the migrant has reached the destination. Expectations from the migration experience are realized primarily due to the available monetary and non-monetary support from kin and non-kin relations; thus, the achievement of a migrant's goals. The next sections discuss the main factors that influenced migrants' decision to move.

6.1 Migration Policies of the Philippines and Thailand

This study revealed that less-restrictive migration policies in both countries also influenced Filipino migrants' decision to move to Thailand. Although getting through the Philippine Immigration at the airport in Manila was difficult, the absence of visa requirements and stringent conditions of entry promoted movement of Filipinos in the country. Many of the migrant respondents thought that Thailand is a better choice because of the low costs of migrating; cheap flights are available and

posing as a tourist does not require a visa or payment of fees at the POEA Office. Sufficient documents were necessary in order to be allowed to board a flight. A supporting letter from a relative, friend or employer abroad is required, apart from the random interview or questioning by airline staff and immigration officials. In the questionnaire, respondents were asked the following questions and obtained the answers as follows:

Q10. What documents did you prepare for your travel to Thailand? Travel documents, credentials (Respondent #106, Survey, 2011)

Why did you need to prepare them? For employment (Respondent #106, Survey, 2011)

Fifty-three (53) migrant respondents wrote that they prepared their certificates and transcripts of records for their trip to Thailand, which clearly showed the intention of finding work in the country. Moreover, surveyed migrants were also asked regarding the reasons for moving to Thailand (*Q22*, Survey). One hundred and forty (140) migrants reported that they came to find (good) work and earn money. Several of them also came to join primary migrants, while others came for a vacation with 31 and 12 respondents respectively; however, they were mostly in employment. The ability of migrants to secure a visa for their dependents and families is also one motivation for the move. Migration policies in Thailand allow immediate family members or their dependents to join migrants with work permits though a Non-immigrant Visa type 'O'. However, government bureaucracy and strict immigration checks in the Philippines as well as financial problems were the major difficulties encountered by migrants in during this stage of migration as shown in the survey data and in-depth interviews. According to the interviewees, many Filipinos were subjected to questioning or interviews and in worst cases, being off-loaded from the aircraft if found to have other purposes other than a holiday. For instance, during the researcher's flight back to Bangkok, two Filipinos were offloaded from the aircraft. In similar news posted by the Bureau of Immigration in 2011, it revealed that 34 prospective overseas workers, who posed as tourists, were barred from boarding their flight for Thailand due to lack of documents.

(http://immigration.gov.ph/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=709&Itemid=78)

Several migrants were also found to have had previous migration experience as shown below (Figure 6.1), particularly in the Asian region. Obviously, this finding is seen highest among the older age groups. These migrants can also be considered as having perceived the ease of migrating based on their experience, and also may have had the necessary resources obtained from previous moves.

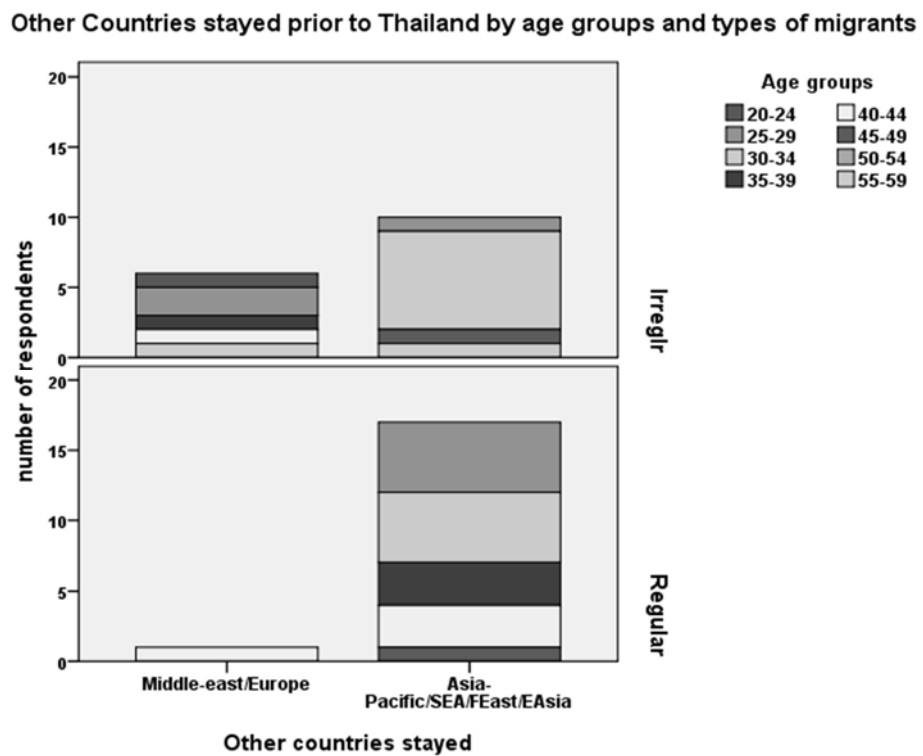


Figure 6.1 Countries stayed prior to migration to Thailand

6.2 Social Networks

Several studies have found that social relations helped shape and organize the different experiences of migrant men and women (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1994 in Parrenas, 2001). Brettell and Hollifield (2000) recognized the essential role of networks in particular in migration process that is based on kinship and friendship, labeled as *network-mediated migration*. According to the authors, people do not

usually take risks in countries outside of their own unless there is a sense of security provided in that new place. Even at the pre-migration stage, prospective migrants' decision to migrate is highly influenced by the assurance of 'safety net' at the new place, as well as their reliance on other members of the family in the maintenance and reproduction of the household during migration. In-depth interviews done with selected migrants revealed the importance of a family member or friend in their decision to move.

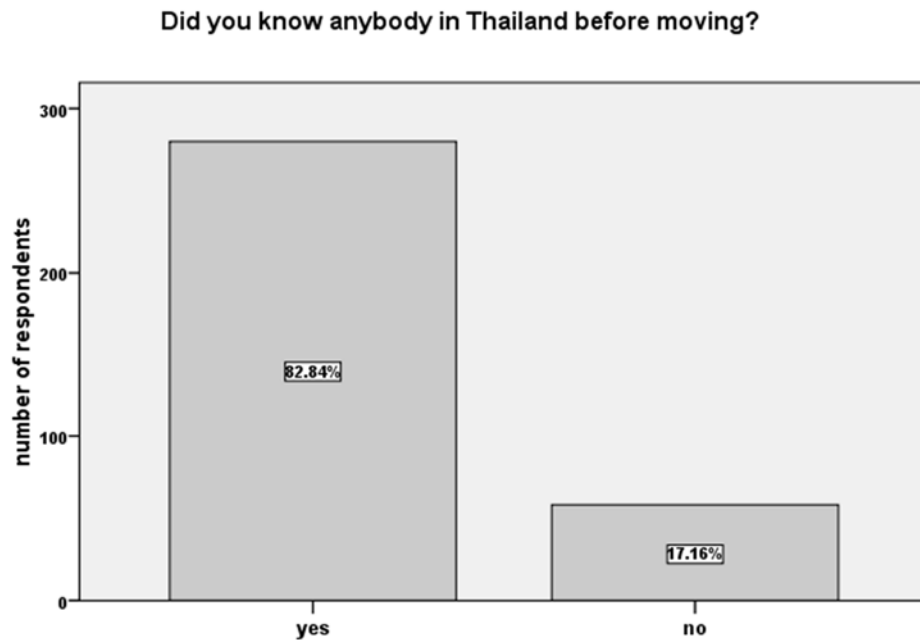


Figure 6.2 Ties at destination

Establishment of (new) contacts or ties to destination can lead prospective migrants to a possible destination because the presence of a family member or friend lowers financial, emotional and social costs of migrating. Findings from this study reveal that about 80% of the migrant respondents have a friend or relative prior to migration (see Figure 6.2), who provided the much-needed information regarding job opportunities and availability, arrangement of transportation and financial support before travel, and pre-departure orientation in order to avoid problems at the immigration and airport check-in counters; thus, minimizing risks and uncertainties.

Moreover, around 40% came with a friend, a friend's friend or family members to Thailand; thus, paving the way for a smooth travel for the new migrants (see Figures 6.3). About 20% of the 170 respondents came with a family member or relative while 13% came with a friend or colleague. The survey also showed that family migration is also an important factor were migrants move in order to follow a family member or spouse, termed as tied movers. Migration among several migrants was made possible through the help of family members and friends particularly during departure.

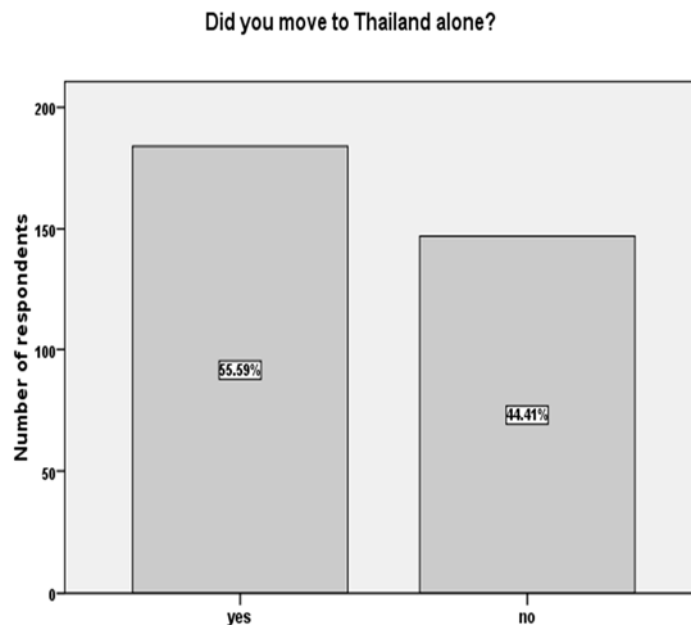


Figure 6.3 Social support in migration

“I had to ask my sister-in-law to accompany my maid from Cebu to here (Thailand), so she won’t have any difficulties at the immigration. But, they still asked her so many questions. It was better to have her with her though; otherwise, she cannot board her flight.” (Informal conversation with an employer, December, 2012)

The timing of the move was also considered. In-depth interviews and casual conversations with migrants revealed that prior to the move, migrant friends,

relatives or family members based in Thailand provided specific information as to the appropriate period for job application or times when job opportunities are better. For instance, the period March to May is the most suitable time to apply for a teaching job because of the school break and the need of schools to plan for the hiring of more teachers. (IDI#6,31/F, June, 2012))

6.3 Demographic Characteristics and Socio-economic Conditions of Migrants prior to Migration

Results from the survey and interviews showed the concentration of Filipino migrants in the age group 20-34. Generally, several life events can be seen in this age group such as completion of schooling or achievement of a university degree, marriage, starting or looking for a job, and the ability to leave or separate from the family home, as revealed in some studies of Kley (2008) and Mayer (2004). In their studies, the authors revealed that younger persons have generally less psychic costs of migrating compared to older ones, and pursuing one's interests is highest in the younger groups. This was supported by Sjaastad (1992), stating that anticipation of a job or income at destination is highest among young adults.

Other socio-economic and demographic characteristics of some surveyed and interviewed migrants are also found to have contributed to the decision to move such as joblessness prior to migration, prospect of further studies or training, being sole income-earners and separation from the spouse. From the figures below, it can be seen that prior to migration, the respondents were in various types of occupations (Figure 6.4). However, current occupations in Thailand show a significant decrease in the number of respondents in similar type of work in Thailand (Figure 6.5). For example, the number of respondents whose previous jobs were in the managerial and health professional categories was very low compared to that before migration. A very significant increase in the number of respondents in the teaching category is also seen from the figures; from around 80 prior to migration, to about 125 after migration. This shows a shift from specific field of practice back in the Philippines to the most available occupation in Thailand; that is, teaching.

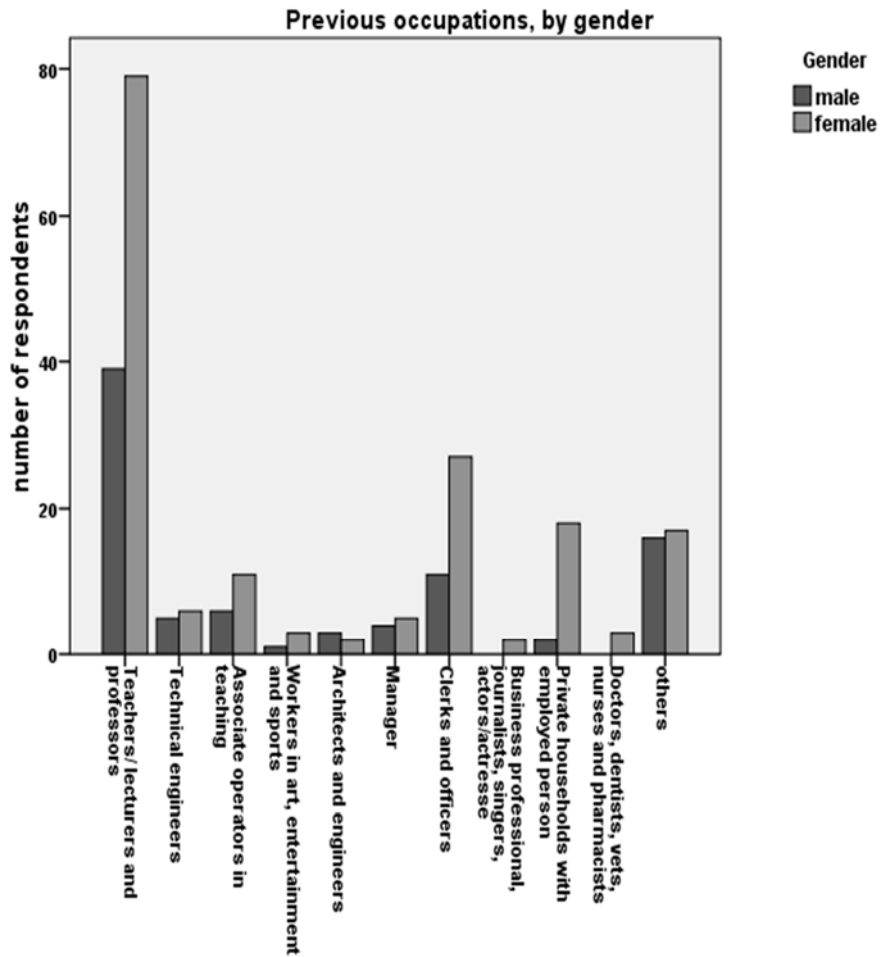


Figure 6.4 Type of employment before migration, by gender

Another factor that has stimulated the movement is the economic conditions of migrant respondents and their families back home. In the Philippines, there is enough evidence to show that the levels of poverty between provinces and cities significantly vary, and that there is a significant poverty gap between cities and rural areas. Results from this research reveal that many migrants came from poorer towns in the Visayas and Tagalog regions where non-farm, income-generating activities are few, and there is high underemployment or unemployment rates. The Eastern Visayas Region, for instance, continues to be the third poorest region in the country according to the National Statistical Coordinating Board (2013).

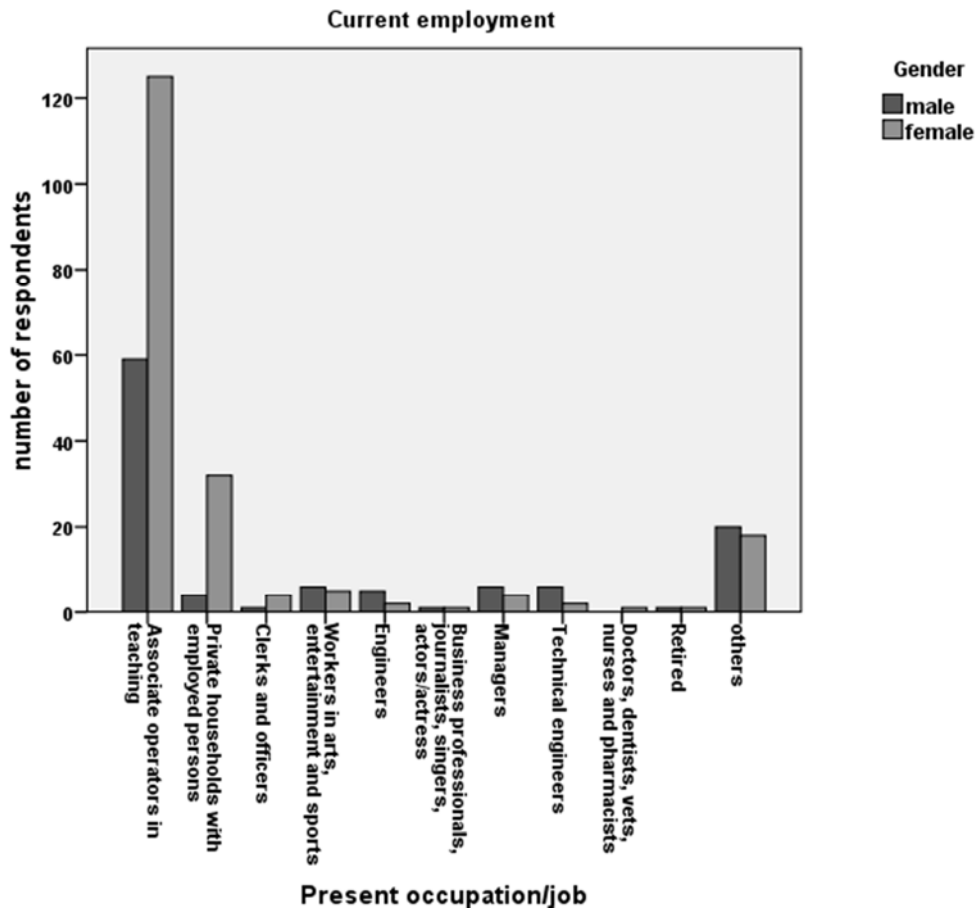


Figure 6.5 Types of employment after migration, by gender

Survey results also show that finding employment was the main reason for the 354 migrant respondents, at 158; followed by family responsibilities and better opportunities, at 37 and 27 responses respectively. Figure 6.6 also illustrates that migrants sent remittances every month to fulfill their family obligations among all types of migrants.

