

**Agents of change, colours of resistance: the socio-economic integration of
Filipina live-in caregivers in Montreal**

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ABSTRACT

Agents of change, colours of resistance: the socio-economic integration of Filipina live-in caregivers in Montreal

Isabelle Kapiga

The current Canadian federal government's Live-in Caregiver program has contributed over the last few decades to the international migration of temporary workers to Canada, particularly those from developing world countries with struggling economies such as the Philippines. The majority of participants in the program are skilled women lured by the opportunity of permanent residency which they can apply for upon completion of two years of work as a live-in caregiver.

This is a direct result of the asymmetrical relations from past colonialism and corporate globalization between the developed world and the developing world. Inevitably the Filipino economy has become dependant on transnational corporations and created labour export policies propelling Filipinos to be regarded as a commodity within the global trade system.

These relations have allowed the Canadian government to capitalize on the economic inequalities between Canada and the Philippines. The program reflects how Canada's need for cheap and skilled labour influences whether it restricts or slackens its immigration policies in order to procure such immigrant female workers. Regulations such as the requirement for the women to live-in and stay with the employer stated on the issued work permit forces them into precarious and sometimes illegal situations, showing the program is restrictive, discriminatory and anti-woman. The majority of the migrant

women in the Live-in Caregiver program (LCP) are visible minority women who are issued temporary status, lack labour rights and often encounter exploitative situations within their workplace.

Using an anti-racist feminist approach, this thesis will seek to explore how Canada's LCP has influenced the socio-economic integration and personal experiences of a sample of Filipina live-in caregivers in Montreal, Quebec. This thesis will initially review the available literature on how Canada's immigration policies have affected immigration trends over time. The current socio-economic outcomes for immigrant men and women who have recently arrived will be examined and compared to those of their Canadian-born counterparts. This will be followed by an assessment of the available literature that explores the contextual and explanatory macro-factors that have influenced the procurement of migrant women into the LCP such as Canada's ever-changing immigration laws and ideologies, as well as its historical and economic status.

With the use of in-depth qualitative research methods the focus will shift to a micro-level, analysing the personal experiences of a sample number of live-in caregivers within the LCP. A feminist approach is necessary to show how domestic work is devalued by the Canadian government which imposes its Eurocentric ideals and culture on these women whilst demoralizing them by denying them their basic human rights and violating their labour rights. The information gathered from the Filipina live-in caregivers will be analysed and discussed in detail. Based on the findings, the thesis will conclude with suggestions on how to change policies that affect the socio-economic outcomes of these women. Recommendations will be put forward that aim to improve their work and personal experiences as well as protect and empower them.

Dedicated to my family and loved ones.

Your faith in me and constant support is much appreciated.

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INTRODUCTION

The Context: Filipina Live-in Caregivers in Canada

In the last two decades, the majority of immigrant women who entered Canada to work as caregivers or domestic workers have been from the Philippines. Historically, Canada has been capitalizing on the economic inequalities of globalization by procuring marginalized visible minority migrant women via its immigration and employment programs. In doing so, the government devalues domestic labour and this is further reflected in the mandate to keep live-in caregivers pay at minimum wage (Grande & Kerr, 1998; Hodge, 2006; Valiani, 2009).

Thousands of Filipina women migrate to Canada each year to work as live-in caregivers within the private homes of Canadian employers caring for the children, elderly or disabled. These domestic workers provide reproductive labour within the global economy and are seen as a commodity which can be bought by the privileged women, in the Western world (Anderson, 2001). We observe an international transfer of the role of care giving from the more affluent working middle-class women in Canada to the Filipina domestic worker who in turn becomes the surrogate mother. “It has been argued that by employing someone to undertake housework and childcare, the traditional household patriarchal system” is maintained but at the same time it relieves the female employer of the double burden (Momsen, 1999:4). Literature shows that there is a distinct division of reproductive labour among working women in the global economy which is due to the need for low-wage service workers in post-industrial nations. The

term “reproductive labour” is used to describe the labour required to sustain the productive labour force (Parreñas, 2000: 561).

Within the global context, domestic work has become a feminized occupation within the private and public spheres and at a local and global scale within the labour market. Gender inequity in both developing and developed countries has perpetuated the belief that care giving and reproductive labour is a woman’s job, despite the increased rate of labour market participation of women (Parreñas, 2000). This has resulted in more responsibility for working women within their professional and personal spheres, in particular for Filipinas LCGs, they have the additional burden of being, transnational breadwinners, and also carrying the gendered roles of being mothers and wives from a distance. While they provide emotional and physical support for their employer’s families, these migrant mothers have to leave behind their own nuclear families in the care of extended family members. With their earnings they send money and gifts back home to support their families, maintain emotional ties, to gain moral recognition and to compensate for their physical absence (Lan, 2003).

Despite the economic devaluation and stigma attached to domestic work, these skilled foreign migrant women readily enter the live-in caregiver program (LCP) in hopes to obtain permanent residency. Stasiulis and Bakan (1997), describe the opportunity to apply for permanent residency as the “carrot” that is dangled in front of the “stick” which is the requirement to work with the same employer for two years. Canada considers the LCP as a form of foreign aid to the women allowing them to enter the country and upon completion of two years of work to eventually have citizenship rights (Arat-Koc, 1992; Stasiulis & Bakan, 1997:123). Most Filipinas have prior experience working as domestics

in other countries such as Saudi Arabia, Hong Kong and Thailand where they have no right to permanent residency.

In Canada, working women often cannot balance the responsibilities of motherhood, house-work and their professional jobs. Theoretically, Canada's childcare system is designed to provide a solution by making daycare accessible and affordable, but in reality it is difficult to find space in daycare and is increasingly costly. Private care giving is an available option, but there are not enough Canadian citizens within the labour market willing to receive such low wages and work under such challenging conditions (Macklin, 1999; Mikita, 1994:23). In particular there are few Canadian caregivers who would be willing to fulfill the employer's requirement of "live-in" as that would mean relinquishing their freedom and being vulnerable to isolation, powerlessness, invisibility and loneliness (Mikita, 1994:23).

Canada institutionalized its first foreign domestic worker policy in 1955, under the Foreign Domestic Movement which later became the LCP. This program allowed for the procurement of women mainly from Third World countries. Initially, preference was for women from the Caribbean, but in the 1980s that shifted to women from the Philippines. This program has been portrayed as an employment and immigration opportunity for skilled migrant women from economically marginalized countries to work as live-in caregivers in private homes of the mostly white middle and upper class Canadians (Stasiulis & Bakan, 1997:123-124). These LCGs are allowed entry to Canada on a temporary visa and with an employer specific work permit, they are required to adhere to the strict regulations of the LCP, such as, being obliged to live-in and to complete two years of work as a LCG within three years. Failure to complete the two

years in the allocated period or, to follow any of the rules of the LCP can result in deportation.

The governments of Philippines and Canada have contributed to the increased international migration of women to Canada via their intergovernmental policies and agreements. These mutual agreements between the two countries has proven to be beneficial to both countries, for the Philippines the remittances from their Filipino foreign workers brings forth economic growth and helps to lower their global foreign debt, whilst for Canada this means the availability of migrant workers to fill jobs that are low paying and demeaning which the Canadian labour force do not wish to occupy.

A major concern for human rights groups and advocates of LCGs is the fact that receiving countries such as Canada do not strive to enforce their laws and policies pertaining to the labour standards and employment protection rights of LCGs. This is all in light of the de-skilling of domestic work and the perception that it is non-productive work. This leaves LCGs with limited access to employment protection and due to their status they find themselves sometimes in very vulnerable and precarious situations as they lack empowerment and engagement in regards to the public policy process and legal rights. The Filipina participants in the LCP often have their labour rights abused and are isolated and cannot report it in fear of losing their job or their employer reporting them to immigration officials. In particular working and living within the employer's home increases the chances of the LCG being exposed to physical, sexual and emotional abuse (Hodge, 2006; Anderson, 2001; Stiell & England, 1997a). The main reason the Filipina women continue to work as LCGs despite their exploitation, the lack of protection and limited access to services is the hope of family reunification in Canada (Valiani, 2009).

Most of the available literature on this topic looks at the structural relationship between the politics of reproductive labour and the flow of Filipina domestic worker migration. There is a lack of literature looking at the personal life experiences of Filipina LCGs as they attempt to establish themselves socially and economically in Canada's metropolitan cities. Several studies researching the situation of LCGs have been done, but they have an impersonal outlook, where the LCGs are seen as objects of study, there are few where the LCGs themselves are approached, listened to and interacted with (Grande & Kerr, 1998; Pratt, 1999; Lan, 2003).

There is a need for more in-depth ethnographic analyses of the life stories of the Filipinas who migrate to Canada as LCGs. Particular attention will be paid to the socio-economic and personal reasons that propelled the women to migrate to Canada as LCGs. My research will assess how Canadian employment and immigration policies influence how successful the LCGs integrate into the local community and the labour force.

To develop my argument, I will begin by reviewing relevant bodies of literature— one being how Canadian immigration policies influenced the flow of immigrants in general and then secondly, I will comparatively assess how various institutional barriers, social capital, and modes of entry for immigrant men and women influences their economic outcomes within Canada's as well as make comparisons with the Canadian-born population. Then I will narrow my review of the literature to focus on Canada's immigration policies and programs specific to the recruitment of migrant Filipina women as LCGs. I will then proceed to describe my research methodology, and my approach in obtaining a sample of Filipina LCGs who have recently arrived to Montreal.

CHAPTER 1

Literature Review: Canadian Immigration policy and Immigrant workers

1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this literature review is first to examine the major recent literature that studies the overall immigration process in Canada and the major changes to immigration policy over time that have influenced the trends in Canadian immigration. Then, I will proceed to look at articles and government publications that study how entry into the Canadian workforce is implemented for recently arrived immigrants, and how their earnings compare to their Canadian counterparts.

Immigrant women typically face more challenges and discrimination than immigrant men do when it comes to integrating into Canadian society, let alone the workforce. In addition, they often have limited family support and knowledge of community resources when it comes to employment services and care giving as they attempt to establish themselves within the Canadian workforce.

The literature shows that they often find it difficult to find jobs equivalent to their previous occupations in their country of origin and their academic qualifications are devalued. Immigrant women often find themselves working in gender segregated labour markets where they are excluded from employment protection and earn low salaries. Subsequently policies that are unacceptable to the general Canadian labour force are enforced upon these immigrant women and their male counterparts.

I have chosen to shift my attention towards immigrant women and their modes of entry into Canada and how that influences their chances of finding professional work and successfully integrating into their community socially, culturally and economically.

There is not much up-to-date qualitative literature available covering the socio-economic experiences of women migrant workers from the Philippines in Montreal. In particular, there is an obvious gap in the literature when it comes to studies on Filipino immigrant communities outside of Toronto and Vancouver. My research will attempt to explore the working conditions of Filipina live-in caregivers, and the institutional barriers that these women encounter, as well see how readily available community resources are to them.

The focus of my thesis will be on immigrant women who are of visible minority that have recently immigrated to Canada as foreign workers, in particular those from the Philippines who are visible minorities that live in the city of Montreal, Quebec and are actively working as live-in caregivers which is an example of a gender segregated job.

1.2 Changes to Canadian Immigration Policy

Canada today has a comparatively open immigration policy and it has one of the highest per capita admission rates. Historically immigration shaped Canada's society, economy and culture. Originally immigration was used to build the country up, for example the railroads and agricultural economy relied heavily on the immigrant workforce and they also helped populate the land especially the rural, frontier regions such as western Canada's prairies (Knowles, 1997).

In the late 1800's western, eastern and central European countries were Canada's main sources of immigrants, in particular those of French and British origin were

preferred and “blacks received a decidedly cold reception from Canadian immigration agents” as did prospective immigrants of Asian origin (Knowles, 1997).

The Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) publication *Forging Our Legacy* tells us that in 1967 the Point system was created to eliminate racial discrimination and to encourage the influx of skilled workers. “The prioritizing of highly educated, skilled immigrants and business personnel has since been the objective of the Canadian State” (Man, 2004;135).

At the same time Canada opened more immigration offices in third world countries causing a major shift in source countries allowing for a more diverse flow of immigrants in particular those of visible minority (Citizenship and Immigration Canada). The Statistics Canada publication *Immigrants in Canada's Census Metropolitan Areas* by Grant Schellenberg shows that between 1981 and 2001 the percent of immigrants arriving from North America and North and Western Europe decreased by 20% whilst those from East Asia and South Asia increased by 21% (Schellenberg, 2004).

The Point System is based on skills of the applicant, individual personal characteristics, fluency in English or French and their likely success in the Canadian labour market. In 1976, a new Immigration Act listed the three main priorities of the immigration policy, the first priority was towards family reunification, the second priority was in regard to humanitarian concerns, and the third priority was the promotion of Canada's social, economic, cultural and demographic goals which are still at the core of Canadian immigration policy (CIC, 2005; Institute for Research on Public Policy, 2008).

