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Working in Japan: The Experience of Filipino Overseas Contract Workers

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The eighties saw the emergence of Japan as an increasingly important destination for Filipino workers — particularly women (Go, 1991). Like seafarers lured by the siren's song of the Japanese yen, Filipino workers have sailed into the Land of the Rising Sun with high hopes and great expectations.

The importance of Japan as a labor receiving country in the world is evidenced by the fact that it has been among the top three host countries of Filipino labor 1984. It ranks third to Saudi Arabia and Hong Kong in the total number of workers that have been deployed by the Philippines throughout the world between 1984 and 1990 (Figure 1).

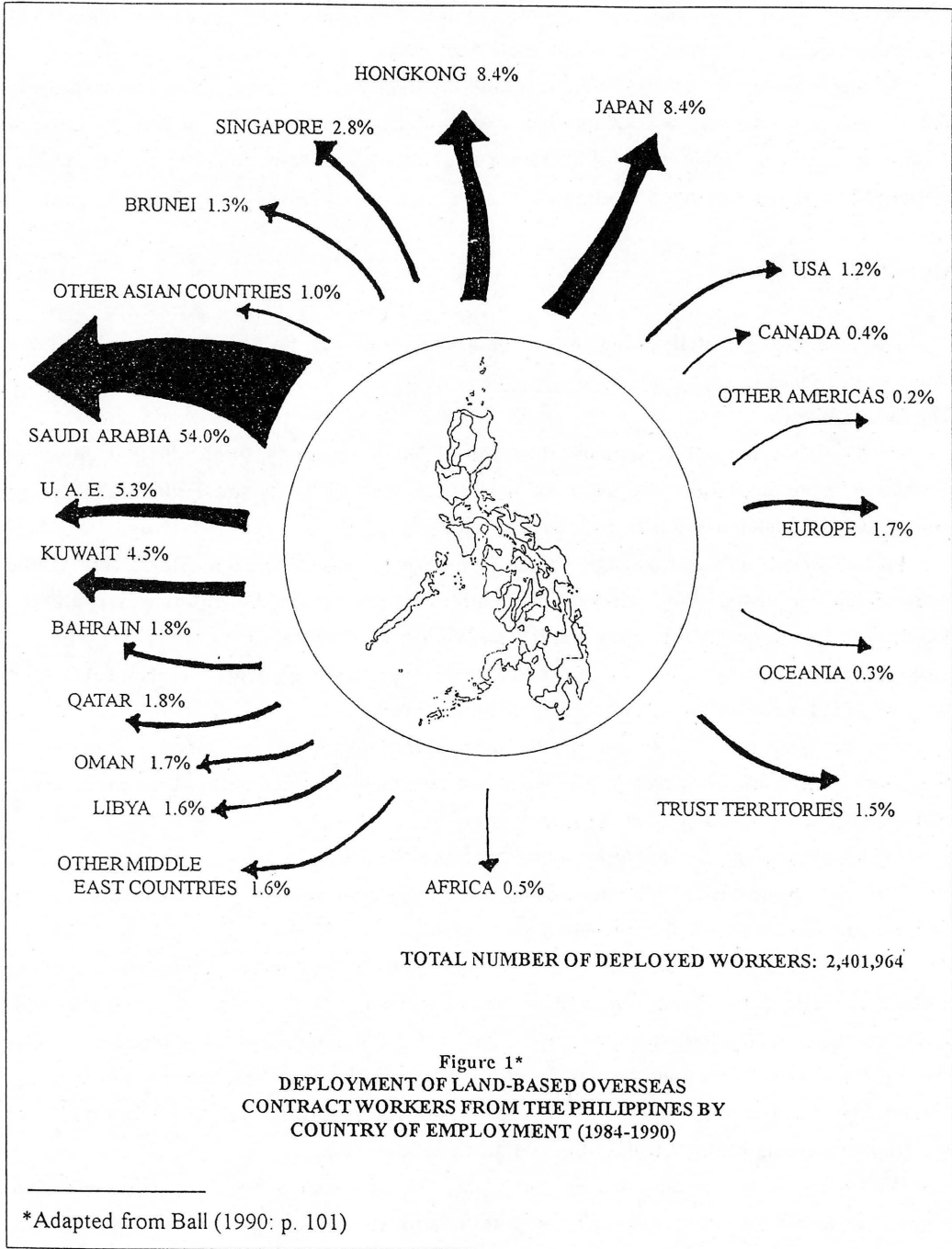
Within the Asian region, it ranks a close second to Hong Kong as the leading country of destination for Filipino overseas contract workers. Among those actually deployed to Asian work destinations between 1984 and 1990, 38.7 percent of a total of 524,237 workers went to Hong Kong while 38.5 percent went to Japan. While Filipino workers to Hong Kong are mostly females employed as domestic helpers, an overwhelming majority of Filipino workers to Japan are female entertainers. In 1987 alone, a total of 33,791 Filipino workers went to Japan (Go, 1991). Of these, 92.6 percent were female entertainers.