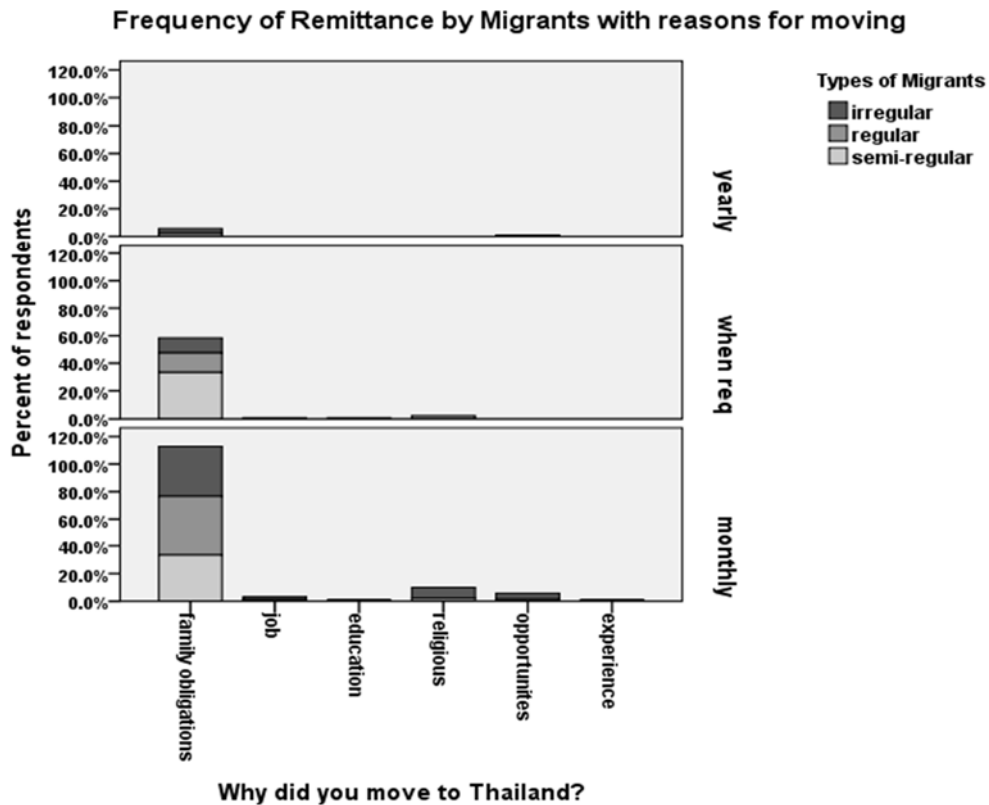


Figure 6.6 Frequency of remittances by types of migrants and reasons for moving

“I have a big responsibility towards my family because I am the breadwinner. My mother is not working and my father works selling clothes in our province. I help my brothers and sisters, 7 of them.” (Interviewee 1, April, 2012)

Is it okay if you do not send money regularly to your family in the Philippines? *“No, it is not okay because nobody will support them. My family have no other income; they are old and do not work anymore/and sick.”* (Respondent #120, Survey, 2011-2012)

Findings also revealed significant amounts of money being sent by migrants to their families back home in order to meet the basic needs of the household members, wherein most of the respondents sent more than 20,000 Baht (US\$660) between 2010 and 2011 more than 50% of the respondents remitted for children’s

education, their parents, siblings and other family members. Other main allocations of the money sent back home are payment of utilities, medications and food allowance. Although many respondents reported that they had no dependents, more than 50% of the surveyed have at least one to five (1-5) dependents.

Goals linked to physical and social well-being of the migrant and his family, therefore, caused the decision of moving. Moreover, perceived opportunity differential in employment or career between the Philippines and Thailand, coupled with changing events in a migrants' life such as joblessness, completion of school or opportunities for family reunification as shown in the high concentration of migrants in the particular age groups might also have contributed to the migrants' decisions. According to Wolpert (1965 in Kley, 2011) migration intentions are dependent on the expectations that migration or moving to a possible destination enables the individual to achieve his goals than staying in the present place; this view was also included in the value expectancy based model of migration decision-making (De Jong and Fawcett, 1981; De Jong, 2000 in Kley, 2011).

6.4 Geographical proximity of the countries: the influence of distance

Distance is said to affect a migrant's decision of moving to a particular destination. The main reason is that costs are seen to increase with the increase in distance (Andrienko, 2006). Costs in moving do not only involve transportation and opportunity costs due to the time spent on the move and giving up possible chances for better work and pay in the origin countries, but also, migrants have to spend to communicate with families, regular visits, psychic costs and job search. Because of these associated costs with distance, moving to Thailand is also another major consideration in the migrants' decision to move. Cheap flights and promotional seats on offer are affordable due to the short distance in travelling. This nearness also provided an assurance for prospective migrants of their ease in going back home should migration fail or in times of crisis. In fact, several migrant respondents have travelled to Thailand before finally settling down in the country. When asked for the reasons why they chose Thailand as their destination, the close distance between the

Philippines and Thailand, ease of entry, and low cost of travel were some of the reasons given.

The relative ease in border crossings between these countries, or their mobility between neighbouring countries promotes migration and intention of temporary stay. Thailand has various border entry points, visa options and requirements. Figure 3.1 in Chapter 3 shows the different points of entry between Thailand and Cambodia, and Thailand and Laos. Nationals of ASEAN member countries are allowed to enter the country, with a 30-day permission to stay as tourists except for Myanmar. Extension of stay is allowed after the 30-day stay expires, either by visiting the Thai Immigration Office in the country or crossing the Thailand/Laos or Thailand/Cambodia borders. On average, about 40 Filipino irregular migrants as well as other nationalities arrive daily in these borders due to the availability of visa-run operators who provide quick visa arrangements and accommodation, without any required documents other than one's passport. The ability of newcomers to have their visas extended instead of returning back to the Philippines reduces a lot of the costs associated with travelling, particularly for those who are still unemployed or those who have limited resources to cover their living expenses in the country.

Moreover, due to the cheap costs of travelling to and from the Philippines and the availability of various modes of communication, the psychic costs associated with the move may be lower as migrants are able to regularly visit home or communicate with families. According to Schwartz (1973, in Adrienko, 2006), "psychic costs of moving are a positive function of distance as far as they could be offset by more frequent trips."

CHAPTER VII

LIFE IN TRANSITION

In the previous chapters, the different structures that facilitated the movement of migrants were analyzed. However, it is also necessary to investigate the effects of these structures on the conditions of migrants after moving. Are migrants' expectations realized? Do the structures that facilitated their move enable them to advance their skills or improve their conditions? This chapter analyzes the changes in the migrants' lives during the initial years and later years in Thailand. Changes in employment status, regularity and life away from their families back home are important considerations for the analysis in order to understand the actual experiences of migrants, and whether or not they have gained from their move abroad. Transitions, or changes in a person's life after migration, is considered as the 'action phase' wherein motivations of moving has been realized; thus, understanding the challenges and circumstances of migrants groups are important (UWT, 2007-9). For instance, according to the Undocumented Transitions Project (UWT), some migrants may find themselves in an irregular situation during a certain period, but through time, are able to obtain regularity and social integration, while in other countries, many migrants have no chance of social integration and are in an irregular situation for an indefinite period. This stage, therefore, has an impact on how a migrant perceives his experiences in post-arrival adjustments.

7.1 Transitions in Employment

Pollock (in Atilgan, 2011) emphasized the two different systems of labor migration. While the skilled migrants are relatively facilitated and compensated, unskilled migrant workers often have poor living standard, less than minimum wage salary, high level of dependency on their employers and little negotiation power to

protect their rights (Atilgan, 2011). As a result, migrants face stressful and overwhelming situations due to occupational deprivation and adaptation.

About 80% of the migrants in this study are educated. One of the main changes that some migrants had to face was that of being in an unskilled work. For some of the migrants in this study, transitional jobs provide income in the short term and address the immediate responsibilities back home, and sometimes come with a work permit. Domestic work for an educated migrant, for instance, provides some short-term security and serves as a transitional job before moving on to a skilled job later in the process. Several respondents in this study had been domestic workers prior to obtaining their present occupation. Although initially they bore the costs of having very low salaries and being in an unskilled work in the short term, this was seen as a step for a much better job in the future. Changing occupations for some of them is another way of investing in human capital. Transcript from a short phone call to a respondent verified this observation:

Why do you still continue working with your Chinese employer despite being overworked and lowly paid?

“Ate (Older sister), what else can I do? I am desperate to have a job. There is nowhere else I can go. If I do not continue, I will have no money. Let me just tolerate it for now.” (Survey respondent, November, 2011)

Although education increases the likelihood of getting a job, most of the male and female respondents have been unemployed for some time upon arrival in Thailand as seen in Figure 7.1. Length of unemployment ranged from a few months to a few years. However, Filipino women seem to have better employment prospects than men as seen in the length of unemployment since their first arrival in the country. Like the younger migrants, many older migrants waited only for a few months before getting a job. Stiff job competition and lack of expertise are the major difficulties experienced by both male and female migrants in finding a job (Figure 7.2).

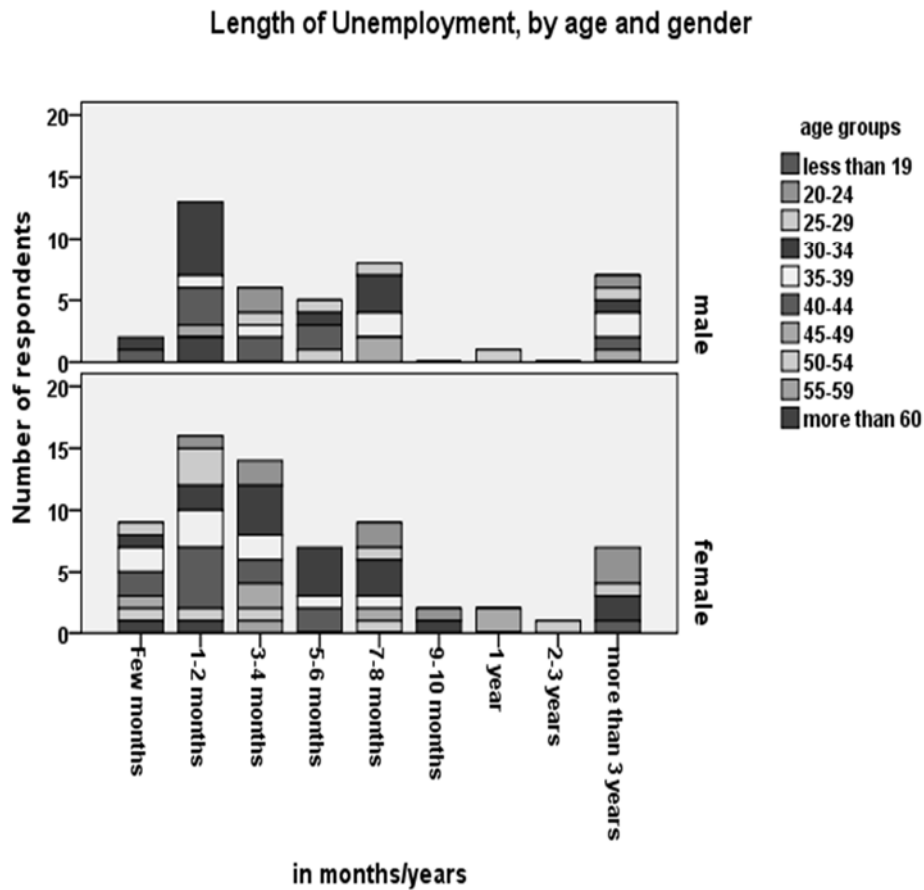


Figure 7.1 Length of Unemployment among migrants

Pre- and post-unemployment status is another adjustment some migrants have to face. For example, an interview with a migrant who moved to join his wife and family revealed that he was jobless in the Philippines and expected to obtain a job after moving; however, he found that it was better for him to stay back home. *“At least in the Philippines, I can help fix things in the shop or sell food.”* (IDI#20, 40/M, April, 2012). Tied movers, or individuals who moved because a family member such as their spouse moved, usually experienced a negative effect on employment opportunities as shown in some studies (Sell, 1983; Boyle et al, 2001; Taylor, 2006).

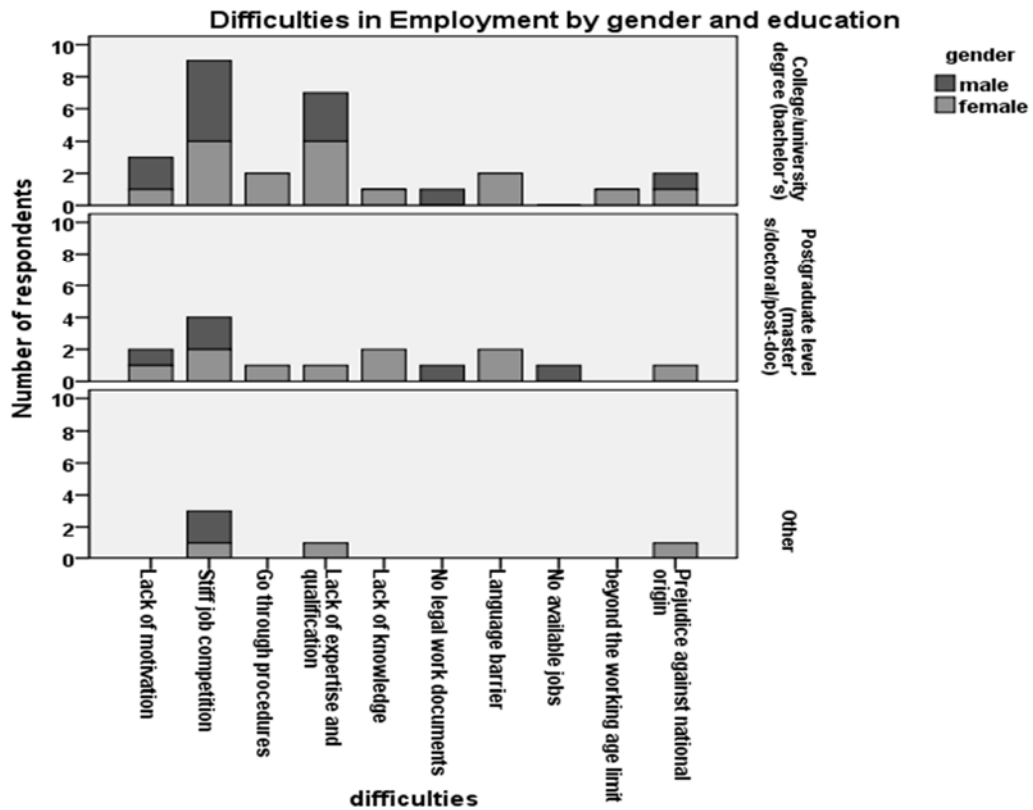


Figure 7.2 Difficulties experienced by Migrants in finding Employment

Language barrier and prejudice against Filipino applicants are also some of the reasons. The image of Filipinos as ‘second class’ in the teaching profession compared to the more preferred Native English Speakers (NES) or ‘whites’ is also a difficulty; thus, which resulted to stiff competition for jobs and low remuneration despite their qualification and experience. Prejudice against Filipinos was seen as a barrier to employment, particularly high among females. Blogs and forums among teachers and non-teachers show the differences in wages and benefits offered to Filipinos and NES or ‘whites’. The images below illustrate this discrimination or bias towards Filipinos, as shown in some online job postings for teaching vacancies (www.ajarn.com).

Sine
English Teachers for Conversation Program
Sine Education Service Co., Ltd. - 31st Jul 2012
We have opportunities for NES teachers to join the SINE team teaching our total conversation program.
School/Company type: private
Province: Bangkok
Pay Rate: At least 30,000 Baht/month
[Click For Details](#)

UNN
20 Teaching Positions for Filipinos
U.N.N. Academy - 2/1th Jul 2012
We are looking for 20 Filipino teachers for many schools in the North East of Thailand.
School/Company Type: language
Province: Bangkok
Pay Rate: At least 15,000 Baht/month
[Click For Details](#)

Pro English
Corporate/ School English Class Facilitators
Pro English - 2/1th Jul 2012
School/Company Type: language
Province: Bangkok
Pay Rate: At least 600 Baht/hour
[Click For Details](#)

MK
English and Math Teachers
MediKids Academy Thailand - 31st Jul 2012
We are looking for Filipino English and Math teachers who are able to start working immediately.
School/Company type: government
Province: --NA--
Pay Rate: At least 20,000 Baht/month
[Click For Details](#)

THE ORIENTAL ACADEMY
British & American Teachers (FT and PT)
The Oriental Academy - 2/1th Jul 2012
School/Company Type: language
Province: Suphaborjui
Pay Rate: At least 30,000 Baht/month
[Click For Details](#)

Figure 7.3 Job placement advertisements for teaching positions

Source: www.ajarn.com

“I have been in Bangkok a couple of times as a tourist and planning to teach but I am very nervous. I have a degree in English Studies but I am afraid that my color will be a problem...that inexperienced Brits or Americans will be considered more qualified than me.” (More power to us, Ajarn Street, August,2012)

“Filipinos are subjected to discrimination in Thailand in the English teaching racket on top of often coming from such dire economic situations in their country, and schools and agencies often would never consider paying Filipinos wages on par with those made by Falangs and they don’t seem to view this type of behavior unethical.”(More power to us, Ajarn Street, August,2012)

Finding a job that matches with one’s skills or educational background is also another change that many migrants in this study experienced as seen in their present occupations in relation to their educational background. Figures 7.4 and 7.5 illustrates that for both genders, migrants are concentrated in the teaching occupation despite a mismatch with their field of study. Among male respondents, teaching jobs are occupied the highest by those with engineering and education degrees (see Figure 7.4), while women migrants with education and science backgrounds dominate the teaching occupations (see Figure 7.5).

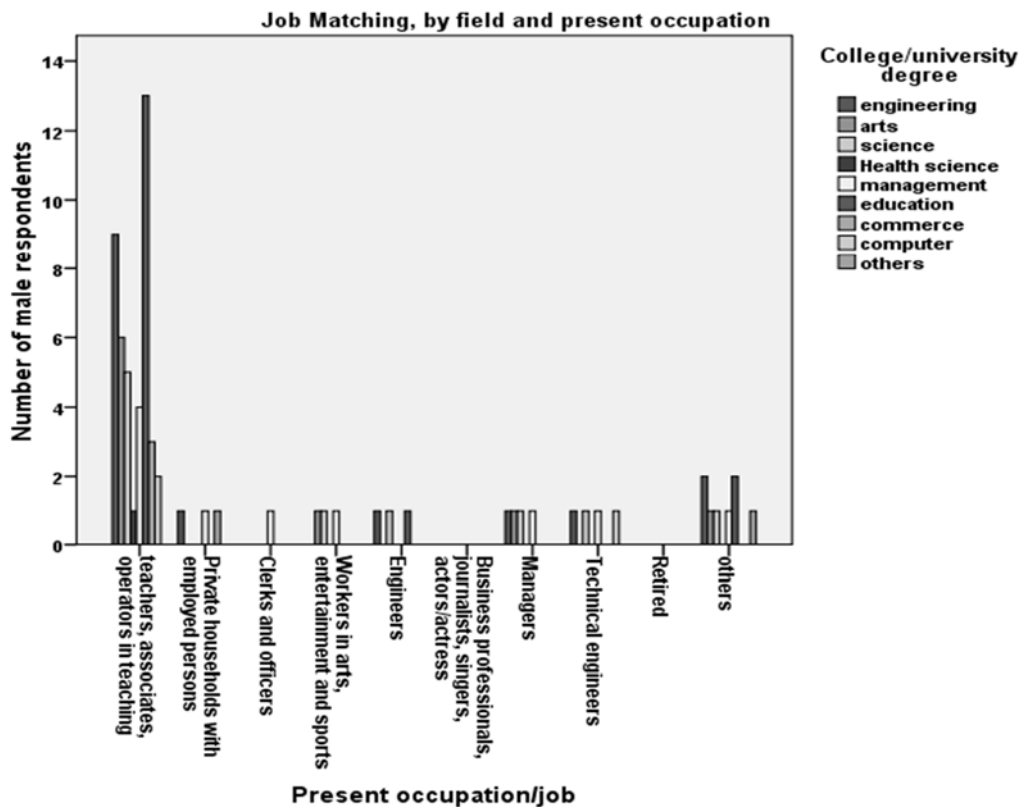


Figure 7.4 Male Migrants’ present occupation in relation to their educational background