DeVoretz and Pivnenko (2007) tell us that Quebec and Ottawa signed an agreement in 1971 that allowed Quebec to be involved in the immigrant selection process

overseas. The Lang-Cloutier Agreement meant that Quebec had “orientation officers” at offices abroad with the intentions being to lure prospective immigrants to Quebec. Furthermore, the 1975 Andras-Bienvenue Agreement invited Québec officials to participate in the recruitment and the selection of immigration candidates at the Canadian offices overseas. Three years later, the signing of the Cullen-Couture Agreement enabled Québec to play a major role in the selection of independent immigrants based on their various economic and social factors in order to measure ability to integrate and prosper in the province using Québec’s own points system.

The Canada-Quebec Accord Relating to Immigration and Temporary Admission of Aliens, also known as the McDougall-Gagnon-Tremblay Agreement, was signed to reinforce Quebec’s position on immigration allowing the province to select all its independent immigrants (DeVoretz & Pivnenko, 2007).

1.3 Recent Immigrant Trends and Occupational Barriers

Typically, recent immigrants are from the upper class and come from urban areas in their country of origin and are highly skilled and educated. These characteristics of the latest wave of immigrants is to their advantage as it helps them meet the high education qualifications criteria that Immigration Canada sets and is suitable in terms of their integration into Canadian society (Schellenberg, 2004). Canada’s population growth rates are highly dependent on net international migration, for Canada that amounts to almost two-thirds. It is projected that as early as 2011 net migration might be accountable for labour force growth and by 2030 for all population growth (Zietsma, 2007).

Frenette and Morissette (2003) note that despite the fact that recent immigrants are highly educated they were often employed in lower skilled jobs relative to their pre-migration jobs and their earnings were below national averages and declining between 1980 and 2000. This has caused immigration policy-makers to question why immigrants with high education levels are not succeeding in the Canadian labour market and subsequently research has increased in attempts to find the answer. Peter Li (2001) says it is due to the refusal or reluctance of regulatory agencies to grant full recognition to immigrants' credentials as equivalent to those of native-born Canadians.

Guida Man informs us the new *Canadian Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* (IRPA) which was implemented on June 28, 2002 replaced the previous 1976 Act. In her article, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) is quoted in 2002 stating that the objective of this new Act is to ensure "that immigration results in the greatest possible economic and social benefits for Canada" (Man, 2004:135). Man proceeds to explain how Canada goes through several steps to ensure this, the first of which is the selective admission of permanent residents who are skilled workers, investors and entrepreneurs; they are expected to contribute to Canada's economic, cultural and social growth (Man, 2004). When it comes to the skilled workers, the new Act states that their selection is based on their skills, but attention is given to education, knowledge of official languages, work experience, age, arranged employment in Canada and adaptability (Man, 2004).

Peter Li (2001) brings to light the problem of foreign-achieved educational credentials not being acknowledged as being equal to those obtained within Canadian institutions. Lower market value is being attached to immigrants' educational qualifications that are equivalent and at times surpass those of native-born Canadians. In

reality it is often found the educational qualifications are not inferior but rather different and therefore not recognized by licensing bodies and regulatory agencies (Li, 2001; Worswick, 2004).

When evaluating foreign skill during the Canadian admission process, the amount of human capital gained from work experience in the home country is also taken into account, but Canadian employers often disregard foreign attained human capital that immigrants possess. Christopher Worswick (2004) is quoted saying, “An immigrant with 20 years of work experience in another country will not necessarily have higher earnings than a similar immigrant with only five years experience” (Worswick, 2004: 6). This is because Canadian employers often devalue and show reluctance to accepting immigrants’ credentials, past foreign work experience therefore offering them lower salaries and lower-skilled positions. (Worswick, 2004; Schaafsma & Sweetman, 2001).

During the immigration admission process, Worswick points out that an applicant under the Skilled Worker Class can be rewarded up to 25 points for their foreign education increasing the chances of meeting the 67-point minimum and thereby increasing their chances of being accepted (Worswick, 2004). He suggests there is need for a reassessment on how Canadian policy values, defines and considers the education category as currently the skills that immigrants come with are being underutilized (Worswick, 2004).

Occupational barriers are defined as entry requirements that limit employment in various occupations according to a 2001 report by Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC). Two types of occupational barriers are mentioned by HRSDC, the first applies to all persons and the other applies differentially to immigrants.

Barriers operating differentially are found in teaching, engineering, and health professions and in construction trades to name a few. They make a point of stating that “First, the existence of a barrier operating differentially does not imply that there is discrimination against immigrants (or that there is no discrimination against immigrants)” (HRSDC, 2001:8). They explain that these barriers can be due to “differences in the type of training implied by a given field of study code for immigrants and for the non-immigrant” (HRSDC, 2001:8).

They proceed to give an example of persons applying to be specialist physicians; in this case the general occupational barrier for everyone is the minimum requirements such as fulfilling a certain number of years of schooling, holding formal certification in medicine and in their speciality and having previous training. In the case of immigrants hoping to practise as specialized physicians they often encounter additional difficulties despite meeting the general occupational barriers (HRSDC, 2001).

Occupational barriers to credential recognition exist in the form of professional associations, we see this particularly in the case of engineers and doctors (Man, 2004). Worswick suggests the immigrant selection system should implement employer sponsorship as part of the admission of skilled workers or reward point-wise, applicants that have a confirmed offer of permanent employment (Worwick, 2004).

Abdolmohammad Kazemipur (2004) informs us that recent research on immigration has begun to use the concept of social capital to examine the adaptation experiences of immigrants and ethnic minorities in new countries. Martin Marger (2001) informs us that social capital is a vital resource that enables immigrants to find their economic and social niches in their host country and it influences their adaptation process

and has been found to be quite important when immigrants are starting up a business. It can be in the form of the ethnic networks or family ties. The context of the receiving country (broader society) can also be considered as social capital as many immigrants say the quality of life is often the main reason they chose to immigrate to Canada (Marger, 2001).

Social capital can be looked at as a success indicator for immigrants as it enables them to establish their economic and social niches (Kazemipur, 2004). Social capital is relevant because of two reasons, and the first has to do with the immigrants being minorities in their host country, which forces them to face limitations such as language and culture. This leads to them developing stronger communal ties and increased reliance upon communal resources. The second reason has to do with their immigrant status and with it brings devaluation in the new labour market of their education and skills from their home countries along with exploitation and discrimination as they lack Canadian work experience and knowledge of their rights (Kazemipur, 2004).

1.4 Immigrant Employment and Earnings

“Canada currently admits economic immigrants based on primarily economic criteria and not country of origin characteristics” (DeVoretz & Laryea, 1999:25). They argue that the most productive mixture of human capital attributes are knowledge of one or both of Canada’s official languages, youth (below age 40) and previous job experience and exposure to modern technologies. They criticise the lack of attention given to an economic immigrant’s country of origin’s characteristics during the immigration selection process as he argues the country of origin and place of acquisition of education

is crucial in determining the success rate of immigrant integration into the Canadian work force (DeVoretz & Laryea, 1999).

Don J DeVoretz is a research fellow in the Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA) and is an economist at Simon Fraser University. He has done a lot of research on immigrant labour market outcomes. In the IZA discussion paper *Canadian Immigrant Experience: Any lessons for Europe?* DeVoretz and Laryea stress that the right human capital mix and experience are key to positive labour outcomes in the host country for immigrants (DeVoretz & Laryea, 1999).

“Knowledge of the dominant language in Canada is essential for economic integration and success. Minimal language skills must be learned by all economic entrants prior to their arrival to insure that their skills are optimized” (DeVoretz & Laryea, 1999: 25).

Chapter eight of the discussion paper looks at immigrant labour market experiences and the findings show that immigrants are isolated in segmented labour markets upon entry and face wage discrimination.

DeVoretz and Laryea then go on to look at the ethnic concentrations in various occupations, across the three largest cities using Hiebert’s index which is an index for measuring the degree of ethnic concentration by occupation. The index provides the ratio of the actual to the expected number of immigrants by ethnicity in various occupations. Third World male ethnic groups were found to be underrepresented in human capital intensive occupations (lawyers, university teachers) and overrepresented in occupations such as taxi drivers (DeVoretz & Laryea, 1999).

Recent working age immigrants between the ages of 24 to 54 that have been in Canada five years or less who arrived between 2001 and 2006 were found to be having more trouble integrating into the labour market compared to their predecessors that arrived between the years 1996 and 2001 despite them having higher educational achievements than their Canadian-born rivals (Zietsma, 2007). It was found that often immigrant's educational credentials did not match their occupation attainment. Immigrants were over-represented in low skilled jobs and underrepresented in high-skilled jobs.

Recent immigrants are more likely to work in the sales and services jobs as well as the food service, accommodation and manufacturing industries. Those who had been in the labour force more than ten years were found in the technical and scientific services and professional jobs. The natural and applied sciences jobs were common amongst newly-landed immigrants compared to Canadian born persons (Zietsma, 2007).

The differences in earnings between immigrant women and men were greater than among Canadian born. Recent immigrants typically have no job security, work long hours with low earnings and with no benefits, they are less likely to work full-year or full-time. *The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and the *Employment Equity Act* state that a "person's ethnic heritage should not constrain his or her labour market opportunity" (Pendakur & Pendakur, 1998:519). There is increasing evidence that earnings among immigrants specifically those that belong to certain ethnic groups are much lower than immigrants who are not of visible minority and whites.

According to Pendakur and Pendakur, public policy is to blame as it wrongly focuses on "discrimination against visible minorities instead of discrimination against

specific ethnic groups” (Pendakur & Pendakur, 1998:519). They point out that when it comes to the discussion of immigrants of various ethnicities and Canadian born people of multi-ethnic backgrounds, data collected often reflects the individual’s subjectivity on ethnicity. Therefore the analysis of earnings differences between ethnic immigrants and Canadian born people who may also be multi-ethnic may present even more of a challenge (Pendakur & Pendakur, 1998). “In terms of wages, visible minorities appear to earn significantly less than other people with similar attributes. This disadvantage is compensated, but only partially, by union status that improved wages, but not by enough to offset it substantially” (Reitz & Verma, 2004: 850).

Studies showed that “racial minority groups generally are less likely to be found in unionized jobs compared to the white majority” and that is attributed correctly to labour market discrimination”. The gap in unionization was found to diminish over time, but does not completely disappear for new immigrants particularly those from racial minority groups (Reitz & Verma, 2004: 850).

In some Canadian Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs), immigrants were more likely than their Canadian born counterparts to be self-employed in addition to being employed in the labour force. Self-employment was found to be more amongst men and older individuals (Schellenberg, 2004). Frenette and Morissette (2003) point out there has been deterioration in the relative earnings of recent immigrants upon arrival and the time lag for them to gain sufficient earnings that are equivalent to Canadian-born individuals is increasing. In 2006, the Labour Force Survey found that the national unemployment rate for the Canadian-born population was 4.9% and was 11.5% for recently immigrants (Zietsma, 2007).

According to Jeffrey Reitz (2007), there are four main determinants of immigrant employment success: immigration policy and settlement patterns, “entry” and assimilation over time, lower value of immigrant human capital, and the origins of immigrants (Reitz, 2007:3). Research has shown that as the time spent in Canada increases the chances of immigrants getting employed at high-skilled jobs are higher and unemployment rates are lower due to integration into the Canadian job market and prolonged stay in Canada allowing for more work experience. It was found that immigrants that had stayed in Canada for over ten years eventually had labour-market outcomes that were similar to their Canadian-born counterparts suggesting convergence (Schellenberg, 2004).

Andrew Jackson (2002) is sceptical of the “catch-up” theory that states economic differences based on race will disappear as immigrants gain more Canadian job experience and move into the mainstream, as this applied to previous white European immigrants. The sad reality is that, the majority of immigrants from racialized groups who came to Canada in the 1980s have still not caught up with their Canadian-born counterparts in terms of earnings or occupations. This reflects on the fact that the economic gap between immigrants and their Canadian counterparts has widened since the 1980s (Jackson, 2002:1).

Recent immigrants are more likely to earn low wages (under \$20,000 per year) than to earn high wages (\$100,000), it takes between 10 to 20 years within Canada on average for immigrants to begin earning high wages (Schellenberg, 2004). The lengthy time required for immigrants to be successfully employed implies that it takes some time for them to get acclimatized to their host country and enter the workforce.

Integration into the labour market varies across provinces. For example, due to Alberta's thriving economy recent immigrants have more success entering the workforce there as opposed to other locations across Canada. If we compare unemployment rates for example it is at 5.8% for immigrants who arrived between 2001 and 2006, much lower than the national rate mentioned before. The large CMAs such as Quebec and Toronto, all have high immigrant unemployment rates and this was applicable to all immigrants irrespective of when they arrived to Canada and their education level.

