

Emerging Issues of Gendered Migration in the Context of Asia

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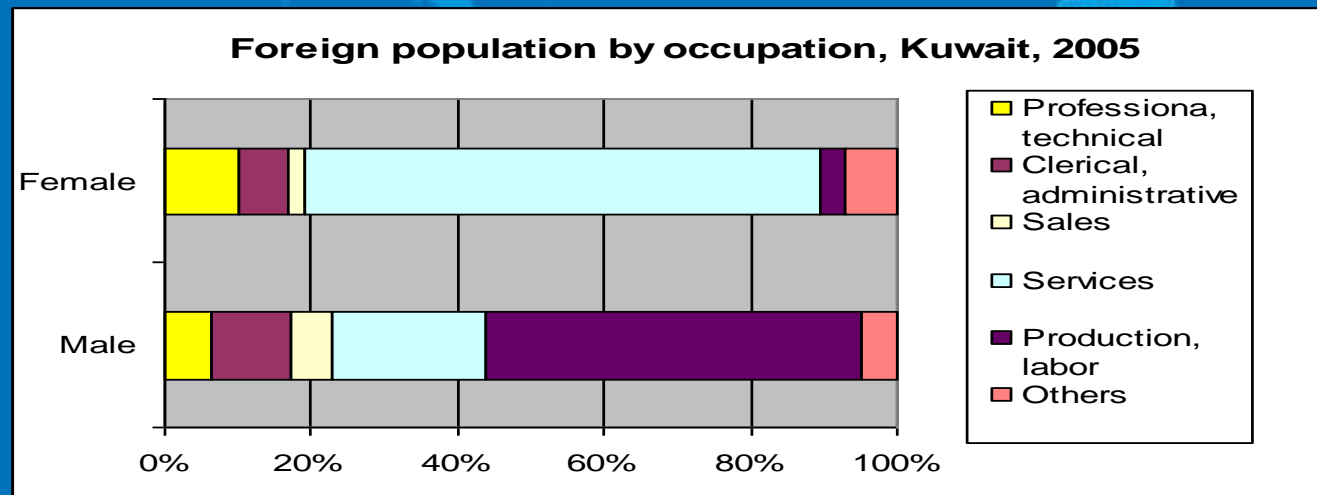
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Labour migration of women: Vulnerability or empowerment

- Much of literature stresses the vulnerability:
“Female migrant workers face *double* discrimination, being women and foreigner in an alien environment.”
- Migration experience of women can modify gender roles and women’s status, as they gain access to financial resources and acquire new norms.
- The impacts of migration on women’s status are complex, as the circumstances and socio-cultural environments mediate the relationship.

Skilled migration

- Increasing selectivity of migration towards the highly skilled.
- Asian skilled professionals go to 1) Pacific rim OECD countries, 2) Middle East, and 3) neighboring high income countries.
- Growing visibility of women professionals in migration