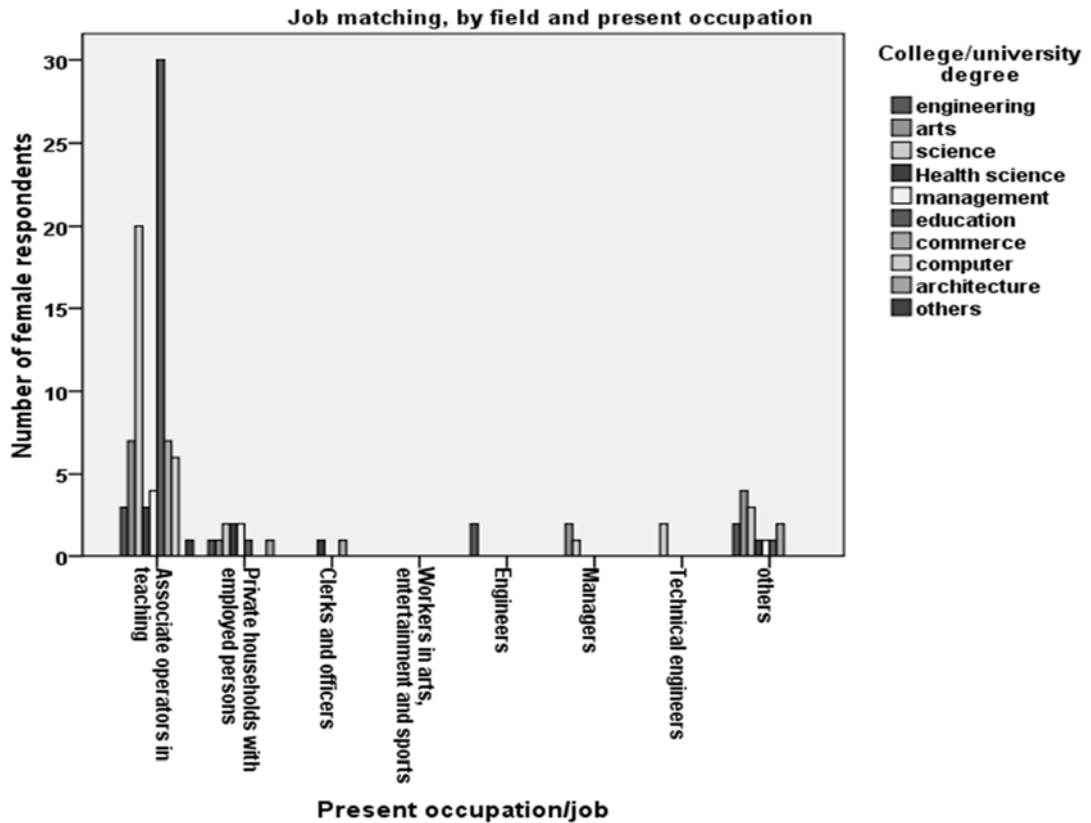


Figure 7.5 Female Migrants’ present occupation in relation to their educational background

Several migrants also moved from one job to another through social networks and intermediaries. The transitional experience in employment also shows that labour standards or appropriate conditions of work were violated by some employers or agencies. Interviews revealed that some migrants were not paid on time, had to work during weekends, had no social protection, and are terminated without advanced notice (IDI#6, 31/F, IDI#3, 30/F, February & April, 2012). Adjustments from a high wage to low wage employment is another change that some migrants encountered. In the case of a domestic worker (IDI#8, 65/F, June, 2012), her non-Filipino employer provided a higher salary and follows the standard labour practices regarding salaries and benefits, while her next employer, a Filipino, provided her with very low salary, exploited her and usually determined the working conditions. According to her, employment conditions for domestic migrant workers can only improve if they stay out (not living in) since being a live-in worker offers an

employer the chance to make unrealistic demands of one's time or exploit the migrant worker due to the high dependence on the part of the domestic worker towards her employer.

Labour insecurity due to precarious contracts such as being a trainee, seasonal employee or temporary worker, or under probation can cause psychological stress. Some migrants who were hired through an agency or project felt unsure of their employment status (IDI#2, 30/M; IDI#6,31/F, February & April, 2012).

“Everybody’s contract ends after a year. For the newly-hired, we only have a four-month contract since the project I am in now is new. Everybody’s contract will end by the end of the semester, too. The whole month of October for example we do not have a job. I think that is the time we can either find another job or wait for the next semester. Our agencies are conducting monthly evaluation of their teachers. We are employed by two agencies working in the same project. The provincial government takes care of our finances so the rules come from them. I cannot say regarding our visas since we still have to be informed if we will be extended. In our agency, the school director decides whether to renew our contract or not; in the other agency, they consult the director first then the head of the agency decides.” (IDI#18, 28/F, April, 2012, Online Interview)

These employment transitions in the early years of migration are also experienced by migrants in their later years.

“I applied through an agency because that time, I really needed a job after I left my previous one. They really exploit Pinoys (Filipinos). I have a much lower salary compared to those who were directly hired by the schools. They have to deduct about US\$100 per month from my salary. After my contract ends, I will try to apply directly to other schools. I am much better than some teachers because in other agencies, teachers get only ½ of the salary.” (IDI #6, 31/F, February, 2012)

In the interviews and online posts on social networking sites, earlier migrants expressed their disappointment of other Filipinos who took very low salaries for teaching works in Thailand. According to them, this has lowered the image of the

Filipinos as qualified and valuable resource, and resulted to the inability of new migrants to negotiate for a better salary. Some migrants experienced a threat of being replaced by (unqualified) newcomers or unable to bargain for better salaries because of the flexibility in work and lower salaries that can be offered to the less-qualified migrants, or the new arrivals. Many migrants also talked about the difficulties in uplifting the image of Filipinos in Thailand particularly the teachers; sacrifices, loneliness, racism and discrimination were some of the negative experiences mentioned even at the later stage.

There is also the additional pressure to participate in various extra-curricular activities outside working hours, including weekends which are indirectly tied to the evaluations, affecting contract renewals (Posts on social networking sites, July, 2012). Moreover, posts and blogs in several Filipino social networking sites showed that some schools and agencies require applicants to pay for non-immigrant visa, (teacher or Thai culture) training, TOEFL test and/or other requirements to be accomplished prior to hiring or renewal of contracts. Registered migrants also face a disturbing trend in Thailand particularly occurring in some schools. As some teachers renew their contracts, their schools tried to cut back on benefits such as reducing the number of paid leaves, keeping the same salary as the previous year, and lowering the stipend on housing and other allowances (www.ajarn.com). Delaying contract renewals and salary payments are some of the practices prevalent in some schools and agencies.

“Still waiting patiently for the "Contract-Signing-Day"...it is so frustrating...Id rather hear a yes or a no than to Hear SILENCE.” (Post on Facebook page, October, 2012)

“...basin ma 15 na sad ta ani...lagot kaau...mahulog na sad ta sa 3 month contract...asa2 na sad mu adto ang 1 month nga suweldo.”

(We might have to wait for 15 again...so upsetting...we might end up getting a 3-month contract again. Where is our one month salary going to end up again.)(Post on Facebook page, October, 2012)

Another transition that even earlier migrants faced is their inability to compete with other foreigners, particularly in the teaching sector. They have difficulties being recognized for their overseas education or qualification. Many schools prefer native English speakers over Filipino applicants despite their years of experience in Thailand and teaching qualifications. Training also is seen as a requirement to cope with the transitions. Although they emphasized their pride of being teachers, they felt they had many sacrifices and difficulties while living abroad; for instance, 'striving hard' to earn money (Posts/Blogs on Facebook pages, 2012).

7.2 Transitions in a Migrant's Status

Because Filipinos bound for Thailand were only given a 30-day visa free permission to stay in the country, those who had to stay longer are required to secure an extension before the due date of stay elapsed by travelling to a neighbouring country such as Cambodia and Laos, or doing a *visa-run*. Some early migrants, who were also irregular migrants, were able to obtain a 2-month or 4-month visa extension through an agency at the borders of Cambodia and Thailand prior to 2010. Being irregular, or working without a valid permit, is not a hindrance for many migrants to find skilled occupations. It is an acceptable and transitional status particularly for new migrants. However, every Filipino migrant strives to obtain regular status, or to have a valid work permit because it provides not only economic benefits as an overseas worker, but also non-economic benefits such as the ability to invite and provide a visa for visiting family members or dependents, and to visit the Philippines regularly without the hassles at immigration counters. Moreover, making trips to visit family are seen as more costly for the irregular migrants because of the fees involved and the risk of not being able to get through the immigration on their return.

Being regular in some occupations is an agreement between the employer and employee. In some companies, schools or agencies, a foreign worker is given support to process a work permit or obtain a Non-immigrant Visa 'B' after the probationary period. One reason is that employers should be able to provide the necessary documents required by the Bureau of Investment or the Ministry of Labour. Another reason is that some employers want to make sure that a migrant will be

employed after the probationary period (IDI#2, 30/M, April, 2012). This situation highlights the irregular status of a migrant at the beginning of his employment, and the change to a regular or registered status once the probationary period is met or when the employer is able to provide support to process the valid visa and work permit.

Due to the contractual nature of the employment, some migrants moved from a regular to irregular status due to non-renewal or termination of the contract. This would mean regular trips to the borders for a 15-day renewal of stay. Moving in and out of regularity or a return to irregularity can happen several times during a migrant’s stay in Thailand, depending on the circumstance of his employment. Thus, many of the Filipino migrants in Thailand face an insecure status, vulnerable to frequent change. Data from the survey showed that many migrants had been in an irregular situation for a long time (Figure 7.6). It can be seen from the figure that, on average, about half of the migrants surveyed stayed in an irregular status between 1-4 years in Thailand. Quite a number of migrants remained irregular or had moved from regularity to irregularity after 4 years.

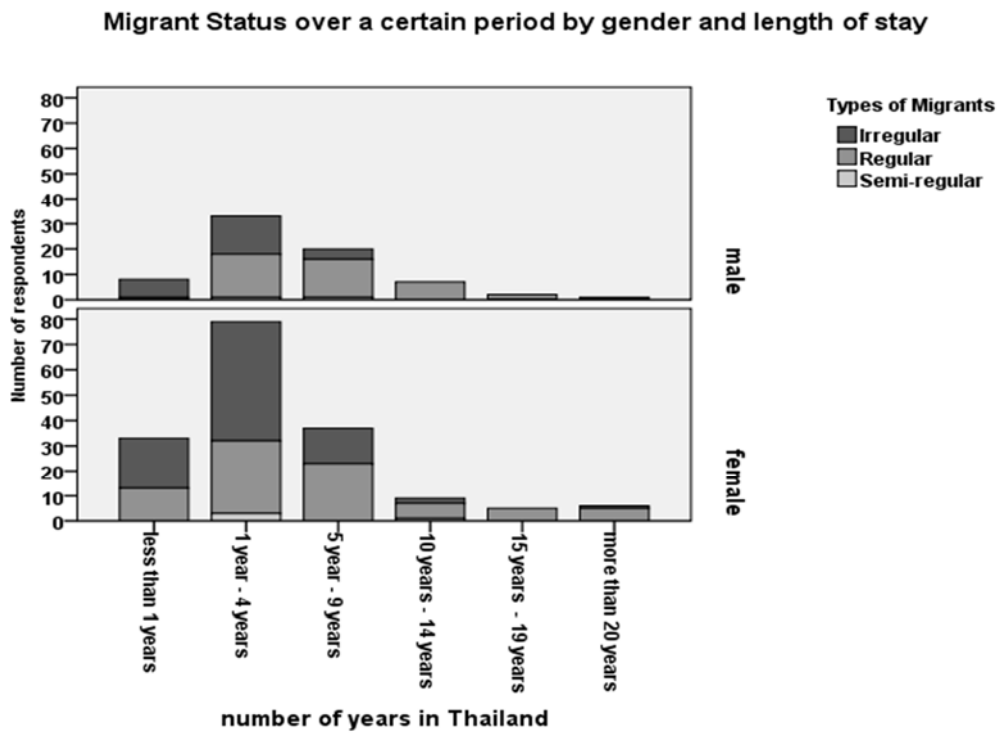


Figure 7.6 Migrants’ status by length of stay and gender

Although Thailand recognizes irregularity, given the thousands of undocumented migrants in the country, it has become stringent in its migration policies towards other nationalities such as Filipinos and Africans, according to a travel operator who is also a Filipino migrant. Changes in Thailand's migration regulations also have a direct impact on migrants, particularly the irregular ones. In October, 2012, irregular Filipinos extending their visas at the borders of Cambodia and Thailand are getting only a 15-day visa extension during a one-day visa run instead of the usual 2-4 months visa extension Filipino tourists obtained in the past (IDI#1-8; Phone conversation with travel operator, February, 2012). Email communication with a key informant also showed that policy changes are based on the government immigration policies and concerns of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (KI#8, email communication, September, 2012). Even so, more and more irregular migrants are travelling to the borders every 15 days with the help of travel agencies. Concerns of safety in travelling and being apprehended by police increased the worries of irregular migrants.

To cope with this change, more and more irregular migrants found other indirect routes to regularity. Through a Filipino-owned travel agency, these migrants secured a student visa from the Royal Thai Embassy in Laos, making them registered student migrants. These migrant workers are now in a semi-regular status; that is, they are registered migrants because of their student status, but unregistered because their visa status does not permit them to work. The change in status is also accompanied by the change in working conditions. Domestic workers who obtained a student visa with the support of their Filipino employers and approval of a school are required to remain with the employers until the contract expires. Some employers require their domestic workers or employers to pay for the expenses by installments. This makes the migrant worker highly dependent on his/her employers. If the working conditions are not met or relationships turn sour, the employer can formally request the school to cancel the student visa, putting the domestic worker back to irregularity (Conversation with an employer, April, 2013)

There are several transitions or mobility within the regular-irregular situations that also gave rise to semi-regularity among several migrants in this study. Migrants found several ways of traversing the laws in order to remain in Thailand

through the help of networks and intermediaries. The plight of irregular migrants crossing the borders for a visa-run is clearly illustrated in a video documentary done by a Filipino reporter; a transcript of which has been translated into English in the box below:

Box 7.1 Documenting Border Movements of Irregular Filipino Migrants

About 7 out of 10 Filipinos working in Thailand have a tourist visa. So apart from hiding, they also have to cross the border to Cambodia every two weeks to renew their tourist visa and continue working in Thailand. The News 5 team went with more than 50 Filipinos going to the border to renew their visa.

“It’s still early in the morning and some Filipinos are now gathered in a shopping mall somewhere in Bangkok, Thailand. They are going to cross to Cambodia to renew their tourist visa. The embassy of the Philippines recorded that around 15,000 Filipinos are in Thailand and 70% of them have a tourist visa.

Interviewee 1 (migrant): It was difficult at first, but after some time, I am now used to it.

Because of the increasing number of Filipinos crossing the borders, some Filipinos have thought of making money out of it.

Interviewee 2 (agency/van operator): They have to go out on the day the visa expires because they have to pay 500 baht per day if they overstay.

Around 700-900 baht per Filipino is charged for the 15-day visa extension. This includes transportation, food and immigration processing fees. These border crossings have been happening for around 20 years in Thailand.

Interviewee 3 (Filipino travel agent): Everyday, there are many Filipinos crossing to Cambodia to extend their visas, sometimes, 60, 50, 40, it’s not the same.

The same agency has allowed us to follow our fellow Filipinos on their trip to Cambodia. We are now following the vans which are full of our fellow Filipinos to Cambodia. This is what they do every two weeks, to take a 4-hr trip in order to get out of Thailand and get into Cambodia, to get a two week extension to go back to Thailand. They do a stopover to rest, refill gas, have lunch and at the border come a lot of Filipinos for the purpose of having a stamp on their passports. Even the officers at the Cambodian borders know how to speak some Filipino words. The Filipinos do not need to get into Cambodia because at the Thai Immigration, their documents are being processed. After 10 minutes, the process is finished.

A 4-hour trip and around 700 baht for transportation and others are the things our Filipinos have to deal with just to be able to stay in Thailand for work. In fact, many of our Filipino workers have been here for several years, and have been under this system just to continue working. It's not even 30 minutes in Cambodia and our fellow Filipinos are now preparing to go back to Thailand. After 2 weeks, they will follow the same process: cross the border, get a stamp on the passport. For our Filipinos in Thailand, it is better to risk or take their chances in another country than to have nothing back in the Philippines."

AKSYON an exclusive report and documentary on Filipinos at the borders

www.-pinoy-ako.info

7.3 Transnational Family Life and the Imagined Place of 'Home'

Theories of migration argued that the family, as an institution, also plays a significant role in the process of migration. Members are expected to have a strong sense of solidarity and obligations to other members of the family. Therefore, it has an influence on the migrants' decisions to move. Relatives and family members also play important roles in the absence of migrants particularly women as they are being relied upon in the maintenance and reproduction of the workers' households through the Filipino value of 'pakikisama' (collectivism and mutual obligation among kin). Family connections are maintained by migrants through regular contacts in several ways as seen in Figure 7.7. This can be explained by the emotional burden of leaving the family and being in an unfamiliar environment; thus, constant communications create a sense of security. It can be seen from the figure that migrants always make sure that they keep in touch, particularly highest among the older age groups, 25-34 , which also have between 1-5 dependents (see Figure 7.8).

Kinship ties are extremely important in the Philippines, possibly because so 'few sources of support, material or otherwise, exist outside the family' (Aguilar in Chant & McIlwaine, 1995:15). In return, migrants have to shoulder the responsibility of providing for primary and extended kin by remitting funds regularly extending their responsibility to include parents, siblings, nieces and nephews (Parrenas, 2001:108), as this reflects innate values among Filipinos to provide help and care to needy relatives; as a result, transnational ties continue to flourish despite the distances over which

family members migrate (Deang in Chant & McIlwaine, 1995:17). Sptizer’s study of Filipino caregivers in Canada showed that obligations to the family such as those associated with finance and kinship ties form a significant part of their life (2011). According to Parrenas (2001), although economic constraints have forced the movement of the migrants, it is the reliance on material rewards or gains from migration in the form of remittances that has strengthened ties with families, assuring migrants of continued support from members back home; thus, establishing concrete familial dependency. As seen in Figure 7.8, financial assistance or contributions to the family are fulfilled every month by many migrants in younger and older age groups.