In Montreal the unemployment rate for recently arrived immigrants was 18.1% in 2006 which was three times that of Canadian-born Montrealers, which reflects obstacles they face such as language barriers, lack of resources and lack of Canadian experience (Zietsma, 2007). Montreal is distinct from other CMAs in that it is a bilingual city, the majority of recent immigrants to Montreal are from French speaking countries like Haiti, Algeria, France, Morocco and Lebanon to name a few. This shows that the languages spoken within the host city can play a major role in the decision making on where to settle (Schellenberg, 2004).

The Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada (LSIC) started with the intentions to find out how (newly arrived immigrants adjust over time to living in Canada and to better understand their settlement experiences. The first interviews were with immigrants who had been in the country for only six months; they were conducted between April 2001 and June 2002. The immigrants were interviewed again two years after their arrival and four years after their arrival (Schellenberg & Maheux, 2005). Within the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada (LSIC) recent immigrants were asked what they liked and disliked about Canada and they replied they liked the freedom, rights,

safety and security; lack of employment opportunities was at the top of the list for things most disliked (Schellenberg & Maheux, 2005; Statistics Canada, 2003).

The main reasons given for immigrating to Canada and remaining were the quality of life, education and the social system, the desire to be close to family and friends, the future prospects for their family and the peaceful nature of the country. Individuals seeking employment said they encountered many problems, such as lack of recognition of their educational credentials obtained abroad, lack of Canadian work experience and no recognition of previous foreign work experience, language barriers and lack of contacts and social networks in the work force. They often encountered more than two of these barriers. New immigrants also mentioned other challenges such as a long wait for health services, financial and time constraints, lack of credit history, transportation constraints and no familiarity with the city. It should be noted some of these are transitory and are experienced only at the beginning. Few listed economic factors as a reason for staying in Canada (Schellenberg & Maheux, 2005).

All new immigrants arriving in the decade preceding the 2001 Census were found to be residing in one of Canada's 27 census metropolitan areas (CMAs), and the majority making up 73% were found in the largest CMAs such as Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver (Schellenberg, 2004). This pattern might be a reflection of the fact that individuals with a degree who live in the larger CMAs and who work full time have higher net earnings than their counterparts in smaller CMAs (Li, 2001).

1.5 Women and Modes of Entry

In some less developed nations structural adjustment programmes and poor economies have reduced opportunities for male employment and previous forms of profit making which has resulted in reduced government revenues. This had brought about an increased reliance on women's labour to help sustain the state and household as part of state economic strategies. This has meant higher flows of international migration of women to all regions of the world (Boyd & Pikkov, 2005). Between 1991 and 2001 Madine VanderPlaat informs us one million women arrived in Canada, constituting 34% of all foreign born females. 58% of the newcomer population came from Asia, including the Middle East, 7% originated from Africa, 5% came from the Caribbean and 6% represented Latin America and 74% of the newcomer population were visible minorities (Vanderplaat, 2007).

Evangelia Tastsoglou and Valerie Preston bring to our attention that many integration theories do not consider gender. This implies that it is assumed that both men and women face the same adversities despite the mounting evidence that men and women's integration experiences differ immensely. When feminist and anti-racism perspectives are considered, Tastsoglou and Preston theorize integration as "racialized gender parity". Note that parity is measured relative to the Canadian born white male's economic experience which is used to assess the economic integration of immigrant women (Tastsoglou & Preston, 2005:47).

There is a stark difference between the entry criteria for immigrant men and women when they immigrate to Canada. There is evidence of gender stratification in the immigration admission process. Women often enter as wives or dependents of men and are legally dependant on their husbands who sponsor their admission, and there are far

more women who enter under humanitarian or as refugees whilst the majority of men enter as economic immigrants and as the principal applicant (Boyd & Pikkov, 2005:1).

Another factor that censuses and surveys often omit is the age at entry of immigrants. Tastsoglou and Preston argue that age at time of immigration influences their experiences of labour market integration. They support this argument by using Monica Boyd's words "Women who migrate as children are more likely than those who migrate as adults to have educational attainments and work experience that are valued by Canadian employers" (Tastsoglou & Preston, 2005:47).

Gender stratification to a certain extent continues within the labour force as women are often employed in female-type occupations and manual jobs such as domestics, cleaning and nursing. But there are differences in type of occupation between Canadian-born women and immigrant women showing evidence of occupational and industrial segmentation. In 2001, 11.7% of all immigrant women worked in manual occupations compared with 5.9% of Canadian-born women. Canadian-born women typically held managerial, professional and clerical occupations (Tastsoglou & Preston, 2005). On the other hand, the jobs that immigrant women first secure are often temporary, marginalized, low paying and unregulated by the state (Boyd & Pikkov, 2005; Anderson, 2001).

Jeffrey Reitz points out that we must also acknowledge that the treatment of immigrants within labour markets is affected by factors such as the overall labour demand, institutional forces such as labour unions and government regulatory regimes and labour market structures (Reitz, 2007).

1.6 Immigrant Women: Settlement and Work Experiences

In this section I examine immigrant women, in particular their “human capital endowments” a term borrowed from Jeffrey Reitz (2007), such as education and qualifications, work experience, and knowledge of Canada’s official languages. Personal characteristics such as nationality, ethnic identity and marital status, family composition and community support are also influential in determining how successful they are in integrating into the community and workforce. But first an overall definition of immigrant women is necessary in order to proceed.

“Immigrant [women] comes from all over the world: Asia, Africa, Europe, North or South America, or Oceania. Immigrants can be white or people of colour, speak English, French or another language as a mother tongue” (CRIAW, 2005; Ng-See-Quan, 2005:1).

Tastoglou and Preston (2005) say the term “immigrant woman” is socially constructed and is charged with racist, sexist and class biases, where the women become categorized through legal and economic processes. Kamlyn Ng-See-Quan emphasises that the distinction between racialized and immigrant women is still vague and that racialized women are not necessarily immigrants and thus a thorough analysis helping to distinguish between racialized and immigrant women is necessary (Ng-See-Quan, 2005).

Upon reading related literature stemming from various disciplines, it can be seen that the plight of immigrant women is not given as much focus as it deserves. They struggle just like their male counterparts; they often face more obstacles such as being female, an ethnic minority and foreign-born. Monica Boyd’s analysis in 1984 confirmed

the existence of a double negative effect in which being a woman and foreign born operated as a disadvantage for immigrant women. She did mention that the nature of the double negative had yet to be clarified. This implies that sex and nativity influence the chances of immigrant women being employed, but this alone does not explain why they hold lower occupational status.

Boyd points out that comparatively the labour market outcomes tend to be better for immigrant men than for women, and that it is even harder for young women (Boyd, 1984). Immigrant women of working age have higher unemployment rates and lower employment rates regardless of how long they have lived in Canada. The unemployment rate in 2006 for women residing in Canada five years and less was 13% compared to 10.3% for men. The opposite is said for Canadian born, the men have a higher unemployment rate of 5.2%, compared to 4.6 % for women (Zietsma, 2007).

In previous years women have made great achievements towards empowerment, such as seeing gains in paid employment through the union movement. They have won the right to bargain collectively in large workplaces which has meant improved wages and working conditions. Unionization has promoted pay equity for women, and the public sector unions provide more protection as compared to private sector unions, particularly in regards to discrimination, sexual harassment, health and safety risks. But often unions exclude the most vulnerable, such as part time workers and the flexible labour force who are often immigrant women. Sadly these vulnerable women still get union fees taken from their pay, so at the end of the day they do not reap much benefits (Man, 2004).

Theoretically speaking, a society that embraces cultural pluralism such as Canada should not penalize newcomers who maintain ethnic attachments or distinctive behaviours as these differences can be an asset rather than a liability. Reitz and Sklar point out that, immigrants who remain attached to their

“ethnic culture, identity, behaviours, social networks and institutional affiliations will have to experience the personal consequences in lost opportunity for good jobs and high earnings and that they may impose costs on society because ethnic attachments restrict and distort the optimal use of human resources” (Reitz & Sklar, 1997:234).

They found women more than men experience a higher sense of ethnic and cultural attachment therefore encountering lower success rates in the Canadian labour force. They observed that within the enclave community, immigrant women are less often self-employed than men and that the majority of immigrant family businesses are owned by men and the women family members are found in subordinate roles within the business.

“Women in minority groups could be seen as more vulnerable than men to the costs of ethnicity. This is not only because some traditional cultures may assign lower status to women than others, but also because patterns of ethnic retention seem to vary by gender, because the enclave economy provides less job opportunities for women than for men (perhaps even fewer than for women in the mainstream)” (Reitz & Sklar, 1997:236).

Religion at times has played a role in influencing how easily immigrant women integrates into the labour force, for example Muslim women who wear the *hijab*, which is a cloth that covers their hair have been found to face discrimination. The women were

often advised by employment counsellors that in order to increase their chances of getting employed they should remove their *hijabs*, as the assumption was it was a fashion statement and not a religious and cultural identity (Persad & Lukas, 2002).

Persad and Lukas studied Muslim women working in the manufacturing, sales and service industries in Toronto. These women experienced more job refusals, were misinformed about jobs on purpose, were fired more often and were frequently harassed by supervisors and co-workers. Of all the Muslim women interviewed 40.6% were asked to remove their *hijab*, the main reason being that it was not part of uniform or for health and safety reasons. The authors suggest the Muslim women can be empowered through skill development workshops, knowing their rights, and by employers being educated about Islamic practices to name a few (Persad & Lukas, 2002).

Canadian born visible-minority women and Canadian born white-women all have approximately equal average earnings. However, immigrant visible-minority women have much lower earnings than their counterparts (Pendakur & Pendakur, 1998). Tastsoglou and Preston bring to our attention that it is important to note that the effects of place of birth are much smaller than the effects of gender, for full-time, full-year workers, being a woman has more influence on earnings than being an immigrant. “Foreign-born women visible minorities earn less than the foreign-born from non-racialized groups. In 2000, immigrant women who were visible minorities reported median wages and earnings of \$20,024, almost 20% less than the \$24,990 earned by non-racialized immigrant women” (Tastsoglou & Preston, 2005:50).

Marianne Sorensen (1995) focused on the existence of market mechanisms that stratify the working populations on the basis of class, gender, race or ethnicity. She says a

central tenet of segmentation, rests on the distinction between a second or peripheral labour market and a core or primary labour market. The primary is characterized as being powerful, capital-intensive conglomerates that control large segments of industry, while the secondary is characterized as being labour intensive, comprised of smaller, less influential firms that are susceptible to the exigencies of intense competition. She points out that mobility from secondary to primary labour markets is restricted by structural and ideological barriers (Sorensen, 1995).

She refers to Frank Parkin's theoretical concept of "exclusionary closure" to better understand why some immigrant women are confronted with barriers to upward mobility and are "stuck" in the secondary labour market. An example of a mechanism of social closure also known as "gate keeping strategies" is the systematic evaluation of academic credentials to determine if an immigrant is eligible for a certification exam. The above-mentioned is used discriminately and subjectively by professional associations (Sorensen, 1995).

In regards to occupation, DeVoretz and Laryea (1999) use Hiebert's index which was previously explained, to measure ethnic concentration and occupation. The findings showed that South Asian, Filipina and Vietnamese females were underrepresented in managerial jobs and overrepresented in housecleaning and clerical jobs. For females as previously mentioned there is a double jeopardy in that female immigrants "regardless of when they arrived are continuously employed as cleaners and garment workers. The daughters of these immigrants when born in Canada however break this pattern" (DeVoretz & Laryea & Laryea, 1999:22).

When looking at the link between education and employment, Tastsoglou and Preston make it very clear that there is an elusive link between the two. The larger percent of women who arrived in Canada between 1996 and 2001 have undergraduate, graduate, and post-graduate degrees compared to their Canadian-born counterparts and their predecessors. The figures they took from Statistics Canada tell it all, for example amongst those aged 25 to 44 years of age, 27.7% of recent immigrant women had a bachelor's or first professional degree compared with 20.9% of all immigrant women and 17.3% of Canadian-born women (Tastsoglou & Preston, 2005).

They proceed to inform the reader that education influences immigrant women's participation in the paid labour force but does not increase it, as Canadian-born women still have a higher labour force participation rate of 82.4% versus 75% for immigrant women and 65% for those who recently arrived. They point out that educated immigrant women with post secondary education such as a university degree are less likely to participate in the paid labour force than their Canadian-born counterparts and immigrant women who recently arrived with less than a high school diploma are as likely to participate in the paid labour market as their Canadian-born counterparts. This indicates that educated immigrant women withdraw from the labour market in Canada, often to pursue entrepreneurship or due to frustration (Tastsoglou & Preston, 2005; Reitz, 2001). According to scholars, professional immigrant women struggle more with the burden of child caring and work as they attempt to rebuild their careers without the social capital that they previously relied on in their country or origin that helped them combine childcare and maintaining their careers (Man, 2004).