The figures, however, are considerably higher since these numbers do not include the illegal workers. Official statistics from the Japanese Ministry of Justice, however, reveal that between 1985 and 1990, there were a total of 85,873 illegal workers apprehended in Japan, the largest proportion of whom (36.6 percent) were Filipinos.

With the exception of Thailand, the sex composition of illegal Filipino workers to Japan is a sharp contrast to the overwhelmingly male composition of workers from other Asian countries. Of the 31,419 illegal Filipino workers apprehended between 1985 and 1990, 72.4 percent were females working mostly as entertainers. This category includes musical performers and dancers as well as stripteasers and bar hostesses. The illegal male workers, on the other hand, were mostly construction and factory workers.

It is evident that an overwhelming majority of Filipino workers in Japan, both legal and illegal, are women employed as entertainers. Media are replete with accounts, albeit generally anecdotal, of the abuse and exploitation of Filipina workers overseas. The issue of Filipina workers abroad is highly controversial and has drawn serious concern from various sectors of Philippine society. However, very few empirical investigations have been undertaken to date that look more closely into the phenomenon of contract labor migration to Japan.

Figure 1



Objectives. The main aim of this study, therefore, is to describe the characteristics of the Filipino contract workers to Japan, their labor migration experience from the pre-employment, employment, and post-employment stages, and the economic and non-economic consequences of working in Japan for the migrant and his/her family.

Methodology. To achieve the above objectives, both quantitative and qualitative research methods were used. The sample survey was utilized to generate more quantitative data while the case study was employed to generate more qualitative information.

An interview survey of 202 return Filipino contract workers from Japan, obtained using the chain referral method, was undertaken within Metro Manila and the nearby province of Cavite. In addition, case studies of 10 return migrant workers from Japan and their families were conducted using in-depth interviews.

Results of the Study

The results of the study bring into focus a number of significant points regarding labor migration of Japan.

The Role of Women

Unlike labor migration streams from other Asian countries (with the exception of Thailand), labor migration streams from the Philippines to Japan are highly selective of young, single females with fairly high levels of education.

In the study, the average age of the respondents was 22 years. Almost all of the respondents were female (90.1 percent) and single (71.3 percent). Although the majority of the Filipinos 15 years and above only have some high school education or less (57.5 percent), close to half of the respondents (47.3 percent) have completed high school while a substantial proportion (24.9 percent) have had some college education.

The predominance of women in the labor migration stream to Japan points to the important economic role played by the woman within the Filipino family, at the micro level, and within Philippine society, at the macro level.

At the micro level, the workers' savings and remittances have been used by their families for their daily basic needs, the education of other household members, the payment of debts, and the purchase or repair of the house.

At the macro level, the land-based Filipino workers in Japan, composed largely of women, are among the largest sources of foreign exchange in the country among the land-based overseas contract workers. Between 1985 and 1989 alone, they were the third among the top foreign exchange remitters to the Philippines, next to the land-based workers in the United States and Saudi Arabia (POEA, 1989). This attests to the invaluable contribution of the female overseas contract worker to the Philippine economy.