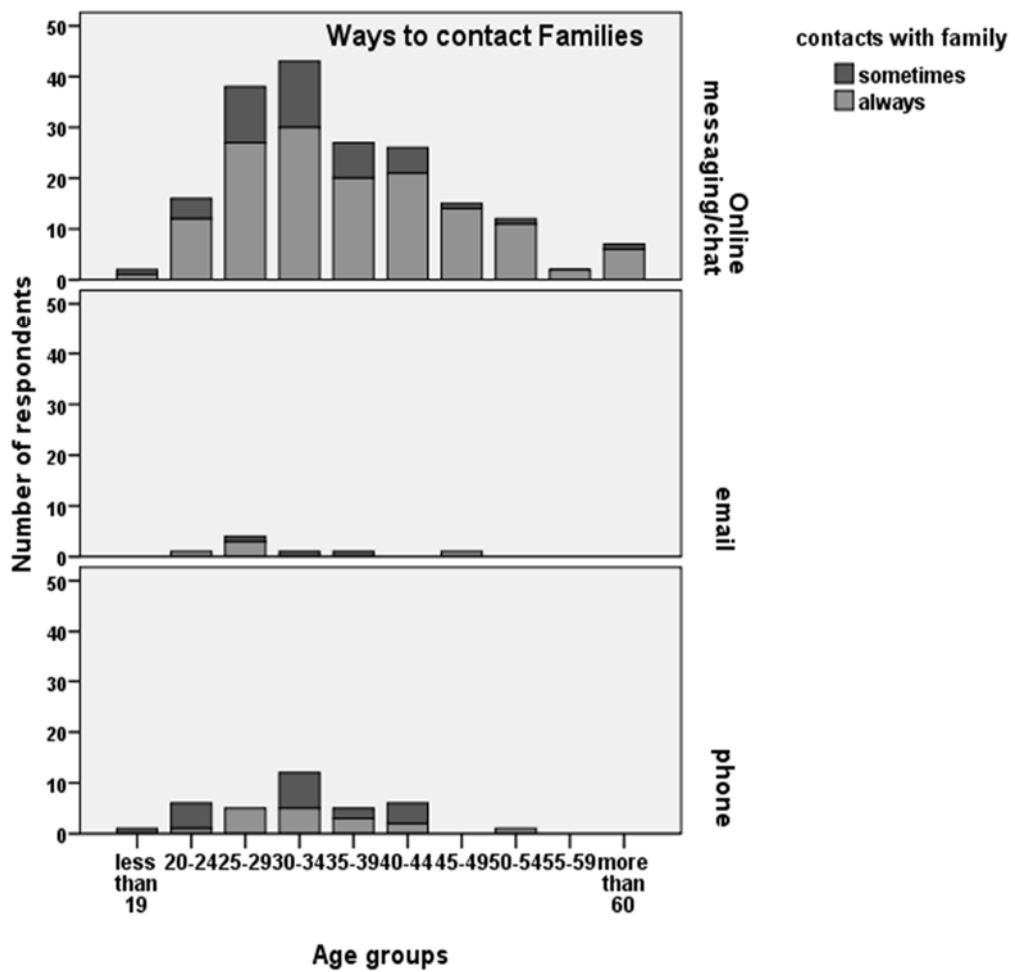


Figure 7.7 Ways of communicating with families, by frequency and age groups

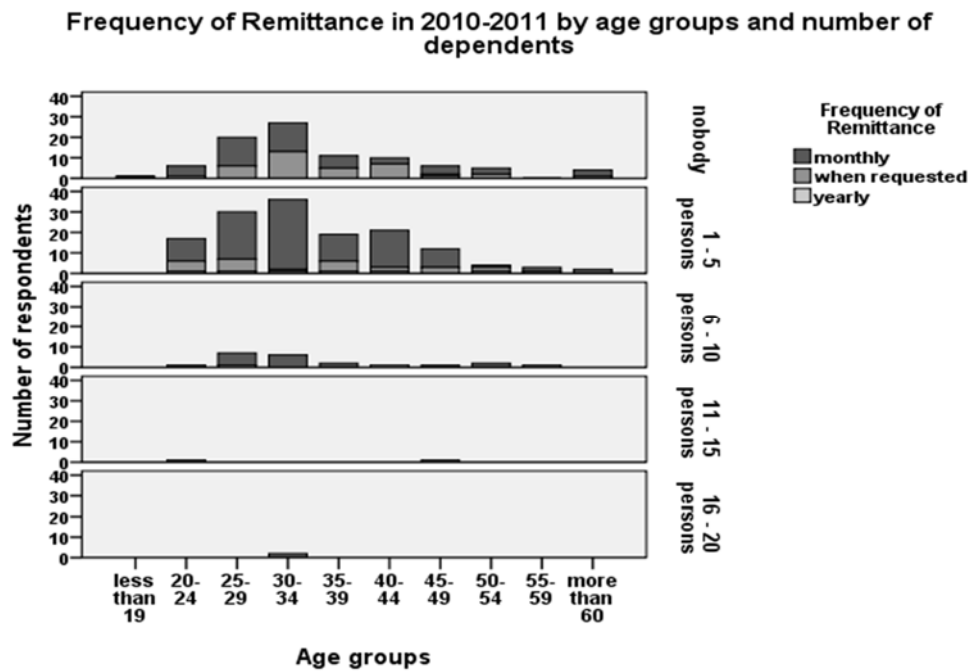


Figure 7.8 Remittances by age groups and number of dependents

Apart from the transnational family life maintained by the migrants, they also recreated a ‘home’ⁱ in Thailand. Migrants generally face a completely different way of life in a new environment such as completely different culture and way of life, new education systems, rituals and practices. Therefore, they often have stronger attachments to their homeland regardless of the time spent in the foreign country. However, how they deal with these feelings and transitions depends on the circumstances at the new place as well as the level of maturity among migrants. Although there is a general consensus among those interviewed that migrants have a sense of belonging in the country and they do not feel out of place despite the language and cultural barriers, migrants still search for belonging and a sense of ‘home’ as seen in various ways they reconstruct or redefine their national or ethnic identity through networks and activities that recreate the meaning of ‘home’ similar to that in the Philippines; thus, keeping the memory alive.

As shown in different migration research, a migrant community provides an identity to those who come from the same ethnicity, and at the same time, a support niche for its members. At the initial stage after arrival, many migrants stayed with friends, or lived in apartments with other Filipinos, which eases homesickness and

adjustments to the new place. For Filipinos in Thailand, these communities also serve as a venue for migrants from various backgrounds (i.e., regions and cities, profession/jobs, class status) to come together, promoting solidarity and interdependency among its members. The creation of a space, such as religious and community activities expresses ethnic identity and belongingness, and also stresses unity and community self-identification similar to what they had in the Philippines. For example, the Filipino communities in Thailand find ways to celebrate important occasions, showcasing national dances and songs, with booths selling Filipino dishes and delicacies. The *Paskong Pinoy 2012*, a celebration of Christmas, was held on 2 December at the Philippine Embassy grounds in Bangkok organized by various associations in cooperation with the Philippine Embassy (Direct observation, December, 2012). According to Parrenas, these activities are ways to provide a venue for congregation or coming together to socialize, obtain information on job opportunities as well as for status seeking referred by her as *pockets of gathering* (2001).

The church also serves as a place for Filipino migrants, not only to fulfill their religious devotions and obligations, but also to socialize. Direct observations in several churches in Bangkok, Pattaya and Chiangmai showed the active participation of many Filipino migrants. Several churches in Thailand have Filipino priests saying masses in English, with one church offering a mass in *Tagalog*ⁱⁱ. Religious activities facilitate the transfer of information and knowledge among migrants. Mateo (2000 in Calbay, F.R, 2002) describes how Filipino migrants in Japan reconstructed places around the church as an imagined town center where they engage in conversations, gossiping, and even sharing information on employment opportunities. Participant observations done in three religious-based events during this research revealed the presentation of messages by Filipino speakers that pertain to migrants' pressing problems such as financial responsibilities to their families back homes and conflicts in groups. Prayers of worship emphasized on migrant members' struggles, their sufferings and those of their families back home in the Philippines. Invited speakers, who are migrants themselves, also highlighted their successes while working in Thailand despite their irregular status, lack of financial resources or joblessness.

Memberships in faith-based or ethnic-based groups are also popular among new migrants; those who had been in the country for less than 4 years and migrants who had stayed in the country between 5-9 years as seen in Figure 7.10. New migrants often suffered the pain of family separation, particularly those with dependents, and worries about those left behind are very high at the initial stage (IDI#4, 28/F). Patterns of life and the use of one’s free time or on days off from work revolved around common activities such as participating in religious events, doing household chores and being with friends and family. Networks of friends and family were found to be the most important channel as they are more experienced; thus, the importance of memberships for many migrants.

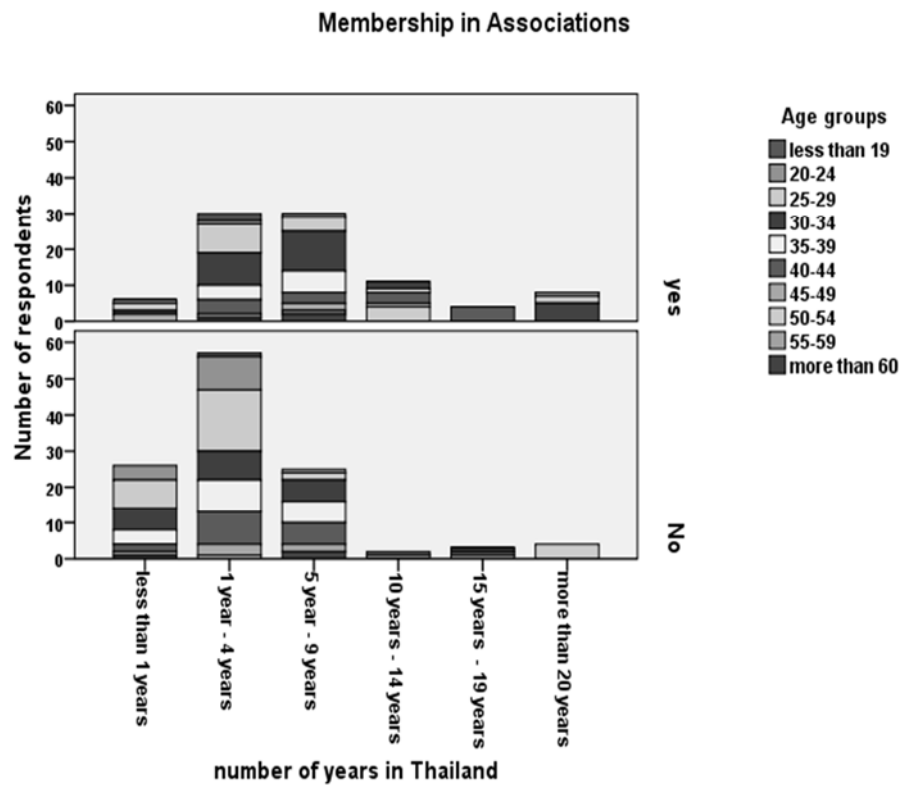


Figure 7.9 Migrants in Associations, by length of stay and age groups

However, more than half of those surveyed were not members of any Filipino associations in Thailand. From the survey, it was found that some of the reasons for non-membership are lack of time and lack of information about the

associations. In-depth interviews of selected migrants revealed that they preferred being with their close friends than being involved in conflicts and gossiping common within associations. According to Battistela (2008), non-membership in Filipino associations show the weakening of the migrant systems established within these communities over time. Some pioneer members or early members escape the negative social capital which can refer to “lack of personal freedoms, excessive claims by members and the moral pressure to support other members”, often found to be counter-productive (Battistela, 2008). As seen in this research, educated or skilled migrants members in groups or networks were found to have wider social relations, less confined within the migrant networks. Migrants found local friends, spent time with them, and participated in local celebrations, expanding their networks.

The growth of the Filipino migrant community in Bangkok also gave rise to entrepreneurial activities of some migrants which cater to the specific needs of the Filipinos in the country. For example, cheap online international calls and messaging are available through various internet sites and over-the-counter shops in areas with perceived high numbers of migrants. Small-scale Filipino entrepreneurs also made Philippine-based SIM cards (e.g., Globe and Smart) available to migrants, reducing further the costs of communication. A Filipino-owned, small-scale grocery shop in Bangkok provides various treats and goods from the Philippines while established Filipino-own restaurants are also found in several areas in city.

The transition from parenting or mothering from a distance to on-site parenting (Sptizer, 2011) has been both challenging and beneficial for some families and their children. As more and more family dependents are joining their migrant parents in the country, primary migrants or migrant couples are faced with the dilemma of whether to send their children back to the Philippines in order to continue their studies, or to remain in Thailand as a ‘complete family’ but face financial difficulties of meeting the educational needs of the children while in the country. Because of this rising trend and difficulties for some migrant families, schools operated by Filipino migrants were set up following the Philippine educational system charging similar school fees as the private schools back home in order to provide alternative education for kids whose parents are unable or unwilling to pay for high fees in local and international schools in Thailand. A short visit to one of the Filipino-

run schools revealed that most of the students are children of Filipino migrants, taught by Filipino teachers. Although this initiative has created or reestablished bonds between children and their migrant parents, it has also transformed their lives in various ways. Children have to cope with missing their friends and relatives who cared for them back home in the Philippines. They have to adjust to their parents' attitudes which they were no longer accustomed to.

“Tita (Aunt), I really want to go back home. I feel lonely because I am not close to any Pinoys (Filipinos) here. Although I keep in touch with my friends on Facebook, often they do not reply. It makes me sad and angry why they do that. My parents always scold me because I cannot do my school assignments. I do home schooling because it is very expensive to go to a real school every day.

(IDI#17, 14/M, April, 2012)

Moreover, the Philippine Embassy in Bangkok has also launched their pilot project, the Alternative learning System Accreditation and Equivalency (A & E) in Bangkok in February, 2012. This system benefit Filipino children and out-of-school youths in Thailand because they are allowed to take a test and obtain a certificate that would enable them to enroll in any accredited institution in the Philippines in the future. Filipino families in Thailand will greatly benefit from this initiative as it will allow them to enroll their kids in schools that follow the Philippines' curriculum in the future. With this, more and more migrants will be encouraged to bring their family members and dependents in Thailand, and stay longer.

7.4 Transitions in Mobility

Mobility indicates the level to which individuals move up (or down) the social ladder. Individual wages, occupation and education contribute significantly to one's mobility. Migrants, for example, invested considerably in order to move. Moreover, they tend to invest in other kinds or resources once they are in a foreign country with the expectations of higher returns. According to Chiswick (1976),

building on human capital abroad enables a migrant to adapt well economically and socially in the host country. It also helps to maintain a level of involvement with the host country that may result to development back home through international exchanges of goods and transfers of knowledge and technology (Dosi et al., 1988; Cohen and Levinthal, 1989; Park, 2004 as cited in Mahuteau & Tani, 2011).

The Filipino migrants in this study are generally educated and skilled. Moreover, many of them were in skilled occupations prior to the move to Thailand, though with lesser salaries. However, several of them changed occupations upon moving to Thailand, quite different from the ones they had back home. Salaries before migration was much lower than the migrants' salary after the move as shown in Figure 7.10 and 7.11.

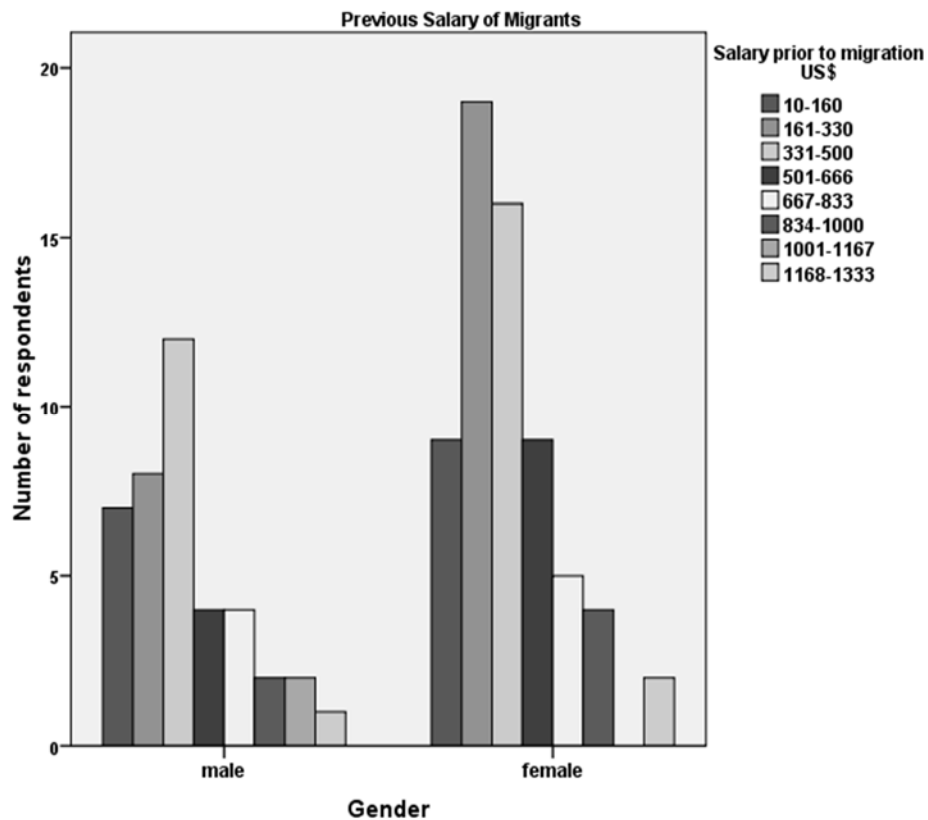


Figure 7.10 Previous Salaries of Migrants

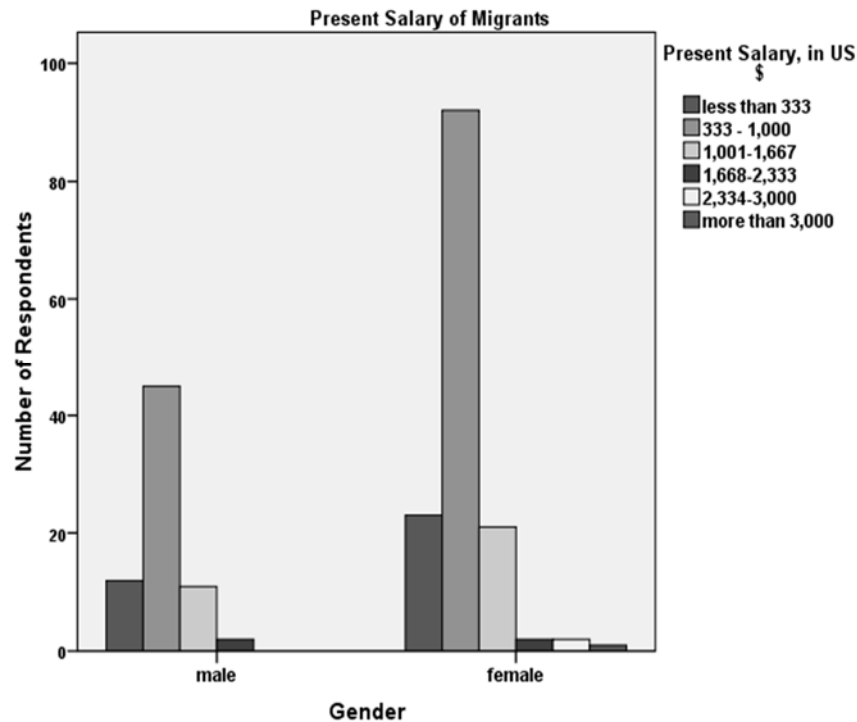


Figure 7.11 Present Salaries of Migrants, in US\$

Because of the need to be professionally qualified, many migrants undertook additional language and cultural training. In some teaching agencies, a certificate of Thai language and culture training is a requirement for hiring teachers or renewing their contracts. On the other hand, several migrant respondents in this study never had any Thai language studies nor were there any attempts to study the language despite the fact that learning a host country's language is generally perceived to be an important factor in integration. In-depth interviews, however, with selected surveyed migrants showed the motivation of some interviewees to improve their qualifications by investing in trainings or postgraduate education. A male interviewee in Thailand, for instance, is currently pursuing his online master's degree and is planning to enroll in a Ph.D. program afterwards.

"I am currently doing my online master's studies at the University of the Philippines. This will give me a lot of benefits in the future; my salary will increase and I will have better job security. This is also good for my children and when I go back to the Philippines." (Interviewee #5, April, 2012)

Another female migrant is also taking Ph.D. courses to improve her skills. She is in a department where a lot is expected from the foreign teachers.

“I get a lot of support from my department; however, I am always on my toes and trying to do my best.” (Random conversation with a female migrant, July, 2012)

As found in the literature, financial considerations are seen as significantly influential in a migrants' choice to move and in choosing an occupation. While working overseas, migrants accumulate monetary resources, and use them to acquire goods or establish new business activities in the home country. Access to savings, credit or government assistance may have also a significant influence on a migrant's decision to stay longer in the host country. For example, inefficient credit system in the home country would entail longer time to build up savings for investment back home; thus, longer duration of migration (Mahateau & Tani, 2011).