Kamlyn Ng-See-Quan in her 2005 article *Racialized and Immigrant Women in cities* says the “absence of employment equity policies and access to the hidden labour market creates barriers of systemic racism for racialized and immigrant women” (Ng-See-Quan, 2005:2). Language is also used as a barrier to employment by employers and it often leaves immigrant women feeling alone, depressed and isolated. Within the new host country immigrant women often lack a strong support system such as extended family or hired help. They usually have limited or no access to childcare subsidies, and do not have enough money to pay for childcare which often prevents them from attending language classes and hinders their job search (Man, 2004).

Guida Man says there is a brain drain from the source country to Canada as many professional women who are highly educated and possessing previous experience from their country of origin are being deskilled or are unemployed resulting in diminishing earning power. She says, neo-liberal restructuring programs, privatization and deregulation are to blame, as they aggravate the labour market and encourage lower wages, part-time positions and insecure jobs (Man, 2004).

According to Ng-See-Quan, recently arrived women tend to stay home taking care of the children or elders and are often the cohesive material in the family. Vanessa Martins and Denise Reid’s study on South Asian women in Toronto, Canada and their occupational adjustment perspectives is summarized in their 2007 article *New-immigrant women in urban Canada: insights into occupation and sociocultural context*. They point out that few studies have explored the factors involved in the adjustment process of South Asian women and how immigrating to Canada has affected their occupations. As occupational therapists, they seek to understand the occupations held by the South Asian

women. The women had to adapt their occupational routines to meet the challenges of the environment and the more they adjusted the more their social contacts grew as they built new friendships and accessed more environmental resources (Martins & Reid, 2007).

In regards to coping and fitting in, personal factors such as good health, education and having a positive attitude and adjusting emotionally to lack of support and house help were deemed important in the process of adaptation. Being able to keep old cultural values and adopt new ones was found to be helpful in the adjustment process. Also associating with friends from one's cultural group, wearing cultural attire and maintaining gendered roles related to care-giving and homemaking were considered essential coping mechanisms (Martins & Reid, 2007).

Martins and Reid focused their research on South Asian women in urban Canada. Based on their findings, they concluded that immigrant women have the roles of homemaker, housewife, and caregiver. Care giving is a lifelong activity and the overall responsibility is in the woman's hands which is typical of many immigrants from Third World countries (Martins & Reid, 2007). This is unrecognized and unpaid work that holds no merit when attempting to enter the Canadian workforce as employers are looking for a good grasp of English and/or French and experience in the workforce as well as youthfulness. So often the immigrant women are only able to secure low paying jobs that require minimal skills (Ng-See-Quan, 2005).

Ng-See-Quan says city governments should be more involved in decisions on allocation of resources or funding towards addressing the challenges that immigrant women face and providing facilities that are accessible to them. Since the power and authority rests within the federal and provincial/territorial government's hands, city

governments should work together with them as the majority of immigrant populations are found in urban centres. The policy initiative the *New Deal for Cities* is a great example of attempts being made to do just that as it involves all levels of government, the non-profit sector, the private sector and individuals in local urban communities, including those that represent immigrant women, to generate funding, re-assess policies and programmes within cities (Ng-See-Quan, 2005).

Within the larger CMAs, existing settlement services for immigrant women are typically non-profit voluntary groups which are often self-help organizations and large or small scale non-profit corporations, some of which are part of established national agencies (Truelove, 2000). Marie Truelove seeks to discover the geographic distribution of new immigrant women and the distribution of agencies that offer settlement services and analyses their location, the quality of services, and their accessibility within the city of Toronto. She says the trend is that immigrants tend to settle in the city core and over time they move outwards towards the suburbs as their socio-economic standing improves and they get replaced by a new group of arrivals in a process of invasion and succession.

With that said, settlement services agencies should concentrate in the core or the immigrant reception areas, but she points out it is not that simple as immigrants have been found to not all be located at the core, but are spatially dispersed (Truelove, 2000). Family services, ethno-specific drop- in and language centres are essential for immigrant women, as they help them cope with issues such as child-care, abuse and learning the official languages.

Truelove lists four main systemic barriers to access to family services. They are lack of recognition of ethnicity and racial factors; lack of capacity to address language

concerns; inappropriate methods of delivery; and location (Truelove, 2000). Ideally these services should be accessible by public transport and close to the areas with high concentrations of immigrants.

Her findings were that ethno-specific agencies worked better at serving immigrant women than mainstream services as they cater to those that hardly speak the official languages, and who are unaware of social services and those that have faced alienation or racism (Truelove, 2000). Also ethno-specific agencies have fewer restrictions such as extending services only to immigrants that have arrived within a certain period of time. Another finding was that there are no programs designed explicitly to improve the employment opportunities of immigrant women at community centres.

Colleges and universities often provide language classes, but at a cost which many immigrant women cannot afford and the large institutions intimidate them so they turn to immigrant service agencies (Truelove, 2000). Based on her research, she found that the number of facilities spread throughout the city of Toronto, in offices, store-fronts and community centres has significantly grown, which implies agencies are attempting to reach out to new immigrants taking into regard their complex settlement patterns. For example some ethnic and language groups were found to be concentrated either in the suburban or inner cities areas (Truelove, 2000). For example, when looking at the location of agencies serving Tamil immigrants, one was found a short walk north of the subway and the other was at a main intersection in Scarborough.

Truelove found some of the agency locations were visible while others located in office buildings, above stores and in industrial malls were not, many small agencies were found to be in low-rent locations or sharing space in government or non-profit facilities

and were often cramped or run-down. Most ethno-specific agencies serve one group so their location choice is more flexible but they have financial restrictions which limits them. Larger mainstream agencies tend to have more money and have multiple locations but the challenge is selecting locations that cater to the language groups they serve. Further expansion into community centres, schools and churches is suggested by Truelove.

Her findings show that now immigrants tend to integrate into their own ethnic communities and eventually into the wider community and society. Truelove emphasises that accessibility to settlement services is paramount for immigrant women especially those who are socially isolated as it affects their quality of life. Truelove concludes by saying agencies are only successful if they can easily shift locations in response to the ever changing immigrant composition and residential locations as well as be accessible to newcomers whilst working with budget constraints. She also concludes by saying that her study confirms that immigrant residential location patterns are more complex than the dated notion of initial location in the inner city.

The double negative, of being female and foreign born is partly the reason that immigrant women are facing so many obstacles when it comes to integration into Canadian society, workforce and culture. They are often placed in menial jobs found in service and production occupancies. There are many institutional barriers that are strategically placed to prevent them moving forward. Likewise they lack knowledge of the availability of resources and often cannot access them, leaving them vulnerable.

1.7 Historical Overview of Immigration Policy and Domestic Workers

In 1955 Canada introduced its first foreign domestic worker policy during which Caribbean women, mainly of Jamaican and Barbadian origin were procured as domestic workers until the mid 1970s. They were granted landed immigrant status on condition they worked for a year as domestics (Stasiulis & Bakan 1997; England & Stiell, 1997b). There was an obvious hierarchy, at the top were the Western European “nannies” who were hired for child-care alone and received higher wages, while the foreign “domestics” from the Third World were responsible for child-care and housework and received lower wages (England & Stiell, 1997a). This confirms Boyd’s argument that the occupational disadvantages immigrant women face, are to a certain extent influenced by country of birth (Boyd, 1984).

By the late 1970s, Canadian women were active in the workforce, which conflicted with their roles as caregivers in their household and most importantly mothers, so there was a sudden high demand for child-care provision, but not enough providers. Canadian women were increasingly getting well paid and holding high professional jobs. These professional women began to seek an alternative solution to the child-care crisis, that being paid live-in domestic workers (England & Stiell, 1997b; Anderson, 2001).

According to scholars, in the 1970s there was a shortage of Canadian women willing to do live-in domestic work mainly because of the low wages, poor status, and the non-existence of employment- related benefits which led to a child-care crisis. According to the literature, Canada met its labour demands in low paying jobs such as domestic work by its government creating a new program to bring in foreign women to meet the demand (Cornish, 1992; England & Stiell, 1997b).

The restrictive and temporary visa system was introduced in 1973 under the “Temporary Employment Authorization Program” which allowed women to work in Canada as domestic workers on short term contracts, for a limited time with a specific employer. With this system the government made a shift from the undesired immigrant settler labour to the desired migrant non-settler labour. Previously most domestic workers entered with landed immigrant status which meant after three years they were eligible for citizenship (England & Stiell, 1997b).

According to Cornish (1992) in the late 1970s, Caribbean women were often instructed to omit family dependants when applying as domestics, and upon receiving their landed immigrant status this was often used against them as the basis for deportation (Cornish, 1992). Notably, Canada was in the midst of an economic recession in the last 1970s to early 1980s, resulting in high unemployment and a dwindling need for domestic workers and settler labour (Cornish, 1992).

According to the experts by the late 1970s and early 1980s, several advocacy groups for foreign domestic workers existed fighting for the women’s rights. Toronto-based (International Coalition to End Domestic Exploitation) INTERCEDE was one of these groups that successfully pushed the government to introduce the Foreign Domestic Movement (FDM) programme in 1981 (England & Stiell, 1997b).

The FDM of 1981 was created to protect foreign domestic workers under the employment visa system and this was later replaced by the Live-in caregiver program (LCP) in 1992. The *Immigration Act 1976* which became law on April 10, 1978 included the LCP, and this Act was replaced by the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* (IRPA) on June 28, 2002 which is when the program was last revised (Cornish, 1992).

Section 2 of the *IRPA Regulations* defines a live-in caregiver as “a person who resides in and provides child care, senior home support care and care of the disabled without supervision in the private household in Canada where the person being cared for resides” (Diocson, 2005; HRSDC, 2008).

According to the available literature, with the introduction of the new LCP came additional barriers such as increased academic and training requirements making it more difficult for LCGs to meet the eligibility criteria therefore making it less accommodating for them (Stasiulis & Bakan, 1997). Applicants are required to have at least 12 years of schooling and six months of formal training. In the Philippines, 12 years of schooling includes university education (Cohen, 2000).

1.8 Filipina Live-in Caregivers in The LCP

The Philippines became a new source country for recruitment of LCGs in the 1980s as the government realised that Caribbean domestic workers were “attempting to increase their citizenship rights” (Stasiulis & Bakan 1997:123). The Philippines has “a history of colonialism and neo-colonialism”, and has had a “debt-based dependency through the International Monetary Fund and US-government-supported structural adjustment policies” (Stasiulis & Bakan, 1997:124). Therefore compelled by poverty and unemployment, the Philippines provides a constant outflow of migrant Filipino workers to Canada in search of employment to support their families which results in high remittance levels (Jackson, 1990; Anderson, 2001;Hodge, 2006).

In the 1960s, Canada hired skilled Filipinas to work as teachers and nurses in schools and hospitals when the country was lacking within its own labour force and in

turn these women helped to contribute to the economy, in particular they worked in remote areas which included First Nations reserves as the Canadian teachers and nurses were not willing to relocate (Diocon, 2005).

The Toronto-based Filipino Magkaisa Centre informs us in a press release dated February 1, 2009 that recent statistics indicate that the Philippines is currently the largest source country of permanent residents and temporary workers to Canada surpassing China and India, and that Filipinos are the third largest visible minority group in Canada. The most recent analysis of Citizenship and Immigration Canada's (CIC) quarterly statistics on new permanent residents and foreign workers by the Association for Canadian Studies (ACS) showed that there were 19, 064 Filipinos out of a total of 236,758 Permanent Residents to Canada in 2007 and 15, 254 out of 115, 470 were temporary workers. The Philippines is ranked as the second top source country for temporary foreign workers after the United States (CIC, 2007).

The Filipino government encourages this exodus of people mainly because of the economic gains. The government facilitates this via its labour export policies and international agreements with Western countries. The social and economic crisis in the Philippines and its Labour Export Program has forced one tenth of the country's population to live and work overseas. These foreign workers contribute to US\$ 13 Billion in annual remittance which is used to pay off the Philippines' foreign debt and boost the country's economy (Oxman-Martinez, J., Hanley, J., & Cheung, L. (2004; Hodge, 2006; Parreñas, 2000; Magkaisa Centre, 2009).

Cecelia Diocson, the Executive Director of the National Alliance of Philippine Women in Canada, is quoted saying "in the last 40 years, more and more Filipinos have

been migrating to Canada, more recently as live-in caregivers and temporary foreign workers”. Since its introduction in 1992, the LCP has brought nearly 100,000 Filipina LCGs to Canada, and that close to 65% of the nearly half a million Filipinos in Canada came under the LCP (Magkaisa Centre, 2009).