While this is so, women workers to Japan have acquired a negative image not only abroad but within the country as well. They are largely viewed as women of ill repute who go to Japan in the guise of entertainers but actually work as prostitutes. However, the fact that their overall level of satisfaction as well as their satisfaction with themselves significantly increased after having worked in Japan seems to suggest that the women have not allowed this negative image to affect them.

Perhaps, the family is their source of strength and social support. The positive regard

accorded to them by their parents and siblings who were their primary motivations for working abroad and the importance of their role within the family as partners in authority and decision-making help to cushion the social stigma attached to being a "japayuki".

Economic Benefits of Overseas Employment

As in other studies, the results of this investigation point to the economic gains that accrue to the worker and her family as a result of working overseas. The Filipina entertainer's average monthly salary of US\$550 in Japan is 8 times what she earned before she went overseas (US\$71) and 6.5 times what she earned upon returning to the Philippines (US\$89). Consequently, despite the fact that their average monthly salary is way below the mandated wage for entertainers set by the Japanese government at US\$1,500, working in Japan is still profitable and the issue of low wages was not among the major difficulties cited by the respondents. As revealed in the case studies, the primary reason for the low wages is the monthly commission taken from their salaries by talent managers, promotions agencies and Japanese promoters.

Evidence also suggests that the dream of owning a house and lot has the possibility of finding fulfillment within a shorter period of time if one were to work in Japan than in the Philippines. Although a majority of the respondents who owned the houses they lived in bought them before they first went to Japan, these houses were bought within a span of sixty (60) years. In contrast, the houses purchased after or during their employment in Japan were bought within a span of just a decade. Moreover, these houses had a current market value 2.5 times that of the houses bought before temporary labor migration to Japan. With the savings generated from working in Japan, those who already owned a house were likewise able to make improvements and repairs within the last five (5) years prior to the survey.

Overseas Employment and the Filipino Family

Although the most salient motivation for working in Japan is economic, central to it is the Filipino worker's abiding concern for his/her family and its welfare (Table 1). According to a majority of the respondents, working abroad would enable them not only to earn a higher income (53.5 percent) but also to support their families and to provide them a better future and a more comfortable life (54.4 percent).

Much has been said about the importance of the Filipino family by those who have studied Philippine society and culture over the last thirty years (Go, 1989). It has been described as the "micoworld of the Filipino" (Castillo, 1979) and the "highest value in Filipino culture" (Quisumbing, 1963). The results of this study lend support to this.

As noted earlier, the economic gains from working in Japan are undoubtedly considerable. However, it would seem that at the core of it all lies the overriding concern for the welfare of the family not just the self. This comes as no surprise because there is a strong sense of duty and loyalty among members within the Filipino family. Thus, to most of the Filipino workers in the study, working in Japan is simply a means of providing their families with a better future and a more comfortable life. Despite the fact that immediate members of their families discouraged them from working in Japan, the women nevertheless went ahead to

Table 1. Reasons for Working Abroad*

Reasons	Frequency	%
To support the family; provide them more comfortable life and a better future	110	54.4
To earn a higher income	108	53.5
To see another country/to travel	22	10.9
To acquire material things	20	9.9
To get a better job/to find a job	17	8.4
To be independent and self-reliant	12	5.9
To establish a business	12	5.9
To gain experience/to practice one's profession	11	5.4
To learn their culture/gain more knowledge/meet other people	7	3.5
To try one's luck/to take a chance	6	3.0
Ambition and interest in the job	6	3.0
Have seen improvements in the lives of others who had been abroad	6	3.0
Encouraged by family members, friends or relatives	3	1.5
Others	14	4.0

N =202

* The percentages do not equal 100% due to multiple responses.

