

Abstract

Filipino Migration and Global Householding: An Overview

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In the past few decades, working overseas has been a major strategy employed by many Filipinos to support their families and households. Official figures indicate 8 million Filipinos working abroad remit about 8 billion dollars a year. Remittances, then, constitute a major factor in the sustenance of the families left by the migrant workers as well as keeping the Philippine economy afloat.

Based on a survey of secondary sources, this paper will examine how the sizeable number of Filipinos living/working abroad has increased the globalizing tendencies of Filipino households in the Philippines. Previous studies (e.g., Espiritu 2003) have documented the emergence of actual and symbolic transnational activities of home-making by migrant workers (e.g., return visits, remittances, plans of retirement) and by their families/relatives left behind (e.g., pressures to support dependents and recruitment for work, rituals and roles allowing migrants to reclaim status denied of them abroad). Most studies (e.g., Asis 1994, Cruz and Pagonini 1989, Parrenas 2005, Pingol 2001, Tacoli 1996) have focused on the effects of Filipino migration on their families.

Utilizing the National Statistics Office (NSO) survey of migrants and other studies, this paper will re-examine how overseas labour migration and the globalised life (i.e., rapid flows of people, technology, and finances across multiple borders) may have reconfigured their patterns of household organization of labour and income. In turn, these patterns of income/labour-pooling may have changed their strategies of wealth/status-making within/across households. This paper will also illustrate the kind of insights gained in utilizing the household (instead of individuals/families) as a unit of analysis in examining global processes and Filipino migration.

References

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