The financial benefits from moving to Thailand are manifold. First, incomes derived from employment were perceived as comparably higher, about 2-3 times more than what many respondents can obtain back home. Another benefit is the final gain from exchange rates or conversion of Thai Baht to Philippine Peso; every 1,000 Thai Baht (US\$330) sent through banks is equivalent to around 1,320 in Philippine Peso (US\$330). Moreover, many of the respondents considered the cost of living in Thailand as lower compared to that in the Philippines; thus, living in the host country, according to them, is 'easy, relaxing and better'.

Accumulation of financial capital during migration has also strengthened migrants' position within networks or cultural communities (i.e., groups that share modes of behaviour and outlook), and maintain coexisting culture of collectivism. According to Mandel (in Brettell, 2000), commercial self-sufficiency, through diversification to other income-related activities, is a way by migrants of recreating a place for themselves and in their own terms, an agency of their own design. Moreover, the ability to earn and save some money enabled migrants to regularly visit their families back home and contribute more in decision-making. Some of the migrants' ability to have access to services particularly education for their children in

international schools, health insurance and housing are some indicators of their improved economic position in the country.

It is assumed that earnings of migrants usually rise with time spent in the host country. However some of the migrant respondents did not seem to move up the social ladder or improved their socio-economic conditions despite being in the country for more than 5 years. Data from this research shows, however, that the highest proportion of migrants who had been in Thailand for less than 5 years were in the lowest income categories. However, quite a number of those who had been in the country for 5 years and more were also found in the low income bracket. Altogether, 168 respondents out of the 209 were in the low-income groups despite the fact that several of them had been in the country for a long time. However, migrants were still able to send money regularly to their families back home.

On the other hand, many migrants also face financial difficulties that led them to borrow money from friends and family members particularly in times of emergency such as death or sickness in the family, or unforeseen circumstances like disasters that require monetary resources. The survey also showed that a few migrants had to take up additional jobs to make ends meet and continue sending money back home. From the interviews and conversations with other migrants, it was found that some irregular migrants also resorted to taking loans from the travel operators using their passport as collateral in order to do a *visa-run*, which prompted the Philippine Embassy in Bangkok to issue a warning, stating that the passport is the property of the government (KI#1, April, 2012).

Some couples with school-age children have also difficulties placing them in international schools in the country due to the significant amount of fees involved. Among the second-generation migrants, some of the children's quality of life was found to be also compromised. For instance, some migrant parents had to delay their young children's schooling, had to find a much cheaper, lower quality schools, or send them to the Philippines for education to be cared for by relatives or placed in dormitories. On the part of the children, this involves some social and psychic costs in the short term due to family separation and having to adjust to a new environment.

With all these changes that migrants experienced in Thailand, do migrants really gain from migration in terms of enhanced employment and/or income

opportunity, as well as personal growth? The text below, *The Journey of Nanay*, provide some answers to the question.

Box 7.2: The Journey of Nanay

Nanay, the name she preferred to be called, came to Thailand in 2005 and since then has worked as domestic worker in different households. The decision to move gave her hope and freedom to escape from her domestic problems back home in the Philippines; her two sons were in miserable conditions and had often depended on her for financial support. According to her, they are *'barkadista'* (always hangs out with friends) and *'nagwawaldas ng pera'* (misappropriates money). She was full of hope and expectations when she came just like all the other migrants she knew who came before her. The first 3 months, however, was not according to her expectations.

"The worst experience I had was when I arrived in Thailand. There was no work for me. As you can see, I was almost 60 years old at that time. Nobody would want to hire an old woman as house help. While staying with a friend, I tried to learn about house work from her, so that I can be considered in a foreigner's household. While waiting for a job, I collected garbage around Bangkok in order to have some money for my personal expenses. Although I am good in walking, it was a very tiring and degrading job. I have never been so degraded in my life, but I had no choice. I needed money at that time. My sister-in-law in Bangkok cannot help because I do not have a good relationship with her."

She worked finally with a Danish family for two years and was given a working visa at that time. But the Danish family finally went back home after the wife gave birth; so she was back to part-time work and without a work permit. Working with a Filipino family was not an ideal thing because they normally pay very low salaries and domestic workers, according to her, are on-call 24 hours a day. Filipino employers generally have a bad behavior, demanding, *'mata pobre'* (looked down on less fortunate Filipino migrants), abusive and talked badly about others or their helpers. With the Danish family, she felt happy and relaxed. As soon as her work finished, she could go back to her apartment.

The Filipino woman she worked with was not a good person either and had no sympathy for her, so she left. She had to move down south, very far from her friends in Bangkok in order to work for a Filipino family for 10 months. However, life was not any better for her there. She could not get enough sleep taking care of a baby; slept at 2am and woke up at 6am. She then went back to Bangkok and got employed with a Filipino family. Although the couple is kind to her, she had to also take care of guests who'd often come and stay in the apartment. She had to do more work: preparing food for sometimes 10 people including the family, cleaning and washing. The children also are a big headache since they do not respect her despite her old age.

Box 7.2: The Journey of Nanay (cont.)

Despite all her problems with her work and family, she is happy in Thailand because she has a lot of friends. They are all very warm to her, but some friends regularly borrowed money and never repaid her. She is very active in her church organization and obtains emotional and financial support from the members. Her young nephew also came to Thailand to find work in 2012. He just got a job as a teacher near the border, and so he cannot visit her regularly. At least she has someone; a relative.

She is trying to save money from her pension and salary, kept in a bank account in the Philippines. Until now, she still keeps the apartment in Bangkok and rented it out to other Filipinos. She wants to keep it because she might go back to being a part-time helper in the future. She had visited the Philippines in January, 2012, months before this interview. She got a lot of money as a social security pension. She travelled everywhere to visit her relatives, but her money almost ran out because her relatives borrowed a lot from her and she also had to pay for everything while she was there. When asked about her plans for the future, she replied:

“Although I am going to be 66 years old, I still want to stay in Thailand. I still feel strong and capable of working for the next few years. But my eyesight is not so good now. I do not want to go back to the Philippines. What will I do there? My sons will shorten my life if I stay there. My children are my problems. I was often angry when I was there. My blood pressure went up. I am tired though of doing the visa-run every 15 days. I might apply for a retirement visa, but it is quite expensive. I am trying to save some money and some of my friends are going to help me. I have a friend in an agency who can help me pay by installments. Maybe I will also move to Singapore...I will see.”

In-depth Interview, F/65, June, 2012

ⁱ The idea of ‘home’ is nowadays subject to different interpretations. Following Morley’s definitions, ‘home’ in this context refers to the ‘spaces of belonging’ through which migrants think of themselves as being ‘home’.

ⁱⁱ *Tagalog* is the national language of the Philippines and one of the official languages. It is spoken by many ethnic groups in various provinces in the country.

CHAPTER VIII

POST-MIGRATION PROSPECTS

In the previous chapter, the different changes in the lives of migrants after moving to Thailand were discussed. Several changes from the move were analyzed by also looking at the various structures that not only allowed migrants to achieve their economic goals and advance themselves professionally and personally but also those that constrained them from fully achieving some of their expectations. Has migration improved the overall conditions of migrants in the country as well as their families so that the prospect of returning is so close, or do they still hope to achieve a better life for them and their families by staying or moving again?

Several studies recognized the importance of education as well as further training in occupational choice and length of migration. This is so because education is seen as having increased the chances of succeeding in the labour market; therefore, migrants are generally motivated to improve their skills while abroad as that would increase their gains and shorten their stay overseas. The value attached to human capital particularly when obtained overseas is another incentive for migrants; that is, the higher the value placed by the host country, the stronger is the intention to undertake the educational investment and return home; as may be the case for international students (Dustmann, 1999 in Mahuteau & Tani, 2011). Moreover, life preferences or priorities would also depend on the migrant's life stage, according to Vasile and Vasile (2011); thus, younger and skilled migrants are more able to move and focus more on their (professional) advancement, while older and skilled migrants are more settled with their family responsibilities and professions. Demographic characteristics of the migrants, therefore, may also be an important factor of returning or not returning to the home country. Barrett and Mosca (2011), on the other hand, showed in his study of Irish migrants that social isolation is a significant feature in the lives of migrants and that the degree of social isolation is typically stronger for

individuals who spent longer away; thus, it may have an influence in the patterns of migration and return.

Results from the survey of Filipinos in Thailand showed that more than 50% of the migrants in this study are planning to stay only temporarily. Quite a number of migrants (around 25%) are unsure about whether they will stay longer in Thailand or not due to three main reasons: the contractual nature of their job, other uncertainties and their plans of migrating to another country. A few of the migrants, around 9%, are staying permanently. On average, the migrants are planning to stay for about 2-4 years more in Thailand, particularly highest among those who have been in Thailand for less than 4 years, see Figure 8.1.

Migrants' planned temporary stay, by years in Thailand

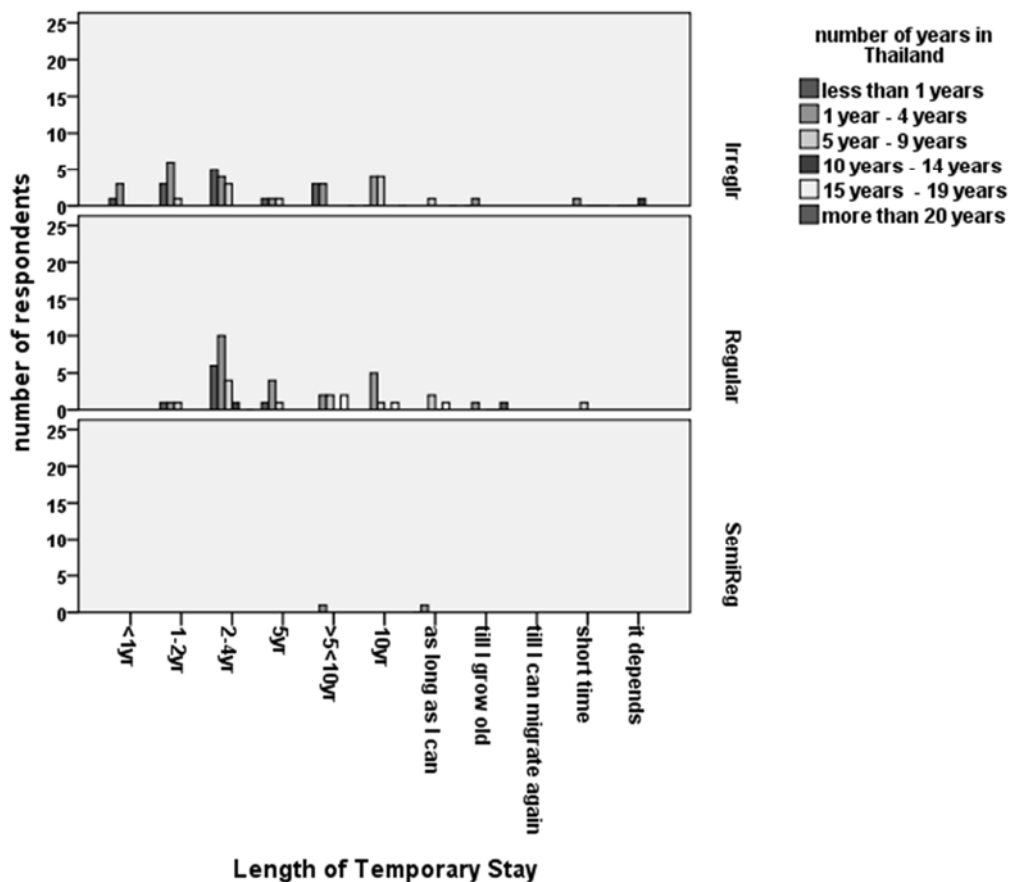


Figure 8.1 Length of Temporary Stay by Migrant Status and Years in Thailand

Migrants who have been in the country for many years intend to stay as long as they can or until they migrate again. Among those who were planning to stay temporarily and those who were unsure about their plans, about 100 migrants intended to move again. The desire is highest among those who were earning less than 30,000 Baht (US\$ 1,000) per month for both male and female migrants as shown in Figure 8.2. This can be explained by the fact that economic factors may have influenced their intention of moving again as shown in the concentration of those who desire to do so in the lower income groups; the same factor that have influenced them to move to Thailand in the first place. The inability of migrants to fully realize their goals in migration can be an important factor for the intention of moving again, as seen from a very high number of those who have no plans of returning and those who are unsure about what to do.

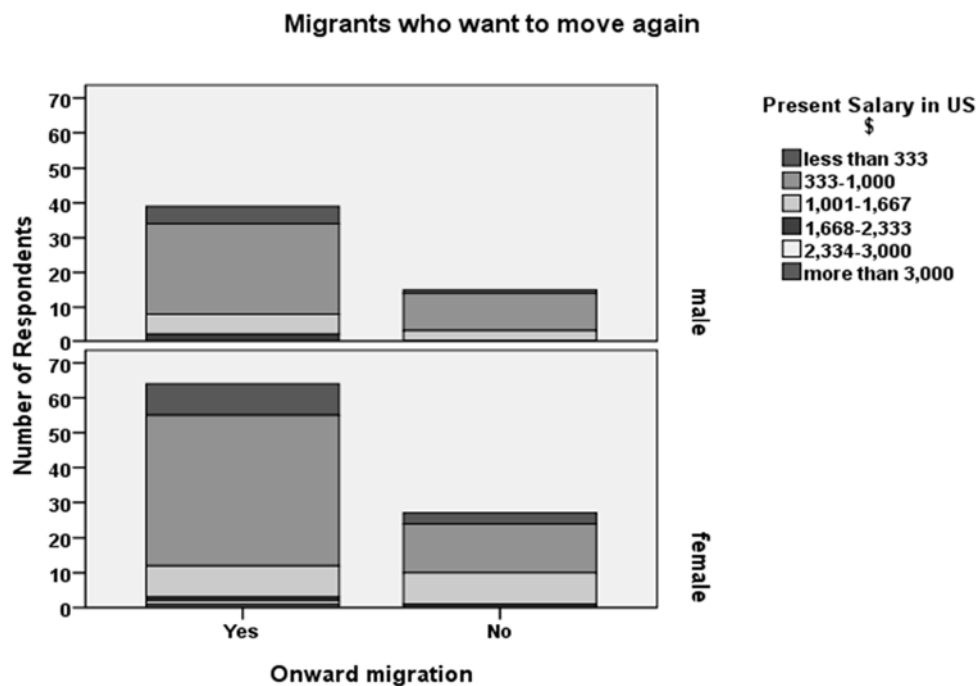


Figure 8.2 Onward migration among migrants, by income level and gender

Among those who planned to move again or those planning to settle in Thailand permanently, there are few who were sure to return home, back to the Philippines. According to Yang (2004), there are two alternative motivations for

return migration: life-cycle considerations and target-earning levels. According to him, having improved financial conditions in the host country (i.e., increased earnings) can lead to longer stays abroad for ‘life-cycle’ migrants, while for ‘target-earners’, improved financial status can lead to shorter stays since migrants have already reached their earning goals (2004). Borjas and Bratsberg (1996) linked return migration to an ‘optimal residential location plan over the life-cycle’ where migrants, after having realized their economic goals or expectations from migration, return to their origin. Another reason could be that they have been misinformed about the prospect of accumulating financial resources in the host country. Unforeseen changes in employment status that affect the overall condition of the primary migrant and his/her dependents may also result to return migration. Non-renewal of contract of one Filipino migrant known to the researcher moved his wife and three children back to his home province in the Philippines due to his inability to cover the children’s high tuition fees and the uncertainty regarding his employment status. Thus, returning provided the much-needed security in times of uncertainty.

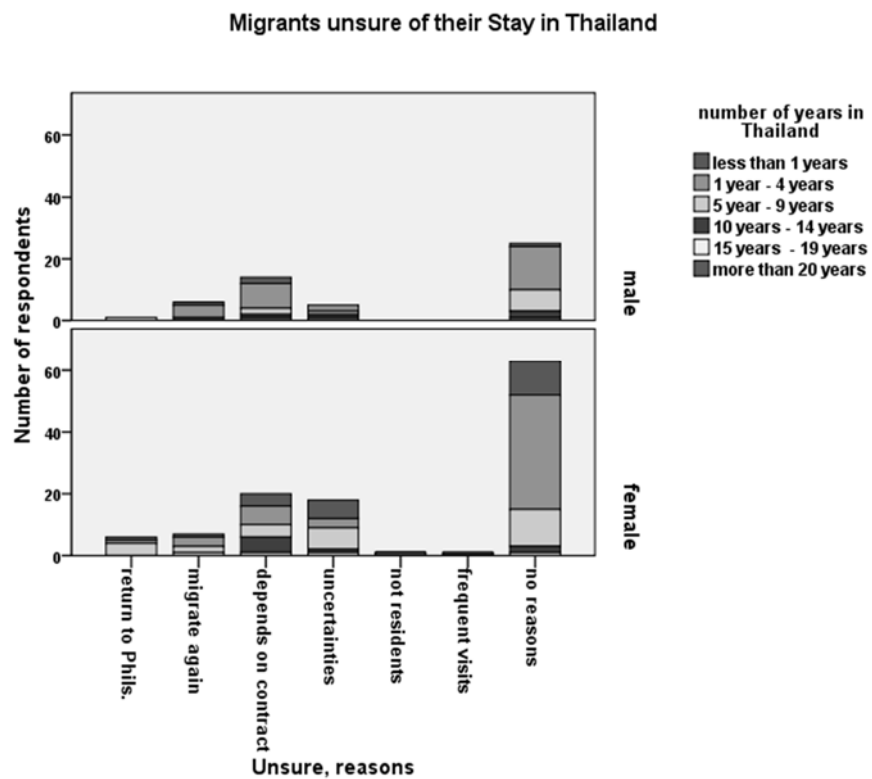


Figure 8.3 Reasons for being Unsure of staying in Thailand

From the survey data, it can be seen that more than half of the migrants do not intend to return to the Philippines. The same trend is true among those interviewed. Although all the interviewees expressed homesickness and longing to stay in the Philippines, most of them had no plans of returning, particularly among those who have been in Thailand for more than 6 years. The ability of the migrants in this study to secure employment and send regular remittances to their families back home while enjoying the relative comfort and safety in the country compared to the less secure environment they had in the Philippines are some of the reasons expressed by the migrants for their lack of motivation to return. Moreover, the poverty and unemployment rates in the Philippines seemed to be a deterrent for migrants to return. Two questions were asked regarding their preference to return and interest in moving to another country if given the chance.

Q7: Do you feel like staying in the Philippines?

“No. For a holiday it’s okay. My first priority is to go to another country with my family. They are here with me. The salary in the Philippines is much lower than what I am getting now.” (IDI#16, 46/M, 16 years in Thailand)

“I prefer to stay in Thailand first, and then, go to Europe.” (IDI#15, 39/F, 9 years in Thailand)

Q8: Would you be interested to move to another country if given the chance? Which country do you prefer?