Table 2. Reasons for Choosing Japan as a Place of Work*

Reasons	Frequency	%
Higher income; easy money	79	39.1
Job availability/talent fitted for Japan	69	34.1
Environment is better, more civilized country; warm and friendly people	29	14.1
Short duration of contract	19	9.4
No expenses when R applied	19	9.4
Presence of family members and/or Filipino friends	14	6.9
Easy work	12	5.9
To see/to travel in Japan	9	4.4
No choice; company assignment	8	4.0
Encouraged by friends/family members	4	2.0
No specific reasons	4	2.0
Others	28	13.9

N =202

* The percentages do not equal 100% due to multiple responses.

pursue their plans.

Individual and Social Factors in Overseas Employment

There are important individual and social factors that together reinforce working in Japan. These are the Filipino's strong sense of duty to the family, the desire to earn a higher income, the attraction of Japan as a work site, the encouragement of friends, the demands of the Japanese labor market, and the current state of the Philippine economy.

Given the state of the Philippine economy, it comes as no surprise that hundreds of

thousands of Filipinos have trooped out of the country in search of better work opportunities abroad. Japan was chosen as a specific work destination because it was viewed as a place which provided opportunities for a higher income and easy money (39.1 percent). (See Table 2). The choice was likewise motivated by the demand in the Japanese labor market. To a substantial proportion of the workers (34.1 percent), Japan is the place where jobs are available and where their talents are best suited.

It is striking to note that although the salient motivation for working in Japan is undeniably economic and the overwhelming concern of the Filipino for the welfare of the family, non-economic reasons have also prodded some of the respondents in the study to choose Japan over other possible work sites. Part of its attraction lies in Japan's environment, including its warm and friendly people (14.4 percent). To others, the short duration of work contracts (9.4 percent), the absence of any costs upon application (9.4 percent) and the perceived ease of the job (5.9 percent) were among the positive features of working in Japan. The presence of family members or friends in Japan was also cited by others (6.9 percent).

Social Networks and Overseas Employment

For the Filipino workers, their social networks of relatives and friends play a significant role in finding jobs in Japan and facilitating social adjustment while abroad.

Social networks and job opportunities. The survey reveals that half of the respondents learned about the job opportunities in Japan from friends who were either in the Philippines or who had been or were currently working in Japan at the time of the survey. About a quarter of these workers learned about them from relatives either in the Philippines or in Japan.

Social networks and social adjustment. The results of the study indicate that Filipino workers to Japan with legal status were fairly well adjusted and did not encounter any major difficulties. A little over half of the respondents (52.5 percent) reported that living in Japan did not pose any major difficulty for them. Loneliness, however, was a problem for some (15.8 percent), while job-related difficulties such as employers, co-workers, and the job itself posed as a problem for others (12.4 percent). The weather, the people, the Japanese language and food were also sources of strain for some of the workers.

That the workers did not have major problems on the job brings into focus the resilience and adaptability of the Filipino. Perhaps the fact that, on the average, the women have worked in Japan twice has familiarized them with the culture and the conditions of the job. Although they recognize the cultural differences between their own and that of the host country, they nevertheless try to cope with it. In cases where they feel that they can solve the problem and change the situation, they cope by actively seeking a solution to their difficulties. For instance, problems associated with the Japanese culture (e. g. language and food) are addressed by learning the Japanese language and culture. However, where problems involve interpersonal relations with employers and co-workers, the workers avoid conflict. They strive to maintain smooth interpersonal relations and cope by exercising patience, simply acquiescing or momentarily escaping from the problem by engaging in recreational or

other activities.

The presence of other Filipinos in the work force with whom the workers in the study have developed close interpersonal relations may likewise account for their ability to adjust and to cope with the problems and difficulties associated with the job and the foreign culture. Sharing the same cultural heritage, speaking the same language and finding themselves in identical circumstances may provide a strong unifying bond. This is perhaps the reason why the workers do not feel crowded in living quarters which they have to share units with an average of ten (10) other workers who are mostly Filipinos.

Moreover, one cannot discount the fact that practically all of the respondents in the study were legal workers. As a result, their legal status may likewise explain the absence of major problems and difficulties and their fairly acceptable working terms and conditions. The picture may not be as positive among those who work in Japan without a legal status.