According to CIC, in 2007, 6,117 people, of whom the majority were women, migrated to Canada under the Live-in Caregiver Program, which surpassed the 2007 projections which were supposed to fall within the range of 3,000 to 5,000 people. Prior to arrival, the woman’s employer is required to obtain a confirmation of an offer of employment from the HRSDC in order to hire a LCG. The LCP participants are issued temporary work visas prior to arrival to Canada, and are only eligible for permanent residency once they have completed two years of care giving within 39 months (36 months in Quebec) of their arrival. In 2007, there were a total of 896 female LCGs (including their spouses and dependants) who were granted Canadian permanent residency after successfully completing the requirements of the LCP (CIC, 2007).

1.9 Filipina LCGs and Their Families

A number of scholars have pointed out a number of problems with the operation of the LCP. They point out the use of systemic racism and discrimination via bureaucratic regulations, which result in the LCG enduring prolonged family separation, the uncertainty of temporary status, and their vulnerability at work and limited labour rights. Jarrah Hodge draws our attention to the fact that LCGs must conform to the accepted “Eurocentric heterosexist” definition of “family” as set by Immigration Canada when

sponsoring family, so she is forced to exclude close family members such as grandparents and siblings who usually are left with the role of raising the LCG's children whilst she is away (Hodge, 2006). It should be noted that Filipina LCGs share "a strong sense of familial loyalty and responsibility, respect for elders, a focus on collectivity, and strong in-group orientation" (Spitzer et al., 2003:274).

Most Filipina LCGs are married women as they are "practising Catholics and formal legal marriage is commonly expected of young women" (Stasiulis & Bakan, 1997:131). In an effort to improve their family's financial and social welfare these women enter Canada's LCP as they cannot find high paying jobs in the Philippines. Once in the LCP, their driving force is the fact they are supporting financially their family and the knowledge they will gain landed immigrant status upon completion of the mandatory two years in the LCP and eventual family reunification in Canada (England & Stiell, 1997b).

According to experts, family separation is commonly the most challenging for these LCGs as they are away for several years, sometimes as much as ten years from their family. Pei-Chia Lan informs us that the physical distance prevents migrant women such as LCGs from "performing their labour of love for their children" (Lan, 2003:195). In order to fill the gap they have left they send expensive gifts, clothes and allowance to their kids, use countless long-distance calling cards and put their children in private schools. These mothers "maintain emotional bonds on the basis of material dependency" throughout the years they are separated, thus making up for the guilt they feel (Lan, 2003:195).

Cohen discusses the concept of a “transnational family” and how the majority of Filipina LCGs in Canada are quite familiar with being away from their families as they have previously spent their “exile in another country such as Singapore or Saudi Arabia where they spend anywhere from two to three years” working as domestics” (Cohen, 2000:82). Despite that, they never get accustomed to the stress on the family such as uncooperative husbands, guilt, depression, tension and limited means of communication. The children are most often left in the care of extended family members such as grandparents or the LCG’s siblings back in the Philippines (Parreñas, 2000).

1.10 Work Conditions, Requirements and Rights of LCGs

According to the Regulations of the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*, the LCG must live at all times in their employer’s home, they can only work with the employer whose name is on their work permit, and maintain their occupation as a LCG and unless authorized, they “must not attend any educational institution or take any academic, professional or vocational training course” (Diocson, 2005).

The *Association des aides familiales du Québec* (AAFQ), points out that the process of changing employers is not easy for LCGs. In Quebec under the Canada-Quebec Accord, the new employer’s offer of temporary employment must be jointly approved by the HRSDC and the *Ministère de l’Immigration et des Communautés culturelles* (MICC) of Québec. In addition, the MICC requires the submission of a duly completed contract between the LCG and the new employer (MICC, 2008; Arat-Koc, 2001).

The LCG must also obtain a new work permit from CIC with the new employer's name as well as a new Quebec Acceptance Certificate (CAQ), which can take several months and they risk being rejected by the immigration officer if the officer is suspicious or doubtful of their intention to work. "Frequent changes of employers can be perceived as an inability to work", but what is not considered is that by "refusing work permits to caregivers who change employers, the public administrators risk to expose women to a greater vulnerability by pushing them to go underground" (AAFQ, 2008: 42). Failure to adhere to these rules can result in deportation, which means the LCGs are constantly fearful of contract termination by their employer or that their application for a new work permit might not be processed in time.

Within the LCP, Filipina women are "triple marginalized by race, class, and gender" (Hodge, 2006:62). As a result of isolation, LCGs are vulnerable, and often face exploitative situations within the households (Bakan & Stasiulis, 1995; Gregson & Lowe, 1994). Furthermore they lack any form of protection as there is no government official or governing body that checks periodically their work conditions. Officially, LCGs are protected by employment standards legislation and have rights to employment insurance, maternity leave, paid overtime, vacations and holidays. The reality is these women often do not enforce their rights due to fear of termination of employment and time constraints (AAFQ, 2008; Arat-Koc, 2001).

The LCGs can be exposed to sexual, physical and psychological abuse and keep silent in order to not jeopardize their chance of obtaining a good employment record which is required when applying for permanent residency. They are often subjected to abuse of their rights such as working overtime without pay, being forced to work in

several households, seizure of legal documents and verbal threats which are examples of exploitation. They sometimes are not given a bedroom which is abuse of their privacy and in extreme cases can even be malnourished.

According to the literature, LCGs are often unaware of their rights and do not know where to seek legal advice or officially complain about the violation of their rights. Officially they can file complaints at the *Commission des normes du travail*, but they must pay a \$100 fee and have to continue working under the same conditions as the investigations proceed which can range from months to years (Hodge, 2006; Pratt, 2002; AAFQ, 2008). The *Immigration and Refugee Protections Act* Regulations supposedly provides a solution to the problem by requiring since 2002 that a written contract be signed by the LCG and the employer which clearly states the role of the LCG and the salary to be earned (Diocson, 2005).

Scholars have noted that, LCGs in Canada are admitted to Canada under the federal government and follow federally regulated policies, but labour legislation is the responsibility of the provincial jurisdictions which can vary across provinces. “The result is that there are no common labour laws governing work conditions” for LCGs (Stasiulis & Bakan, 1997:122). LCGs are excluded from certain labour protection policies, and the reason provided by policy makers is that they are working in private homes or within a family set up, so they are not regarded as “workers” (Cohen, 2000).

Geographer, Geraldine Pratt (1999) quotes from a brief presented to the Employment Standards Act Review Committee in March 1993, by the West Coast Domestic Workers’ Association, which says “by imposing a daily [as opposed to hourly] minimum wage and excluding domestics from hours of work protection, [provincial

regulations], in effect, work with the federal immigration program to provide foreign domestic workers as cheap labour” (Pratt, 1999:220). The two levels of government define LCGs differently. In the eyes of the federal government they are “visa holders” and in the eyes of the provincial government they are “employees” (Pratt, 1999:222).

LCGs have to meet the requirements of successful completion of schooling equivalent to Canadian secondary school. Valiani informs us LCGs may qualify to enter Canada either based on their education or experience. In regards to education, they must have completed at least a six month formal education program in an accredited institution in the Philippines in the areas such as nursing, early childhood education, or first aid. In order to be accepted based on experience, they must show they have completed one year of full-time employment, which is inclusive of six months of continuous employment with the same employer. This full-time employment in a related field must have been within three years of the date of submission of their LCP application (CIC, as cited by Valiani, 2009). In addition, they must be able to demonstrate they can communicate effectively in either English or French, which are Canada’s official languages (AAFQ, 2008; Arat-Koc, 2001).

Many of these Filipina LCGs are highly skilled, have university degrees and previously held high occupations in the Philippines, but it was the lack of employment and low salaries that drove them to seek better paying jobs in other countries. Working as a LCG in Canada limits women’s occupational and professional opportunities as they are prohibited by the federal government from seeking educational training as temporary workers. Their chances of securing a job that matches their past professional training are slim as they lack Canadian professional experience and their academic qualifications do

not match Canadian standards. These LCGs are subjected to “deskilling through immigration, followed by ghettoization within marginal occupations” (Pratt, 1999:216).

1.11 Recruitment agencies

According to the literature on this topic, recruitment agencies play a major role in the LCP, as they are the intermediaries that connect the prospective LCG with Canadian employers. Agencies advertise in Asian cities where there are already many Filipina domestic workers, such as Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Hong Kong, and Taiwan (Cohen, 2000; Pratt, 1997). LCGs seek the help of recruitment agencies to shorten delays of processing applications and finding an employer. “Certain caregivers have admitted to having been recruited abroad by agencies established in Canada. These agencies act as immigration consultants” (AAFQ, 2008:38). They demand fees from the LCG; the amount can vary from \$2000 to \$10,000 and is usually paid in instalments prior to arrival. Sometimes the caregivers are provided false employment offers, and upon arrival find out they have no employer and are forced to anxiously wait for a genuine employer (AAFQ, 2008).

The names of the agencies are selectively chosen to convey professionalism and security to both the employer and the LCG. Examples of names are “Execu- Nannies” or “Diamond Domestics”. They tend to advertise online and in local newspapers in countries abroad and in Canada, as well as in Canada’s *Yellow pages*. Agencies aim to “create and perpetuate” employer demand and are quite competitive (England & Stiell, 1997b:205).

Agencies play an important role in pre-selecting and matching domestic workers of different national identities to the perceived needs of their clients (employees) in Canada. Agencies feed off and use their client's preconceived notions as well as racialised and gendered stereotypes towards LCGs such as Afro-Caribbeans being difficult, aggressive, and too assertive versus Filipinas who are docile, compliant and unassertive (England & Stiell, 1997b). Macklin further demonstrates how stereotypical outlooks are observed amongst white female employers towards coloured immigrant women such as Delia her Filipina LCG. In her example Mary, the employer described Filipinas as being typically hardworking, subservient, loyal, tidy housekeepers that work well with children' (Macklin, 1992).

Scholars allege that Filipinos seem to be a cultural group that easily assimilate into Canadian culture but yet remain as a cohesive group. England and Stiell observed that Filipina LCGs in Toronto had a close network that provided them with support and helped them cope with their various experiences working as LCGs; they expressed this in various ways such as sharing of an apartment on their days off (England & Stiell, 1997a). Likewise, Montreal has a large Filipino community within which there is a significant proportion of Filipina migrant workers who are employed as LCGs. These Filipinas will be the focus of my research. These women face challenges similar to their counterparts in other cities throughout Canada, but their experiences might vary due to the fact Montreal is a bilingual city and they might be required to learn French, and other variables such as their salaries, workers' compensation and boarding fees which vary across provinces thus influencing their work conditions.

1.12 Summary

In this chapter we have reviewed the regulations of Canada's immigration policies and how they have been used to build the nation and determined who is allowed entry into the country, and over time have changed from being restrictive to more open. Initially, Canada's immigration policy was discriminatory and the point system was created to eliminate that and to encourage skilled workers and business migrants. Initially Canada showed preference for immigrants from European countries, but over time Canada opened its doors to visible minority migrants such as Africans and South Asians. The literature has shown how immigration agreements between Quebec and Canada have developed, allowing Quebec to select independent immigrants.

Recent immigrants to Canada are typically university educated, have professional work experience and come from the upper class in their countries of origin as they can afford the costs of migration to Canada. According to the literature, they face institutional and language barriers and their foreign attained academic and professional credentials are undervalued in Canada as they are not regarded equivalent to Canadian standards. They find it hard to integrate successfully into the Canadian labour market as they often obtain part-time employment and encounter difficulties obtaining employment that matches their expertise. They typically are underemployed, have high levels of unemployment, and lower annual incomes which leads to poverty.

Scholars say there are several occupational and institutional barriers as well as mechanisms of social closure that are set to prevent upward movement of immigrants and migrant workers from the peripheral labour market to the core labour market. An immigrant's ethnic heritage, religion and cultural traits were seen to constrain his or her

labour market opportunities. The concept of “social capital” is used to examine the social-economic integration of immigrants and is seen as valuable in assessing how successfully they adapt in society and the labour market as well as in establishing their economic and social niche.

According to the literature, there are wage disparities between recent immigrants, especially for those who are visible minorities and their Canadian born counterparts and an even bigger difference in wages between immigrant men and women. Some scholars argue the earnings gap decreases with time, but others dispute it by saying the gap is persistent and that it does not fully close.

There is also a difference in occupational status between recent male immigrants and their Canadian born male counterparts, showing evidence of occupational and industrial segmentation. Visible minority immigrant men are overrepresented in unskilled jobs such as taxi drivers and general labourers, whilst they are underrepresented in skilled jobs such as lawyers and engineers. Immigrant men who belong to non-racialized groups were found to be less disadvantaged economically as they found it easier to obtain high skilled jobs and earned more on average than visible minority immigrant men.