“England because my fiancé is there—I will join him.” (IDI#4, 28/F, 1 year in Thailand)

“I’m going back to Doha. There’s nothing in the Philippines. It’s like a holiday here.” (IDI#9, 24/M, 1 year in Thailand)

Although the migrants generally found their life in Thailand as relatively much better than when they were in the Philippines because of the improved earnings and comfortable lifestyle, results from this study also show that migrants are constrained by the changing migration policies in the country, a job mismatch, and

uncertainties in employment and migrant status, as seen from the answers during the in-depth interviews. When asked what advice they can give to those who want to come to Thailand, and whether this is a good place for Filipinos to move for work opportunities, the interviewees had similar ideas:

“I am not saying don’t come. It is luck. Better to stay in the Philippines if they are not sure. They should have money for at least 3 months, close friends, sure work. Don’t risk if you are not qualified or competitive.” (IDI#2, 30/M, 6 years in Thailand)

“If there is a good opportunity, it is good for them to come, but taking risks are not good. They should have a visa, work permit, money, relatives, or better go to Cambodia or Laos. Last time I helped 4 Filipinos who slept in the church because they just came to Thailand to look for a job, and there was no job.” (IDI#4, 28/F, 1 year in Thailand)

“It’s okay to come but they will have lower chances; it is competitive, salaries are low. Don’t waste your time. You have to be qualified enough, have friends, sure work and be human enough.” (IDI#5, 40/M, 6 years in Thailand)

“If they want to come, they should not risk or get low salary. Other schools offer very low salaries to every Filipino. It is difficult to get work now. They need to have a network or people who can help, money for expenses, visa, work permit, invitation...documents should be ready.” (IDI#6, 31/F, 6 years in Thailand)

The same factors that made migration possible at the first phase of the migration process can also be seen as having an influence on onward migration decisions of many migrants in this study. Some migrants had to give up their jobs back in the Philippines, losing valuable benefits and future promotions in order to seek for better opportunities in Thailand. If the expectations of recovering from the initial costs of migration are not met, this may also lead migrants in finding other alternative destinations to fully accomplish their goals. Having ties at a destination is another

important factor for onward migration. For instance, primary migrants (i.e., those who migrated first and later joined by the family members or their dependents) who planned to move again to another country with their families were found to have relatives and friends at the planned destination. Moreover, these migrants have already accumulated resources to finance the next move. A 46-year old male interviewee who had been in Thailand with his family for 16 years thought that he might not have a better chance of finding a better work with good pay at his age. Moving to another country like Canada or Australia is good for her growing up children, and for him and his wife when they get older (IDI#16, 46/M); thus, setting an ultimate destination for final settlement.

Moreover, primary migrants who have accumulated years of experience, skills, and training as well as financial resources throughout their stay in Thailand are more confident in their plans of moving to another country again compared to those who are in less-skilled occupations and lower salary levels. Human capital through education and acquisition of additional skills, in the case of onward migrants in this study, is an important factor for deciding to move. This is supported by Nekby's study of emigrants in Sweden where results indicated that university education is positively associated with emigration for onward migrants while insignificant for return migrants; that education increases the probability of migration (Andersson *et al.*, 2000; Pederson *et al.*, 2002; and Klinthäll, 1998, 1999 in Nekby, n.d.). Another interesting finding from the interviews and survey data is that, most of those who planned onward migration are moving towards developed countries in Europe, Canada, Australia and America where social safety nets are strong.

Remaining in Thailand in the short term for those who intended to stay temporarily is motivated by several opportunities for social and economic mobility among migrants, particularly those who have been in the country for only a few years and those in the younger age groups. The strengthened integration within the ASEAN which will be fully implemented by 2015 is generally seen as that which will allow a freer movement of skilled persons from the region; thus, the skilled Filipino migrants particularly those in the teaching professions in Thailand can benefit from this as more and more teachers and English-speaking professionals are required to work. Moreover, the initiative of the Philippine government through its consular services to

provide the necessary support for its growing number of migrants in the country can also be an incentive for migrants to stay on. Although many migrants moved between irregularity and regularity, strong networks and intermediaries enable migrants to employ various mechanisms in order to become regular migrants in the country, facilitating their employment and regularity, and provide the necessary. Fellow migrants are considered important and necessary in finding jobs and for financial assistance. Lastly, the ability of migrants to adjust well with the local culture and establish a good relationship with their local colleagues also contributed to their 'better life' experiences in the country.

However, several migrants may have preferred to stay temporarily before moving to another country due to familial obligations. Some of the surveyed migrants felt they have more responsibilities now that they are abroad as shown in the survey results; with 72% of the males expressed this view compared to 56% of the females. This can be attributed to a general perception of 'being abroad'; that is, a migrant who is abroad is earning in 'dollars' and therefore, he has a lot of money. This results to a greater expectation from families back home. Moreover, despite the fact that many respondents were supported by other forms of income back home in the Philippines, such as incomes from investment, pension of parents and other household members, some of them still have no savings. In several instances, they had to borrow particularly during emergency or unexpected cases such as death or hospitalization of a family member. Borrowing is particularly highest among those who have been in Thailand between 1- 4 years. Migrant respondents also reported that for some occasions families asked for more money due to various reasons such as more expenses. The surveyed migrants also reported experiencing problems while in Thailand; lack of money and problems with visa extension had the highest number of responses (see Table 9.1). Because of these, migrants might have intended to accumulate resources first until such time that they can plan to move again or return to the Philippines.

Table 8.1 Problems Migrants encountered in Thailand

	Problems Encountered in Thailand						Total
	lack of money	trouble with police	conflict with friends	loss of valuables	visa extension	others	
Irregular	17	1	4	4	10	0	31
	42.5%	20.0%	20.0%	33.3%	33.3%	.0%	
Regular	20	4	16	7	17	2	44
	50.0%	80.0%	80.0%	58.3%	56.7%	100.0%	
Semi-regular	3	0	0	1	3	0	5
	7.5%	.0%	.0%	8.3%	10.0%	.0%	
Total	40	5	20	12	30	2	80

Migrant respondents also expressed their worries in the survey questionnaire. ‘Other worries’ had the highest number of responses which can include worries about their state of financial or employment stability, migration policies, and prospects for the future; particularly highest among regular migrants (see Figure 8.4). Children’s needs, parents’ health, and lack of proper job and money are also the main concerns of the surveyed migrants. Being the breadwinner, having sick or old parents, unemployment in the family and being in non-remunerative work are some of the causes of the migrants’ worries.

An in-depth interview with an 80-year old migrant illustrates her desire to remain in the country with a retirement visa, but she also had concerns about the future. Although she has lived in Thailand for about 40 years, her unemployment due to old age has increased her worries for herself and her family while in the country.

“I worry about the condition of my grandson because he is still very young and I always have to take care of him while his Thai mother is working. My retirement visa is also another problem. I used to show the Immigration around 800,000 Baht (US\$26,000) as a bond, but now I do not have enough money.”
 (Interviewee #10, April, 2012)

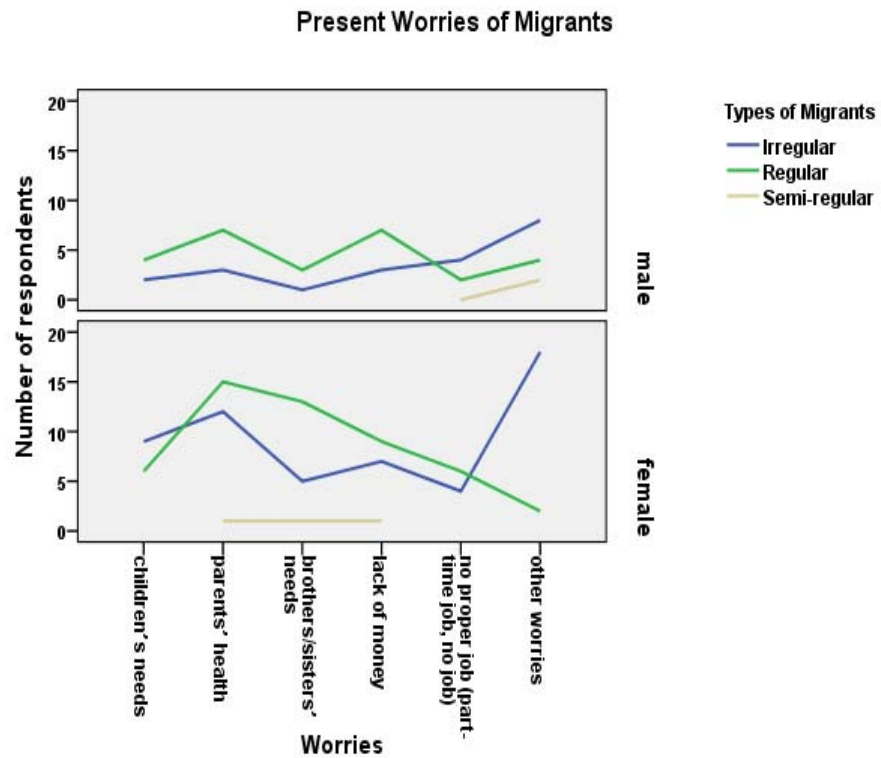


Figure 8.4 Worries of Migrants, by status

Based on the findings from this research and using human capital theory, it can be argued that there is a stronger pull for migrants towards areas with much better opportunities than those in their origin, particularly among young migrants. Other migrants also are willing to stay longer though temporarily in Thailand. This can be attributed to the commitment to provide for the needs of the family and stronger ties with families back home which can significantly influence the intention to move again; thus, the significance of geographical proximity in this case. The high concentration of younger migrants who are staying temporarily can be explained by some research studies that showed younger migrants have a longer time to benefit from investing in migration at the destination with larger value of the benefits¹. Older migrants, on the other hand, are more inclined to move again after accumulating enough resources while in Thailand. Since returns from migration tend to decrease with age, according to some studies, older migrants in this study may be planning for their early retirement in other countries or as the children are entering adulthood,

primary migrants are seeking for areas that provide a more stable environment for them and their families; thus, the choice of moving to developed countries.

However, given the continuous transitions that the migrants have to go through up to the present time, it is possible that the prospects identified in this research will also change depending on the circumstance or situation that would offer them incentives or disincentives; until finally, they reach their desired state.

ⁱ This valuable information was taken from *Geographic Mobility: Distance, Age and Education in Migration*. Unfortunately, the name of the author and date of publication is not available.

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study was set out to investigate the trends in migration among Filipino migrants in Thailand and the various experiences they had gone through at each stage of the migration process; namely, pre-migration and departure, the initial years and later years, and post-migration stage. Drachman's Stages of Migration Framework was adapted in order to explain the dynamics of migration in the context of the movement from the Philippines to Thailand, and to analyze the factors that encouraged migrants to choose Thailand as their destination. The framework outlined the factors that motivated individuals to move, tied with the concept of migration as a process for the purpose of understanding the experiences of migrants and then, improving various types of interventions. Although the framework utilized significant variables more applicable to migrants in distress or in life-threatening circumstances, adapting Drachman's framework in this research revealed the social and structural processes that made Filipino migration to Thailand possible, and for migration to persist over a course of 40 years. Moreover, it acknowledged the fact that although the Filipino migrants in the country are more in control of their mobility and are at an advantaged position compared with some of their counterparts in other countries in the region, their experiences have been shaped by these dimensions. Like many other Filipino migrants worldwide, these processes not only enhanced their economic and professional growth and those of their families, but also constrained them from fully achieving their goals.

Through qualitative and quantitative data generated from this study, the main objectives of this research were achieved; the general characteristics of migrants were identified, and the migration system established within this movement was analyzed. The different structures and resources employed were also investigated in relation to their experiences and the realization of their goals in migration. Results from this research have shed light on the development of a migration system over a

span of several decades which had been overlooked; the first group of pioneer migrants first arrived in the 1970s in very small numbers, followed by a gradual increase. Due to the less restrictive migration policies in both countries and the initiative of the Thai government in building the language proficiency of its students, a rise in the number of Filipinos within the teaching sector can be seen. New patterns of mobility and the characteristics of those who migrated from the Philippines to Thailand were also identified in this research. Distance, migration policies in both countries, perceived net benefits from migration, available resources and socio-economic conditions are the major factors that influenced migrant to move to Thailand.

Demographic characteristics such as age and educational level were some of the underlying factors that have shown to have also motivated migrants to move. For example, most of the migrant respondents are educated, which shows the importance of human capital; thus, illustrating the fact that educated Filipinos are more likely to move than less-educated ones due to the perceived net benefit from human capital investments (i.e., schooling). Although the importance of human capital in migration has been supported by several empirical researches, results from this research showed that after the movement, migrants' education has relatively less influence on their position in the labour market and their salary, or that of their social mobility in Thailand. Some migrants with postgraduate education, for instance, were found in less-remunerative occupations, while others with health and science backgrounds were found in different job categories; a shift from a relevant occupation back home to that which is available to a migrant. Another finding is that migrants are highly concentrated in the younger age groups, where important life events happened like finishing school, looking for a job or starting to lead a life on one's own away from one's family. However, this observation can be further researched or studied through a comprehensive application of quantitative techniques in order to come up with generalizable results of the influencing factors in their decisions to move.

The first stage of migration resulted from the various factors mentioned in the previous paragraph. Moreover, important life events may have also influenced migrants to move as shown in the high concentration of migrants in particular age groups and educational level. However, constraints such as the lack of resources and

changes in migration policies in both Thailand and the Philippines have an impact on the realization of a migrant's expectations at the initial and later years of stay in the country. Migrants were seen to be continuously having transitions or changes in their lives brought about by changes in migration policies, employment and other factors. Because of the absence of policies governing Filipino migration to Thailand, migrants follow the path of irregularity during the early years after arrival, while others continued to be irregular in later years, which contributed to their difficulties while in the country. Moreover, changes in migration policies in the country also led to changes in some of the migrants' status which resulted to their movement in and out of regularity even in later years.

Findings from this research also revealed that the availability of resources at all stages of the migration process has proven to be very important as they cope with various feelings of loneliness and family separation, changes in socioeconomic status and in migrant status. The availability of kin and non-kin support is considered necessary not only in reducing migration costs and a migrant's ability to finance these costs, but also in ensuring a migrant's stay in Thailand even in times of crisis such as unemployment or sickness in the family. Access to monetary and non-monetary resources derived from a migrant's affiliations to the migrant communities or social networks have reduced barriers to employment opportunities and other gains from the movement. Intermediaries are also seen as important in facilitating employment and regularity among those who intended to stay.

Despite the perceived benefits obtained from the movement, several migrants in this study are still facing various constraints as shown in the different mechanisms employed to remain in the country, the lack of financial resources to meet current and future economic obligations and the inability to obtain stable employment tenure, particularly among the young and new migrants, and those with dependents. They move through different paths or statuses, trying to be as regular as possible; some take up degrading or less-remunerative work to fulfill their roles as breadwinners, mothers, or fathers while at the same time, maintaining relationships from afar. Moreover, despite constant change in some of the migrants' status, there are no constraints in their ability to regularly send remittances to their families back home. Findings from this study clearly illustrated the extent through which

remittances have served the needs of the migrants and their families; that is, merely addressing the basic needs of the household. Therefore, assessing the impact of the amounts sent regularly back home on the well-being of the family members and the translation of these monetary transfers into other forms of incomes needs further investigation. Are the Filipino migrants in Thailand capable of investing their remittances beyond the needs of the household?

The possibility of returning to the Philippines, settling in Thailand or migrating to another country is affected by the expectations or goals of the migrants and incentives realized in the later stages of migration. The migrants in this study can be classified as those who preferred to stay temporarily for some years, those who were unsure of whether they will stay or not, those who were sure to move again, and those who will return to the Philippines. Life-cycle and target-earning migration seem to characterize the decisions of the migrants in this study, following Yang's argument (2004) that migrants who have improved their financial standing abroad tend to stay longer overseas while 'target-earners' stay shorter once they have reached their earning goals; also supported by Borjas and Bratsberg (1996 in Yang, 2004).

Although the migration of Filipinos to Thailand has been gradual and insignificant in terms of numbers, as found in this study, several pressing issues need to be addressed by both governments of Thailand and the Philippines. This is necessary particularly because these are recent concerns and arose mainly due to the lack of attention or interest on the part of the governments. Firstly, migration policies between the two countries are properly in place as far as irregular and skilled migration is concerned; however, efforts in controlling irregular migration of Filipinos in Thailand are primarily initiated by the Philippines with minimal response from Thailand, despite its many years of handling undocumented migration from its neighbouring countries in the GMS.

At this stage, it is also premature to assume that the strengthened integration within the ASEAN through the AEC present better opportunities for migrants since there is no prospect yet for a bilateral agreement between the two countries that can manage their continuous movement in the country. Agreements among ASEAN member countries do not cover formalizing labour migration between Thailand and the Philippines although it is possible for both countries to engage in

bilateral agreements with regards to hiring skilled workers from the Philippines. Formalizing the employment of Filipino workers in Thailand, however, can only be done when there is a significant number of Filipino migrants in the country. The promotion of freer skilled labour in the future among the countries in the region would mean marginalizing those who do not meet the skills requirements; thereby, pushing migrants away from regularity. Therefore, it is necessary that the two countries should work together in enhancing their interest on this situation before irregular migration can become uncontrollable.

Moreover, stringent measures at the borders in both countries do not seem to deter Filipino 'tourists' from coming and remaining in Thailand in the hope of finding better opportunities; however, these measures do have some effect on their experiences prior to departure and upon arriving in the country. Also, this type of movement is affected by current domestic and international policies of both countries with regards to migration; thus, Thailand and the Philippines share in their responsibility on the perpetuation of this phenomenon particularly of irregularity. On one hand, lack of employment or career opportunities in the Philippines led to the motivations of migrants to seek for better economic and personal growth for themselves and their families, while on the other hand, Thailand's inability to handle skilled migration particularly due to its primary focus on unauthorized migration from the neighbouring countries within the GMS encouraged the formation of migrants networks and thereby, the perpetuation of migration.

A formalized agreement between Thailand and the Philippines with regards to the management of Filipino labour in the country is also needed. The presence of informal networks or channels has facilitated the movement of Filipinos in the country and has perpetuated irregularity due to the increasing demand in various sectors and inadequate government enforcement of migration policies. Recent changes in Thailand's migration policies have limited the socio-economic mobility of Filipino migrants who are less qualified to work and those who are in irregular situation as more and more employment arrangements in Thailand are done outside the legal framework, between the employers and Filipino migrants, as seen in the number of irregular migrants employed by schools and agencies. This has led to an increase in the violations of the migrants' rights to fair wages and benefits and secure

employment tenure. Filipino migrants in Thailand are now being seen as a cheap source of (teaching) professionals, as revealed in the interviews and internet blogs. The protection of their rights is increasingly a growing concern for many migrants in the country.

The Philippine government, through its diplomatic office in Bangkok, has initiated several programs to directly address the needs of migrants and their families in Thailand. However, the programs generally address only partially the difficulties and challenges faced by migrants with dependents. Not all migrants with dependents in Thailand are regular migrants; therefore, the negative impact of irregularity on the primary migrants would also affect their dependents. Another difficulty of primary migrants that is only partially addressed is the continuing education of dependent children. As mentioned in Chapter VII, migrant parents are often faced with a predicament with regards to their children's schooling. The Alternative learning System Accreditation and Equivalency (A & E), though useful for children who will be continuing their education in the Philippines, does not provide an affordable, face-to-face interaction with teachers similar to a school setting. Parents who want to provide a school environment for their kids often face financial challenges in placing children in proper schools in Thailand, and emotional strain for those whose children had to study in the Philippines. With these pressing difficulties for migrant parents and their dependents, it is imperative that the Philippine government looks at how to assist better migrant families in the country.

Despite the fact that this phenomenon reveals similar characteristics or profile of Filipino migrants moving to other countries in the region, the migrants appear to have moved because of personal motives and seemed to be at an advantaged position compared to their counterparts in Malaysia and Singapore, mainly dominated by women in domestic and care work. The migrants in this study are particularly able to negotiate for a better salary, are located in professional and skilled occupations, and often relied on informal migrant networks established by friends and family. Moreover, the profile of current migrants represents a wider socioeconomic range compared to those of earlier or pioneer migrants, showing both continuity and change to these flows; continuity brought about by the increasing reliance on informal

networks established in Thailand, and change because of the characteristics of current migrants and increasing volume and irregularity of the movements.