One cannot also discount the possibility that the perceived adjustment and absence of any major difficulties among the workers is the result of various strategies of psychologically dealing with the problems of working and living abroad. As a defense mechanism enabling the workers to cope with the stresses and strains of working abroad, they may have resorted to denial of the subjective impact of working in Japan. Consciously or unconsciously, the workers may set aside their feelings, deny the existence of any problems or difficulties and focus solely on doing the job they came to do and surviving an alien environment. The workers may also resort to rationalization. To justify their working in Japan, they may have rationalized that the reason they are working abroad and enduring the difficulties attendant to it is their concern for the welfare of their families back home.

Perceived Psycho-Social Changes

Changes in self. Working in Japan has brought about changes in the values, attitudes, and ways of the Filipino workers (Table 3). In the perception of a substantial proportion of these workers, they became more mature (38.7 percent) and learned to deal with all kinds of people (27.9 percent). Some mentioned that they learned the value of money and of spending it wisely (18.9 percent), while others reported that they became strong and independent (17.1 percent) and even more physically attractive (11.7 percent).

Changes in family relationships. In the perception of the workers themselves, working in Japan has not brought about adverse effects on their family relationships.

The results of the study indicate that the status of the single worker in the family, particularly among his parents and siblings, has been enhanced. It would seem that for a majority of the single respondents, their parents now view them as important partners within the household (Table 4). Parents now tell them about their personal concerns (61.6 percent) and believe in their capabilities. They now take part in the important decisions made by their parents (63.8 percent) and are now consulted before decisions on family matters are arrived at (56.5 percent). The important role which the worker plays in the economic well-being of the family is evident. They now share in the financial responsibilities of their parents (85.5 percent). In fact, in the perception of half of the single respondents, their parents now rely on

Table 3. Perceived Positive Changes in Worker*

Positive Changes	Frequency	%
Became more mature	43	38.7
Able to deal well with all kinds of people	31	27.9
Learned to value money and to spend it wisely	21	18.9
Became strong and independent	19	17.1
Became more physically attractive	13	11.7
Became responsible	8	7.2
Learned Japanese language	8	7.2
Developed self-discipline	7	6.3
Developed humility/kindness	5	4.5
Became unselfish	4	3.6
Learned to observe cleanliness	4	3.6
Learned to behave properly	3	2.7
Learned to value time	3	2.7
Became more concerned about the future	3	2.7
Became courageous	3	2.7
Others	26	23.4

N = 111

* The percentages do not equal 100% due to multiple responses.

Table 4. Relationship with Parents

As a result of being away and working in Japan. . .	Agree	Disagree	Has Been Happening Before	Total
I now take part in their making of important decisions	63.8	13.8	22.5	100.1 (138)
My parents are more proud of me now	45.7	15.9	38.4	100.0 (138)
I share in their financial responsibilities	85.5	6.5	8.0	100.0 (138)
They now consult me before making decisions on family matters	56.5	21.0	22.5	100.0 (138)
They tell me about their personal concerns	61.6	13.8	24.6	100.0 (138)
They now believe in my capabilities	62.3	5.8	31.9	100.0 (138)
My parents rely on me to improve family's lot	55.5	32.1	12.4	100.0 (137)
They think of me mainly as a source of financial assistance	9.0	87.2	3.8	100.0 (133)

them to improve their family's lot.

Among the siblings, there appears to be more deference for the worker (Table 5). They now treat the worker as a second parent (66.4 percent). Not only do they rely on her for

Table 5. Relationship with Brothers and Sisters

As a result of being away and working in Japan. . .	Agree	Disagree	Has Been Happening Before	Total
My brothers and sisters treat me as second parent	66.4	17.9	15.7	100.0 (134)
They rely on me for schooling and other financial needs	60.8	30.7	8.5	100.0 (130)
They think of me mainly as a source of financial assistance	10.6	81.8	7.6	100.0 (132)
They now listen to me whenever I give advice	56.4	15.0	28.6	100.0 (133)
I am more highly regarded by my brothers and sisters	48.1	15.0	36.8	100.0 (133)
They usually obey my orders	36.0	21.3	42.6	100.0 (136)

guidance, they also rely on her for their schooling and other financial needs (60.8 percent).