The literature shows evidence of gender stratification as immigrant women within the labour force are overrepresented in undervalued, female-type occupations such as cleaning, domestic work and in the garment industry. The women are underrepresented in high skilled occupations such as banking or managerial jobs. We have seen how religion can influence labour force participation of immigrant women, especially for Muslims who face additional discrimination. Immigrant women have higher unemployment rates than men, and this is partially due to the lack of family support. The women are burdened

with the role of being caregivers, wives and mothers within their households. They often are unaware of the available support that community centers provide such as childcare and language classes and have limited access to them.

The literature informs us that integration into the labour market for recent immigrants varies across the provinces. Immigrants tend to settle in CMAs, particularly in the city core and over time they move outwards towards the suburbs. Immigrant unemployment rates are highest in Canada's CMA with the few exceptions such as Alberta due to its thriving economy in recent years.

Scholars such as Ng-See Quan and Sorensen, suggest that the government should allocate resources towards empowering immigrant women as they are marginalized and more vulnerable because they are female, visible minorities and immigrants. They suggest more accessible family and settlement services within areas of the city with high concentrations of recent immigrants.

Gender stratification in the immigration admission process has its negative effects as seen within the federal government's LCP. As previously discussed, these foreign domestic workers often face discrimination not only because they are visible minorities but due to their temporary status and vulnerability within the work place. The literature shows they feel victimized, isolated and are often unaware of or lack access to legal and employment services.

There is a general agreement amongst scholars that there is a dire need for legislative change to improve the socio-economic integration of recent immigrants. The government needs to ensure employment equity and security for new immigrants and temporary workers. There is a call for more readily available settlement services that

cater to recent migrants, in particular the women and their dependants. In addition, policies need to be created that identify and minimize workplace and employment discrimination.

Further research should be conducted to assess the availability and accessibility of community centers, legal authorities and social workers for women migrant workers. Increased community support for these women can be in the form of accessible (via public transport) ethno-specific centres or advocacy organizations where the staff can speak the majority language of the ethnic enclave in which they are situated. This leads me to question, how successful is the socio-economic integration of foreign migrant women workers in Montreal and if they exercise or are aware of their labour rights and have access to legal, settlement, and employment services within the city?

My research will focus on women from the Philippines (Filipinas) who have migrated to Canada through the Live-in Caregiver Program (LCP) and are living in Montreal. I will attempt to identify the socio-economic challenges Filipina LCP workers face in Montreal, as well as examine the consequences they face as a result of not having adequate employment benefits and protection. I will also explore their cultural and social networks within the Filipino live-in caregiver community and how they identify themselves within the Canadian context.

CHAPTER 2

Methodology

2.1 Methodological framework

The migration of foreign workers and immigrants to Canada has been covered by many researchers. In particular the immigration policies, patterns of settlement, numbers and labour integration of these migrants have been of interest. I have chosen to look at the socio-economic integration and personal experiences of newly arrived immigrant women who have entered Canada as temporary migrant workers via one of the programs designed to bring in foreign workers as a result of a shortage of Canadians willing to do such work.

I will focus on Canada's federal government's Live-in caregiver program (LCP) and the immigrant domestic workers (caregivers) that enter this program. The majority of these women come from Third World countries and are visible ethnic minorities, they enter initially as temporary migrant workers and after two years in the program they are eligible to apply for permanent residency and can sponsor their family. We only become aware of their existence when there is a scandal or a case of deportation or abuse. In reality they face a lot of barriers to full equality within Canada's economy and labour force.

There is not enough qualitative research within Montreal to show how these particular women are treated, if they adapt culturally, linguistically, and socio-economically within the community and the private homes they work in. Since their work

is privatized, it is difficult for officials to observe if labour standards are being respected by their employer and to monitor their work and living conditions within their employer's household.

My aim is therefore to provide insight into their personal socio-economic experiences and to highlight their coping mechanisms within the households they live and work. I also intend to examine their accessibility to legal, employment and health services. Montreal is where I live and have pursued my academics for the past seven years. During this time, I have observed that the city is rich in cultural and ethnic diversity, and that was primarily why I chose to focus my research on visible minority migrant women in Montreal. The ethnic diversity within the city allows me to expand my horizons when selecting an ethnic group from which I will interview a sample of working immigrant women.

I chose to focus on working visible minority migrant women from the Philippines. Preference was for those who had recently arrived to Montreal and had been residing in the city on average for no more than five years. However, due to time constraints women who had been residing longer in Montreal were also selected for my research. By limiting the time spent in Montreal I increased the chances of obtaining women who (at the time of their interview) are currently separated from their family and are actively working as live-in caregivers (LCGs) as opposed to those who have completed the requirements of the LCP and are permanent residents or citizens and not required to work as live-in caregivers.

I was made aware of the difficulties immigrant women and migrant workers face when I attended a four week employment workshop hosted by Centre Génération Emploi

in Parc Extension, and discovered the centre was in a predominantly immigrant community and the majority of the participants were immigrants who had recently arrived to Montreal. It was further reinforced for me that immigrant women have many difficulties integrating into the Montreal workforce when I visited the centre “Petites Mains” in Côte-des-Neiges for the purpose of conducting a series of interviews for a group project on immigration for a French intermediate summer class at L’Université de Montreal in 2006.

As stated in my literature review, I have become concerned with how visible minority women from the Philippines have settled in Montreal and the challenges they face as they attempt to gain a better lifestyle for themselves and their family. In order to pursue this, the best approach for me to adopt was to conduct informal semi-structured interviews with a sample group of Filipino LCGs to obtain their experiences of socio-economic integration into the Montreal community. With the use of an interview guide, I was able to ask my key questions and leave the answers to be open-ended, as this allowed the women to provide additional information.

2.2 Sample Selection

The approach I took to obtaining my interviewees was by calling and offering to do volunteer work at various advocacy groups that interact directly with immigrant and migrant workers such as Les Petites Mains, Project Genesis, The Immigrant Workers Centre (IWC) and PINAY which is the Filipino Women’s Organization in Quebec. The PINAY association and its members were the most open and cooperative all thanks to the help of their leader who introduced me to several of the live-in caregivers.

Pinay is a word that is used to describe a woman of Filipino origin (Filipina) who is living outside the Philippines, so when Filipinas meet each other overseas they ask, “pinay ka ba” which translates to “are you pinay”? PINAY is a non-profit organization of Filipina migrant and immigrant women in Montreal. They are an advocacy group that fights for the rights and empowerment of Filipina women, particularly domestic workers and their families living and working in Quebec (PINAY, 2008).

PINAY is greatly involved in the community and has made considerable steps towards helping out caregivers in Montreal and throughout Canada. The association spearheaded the *Stop Expulsion of Melca Salvador Campaign* which kept Melca and her son in Canada and also helped expose the oppression and exploitation of live-in caregivers. PINAY has been involved in several marches such as the World March of Women in Montreal in March 2000, and has co-organized the March 8 Coordination and Action Committee of Women of Ethnic Diversity in Montreal since 2002 (Hanley, Oxman-Martinez, & Cheung, 2004).

By gaining the trust of a few of the Filipina live-in caregivers I was able to get access to several other women within their social networks who eventually agreed to sit down and have a semi-formal interview with me. The interview is in essence a conversation (between the interviewer and the respondent) directed by the interviewer (Babbie, 1998).

I used the “snowball method” which involved asking the initial interviewees to refer me to their friends, family or acquaintances within their social networks (Bradshaw & Stratford, 2000:44). This method is particularly suitable when there is no sampling frame, which is “the listing of the accessible population from which you'll draw your

sample” (Trochim, 2006). Snowball sampling is an ideal method to use when access to the appropriate subjects for interviewing and observation is limited or the targeted group is closed to conventional sampling strategies. Examples of such groups would be secret societies or networks that congregate temporarily or infrequently (Gray, Williamson, Karp, & Dalphin, 2007:117).

Snowball sampling or chain sampling is an approach for identifying information-rich key informants. According to Patton, the process starts by asking a number of people who else to talk with and the snowball gets bigger and bigger as new information-rich cases accumulate (Patton, 2002). Snowball sampling is also a form of purposive sampling which allows the researcher to select a sample that will yield the most complete understanding of the subject of study (Babbie, 1998).

Snowball sampling is an example of non-probability sampling which does not involve random selection, as does probability sampling which uses statistical techniques to measure sampling error (Trochim, 2006). One of the major disadvantages of non-probability sampling is the population may or may not be well represented in the sample as the selection process is arbitrary or subjective as it relies on the researcher’s experience and judgement. Non-probability sampling is commonly used in applied social research due to limiting factors such as time, research objectives and financial constraints. It is also used when it is not feasible to adopt a random process of selection as is the case for my research, furthermore there is no need for probabilistic sampling in my research as estimation of the results is not an objective (Trochim, 2006).

There are two broad types of non-probability sampling, they are accidental and purposive. Most sampling methods are purposive rather than accidental as a specific plan

is implemented. Purposive sampling is ideal when seeking a target population within a limited time period (Trochim, 2006). Snowball sampling is often the best approach to find and recruit members from populations that are not easily accessible, such as live-in caregivers, who live and work within their employer's homes. In this case, the new respondents are selected based on recommendation from previous respondents in the research. Rapport plays an important role in snow-ball sampling as it can help increase the response rate (Babbie, 1998).

2.3 Interviewing

Semi-structured interviews are carefully planned but have a flexible approach. With this in mind, I created a list of questions which gave the interview structure, but the respondent was free to provide additional information. The structure of the interview and the sequence of the questions could be changed at any time throughout the interview based on the flow of the conversation or the preferences of the respondent. The semi-structured interviews allowed me to control the direction of the interview whilst keeping the conversation fluid. It also provided me with the opportunity to ask the crucial research questions, to follow-up with the respondent and to ask additional questions.

With all the above considered, my sample included thirty one Filipina women as I believe this is a sample large enough to be representative of the population of Filipina live-in caregivers in Montreal and it allows most if not all of the population's main perceptions and perspectives to be captured. To meet the ideal criteria for my research, the sample of women who each participated in a semi-formal interview all had to be of working age which ranged from the early twenties to late forties, and early fifties.

According to the available literature, institutional review boards translate federal policy into local standards for the protection of human subjects from physical and emotional harm by requiring researchers to manoeuvre within the narrow framework of what constitutes ethical research and an accepted researcher-subject relationship. An example would be the requirement of a consent form to be signed by the subject prior to conducting of an interview (Hay, 1998; Gunsalus, 2004; Gubrium & Holstein, 2002). There is more emphasis now for researchers to act ethically more than ever due to increasing public demands for accountability. This also means institutions such as universities are protecting themselves legally from unethical or immoral actions from their students (Clifford & Valentine, 2003). With this in mind, prior to conducting the interview the women were informed in detail about my research, about how the information obtained would be used and they were reassured of their anonymity. I made sure the interviewee understood that my research questions and interview followed professional and institutional ethical codes.

As mentioned earlier, I chose to interview women from the Philippines as the majority of Live-in caregivers in Montreal are Filipino, and they are representative of ethnically visible minority women who are English speaking within the Montreal community. The women I selected preferably had to have entered through the LCP and been working or actively seeking employment as LCGs. In addition, they must have been working in Montreal anywhere between a few months to just over five years. This ensured that they had some recent experience working in Montreal as LCGs and could provide up-to-date insight on the experiences working as ethnically visible migrant women in Montreal. It should be noted there were occasional exceptions made in regards

to time spent working as a LCG due to time constraints. I recognized and embrace the fact that the women in my sample all have diverse experiences, personal backgrounds and employment histories.

The interviews took place in Montreal over the period of July, 2008 to November, 2008 and all the fieldwork was limited to Montreal. All the interviews were conducted in locations where the interviewee felt safe such as public places like restaurants, cafes or community centres. If the interviewees trusted me the interviews were conducted within their homes where they felt comfortable. All the women who were interviewed remain confidential and their names have been changed to respect that. The project information, the invitation to participate, consent form and the interview guide (appendices A, B, C and D) are found at the end after the bibliography.

CHAPTER 3

Findings and Discussion

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the perspectives of recent Filipina migrant workers who are employed as live-in caregivers (LCGs) will be described and analyzed as they attempt to establish themselves within the Canadian workforce. The intersections between gender, citizenship, labour market participation, immigration and integration in Montreal will be explored within my analysis.

The LCGs' previous work experience and academic qualifications will be examined along with the reasons they chose to enter the Canadian live-in caregiver program (LCP). The LCP application process will be examined in detail with particular focus on the fees, the country from which the application was sent and the various waiting times. The LCGs will be questioned about their various channels of immigration, as well as the degree of involvement of Canadian based agencies and their employer during their application process.