Although this study has provided a groundbreaking attempt to explain this new trend of migration in the context of Filipinos in Thailand, the inability of this research to reach other migrants in remote areas and provinces has limited the ability of the researcher to fully enrich this study. Therefore, future research that can accurately quantify the volume of Filipino movements is recommended so that possible interventions in the short and long term can be made possible and will address the needs of all migrants. Applying the analytical framework used in this research in studying migration patterns and experiences of migrants in other contexts will provide a basis for comparisons between groups of migrants in the Southeast Asian region, particularly those in other less-familiar and unexplored areas like Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Commission on Filipinos Overseas
STOCK ESTIMATE OF OVERSEAS FILIPINOS
 As of December 2011

REGION / COUNTRY	PERMANENT	TEMPORARY	IRREGULAR	TOTAL
WORLD TOTAL	4,867,645	4,513,171	1,074,972	10,455,788
PERCENTAGE	47%	43%	10%	100%
AFRICA	4,933	51,987	6,588	63,508
1 AFARS AND ISAS	0	7	5	12
2 ALGERIA	0	8,993	250	9,243
3 ANGOLA	225	4,454	500	5,179
4 BENIN	0	54	10	64
5 BOTSWANA	125	355	50	530
6 BURKINA FASO	0	35	15	50
7 BURUNDI	0	10	15	25
8 CAMEROON	1	200	15	216
9 CAPE VERDE	0	25	15	40
10 CENTRAL AFRICAN REP.	0	68	25	93
11 CHAD	0	223	75	298
12 CONGO	0	1,524	100	1,624
13 CONGO, DEM. REP.	0	180	0	180
14 COTE D'IVOIRE (IVORY COAST)	5	105	60	170
15 DJIBOUTI	0	661	0	661
16 EGYPT	1,198	3,028	2,570	6,796
17 EQUATORIAL GUINEA	75	3,690	245	4,010
18 ERITREA	0	118	5	123
19 ETHIOPIA	0	636	10	646
20 GABON	0	323	15	338
21 GAMBIA	0	50	10	60
22 GHANA	30	1,149	70	1,249
23 GUINEA	3	189	10	202
24 GUINEA BISSAU	0	8	3	11
25 KENYA	1,015	257	20	1,292
26 LESOTHO	260	79	30	369
27 LIBERIA	20	359	25	404
28 LIBYA	77	2,572	75	2,724
29 MADAGASCAR	0	5,386	0	5,386
30 MALAWI	0	152	10	162
31 MALI	0	149	10	159
32 MAURITANIA	0	59	0	59
33 MAURITIUS	0	208	10	218
34 MOROCCO	0	789	55	844
35 MOZAMBIQUE	500	796	50	1,346
36 NAMIBIA	125	834	80	1,039
37 NIGERIA	282	6,500	500	7,282
38 RWANDA	0	147	5	152
39 SAO TOME & PRINCIPE	0	29	10	39
40 SENEGAL	5	79	5	89
41 SEYCHELLES	0	1,079	100	1,179
42 SIERRA LEONE	15	250	35	300

43 SOMALIA	0	11	0	11
44 SOUTH AFRICA	402	1,784	600	2,786
45 ST. HELENA	0	1	0	1
46 SUDAN	307	2,436	635	3,378
47 SWAZILAND	135	318	25	478
48 TANZANIA	0	362	50	412
49 TOGO	5	60	5	70
50 TUNISIA	7	265	10	282
51 UGANDA	0	337	20	357
52 UPPER VOLTA	0	1	0	1
53 ZAMBIA	95	509	100	704
54 ZIMBABWE	21	94	50	165
ASIA, East & South	284,646	621,400	543,327	1,449,373
55 AFGHANISTAN	1	1,000	2,600	3,601
56 BANGLADESH	100	677	50	827
57 BHUTAN	0	6	2	8
58 BRUNEI DARUSSALAM	17,657	1,331	2,100	21,088
59 CAMBODIA	43	2,187	1,280	3,510
60 CHINA	1,845	23,380	1,780	27,005
61 HONGKONG	13,251	156,600	5,000	174,851
62 INDIA	688	1,310	150	2,148
63 INDONESIA	514	11,450	465	12,429
64 JAPAN	154,219	57,333	9,330	220,882
65 KAZAKHSTAN	0	1,513	0	1,513
66 KOREA (North)	0	25	0	25
67 KOREA (South)	12,310	63,714	11,860	87,884
68 KYRGYZSTAN	0	13	5	18
69 LAOS	2	886	15	903
70 MACAU	1,930	12,429	1,935	16,294
71 MALAYSIA	26,006	95,485	447,590	569,081
72 MALDIVES	25	3,284	800	4,109
73 MONGOLIA	0	438	300	738
74 MYANMAR	57	360	75	492
75 NEPAL	55	76	10	141
76 PAKISTAN	153	813	950	1,916
77 SINGAPORE	44,100	86,500	49,400	180,000
78 SRI LANKA	1	1,059	100	1,160
79 TAIWAN	8,630	83,416	1,850	93,896
80 TAJIKISTAN	0	16	10	26
81 THAILAND	3,059	9,226	3,600	15,885
82 TIMOR-LESTE	0	1,413	710	2,123
83 TURKMENISTAN	0	909	50	959
84 UZBEKISTAN	0	47	10	57
85 VIETNAM	0	4,504	1,300	5,804
ASIA, West	7,713	2,872,440	107,770	2,987,923
86 SAUDI ARABIA	91	55,077	3,255	58,423
87 IRAN	1,016	1,161	505	2,682
88 IRAQ	45	3,370	2,800	6,215
89 ISRAEL	2,000	26,748	6,000	34,748
90 JORDAN	108	17,784	11,750	29,642
91 KUWAIT	502	180,098	6,150	186,750
92 LEBANON	1,190	21,848	4,500	27,538
93 OMAN	140	43,318	6,400	49,858

94 QATAR	16	329,426	13,000	342,442
95 SAUDI ARABIA	354	1,530,218	20,000	1,550,572
96 SYRIA	510	2,890	13,600	17,000
97 UAE	1,711	658,348	19,760	679,819
98 YEMEN	30	2,154	50	2,234
EUROPE	405,747	263,605	139,427	808,779
99 ALBANIA	0	45	2	47
100 ANDORRA	475	676	115	1,266
101 ARMENIA	0	29	0	29
102 AUSTRIA	20,616	2,496	2,000	25,112
103 AZERBAIJAN	308	1,065	500	1,873
104 BALEARIC ISLANDS	985	748	235	1,968
105 BELORUSSIA (BELARUS)	0	25	0	25
106 BELGIUM	6,460	237	5,000	11,697
107 BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA	3	5	0	8
108 BULGARIA	24	52	10	86
109 CANARY ISLAND	0	1	0	1
110 CROATIA	16	80	0	96
111 CYPRUS	2,707	17,436	2,100	22,243
112 CZECH REPUBLIC	65	482	10	557
113 DENMARK	7,096	3,827	0	10,923
114 ESTONIA	1	21	0	22
115 FINLAND	1,767	482	10	2,259
116 FRANCE	8,515	1,006	41,415	50,936
117 GEORGIA	5	194	70	269
118 GERMANY	46,237	8,095	3,030	57,362
119 GIBRALTAR	0	25	5	30
120 GREECE	101	46,734	6,000	52,835
121 GREENLAND	5	23	0	28
122 GUADELOUPE	0	1	0	1
123 GUERNSEY	0	1	0	1
124 HUNGARY	79	95	10	184
125 ICELAND	963	688	10	1,661
126 IRELAND	5,186	6,583	3,000	14,769
127 ISLE OF MAN	0	46	0	46
128 ITALY	50,001	99,817	34,820	184,638
129 JERSEY	0	7	0	7
130 KOSOVO	0	3	0	3
131 LATVIA	6	0	0	6
132 LIECHTENSTEIN	11	41	30	82
133 LITHUANIA	2	4	0	6
134 LUXEMBOURG	501	247	400	1,148
135 MACEDONIA	0	61	0	61
136 MALTA	9	597	20	626
137 MOLDOVA	0	7	0	7
138 MONACO	210	95	500	805
139 MONTENEGRO	2	3	0	5
140 NETHERLANDS, THE	15,842	2,930	1,500	20,272
141 NORWAY	17,927	4,770	0	22,697
142 POLAND	69	431	20	520
143 PORTUGAL	637	1,603	800	3,040
144 ROMANIA	18	716	20	754
145 REUNION	0	2	0	2
146 RUSSIA	10	2,204	500	2,714

147 SAN MARINO	0	28	5	33
148 SERBIA	10	37	5	52
149 SLOVAK REPUBLIC	19	22	0	41
150 SLOVENIA	53	28	5	86
151 SPAIN	34,969	12,816	4,175	51,960
152 SWEDEN	10,108	2,019	3,000	15,127
153 SWITZERLAND	12,979	4,767	1,130	18,876
154 TURKEY	744	899	3,950	5,593
155 UKRAINE	1	43	5	49
156 UNITED KINGDOM	160,000	35,000	25,000	220,000
157 VATICAN	5	3,210	20	3,235
AMERICAS / TRUST TERRITORIES	3,811,111	244,798	270,150	4,326,059
158 AMERICAN SAMOA	500	1,524	500	2,524
159 ANGUILLA	0	21	5	26
160 ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA	0	50	5	55
161 ARGENTINA	83	163	10	256
162 ARUBA	383	1,616	815	2,814
163 BAHAMAS	20	642	50	712
164 BARBADOS	4	58	20	82
165 BELIZE	17	80	5	102
166 BERMUDA	1	376	100	477
167 BOLIVIA	5	12	10	27
168 BRAZIL	235	425	60	720
169 BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS	1	294	5	300
170 CANADA	735,448	101,908	5,295	842,651
171 CAYMAN ISLANDS	0	2,225	100	2,325
172 CHILE	11	159	10	180
173 CNMI	2,500	5,454	1,500	9,454
174 COLOMBIA	25	56	10	91
175 COSTA RICA	166	118	30	314
176 CUBA	125	110	50	285
177 CURACAO	0	150	0	150
178 DIEGO GARCIA	0	885	180	1,065
179 DOMINICA	0	26	0	26
180 DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	60	765	5	830
181 ECUADOR	65	50	20	135
182 EL SALVADOR	33	47	5	85
183 FALKLAND ISLANDS	1	2	0	3
184 FRENCH POLYNESIA	3	1,012	0	1,015
185 GRENADA	0	26	0	26
186 GUAM	12,680	5,565	500	18,745
187 GUATEMALA	148	181	5	334
188 GUYANA	9	104	5	118
189 HAITI	251	254	50	555
190 HONDURAS	184	93	15	292
191 JAMAICA	38	296	20	354
192 MEXICO	201	510	60	771
193 NETHERLAND ANTILLES	0	46	5	51
194 NICARAGUA	61	25	5	91
195 PANAMA	33	111	15	159
196 PARAGUAY	17	47	5	69
197 PERU	46	262	10	318
198 PUERTO RICO	10	340	0	350
199 SABA & ST. EUSTATIUS	0	8	0	8

200 ST. KITTS NEVIS	0	22	0	22
201 ST. LUCIA	0	39	0	39
202 ST. MARTIN	0	201	0	201
ST. VINCENT & THE 203 GRENADINES	0	57	5	62
204 SURINAME	63	137	5	205
205 TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO	50	1,069	150	1,269
TURKS AND CAICOS ISLAND 206 (WEST INDIES)	0	1,900	0	1,900
207 UNITED STATES	3,057,532	112,997	260,335	3,430,864
208 URUGUAY	5	25	10	40
209 VENEZUELA	97	130	10	237
210 VIRGIN ISLANDS (US)	0	2,125	150	2,275
OCEANIA	353,495	89,837	7,710	451,042
211 AUSTRALIA	325,089	55,828	3,720	384,637
212 COOK ISLANDS	82	171	5	258
213 FIJI	164	55	5	224
214 KIRIBATI	22	311	5	338
215 MARSHALL ISLANDS (MAJURO)	14	1,155	0	1,169
MICRONESIA, FEDERATES 216 STATES OF	14	2,044	150	2,208
217 NAURU	0	243	5	248
218 NEW CALEDONIA	100	3,541	0	3,641
219 NEW ZEALAND	26,950	7,000	1,225	35,175
220 NIUE	15	5	0	20
221 PALAU (BELAU)	68	4,345	205	4,618
222 PAPUA NEW GUINEA	780	14,412	2,350	17,542
223 SAMOA	82	22	5	109
224 SOLOMON	33	519	30	582
225 TONGA	82	22	5	109
226 TUVALU	0	15	0	15
227 VANUATU	0	149	0	149
SEABASED WORKERS		369,104		369,104

The top 10 destination countries of Filipinos: US, Saudi Arabia, Canada, UAE, Malaysia, Australia, Qatar, Japan, UK, and Kuwait.

Permanent - Immigrants, dual citizens or legal permanent residents abroad whose stay do not depend on work contracts.

Temporary - Persons whose stay overseas is employment related, and who are expected to return at the end of their work contracts.

Irregular - Those not properly documented or without valid residence or work permits, or who are overstaying in a foreign country.

Sources : Department of Foreign Affairs, Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, Commission on Filipinos Overseas

APPENDIX B

Interview Checklist and Interview Questions for Surveyed Migrants

Interview Checklist:

1. Arrange a venue, preferably at the home of the respondent for individual interviews; at the meeting area or home of respondents for group interviews.
2. An assistant will help the researcher in recording the interviews (taking notes and preparing the audio/video equipment).
3. Interview questions and follow-up questions are based on the questionnaire (see questionnaire attached).
4. Informal interview that starts with appreciation for the time given for the interview and in answering the questionnaire. Follow-up questions will follow.
5. Interview should last between 1.5 – 2 hours.
6. Summarize the main points of the interview.
7. Conclusion of the interview.

Interview Questions:

Highlight some of the answers made in the questionnaire.

1. Do you have any questions about the survey being conducted?
2. I see from your answers that you have been in Thailand for several years/few years. What is it like living in Thailand? How do you feel now after being away for some time?
3. There are changes now in the visa policies for Filipino migrants in Thailand. Does this affect you in any way? What do you think of the 15-day visa extension given to Filipinos at the borders?
4. What experiences did you have here that you cannot forget? Do these make you want to stay longer?
What hobbies do you have? Any particular interests that you do during your free time?
[Why don't you have a free time? How do you relax?]
5. Have you tried taking training courses or learning Thai? When?

6. What experiences do you have that would make you get a better job or higher pay?
7. Do you have some Filipino friends? What about Thai friends? What experiences do you have with them?
8. Have been home recently? When was the last time you went to visit? Did you feel like staying there? Why is that?
9. Would you be interested to move to another country if you have the chance? Which particular country do you prefer? Why?
10. I can see from your answers that you want to stay longer in Thailand/planning to go somewhere. Can you tell me more about your plans for the next few years?
11. There are many Filipinos who still want to come to Thailand for work. What advise can you give them? How can they prepare for their trip? Is this a good place for them to work or find work? Why?

Thank you very much for you time. I really appreciate it and I wish you good luck on your plans.

APPENDIX C

Key Informant Interviews

The Philippine Embassy, Bangkok

Good afternoon to you,_____. Thank you very much for giving me some of your valuable time and in allowing me to interview you.

I have prepared several questions for this interview, but before I start, I would like to get your permission to take notes of your answers on paper or audio recorder, whichever you feel comfortable. Please be assured that your answers or personal opinions will be kept in strictest confidence, and that, you will not be quoted in any research writings that I will be doing in the future.

1. How long have you been working in Thailand as Consul General at the Philippine Embassy?
2. Have you worked in a similar position in the past in other countries?
How different or similar were your experiences or challenges to those that you've had here in Thailand?
During your tenure as Consul General, which task is the most challenging?
3. Regarding the Filipino migrants in Thailand, is it true that more and more Filipinos are coming to the country for work?
What is your estimate of the current number of Filipinos in Thailand?
What is your stand on this increasing trend?
Does this trend pose any challenges to you and the embassy in general?
4. What do you think are some of the factors that encouraged more and more Filipinos to come to Thailand?
5. Which sectors in the Thai labour market can we find many Filipino workers?
6. The POEA has made it compulsory for every working Filipino abroad to register and pay various fees in the Philippines before they can travel (back) to their host countries.

How will this benefit the registered workers while staying in Thailand?

What about those who are not registered, came as tourists and are working in Thailand? Are they going to be protected or benefited in other ways?

7. Does the Philippine government have any bilateral agreements with Thailand regarding the import of labour or in accommodating Filipino workers in the country?
8. I have interviewed some Filipinos during my data collection, and they mentioned that travelling to Thailand is becoming more and more difficult for tourists. They mentioned that some passengers have been offloaded by PAL and Cebu Pacific airlines. Going through immigration is also another big challenge. Does this have something to do with the increasing trend of Filipinos entering Thailand?
9. Another recent change is the 15-day extension of visas given to Filipinos at the borders of Cambodia instead of the previous 2-4 months visa. This started in October, 2011. Is there any reason for this abrupt change?
Other nationalities are still getting a month or 3 months extension.
10. What are the possible consequences of these changes on Filipino migration to Thailand?
11. How do you think this would affect the large number of irregular/illegal Filipinos in Thailand?
12. A few Filipino respondents told me that they are not going home for a visit yet due to the offloading of passengers and stringent checks by immigration officers. This may have some social and economic implications, don't you think so? What about the families they left behind?
13. What are some of the strategies that can be employed to minimize the number of illegal Filipino workers in Thailand? What is the role of the embassy in this regard?
14. Is it possible to regulate or formalize the employment of Filipinos in Thailand, like those in the Middle East, Singapore and Malaysia?

**Key Informant Interview Questions
Philippine-based Airline Company Officials**

1. Briefly describe your airline's interest in promoting low-cost travel to/from the Philippines.
2. Apart from the passengers, who benefit from the airline's initiatives of low-cost international and domestic travels?
3. What are some of the positive changes in your company's overall performance when you shifted to low-cost travel as a new business model?
4. What are some of the negative changes?
5. Do you have other routes outside the ASEAN?
6. In which routes do you profit more or enjoy a large market/customer base?
7. When did you start operating between Philippines and Thailand?
8. How many flights do you offer for this route?
9. Is there an increasing trend in Filipino passenger's statistics within the last 10 years?
10. With this increased opportunity for Filipinos to travel, particularly within Southeast Asia, do you think this may also encourage migration within the region?
11. Is it true that many Filipino passengers bound for Thailand have been offloaded?
12. What were some of the reasons why they were not allowed to board a flight?
13. Does your airline have a legal agreement with the Philippine Government concerning offloading of passengers? What are the conditions?
14. What did the airline do to assist those who have been offloaded?
15. Does offloading have a negative impact on the airline's image? Customers might perceive it in a negative way.
16. The Immigration Office in the Philippines is becoming more and more stringent on departing Filipinos. How does it affect overall sales and customers' confidence on the airline?

17. Recently, the number of illegal Filipinos in Thailand has been increasing. Can we also attribute it to the low-cost travel?
18. Are there ethical and legal issues in this case that the airline has to consider?
19. Is the airline employing some strategies to reduce this kind of problem? Are they effective?
20. In what ways do you think illegal Filipino migration can be reduced or controlled by the governments of Thailand and the Philippines?