In the perception of the workers married to Filipinos, working in Japan has resulted in stronger marital bonds (Table 6). As a couple, they now have a stronger marital relationship (67.7 percent). They have learned to appreciate and value each other more (70.0 percent), are now more open to each other (67.7 percent), and consult each other more often before making decisions on family matters (67.7 percent).

Table 6. Relationship with Spouse

As a result of being away and working in Japan. . .	Agree	Disagree	Has Been Happening Before	Total
We have a stronger marital relationship	67.7	12.9	19.4	100.0 (31)
We consult each other more often before making decisions on family matters	67.7	16.1	16.1	99.9 (31)
We became more distant	16.1	83.9	—	100.0 (31)
My spouse now think of me mainly as a source of financial assistance	3.3	96.7	—	100.0 (30)
My spouse and I are more open to each other	67.7	19.4	12.9	100.0 (31)
We have learned to appreciate and value each other more	70.0	13.3	16.7	100.0 (30)
We now have more disagreements than before	21.9	75.0	3.1	100.0 (32)

Likewise, the married respondents' relationship with their children was not adversely

affected by their working in Japan (Table 7). In their perception, their children continue to regard them highly (63.6 percent) and have not become more distant (82.8 percent) nor more difficult to discipline (88.5 percent). Moreover, a majority disagreed that their children now think of them mainly as a source of financial assistance (81.8 percent). In fact, in certain cases the respondents the respondents were of the opinion that their parent-child relationship was even enhanced. Although a substantial proportion were of the opinion that their children were open to them even before they left for Japan, (30.8 percent) and that they spent time together whenever the opportunity arose even then (20.7 percent), close to half agreed that as a result of being away and working in Japan, their children have become more open to them (46.2 percent) and they now spend time together whenever the opportunity presents itself (48.3 percent).

Table 7. Relationship with Children

As a result of being away and working in Japan. . .	Agree	Disagree	Has Been Happening Before	Total
My children look up to me more highly	31.8	4.5	63.6	99.9 (22)
They now think of me mainly as a source of financial assistance	18.2	81.8	—	100.0 (22)
I now find my children more difficult to discipline	7.7	88.5	3.8	100.0 (26)
They are now more open to me	46.2	23.1	30.8	100.1 (26)
We spend more time together whenever the opportunity arises	48.3	31.0	20.7	100.0 (29)
My children have become more distant to me	13.8	82.8	3.4	100.0 (29)

Decision-making. The results of the survey revealed that even prior to working in Japan, a majority of the workers played an important role in the decision-making process within the household (Table 8). Upon return to the Philippines, an even larger proportion of the workers participated in making decisions regarding various areas of concern within the household, particularly those that involved financial considerations. The largest percentage point increase in joint decision-making was in the area of budgeting and family expenditures (+ 23.2 percent) and the construction and repair of the house (+ 21.3 percent). These were followed by the educational plans of their brothers and sisters among single workers (+ 19.6 percent), the disposal and acquisition of family property (+ 18.0 percent), the choice of family residence (+ 17.6 percent), and the purchase of major household appliances (+ 17.6 percent).

Level of satisfaction. Working in Japan has resulted in an increase in the level of satisfaction of the workers in the various aspects of their life (Table 9). On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 indicating the greatest satisfaction and 1 indicating the greatest dissatisfaction,

Table 8. Extent of Worker's Participation in Decision-making Before and After Going to Japan