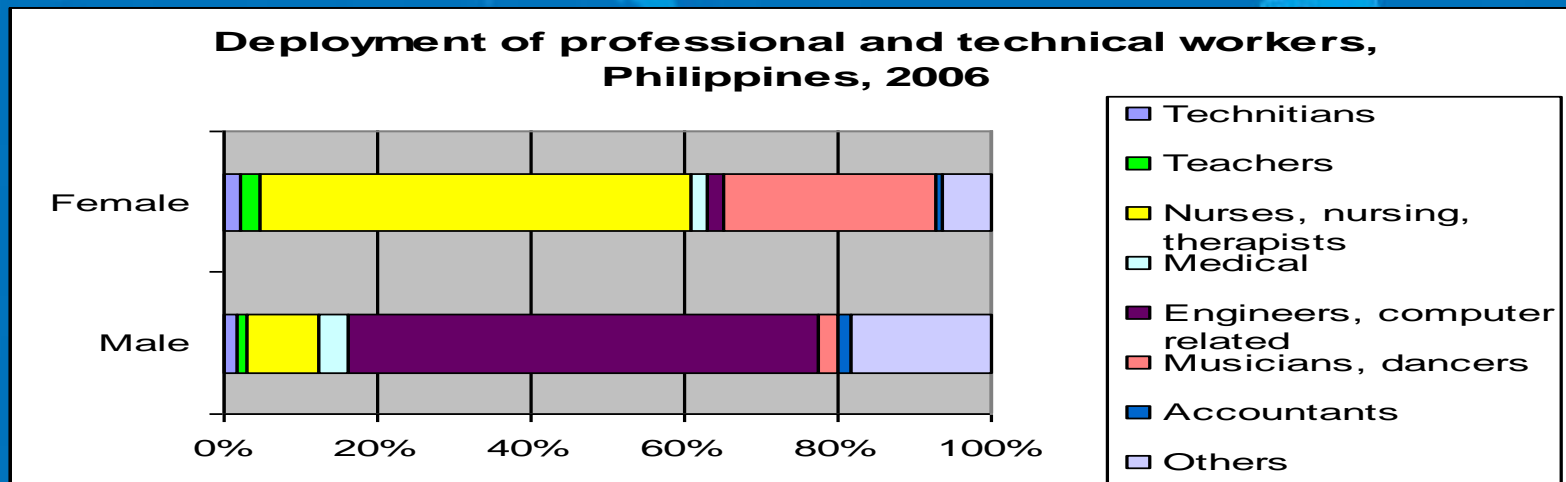


Gender dimensions of skilled migration

- From high income countries, women who move abroad are on rise in company transfers, academics, international NGOs, and as business owners.
- From developing countries, the outflows of skilled women grow faster than those of unskilled women or skilled men (ILO, 2008).
 - Deployment of professionals, Philippines, 2006
24,000 (f) > 17,000 (m)
 - Brain drain of women?

Gender dimensions of skilled migration

- Gender segregation of skilled jobs
- Men move within transnational corporations and sectors such as ICT, science, finance, accounting and engineering.
- Women still go into “feminized occupations” (nurses, teachers)



Student migration

- Growing number of Asian students studying abroad
- Traditionally to US or UK, but there is a surge of intra-Asian student migration
- Response to signals which many countries are sending, concerning possibilities for work and residency, following the completion of their education (OECD, 2007). (ex. Australia, Singapore, Japan)
- Foreign student are increasingly seen as a highly qualified reserve of workers,

Women represent nearly a half of student migration

Host country	% female (year)	
US	38% (1993-94) 44% (2003-04)	Leading destination, Dominance of Asian students
Japan	49% (2007)	The number almost doubled: 64,000 to 114,000 (2000-07)
Australia	49% (2000-01)	Large increase in the number of foreign students, 2002- 2008

Women studying abroad: positive gains?

- Female students typically major in social science and humanities, whereas male students are found more in engineering, ICT.
- Female students are less likely to benefit from the measures of host country to facilitate easy access to work permit or long-term residency.
- Will their study abroad contributes to their empowerment, upon return? – an area of research

Gender dimensions of marriage migration

- Dramatic increases in international marriages
 - Korea 1.2% (1990) to 13.5 % (2005)
 - Japan 3.5% (1990) to 6.1% (2006)
 - Taiwan 388,000 foreign spouses (2007)
- Mostly Involve foreign women and local men
- Foreign brides from neighboring developing countries (ex .Philippines, Viet Nam, China, Thailand)

Shortage of bride ?

- In rural areas, difficulties of men finding partners as local women prefer to move to a city or marry men with white color jobs
- Local men turning to foreign brides, in the hope of finding women who embody “traditional” values
- Solution to de-population and ageing of society ?
- Some local governments participate in search of oversea bride

Asis (2008)

Insecurities of marriage migration

- Gaps in the spouses' expectations
- A route to labour market/residency?
- Involvement of brokers has led to abuse, fraudulent marriage and the trafficking of women
- Slow developments in policy to assist the integration of foreign spouse and their children

Concluding remarks

- Women have become visible participants of migration streams with formal mechanisms and at upper strata of labour migration.
- Yet, such trends do not automatically result in the empowerment of migrant women or gender equality.
- In Asia, migration still occurs largely in the existing gender norms and migrant women are still incorporated into gender segregated labour market at the destination.
- Needs for gender sensitive policy.
- Dearth of data and research about the potential of migrant women to contribute to social and economic development and gender equality.

A stylized map of Southeast Asia is centered on a background with a vertical gradient from light blue at the top to orange at the bottom. The map is rendered in a light, semi-transparent style, showing the outlines of the region's countries. The text "Thank you !" is overlaid in the center of the map in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

Thank you !