**Ministry of Labour (Face-to Face Interview)
Immigration Office, Bangkok (Interview Questions by Email)**

1. What are your main responsibilities?
2. Do you find your tasks difficult? Why?
3. There are so many tourists coming to Thailand over the last 5 years. What do you think are the reasons for the increase?
4. How are you managing the increasing number of tourists coming to the country in terms of safety and protection of tourists and also of the Thai people?
5. Of all tourists coming from Southeast Asia, from which countries have the highest number coming to Thailand? (Write the countries)
6. What are the most common cases of violations to the immigration laws in Thailand? Please provide around 3 common cases. What were the penalties or punishments?
7. The number of migrants who came to work in Thailand has also increased over the last 5 years. What are the reasons for this increasing trend?
8. The Ministry of Labour reported that the highest labour migrants from Southeast Asia are from Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos. Many of them are illegal workers. Why are there so many illegal workers from these countries? What is the immigration office doing to reduce the number of illegal migrants from these countries?
9. What are the punishments or penalties for illegally working or illegally staying in Thailand?
10. In many Asian countries, some tourists are being interrogated and even not allowed to enter without proper documents. Do the immigration officers at the airport ask for supporting documents from tourists entering the country?
11. What types of documents are asked from tourists by immigration officers?
12. The borders between Thailand and Laos, Thailand and Cambodia and Thailand and Malaysia are full of tourists renewing their Thai visas. Many of these tourists are working without a work permit in Thailand. What is the immigration policy regarding these tourists who are working and are extending their visas for many years at the borders?
13. Is this allowed under the immigration law?
14. Is there a minimum number of visa extensions for each tourist?
15. How do you know if this tourist is not really a tourist but working illegally in Thailand?
16. Since October, 2011 the Thai Consular office in Cambodia gives only a 15 day visa for Filipinos extending their visas at the border. Do you know the reason for this?
17. Regular extensions of visa would mean long stays in Thailand with illegal work and also increase in the number of illegal workers. Is this also one of the main concerns of the immigration Department?
18. There are reports also that immigration at the borders and in the big cities of Thailand regularly checks or round up illegal workers particularly from specific countries of the Middle East, Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos. Is this true?
19. However, the immigration seems to be lenient or lax on other illegal workers from other countries such as Russia, China and the Philippines. Is this true?

20. What are some of the immigration,s plans for the future particularly on the increasing number of illegal migrants and illegal activities by tourists in Thailand?
21. What are some of your department,s plans that might affect workers especially Filipinos in Thailand?
22. Is there any other thing that you might want to add in this inrterview that you think I have to include in my report?
23. Is it possible for me to get some statistical data on the number of migrants entering and leaving the country for the past 5 years? Which nationalities are the highest?
24. For 2010 and 2011, I would like to know some specific data of the number of tourists entering and leaving the country Southeast Asia. How many were females/males, their purpose of entering the country and length of stay,etc.
25. For 2011, is it possible for me to get demographic data (age,gender,purpose of visit,ect.)of Filipinos who got a stamped re-entry visas at the borders of Thai-Cambodia and Thai-Laos borders?
26. If possible, can your office provide the number of Filipinos who went through these borders for visas and other purposes?
27. I hope you can give me also some specific data on the number of cases of violations done by Filipinos over the last 5 years and the corresponding penalties or punishments.
28. Can you recommend other departments that might also be abel to help in giving more information regarding migration in Thailand?

Thank you very much for your valuable time. I truly appreciate your help in providing me as much information as you can in order for me to write a very accurate report regarding migration in Thailand.

Key Informant Interview

Raks Thai Foundation

Greetings!!!

1. What are your main responsibilities in Raks Thai?
Do you find your work challenging? Why?
2. Your foundation has been serving the needs of various groups for a long time now. Which areas of your foundation's works do you think need more attention? Why?
3. My study is on migrants in Thailand, and it is great thing to know that labour rights are one of the core areas that you are working on. Can you tell me more about the foundation's works in promoting labour rights?
4. Who are the labour migrants that the foundation has worked with in the past and at present? Specific nationalities?
5. What were some of the problems encountered by the labour migrants?

Why do they experience such kind of problems?

Are there other people who can help them apart from the foundation?

6. Are there any changes in your work on labour rights now compared to the works you did in the past? (e.g., no. of cases, migrants that you have to take care of, etc.)
7. Have you had cases that involved Filipino labourers also?
8. How do you identify the labourers that need help?
Are there any conditions that the labourers have to follow?
How do you know that the kind of work that you do or help that you give them is sustainable and will have a long-term positive impact on them?
9. Do you also collaborate with the immigration or labour ministry? In what specific areas do you have to deal with these offices?
10. Do you have any available data on the current migrants in Thailand, both regular and irregular?
11. In 2015, the ASEAN community will be in its full effect.
Do you see any positive impact from this as far as labour rights or migration is concerned?
What about the negative impacts?
12. Will this affect the extent of work that the foundation has to cover?
13. What are some of the major plans that the foundation is going to implement in the near future as far as labour rights or labour migration is concerned?

APPENDIX D

Dear **Kabayan**,

A research survey is being conducted on Filipino migrants in Thailand for the purpose of accounting for the number and status of Filipinos in the country, their needs and difficulties while working or residing in Thailand.

This questionnaire will take about 20 minutes to complete. Instructions for completing the questionnaire can be found on the form itself. Please be assured that all information you provide will be kept strictly confidential. Your name or other identifying information will not appear on any study report – all results will be reported as statistical summaries only.

Your participation has a very valuable contribution to the ongoing doctoral research on Filipino migration to Thailand at the Institute for Population and Social Research, Mahidol University. Your involvement will also help the **Philippine Embassy in Bangkok** strengthen its present capacities in delivering consular and related services to the Filipino community in Thailand.

Thank you for your time and participation in making this research meaningful.

Date: _____

Questionnaire for Filipinos in Thailand

Personal Information

1. **Age:** _____ Male _____ Female _____
2. **Marital Status:** single _____ married _____ separated _____ annulled _____
others _____
3. **Educational degree:**
 _____ Vocational training (less than 1 year) Type of training: _____
 _____ Vocational training (1-2 years) Type of training: _____
 _____ College/university degree (bachelor's) Major: _____
 _____ Postgraduate level (master's/doctoral/post-doc) Level: _____
 _____ Others, specify _____
4. **Home Town in the Philippines:** _____
5. **City/Location in Thailand:** _____
6. **Number of years/months in Thailand** _____ years _____ months
7. **Present occupation/job** _____ salary _____
8. **How long have you been in your present occupation/job?** _____ years
_____ months
9. **Type of organization:** NGO _____ government _____ academic _____
international _____ company _____ others _____
10. **Previous occupations:**
 1. Job position: _____ Year employed: _____
salary _____ city/location _____ years/months _____
 2. Job position _____ Year employed: _____

salary _____ city/location _____ years/months _____
 3. Job position _____ Year employed: _____
 salary _____ city/location _____ years/months _____

11. Number of dependents in Thailand:

children _____ immediate adult family members _____ other relatives _____

12. Number of dependents in the Philippines:

children _____ immediate adult family members _____ other relatives _____

13. Number of dependents in other countries:

children _____ immediate adult family members _____ other relatives _____

Move to Thailand

14. When did you move to Thailand? Year _____

Is this your first move? Yes _____ No, I came here before in _____ (year)

15. Is this your first move abroad? Yes _____ No, _____ I have worked /studied in _____ (another country) before coming to Thailand.

16. Did you move to Thailand alone? Yes _____ No, _____ I came with _____ (friend/relatives/spouse/others) pls. specify _____

17. Did you know anybody in Thailand before moving? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, please specify your relationship with the person(s) you know.

_____ immediate relative(s): *brother, sister, parent, spouse, etc.*

_____ friends(s) _____ prospective employer

_____ others, please specify _____

18. Why did you move to Thailand?

19. Why did you choose Thailand as your destination? _____

20. Did your family approve of your move?

Yes, because _____

No, because _____

21. How much money did you spend in the Philippines in order to come here? _____

How did you pay?

_____ loan _____ own savings _____ borrow from friends/relatives _____ sponsorship (*e.g., prospective employer*) _____ others

Did you have any difficulties in preparing for your travel to Thailand?

Yes, because _____

No, because _____

22. What documents did you prepare for your travel to

Thailand? _____ Why did you need to prepare them? _____

23. What was the biggest problem you experienced while preparing for your trip? (e.g., financial, family, travel documents,

etc.) _____ During the trip? (e.g., at the airport) _____

Who helped you? _____

Remittances

24. Do you have any dependents? ___ Yes ___ No

Where are they located? Philippines _____ Thailand _____

Others _____

25. Who are your dependents? How many? (specify the number of dependents)

Children _____ Parents _____ Brothers/sisters _____

Other dependents (please specify) _____

26. How often do you send money to your dependents in the Philippines?

Monthly _____ How many times in a month? _____

Yearly _____ How many times in a year? _____

When requested _____ How many times did you send money in 2010? _____

27. How do you send money? (e.g., through Western Union, friends, local banks)

28. On average, how much money did you send each time? _____

For what purposes did you have to send money?*(Please mark as many as you can.)*

- a. Payment of tuition fees monthly____ yearly____ others ____
- b. Payment of loans/debts monthly____ yearly____ others ____
- c. Children’s allowance monthly____ yearly ____ others ____
- d. For parents’ medications/needs monthly____ yearly ____ others ____
- e. Payment of housing renovation/purchase monthly____yearly____others __
- f. Finance small business monthly____ yearly____ others ____
- g. Food and utilities (electricity, etc.) monthly____ yearly____others ____
- h. Housing rental monthly____ yearly____ others _____

29. On average, how much money did your family spend each month before you moved to Thailand? _____

Were you able to cover all the expenses at that time?

Yes, because _____

No, because _____

After moving to Thailand for work, are you able to cover all the expenses of your family each month? Yes, because _____

No, because _____

30. Do you always send enough money for your family?

Yes, _____

No, because _____

31. Was there a time when your family asked for more money? No, _____

Yes, because _____

32. Have you ever borrowed money to send to your family? Yes ___No _____

From whom did you borrow? _____

Why did you have to borrow? _____

33. Does your family have any other income? Yes, from _____

No, because _____

34. Is your family spending more now that you are abroad?

Yes, because _____

No, because _____

35. Is it okay if you do not send money regularly to your family in the Philippines?

Yes, because _____

No, it is not okay because _____

36. Who help you support your family or dependents? _____

37. Is it better for you to be in Thailand than with your family? Why?

38. Do you feel that your family is financially better now that you are working in Thailand? Why?

Resettlement in Thailand

39. Do you live alone in Thailand? Yes _____ No, I live with _____

40. Do you like your present job? Yes, because _____

No, because _____

Have you had other jobs in Thailand before your present job? *Please specify your previous jobs.* _____

How many jobs do you do at present? one _____ two _____ several jobs _____

Why do you need to do two or several jobs? _____

41. Was it easy for you to find a job? Yes, because _____

No, because _____

How long did you have to wait to get this job? _____

Who helped you find this job? _____

Have you been unemployed before? Yes, _____ for how long? _____

No, I got a job immediately because _____

42. Do you like working in Thailand? Yes, because _____

No, because _____

43. Do you have a day off from work? No, because _____

Yes, (which days?) _____

What do you do on your day off?

- a. visit the church ___ b. do part-time work ___ e. attend religious meetings
 c. go out with friends ___ d. shopping ___ f. others, specify _____

44. Have you ever extended your visa in: Laos ___ Cambodia ___ others ___?

- a. Yes, I have been extending my visa since _____ (year).
 b. Yes, I extended my visa in _____ (year) but now I have a work permit.
 c. No, I have a work permit since _____ (year). **Go to Question 47**

45. How much did you pay for visa extension? _____

Who paid for your visa extension? _____

If you paid for the visa extension, did your salary cover it? Yes _____

NO, I have to borrow from _____ (please specify.)

What type of visa did you get? Tourist ___ Non-immigrant B _____

46. How many times have you visited Cambodia for your visa? _____

What type of visa did you get? Tourist ___ Non-immigrant B _____

How many times have you visited Laos for your visa? _____

What type of visa did you get? Tourist ___ Non-immigrant B _____

Have you had a work permit before? Yes, but _____

NO, because _____

Are you going to apply for a work permit? Yes ___ No, because _____

Who can help you get a work permit? _____

47. Is it difficult to communicate with the Thais? Why?

48. How do you communicate with the Thais? (e.g., in the shops, on the bus/train, etc.) _____

49. Have you tried learning the Thai language? Yes, because _____

No, because _____

50. Have you attended any special Thai celebrations? Yes, I attended:

- a. Thai weddings ___ b. Songkran ___ c. Loy Krathong ___ others _____

51. Have you got any Thai friends? Yes, _____

How did you meet them? _____

Do you also spend time with your Thai friends? Yes, _____

No, I do not have Thai friends because _____

52. Have you had any bad experiences with Thai people? Please specify.

What did you do?

53. What were some of the problems you encountered in Thailand?

a. lack of money ___ b. trouble with police ___ c. conflict with friends ___
d. loss of valuables ___ e. visa extension ___ f. others (specify) ___

What did you do? _____

Who helped you? _____

54. Are you a member of an association in Thailand? Yes, I am a member of

_____ (specify the associations)

As a member, what are your duties?

Do you have a good relationship with the other members? Yes, _____

No, because _____

Do you get support from the members? Yes _____ No _____

Give examples _____

What were some of your association's activities in Thailand?

No, I am not a member because _____

Is it important to be a member of an association in Thailand? Yes, because

No, I think it is not important because _____

55. Have you visited your family in the Philippines? Yes, _____ in (year) _____

How often do you go for a visit? _____

No, I have not visited Philippines yet because _____

Do you usually spend a lot of money during your visit to the Philippines?

Why? _____

56. How often do you contact your family? _____ sometimes _____ always

How do you contact your family? _____ by phone _____ email _____ chat

_____ others, please specify.

_____ others, please specify.

57. Do you feel better living in Thailand than in the Philippines? Why?

58. Do you have more responsibilities now that you are abroad? What are your responsibilities? _____

59. How much do you usually spend each month for your living expenses?

Is your income enough to cover your expenses in Thailand?

Yes, because _____

NO, because _____

So, I have to _____ (*often borrow/do other jobs/others*)

60. How long do you intend to stay in Thailand?

Temporary: how long?

Permanently: why?

Not sure: why?

61. Do you plan to move to another country? Yes, __ where? _____

When do you plan to move to another country? _____ (year)

Why do you want to move there? _____

No, I will stay in Thailand _____

62. What worries you at present? Please mark as many as you can.

a. [] children's needs _____

b. [] parents' health/needs _____

c. [] brothers/sisters' needs _____

d. [] lack of money _____

e. [] no proper job (part-time job, no job) _____

f. [] visa extension/no work permit _____

f. [] other worries (specify) _____

Maraming salamat sa inyong panahon sa pagsagot sa mga tanong dito. Mangyaring maging sigurado na ito ay mananatiling lihim at gagamitin lamang upang makabuo ng data para sa aking mga pananaliksik. Huwag mag-atubili na isulat ang iyong mobile no. para sa hinaharap na mga katanungan kung sakali.

Your Mobile Number: _____

Thank you very much for your time in filling out the questionnaire. Please be assured that this will remain confidential and will be used only to generate data for my research. Feel free to leave your mobile number for future inquiries.

Mobile Number: _____

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APPENDIX E

Main Variables	Definitions	Components/Scale
Demographics	The specific factors or variables that characterize the people being studied.	
Age	Actual age at the time of the survey	Youngest to oldest categories (Interval scale)
Marital status	Refer to the status of a migrant as being single, married, separated or others	Married/Single/Separated/Annulled/Others (Nominal scale)
Gender	Masculine or feminine classification of a person	Male/Female (Nominal scale)
Present income	Money that is regularly received from an activity.	Lowest to highest categories; (Interval scale)
Present occupation	The main source of income or livelihood for a migrant	Unskilled, semi-skilled and skilled occupations; relevance to previous occupations and education (Ordinal scale)
Length of employment in present occupation	Total time in months or years spent on the present job.	Months or years of employment (Interval scale)
Educational level	The highest level of schooling a migrant had attended	Elementary and high school level, vocational level, college/university level, postgraduate level (Ordinal scale)
Hometown or City of origin	A place of one's birth or main residence	Poverty level (Ordinal scale) Migrants from the place of origin (Nominal)

Main Variables	Definitions	Components/Scale
Pre-migration and departure (Socio-economic conditions)	Refers to one's ability to have access to resources that influence a migrant's life chances or improve his well-being before moving.	
Sources of income prior to migration	The financial sources that are sufficient to support a migrant and his/her family	Salary; other sources of income (Nominal scale)
Dependents	Includes young children, older members of the household, and other members who have no sources of income, and whose living expenses are supported mainly by the migrant and other adult income earners of the household.	Parents, children, non-working immediate adult members of the family, relatives (Interval scale)
Responsibilities in the family	Tasks of caring and looking after the needs of the other members of the household.	Breadwinner, oldest among siblings, Marital status (Nominal scale)
Educational Level	The highest level of schooling a migrant had attended	Elementary and high school level, vocational level, college/university level, postgraduate level (Ordinal)
Support Network	People or institutions who provide several types of support to a migrant	Friends and colleagues; intermediaries; family members and relatives; ties at destination (Nominal scale)
Reasons for Migration	Socio-economic factors that made the migrants move	Employment condition; means of income; dependents; household size; obligations (Nominal scale)
Financial resources	Money available to the migrant in the form of cash or credit.	Sources of funds used to prepare for the travel (Nominal scale)
Difficulties	The state or condition in which a migrant had problems while preparing for the trip and during the journey	Insufficient funds and/or documents; separation from family; uncertainties or worries; immigration checks (Nominal scale)

Main Variables	Definitions	Components/Scale
Initial Years and Later Years in Migration	Constraints and opportunities during the early months/years after arrival	
Financial resources	Money available to the migrant in the form of cash or credit.	Sources of funds used for living expenses (Nominal scale); Amount of remittances sent (Interval) and Regularity (ordinal)
Support Network	People or institutions who provide several types of support to a migrant	Friends and colleagues; intermediaries; family members and relatives; ties at destination (Nominal scale)
Language acquisition	Use of the local language in communication Changes migrants had to go through that affect individual migrants	Ways of learning the local language (Nominal); interest in learning (Nominal)
Transitions	Changes that affect the lives of migrants	
In Employment	Ability or inability of the migrant to get a job Job matching Present and previous incomes Work conditions	Unemployment; Length of unemployment (ordinal scale) Educational background vis-à-vis Present occupation (Nominal) High to low income; Low to high income (Interval) Salary increase/decrease; Increased workload; normal/precarious contract agreements (Nominal)
In Migrant Status	Change from regular to irregular status; irregular to regular; several status at different times	Frequency of <i>visa-run</i> (Ordinal); Ever extended a visa (Nominal); Ever received a work permit (Nominal); Plans of securing a work permit (Nominal); Type of Visa received (Nominal)

Main Variables	Definitions	Components/Scale
Transnational Life	Maintaining of relationships from a distance and in the new place	Frequency of remittances (Ordinal); Frequency of contacts with friends and families (Ordinal); Ways of keeping in touch back home (Nominal); Frequency of visits to the Philippines; visits of friends and families to Thailand; Memberships in migrants and community networks (Nominal); Participation in local cultural activities (Nominal)
Mobility	Enhanced income or career opportunities	Trainings (Nominal); Advanced education (Nominal); Savings (Nominal); Inadequate income
Post-migration Prospects	Emigration trajectories based on the expectations realized in migration to the destination and incentives to return, settle or migrate to another country.	Realization of pre-determined goals; Increased income; More earning opportunities; Family reunification; Overall satisfaction of life in the new place

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