Areas of Decision-making	Before Going to Japan				After Going to Japan				Percent Point Difference*
	HS	JD	SD	Total	HS	JD	SD	Total	
Family expenses/budgetting	40.3	55.7	4.0	201	12.6	78.9	8.5	199	+23.2
Purchase of major household appliances	34.0	58.6	7.3	191	8.3	76.2	15.5	193	+17.6
Educational plans of: children (if married)	21.7	58.7	19.6	46	6.9	75.9	17.2	29	+17.2
brothers and sisters (if single)	35.9	59.4	4.7	128	15.2	79.0	5.8	138	+19.6
Occupation and job selection of: children (if married)	50.0	44.1	5.9	34	31.8	63.6	4.6	22	+19.5
brothers and sisters (if single)	58.4	40.0	1.6	125	50.0	43.4	6.6	136	+3.4
Disposing of/acquiring family property	34.6	61.3	4.2	191	15.4	79.3	5.3	188	+18.0
Choice of residence	26.8	66.3	6.8	190	7.0	83.9	9.1	186	+17.6
Construction/repair of house	37.0	58.9	4.2	192	17.2	80.2	2.6	192	+21.3
Putting up a business	25.2	66.3	8.6	163	8.2	82.4	9.4	170	+16.1
Discipline of children	17.6	79.6	2.8	142	15.8	79.5	4.8	146	-0.1

* Percentage Point Difference in Joint Decision-Making Before and After Going to Japan

Legend:

HS: Has no say

JD: Jointly decides

SD: Solely decides

Table 9. Worker's Level of Satisfaction

Areas	Before Going to Japan	Upon Return to the Philippines	T-Value
Socio-economic status	4.0	6.4	18.0**
Sense of self	4.4	6.6	14.6**
Relationship with: spouse (if married)	7.2	8.5	3.9**
parents (if single)	7.0	7.9	6.5**
Relationship with: children (if married)	7.8	8.9	3.5**
brothers/sisters (if single)	7.1	7.9	6.6**
Relationship with relatives	5.3	6.1	6.2**
Over-all level of satisfaction	5.3	7.2	13.0**

** p < .01

significant differences were found in the overall level of satisfaction of the workers with their life in general, as well as in specific aspects of their life before and after working in Japan. Their overall level of satisfaction rose from 5.3 before working in Japan to 7.2 upon return to the Philippines.

After having worked in Japan, they were more satisfied with their socio-economic status, their self worth, their relationship with their spouses and children, their parents and siblings,

as well as their relatives. The most striking increases in their level of satisfaction were evident in their socio-economic status as well as their self-worth. Before finding employment in Japan, the workers were dissatisfied with their socio-economic status (Mean = 4.0); however, upon return from Japan, their level of satisfaction rose to 6.4. Moreover, although they were not very satisfied with themselves prior to working in Japan (Mean = 4.4), their satisfaction with themselves rose to 6.6 after having worked in Japan.

It is striking to note, however, that although the workers' level of satisfaction with their life in general and in specific aspects of their life (particularly, their socio-economic status and their sense self worth) have risen, they are far from fully satisfied.

The Future of Filipino Labor Migration to Japan

The prevailing economic conditions in the Philippines today, characterized by high rates of unemployment and underemployment, and aggravated by a series of natural calamities and the pullout of the United States military facilities are likely to see the continued outflow of Filipino overseas contract workers to Japan as well as to other countries. The aspirations of the workers for themselves and their families which include owning a house and lot, investing in a business, and sending their brothers and sisters through college are long term goals which are not likely to be fulfilled with one or two 6-month contracts. For as long as employment opportunities are not made available locally to allow Filipinos to afford such basic social services as housing and education and there continues to be a demand for their skills in Japan and elsewhere, these women will continue to work abroad.

Thus, it comes as no surprise to find out that almost all of the respondents in the study signified their intention to seek reemployment in Japan.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion. The *Japayuki phenomenon* is recent in origin. However, the prospect of economic gain for the Philippine government, private entities (such as recruitment agencies, promoters, and talent managers), the women themselves, and their families will see the continued exodus of Filipina entertainers to Japan well into the year 2000. For as long as the Philippine economy does not improve and the government is unable to provide the necessary economic opportunities for its burgeoning labour force, Filipinos and Filipinas will continue to work abroad in the pursuit of economic advancement.