The barriers identified by the Filipinas themselves, upon reflecting on their personal life experiences, and how they are marginalized by such barriers will also be examined in detail. The LCGs' legal rights, accommodation, work conditions, employer-employee relations and experiences within their employer's household will be explored in detail. Family, support and social networks play a significant role for LCGs as they are

an integral part of the LCGs' lives. Therefore, the women will be questioned about their various forms of involvement within the Filipino community and their social networks.

In regards to family, the LCGs will be questioned about communication, financial obligations and their future prospects for family reunification. Finally, the LCGs offer their suggestions on how the policies and regulations within the LCP can be ameliorated to improve their socio-economic outcomes and better protect them. It must be noted that some of the issues in the various sections of this chapter may seem redundant because key issues reappear, but they are expressed differently as the LCGs transition through different phases in the integration process.

In total, there were 31 interviews that were administered. All of the respondents were women, and the majority of them were working as LCGs or had worked as LCGs within the last five years and had recently become Permanent Residents or Citizens. The findings are divided below into seven categories; profile of respondents, application process, recruitment agency abuse, employment experiences, social networks (family and community), cultural differences and access to medical and legal services.

3.2 Profile of interview respondents

All of the women who were interviewed were born in the Philippines, and they came from various regions in the Philippines. Within the sample, there seemed to be no particular geographical area from which the majority of the Filipina LCGs originated. Most of them (77%) had stayed in Canada for less than five years, only 23% of the women had stayed over five years in Canada. At the time of the interview, there were two who had been in Canada for over 10 years, and three who had arrived within the last year.

The respondent's ages ranged from 28 years to 54 years, with a mean age of 39 years. The majority of the women within the sample were between 35 and 39 years of age (Table 3.1). Within the sample there were only two women who were in their twenties, 55% of the women were in their thirties, and 29% were in their forties.

Table 3.1 Age of respondents

Age	At time of interview	
	No.	%
25-29	2	6.4
30-34	6	19.35
35-39	11	35.5
40-44	3	9.7
45-49	6	19.35
50-54	3	9.7
Total	31	100

Source: author; interview guide survey

It should be noted, that typically, the majority of LCGs are in their twenties and early thirties as seen in the literature review (Lan, 2003; England & Stiell, 1997a). However, this was not reflected within my sample as most of the respondents were older. In response to this, Heidi replied during her interview:

“In the Philippines it is harder to get a job when you are older, especially when you have passed 25 years, as companies only want to hire spring chickens, so we are forced to look for jobs abroad.....It is not easy.”

Heidi started working as a LCG in Canada at 48 years of age, and at the time of the interview had recently turned 50 years old. It should be noted that Citizen and

Immigration Canada (CIC) currently has no age limitations for LCP applicants. The minimum requirement is that they should be of legal age. As we saw previously in the literature review emphasis is put on training and previous employment in a field related to care giving.

There only two women who were older than 50 years, but they came to Canada when they were in their early forties. Tammy and Karine both entered Canada in 1996; Tammy came as a tourist and used a recruitment agency to help her apply into the LCP and find an employer. On the other hand, Karine entered with a visitor permit with her Saudi employers who lied to authorities that they were bringing her along on their vacation. In reality, they were smuggling her into Canada to be a domestic for their daughter who was studying medicine at McGill University.

The majority (77%) of the respondents were university educated and most had been professionals working in their field of expertise for a period of time in the Philippines but had been forced to look for other jobs in foreign countries due to the lack of jobs and the low salaries. That was the case for Rita, who graduated in accounting and had worked as a government employee in the Philippines for eight years, and then she worked in a private office as a book keeper for nine years. She resigned from her job in order to migrate to Canada as a LCG where she hoped to make more money:

“I am sad and mad, because the salary I earning was so low, that it forced me to leave Philippines, due to the deteriorating job market and the compensation I received which could no longer meet my family’s needs. My husband also earns a low salary too despite his big title...he is the chairman of the board of directors for the Water District.”

She expressed her dismay, saying she had high hopes and expectations that life in Canada would be like “milk and honey”. She has been away from her family for the last four years, at the time of her interview she was anxiously waiting to see if her permanent residency application had been accepted and had recently sent in her accounting degree and academic credentials to be evaluated so as to know their equivalence to Canadian education standards. She practised her accounting skills by handling the finances for PINAY and helping other LCGs file their taxes during the taxation period.

Most of the women who held university degrees had attained a bachelor of science in agriculture, midwifery, commerce, accounting, psychology and nursing. Karine had only completed high school, May and Bianca had completed two years of college, and some respondents had completed midwifery courses in college such as Sophia and Ursula. Bessie had completed secretary courses, while Wendy said she completed 72 units in computer programming which according to her is equivalent to CEGEP level. The majority of these women had a bachelor of science in elementary or secondary education and nursing. Samantha said she had decided to further her education as her university degree in education was not recognised in Canada:

“I decided to take an intensive early childhood education program once I had my open permit. I had to avoid becoming a victim of downward economic mobility by continuing to work menial jobs which many caregivers end up doing. I want to get an education degree from Concordia University but time does not permit it as I am a single parent to my little boy so I have to settle with being an early childhood educator for now.”

All the respondents who had graduated in nursing in the Philippines had gone to work in Saudi Arabia on contract as nurses in government or private hospitals. That included Gaby, Heidi, Nayla, and Hazel, who said the main reason they left Philippines to work in Saudi Arabia was because of the high salary offered there. Hazel, at the time of her interview had been living in Canada working as a LCG for the last five months. She was considering returning to Saudi Arabia as she found working as a LCG very demeaning and the salary much lower than what she received working as a nurse in Saudi Arabia. She had been working in Saudi Arabia from 1996 until the early part of 2008 in both private and government hospitals. Despite not liking her LCG job, she had decided to complete the LCP requirements as she saw the long term benefits she would gain:

“I will stay and complete my 24 months and once I get my permanent residency, I will return to work as a nurse in Saudi Arabia, you see as a Filipina nurse I used to receive 3,500 Riyals, which is the Saudi Arabian currency, but if I return as a Canadian I will receive a salary of 20,000 Riyals each month, which is just over \$ U.S. 5,300, that is a lot of money.”

Hazel and Nayla met in the same hospital whilst they were working in Saudi Arabia and had been friends since then. Nayla had come a month after Hazel to Canada, but she planned to stay in Canada once she received her permanent residency unlike Hazel who was single and contemplating returning to Saudi Arabia. Nayla intended to sponsor her three sons and husband when applying for her permanent residency which was something she could not do in Saudi Arabia where (according to her) temporary workers are not granted the

right to become permanent residents regardless of the number of years they have worked in the country.

A large proportion, 58% of the respondents were married (Table 3.2) and 21 women (68%) had children, some of these children were residing in the Philippines and some had been recently reunited with their mothers in Canada. Most of the LCGs who were mothers had two children (62%), and 21% had three or more children (Table 3.3). Most of these children were young, as Table 3.4 shows, the majority (29%) fell between the 10-14 years age range and were therefore financially dependant upon the respondents, which was the main reason they decided to enter the LCP, so as to provide a better future for their families.

Within the sample of LCGs, the women had a total of 45 children, of which 11 resided in Canada with them. Those that did not have their children in Canada intended to sponsor their children who were still dependants in the Philippines. Valiani brings to our attention the harsh reality that often LCGs cannot reunite with their children who are over the age of 19 due to the regulations that only children under 18 years or those enrolled in full-time education can join their mothers in Canada (Valiani, 2009:13).

Wendy had three children and the youngest at the time of the interview was two years old and was born in Canada soon after her family had arrived. Vivica had come to Canada single and was in a common-law relationship with a Spanish man, who fathered her five year old daughter. Grace also had recently re-united with her family and had a 10 year old and a one year old, the youngest was Canadian-born. Samantha had divorced prior to migrating to Canada and now has her three and a half year old son with her in Canada. Glenda had two children in Canada with her husband who had been in Canada

for less than two years and their youngest child was 11 months old. Tammy, who was 52 years old, had her family in Canada which included her 18 year old daughter and 22 year old son.

There were only eight women who were single, and two of the respondents were permanently separated from their husbands and either in the middle of divorce proceedings or had not begun them due to financial constraints (Table 3.2). There were two respondents who were divorced at the time of their interviews. They both said their strenuous marital relationships were caused by the distance and time apart which resulted in their husbands having affairs.

Rina Cohen confirms that this is a common problem for LCGs and is quoted saying, “Many years of separation can often claim a heavy toll on the relationships” of the LCGs (Cohen, 2000). Cohen interviewed several LCGs, one in particular testified to the “detrimental effects of the lengthy separations on her conjugal relationship” which almost led to permanent separation. Similarly, the respondents who were permanently separated from their husbands voiced similar negative effects which were resultant of the distance between them and their husbands (Cohen, 2000:84).

Table 3.2 Marital status of Respondents

Marital status	No.	%
Single	8	26
Married	18	58
Separated	2	6.4
Common-law	1	3.2
Divorced	2	6.4
Total	31	100

Source: author; interview guide survey

Table 3.3 Respondents with Children (by Number of Children)

No. of Children	No. of Resp.	%	Total Children
1	3	14	3
2	13	62	26
3	4	19	12
4	1	5	4
Total	21	100	45

Source: author; interview guide survey

Table 3.4 Ages of Respondent's Children

Age range of Children	No. of Children	%
0 to 4	4	9
5 to 9	9	20
10 to 14	13	29
15-19	6	13
20-24	7	16
25-29	4	9
30-34	2	4
Total	45	100

Source: author; interview guide survey

Out of the 31 respondents, 14 had previously worked for several years as domestics in large cities in foreign countries, such as Saudi Arabia, Taiwan and Singapore but predominantly in Hong Kong, China. Nine LCGs had previously worked as domestics in Hong Kong, one had worked in Saudi Arabia as a live-in nanny, three had worked in Taiwan as domestic helpers and one had worked in Singapore as a domestic. As we saw in the literature review, this reflects the aggressive marketing of labour for export which the Philippine government promotes in order to improve its economic situation through remittances (Stasiulis & Bakan, 1997).

In regards to their immigration status, there were 16 women who were temporary workers (Table 3.5). At the time of the interview, some were just short of a few months to completing their 24 month requirement. A few women were aware they would not complete the required 24 months within 36 months as they had changed employers frequently or had been dismissed too often which was the case for Eva.

Table 3.5 Immigration Status of respondents

Immigration status	No.	%
Temporary worker	16	51.6
Open permit	6	19.4
Permanent resident	7	22.5
Citizen	2	6.5
Total	31	100

Source: author; interview guide survey

Eva has a temporary status despite working for four years and eight months as a LCG in Canada. She recently had to reapply into the LCP and start again her 24 month requirement. There are many reasons she did not complete her requirements. The first being, the employer on her work permit upon arrival on March 2004 to British Columbia did not need her services as they had found a new LCG whilst she was processing her papers abroad. Second, she had to wait four months before a recruitment agency based in Montreal, found her an employer. After moving, it took her three and a half months to obtain a new work permit and Québec Acceptance Certificate (CAQ). Whilst waiting for her papers to arrive she worked (illegally) for her new employer in Montreal.

She said she had no choice as she needed the money and they required her services immediately as the husband was ill with cardiovascular problems. She stayed 10 months with that employer, and then was terminated because of a misunderstanding:

“The husband sent me to go buy mayonnaise for a sandwich late in the evening and the wife was at work. I was away for thirty minutes, during that time their two little girls crept out of the house and neighbours informed my employer later on. They got angry and said I neglected their kids and compromised their safety. I just thought I was doing a good deed and they never provided me with a letter of reference.”

Eva found another employer immediately, but she resigned after five months because she found the three children troublesome, the situation in the household volatile as the employer was shouting too much at her in an aggressive manner and she worked over 12 hours a day without pay.

Eva moved back to British Columbia and found another employer, with whom she stayed one and a half years. The processing time for a new work permit was short in British Columbia as it only took her only two months and a week to get a new work permit.

“I went back to Vancouver mainly to reunite with my friend as I was lonely, we moved in together and I stayed there for over a year. My friend got her permanent residency and was reunited with her family.”

She returned to Montreal on June of 2007, she found her fourth and current employer, and it was at that point in time she restarted her 24 months.

Upon completion of the two year work requirements of the LCP, the LCG is allowed to apply for an open permit which allows her to work any job (CIC, 2009). Amerie was expecting her “open permit” status within a week, so she was regarded as having already received it, so in total there were six women who had open permits. Chloe, who had an open permit, was still working part-time for her second employer, whilst working another job at La Senza since she was no longer required to work as a LCG. Yolanda was working fulltime at a factory assembling parts for trains, whilst May also works part-time for her second employer whilst working another job. The three other respondents who had an open permit were still working as live out caregivers as their relationships with their employers remained amicable.