The psychological and social costs of working in Japan will remain a continuing concern of many sectors in Philippine society committed to the welfare of women workers abroad and their families left behind. Although the magnitude of exploitation and abuse that take place among the female migrant stock working in Japan is difficult to quantify empirically, given the methodological limitations of the few studies that have been undertaken thus far (including the one presented), the cases that have surfaced in the open are enough reason for serious concern and the formulation of concrete action programs in the areas of policy, intervention, and even research.

Many cases have been documented of abuse and exploitation, including sexual harassment, long working hours, low wages, physical abuse, and crowded living conditions. While the protection of the well-being of the workers and their families ought to remain a continuing priority, the Philippine government needs to work double time to put its economy in shape so that the day will come, in the not so distant future, when Filipinos will no longer have to cross the seas and to subject themselves to voluntary servitude abroad.

Recommendations. Much remains to be done in the area of research in order to better understand the subtleties and complexities of the labor migration phenomenon to Japan. Thus, the following studies are recommended:

1. Longitudinal studies which follow the migration experiences of Filipino workers from the pre-employment, employment and post-employment stages to better gauge the actual impact of the experience at each migration stage and to avoid problems of recall and rationalization in retrospective studies;
2. A comparative study of the migration experiences of legal and illegal workers as well as male and female workers, to determine the impact of the migration experience and the possible problems and difficulties specific to the sex and work status of the contract worker;
3. An in-depth study of cross-cultural marriages between Filipina overseas contract workers and their Japanese spouses to look into the family dynamics, including authority and decision-making, the possible sources of strain and stability in such relationships, and the changes in the relationship between the Filipina spouse and her family of orientation.
4. An investigation of the short-term and long-term consequences of working in Japan for the worker, his/her family and the communities left behind; and
5. An analysis of the socio-demographic, psycho-social, and other determinants of stress and other psycho-social costs for the worker and his/her family.

At the level of government action, both Filipino and Japanese, much needs to be done as well:

To better address the welfare needs of the worker and his/her family, the Philippine government must make a commitment to "education for adaptation" via policy formulations that will institutionalize it within the overseas employment program. Consequently, a comprehensive, well-planned and well implemented education program needs to be developed hand-in-hand with other programs, projects, and institutional structures designed to protect the interests and well-being of the worker and his/her family.

At the pre-employment and employment phases, it is suggested that the following strategies be adopted:

1. Improve the curriculum of pre-departure orientation programs to enable workers and their families to make informed decisions about working in Japan by including:
 - a. only basic facts that must be remembered, to avoid information overload, regarding such topics as the host country, terms and conditions of employment, government services to workers and their families, and the code of discipline and obligations of workers;

b. a discussion of possible problems and difficulties confronting the workers on the job, including a sharing of feelings, doubts and anxieties; and

c. more participatory strategies for better internalization, such as case studies and role playing;

2. Publish regular bulletins regarding welfare facilities and services available in major countries of destination, including Japan;
3. Develop programs for foreign affairs, labor and other welfare personnel to make them better informed and trained regarding the forms of assistance they can and are obliged to extend to the workers at the country of destination.

At the post-employment phase, the following strategies are recommended:

1. Develop education programs designed to develop or upgrade entrepreneurial skills of workers and their families, including managerial and technical skills, so that savings generated from working in Japan and elsewhere can be channelled to productive investment; and
2. Provide business counselling programs.

An ever continuing concern, however, should be the revitalization of the Philippine economy so that local employment and entrepreneurship are possible. However, given its current state, the Philippines may take years before it is able to provide adequate employment for its burgeoning labor force.

There is likewise a need for both the Philippines and Japan to arrive at a mutually acceptable bilateral agreement to provide for the protection of all Filipino workers in Japan and to address the problem of illegal workers, including their abuse and exploitation.

The Japanese government may need to liberalize its immigration laws to allow foreign workers, including Filipinos, to work legally in jobs which the Japanese refuse to take on anyway because they are *kitanai*, *kiken*, and *kitsue* (dirty, dangerous, and difficult).

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