This implies that many ex-LCGs who can legally work in other occupations tend to continue providing domestic services or find similar marginal jobs. They usually have few favourable options as they have been deskilled for a prolonged period making it difficult to have successful professional careers within the restrictive labour market. These findings support Pratt’s (1999) argument that working in Canada as a LCG narrows occupational opportunities long after the LCP requirements have been fulfilled. Pratt describes this process as “deskilling through immigration, followed by ghettoization within occupations” as mentioned earlier in the literature review (Pratt, 1999:216).

Yolanda had her open permit and had applied for her permanent residency, but was refused as she was found inadmissible because her son failed his medical exam which is required of all permanent residency applicants and their sponsored family members. She said:

“My application was denied because of my son’s medical results, they say he suffers from developmental delay, but I do not understand as he is in the right class as his age-mates in school. At least immigration Canada could have given it to me as I am the principal applicant and the healthy members of my family.”

Yolanda was fighting for a re-examination and had applied a second time for permanent residency based on humanitarian and compassionate grounds. Rina Cohen argues that “denying live-in caregivers the right to immigrate to Canada together with their spouses and children is devastating to their family life”. Cohen says it is especially unfair to LCGs such as Yolanda who have toiled for several years separated from their family, being overworked and underpaid and trapped within “regressive policies” (Cohen, 2000: 77).

There were seven women who had permanent resident status, some had already their family in Canada and two were waiting for their family members to arrive to Canada. Two of the respondents and their family members were citizens, at the time of the interview. One of them is Wendy, who at the time of the interview was celebrating with her family their recent Citizenship which they received on October of 2008.

3.3 The Application Process

There were 14 women who were previously working as domestics in other countries before entering the LCP and 13 of them processed their work permits and visas from the country they were residing in (Table 3.6) with the exception of Karine who was smuggled into Canada illegally. There were 10 LCGs who sent their LCP applications

from the Philippines, and they all had previously held professional jobs before arriving to Canada from the Philippines.

The respondents all agreed that the processing time in the Philippines is longer compared to other countries from which Filipinas apply into the LCP. Of the 10 women who applied from the Philippines, eight waited over two years for their papers to be processed. Sophia, who had applied from the Philippines, received her visa and work permit within a year. Eleanor waited for one year and four months to receive her papers whilst Rita had the longest waiting time of three years.

There were a total of 19 respondents who had their visas and work permits processed from foreign countries, and the majority had short processing times compared to those processing from the Philippines. The average mean waiting time for these 19 respondents was 10 months. Ursula applied from Hong Kong and waited only two months for her papers as the application process was expedited by her cousin (her employer) in Brampton, Ontario. Amerie who applied from Hong Kong, had to wait roughly two years and a half as her recruiting agency took a year to find her an employer.

Table 3.6 Work Permit and Visa Processing Locations

Location	No. of LCGs	Percent (%)
Philipp.	10	34.5
Honk Kong	10	34.5
Singapore	1	3
Saudi Arabia	4	14
Taiwan	4	14
Total	29	100

Source: author; interview guide survey

According to the majority of the respondents, the fees for the application process can be very costly. Applicants often end up indebted to family members or with little or no savings as they have used it all to pay the recruitment agencies, the fees for the work permit and visa as well as the airplane ticket. Valiani confirms in her report that LCGs pay extremely high placement fees and sometimes have to wait for several years to find an employer to work for under the LCP. The high cost of migration suggests that only Filipinas with financial means can afford it such as middle-class professionals (Parreñas, 2000, Valiani 2009).

All of the respondents, except Karine who was smuggled in, used their personal savings and/or borrowed money from family members to cover the migration expenses which the majority of the women have paid back or were still paying. There were only 10 women (33%) who paid on their own, the processing fees and travel expenses. There were 19 women, (63%) who had to rely on either their husbands, sisters, relatives or their employers to pay what they could not afford. The women who covered their own expenses all said they had no money left upon arrival to Canada.

3.4 Recruitment agency abuse

Recruitment agencies were used by most of the women as they had been advised agencies could help to expedite the application process as they act as an intermediary agent reducing complications. Most, if not all recruitment agencies require the payment of a placement fee which is quite expensive. For the most part, in Quebec they are unregulated. Some of the respondents said they were required to pay only half of

the placement fee, whilst their employer paid the other half. The majority of the respondents said the agency they used required them to pay all the fees. Ophelia was one of them and she regrets having not done research, prior to choosing an agency:

“I did not know that some agencies charge only U.S. \$2,000. The one I used required me to pay them U.S. \$4,800! I had to use one year of my salary which I had saved, I find that it was too expensive.”

The fees seemed to vary from one agency to another and have increased over the years. Amongst the respondents, some paid fees as low as U.S\$ 2,000 to exorbitant placement fees as high as U.S. \$6,000. This does not include the federal and provincial processing fees to get the work permit, CAQ and visa and associated costs, nor the travel expenses to migrate to Canada. The total cost of obtaining a job as a LCG in Canada for most respondents ranged between C\$8,000 and C\$10,000, leaving many in debt early in the process. This finding is confirmed by Grandea and Kerr (1998) who are quoted saying “applicants for overseas contract work bear onerous costs related to travel, recruitment, and government requirements” (Grande & Kerr, 1998:10).

Within the sample, 29 women had applied to enter the LCP from foreign countries including the Philippines, 21 of these women (72%) used an agency to obtain an employer and to help process their papers. Many of the respondents were not satisfied with the services provided by the agencies they used. There were 10 respondents who voiced similar problems with one particular Montreal based agency called *T.M. International*. The name of the agency has been altered to protect the respondents and the initials T.M.I will be used from here on when referring to the owner of the agency. The

owner recently changed his company's name to avoid previous legal scandals associated with LCGs he has done business with.

According to the respondents, the major problem they had with recruitment agencies was that they did not provide genuine employers on their work permit. This meant that, their completion of 24 months within 36 months was jeopardised as they waited for the agency to find them an employer. Valiani (2009) confirms that recruitment agencies do issue illegal employment contracts to LCGs. Out of the 21 respondents who used placement agencies there were six who discovered upon arrival that they had fake employers. Ines was one of the six respondents with a fake employer on her work permit:

“I arrived on July 2007 and found out my employer on my work permit was bogus. I found my first real employer and only started to work legally in May of 2008 after 10 months of no genuine employment. I used another agency and they were more professional and sincere than T.M.I.”

The second problem mentioned by most respondents was that several of them did not get receipts for the fees they paid their respective agencies. Rita had a fake employer on her original work permit and was not issued a receipt from the agency for the fees she paid. She said:

“After paying *T.M. International* U.S. \$ 3165, I arrived to find out my employer had another lady and the recruitment agency knew that. They lied to me.... I waited six months to get another employer and had to work under the table in the meantime...I was scared as I was working illegally.”

Chloe had a similar situation as Rita, where the unscrupulous owner of T.M.I arranged for her to work with various employers until she secured a permanent

employer. She said “Because I had a ghost employer, I wasted seven months working on a temporary basis for different employers doing two week trial periods with a low salary”.

Grande and Kerr (1998) confirm this trend amongst the LCGs and explain that domestics are obliged to work and comply with the agency’s demands as they cannot stay unemployed for long periods of time due to the dire need for money to send to their families.

The third problem mentioned by the respondents was the inconsistency with the fees which varied from one agency to another, some respondents paid low fees, whilst others paid expensive fees. The *Association des aides familiales du Québec* (AAFQ) reports that these agencies can charge as much as \$1,000 to \$5,000 to obtain a work permit and an employer. The agencies usually do not inform in detail the women their rights and encourage them to agree to work overtime without pay. Langevin and Belleau inform us of a study done in Great Britain where recruitment agencies were charging exorbitant fees to the LCGs. Similar to the respondents in my research sample, those in their study were obliged to pay off the remaining fees they owed the agencies once they arrived in Great Britain (Langevin & Belleau, 2000).

As previously mentioned, there were 10 respondents who had negative experiences with the owner of T.M.I and accused him of abusing their rights. These respondents said they were forced to live in cramped quarters either on his private premises in his house or in his apartment buildings as they had been deceived into signing leases with him before coming to Canada. They said he sent them papers to sign

which to their understanding were for the supposed reservation of their room in an apartment. This was the case for Felicia who signed the papers while working in Taiwan:

“I arrived April 13, 2007 and was brought to his office, where he made me sign again for apartment 10 in a building located on L'Île-Bizard, but I never even resided there as he housed me somewhere else.”

Felicia's explained that she and other LCGs lived with T.M.I on his private premises for a few months. His home was converted into the agency's office in the daytime. Felicia provides a detailed description of her temporary living situation:

“We slept in the extension room at the back of his house on a double bed, there were three to five girls sharing that bed at any given time. We asked him why we were living there and he told us that the apartment located on L'Île-Bizard, which we were supposed to occupy was being renovated.”

Bianca had the worst treatment amongst the six respondents, upon arrival to Montreal. Like Felicia she was informed her apartment was under renovation, so she stayed in the living room of his house for a month where she slept with seven other women on the floor. She said to keep warm during the cold nights they put a quilt on the floor and huddled together. Once she moved to the apartment, she began paying \$150 per month in rent for the room she shared with other LCGs.

Bianca and her roommates were informed that one month of rent out of the year lease would be free, so she figured she could leave after 11 months. She issued a notice to T.M.I three months prior to her intended day of departure informing him she would not be staying any longer. According to her, T.M.I did

not object at the time and wished her well. She only knew of his intentions when she and one of her former roommates were sued by T.M.I for not paying rent:

“I was completely surprised, as I understood that my lease was over.

When we were in court at the *Regie de logement*, he told the commissioner that my lease was automatically renewed and that he did not receive any notification from me that I intended to leave. He lied with a straight face on to the commissioner.”

T.M.I won the case as she and her roommate were not represented by a lawyer and did not have copies of the lease or enough documentation to defend their case. By order of the court, they each paid T.M.I over \$800 for the unpaid rent and interest. The court initially had intended to send a letter to Bianca’s employer to freeze her salary and have it redirected towards payment of the money. To avoid her employers getting involved and being disgruntled, she and her roommate settled immediately the payment.

The respondents that signed leases with T.M.I upon arrival to Canada like Felicia, Bianca, Chloe and Amerie said they never were given the opportunity to read the details as they were strategically covered. Felicia said that T.M.I simply showed her where to put her signature whilst covering the details with either a paper or his hand. She said in some instances he would turn the pages over quickly if she tried to lean over to read the fine print. Felicia added that when she asked to read the lease she was informed she would get a copy later on.

Upon arrival, some respondents had permanent live-in workplaces with their genuine employers. Despite that, they were forced to pay rent as well

because they had signed the lease prior to arrival and when they asked to break it, T.M.I refused. Inevitably, the women were required to live in the apartment on the weekend and pay rent. He used all means necessary to get them to stay and force them to continue paying rent. Amerie was a victim of his tactics, as she said she was made to sign multiple leases; she provides a more detailed description:

“The first lease obligated me to stay in his rented room with the other ladies from February 2006 to February 2007. Then, T.M.I changed his mind in the middle of that lease and asked us to sign a new lease that was dated August 2006 to July 2007. He added 4 months. In the old lease the rent was \$ 155 per month, while in the new lease we had to pay \$165. I was angry about that but respected it and moved out in June of 2007.”

Furthermore, a clause in the lease, which they were not notified about, stated that all involved parties had joint responsibility for rent, meaning if a LCG vacated the premises, then those remaining would have to pay her share. Some respondents said T.M.I would force them to go to the bank to withdraw money on their days off or if he was aware they had recently been paid. Felicia was one of them and explains:

“One Sunday, I was about to go to church, his assistant was outside waiting for me, she demanded that I pay immediately the deposit and rent. She threatened me and would not let me go. She insisted on driving me to the nearest bank to withdraw the money. I had to also pay in advance \$330 for the next two months. I had just been paid and I was back at zero.”

Felicia eventually got frustrated and broke her lease and went to live with a friend on May 28 2007. Patricia was living in T.M.I’s apartment in Beaconsfield. She also broke

her lease and left because of the overwhelming distance between work and home. Furthermore, she was upset that her requests to be released from the lease were being ignored.

She provides the following:

“He was trying to force us to live in his apartment because he said we had signed a one year lease. In each apartment there were three rooms, each room had three to five women sharing a bed. Also the roof was leaking along with the kitchen sink and toilet being blocked. We repeatedly asked his daughter for them to be fixed when she came to collect rent. I decided to leave for a better and convenient place and he is suing me for that.”

Mikki Harrar is a lawyer who represents about a dozen of the LCGs including Patricia. They have been fighting T.M.I.’s accusations of not paying rent for the remaining months as stated in the lease they broke. He is quoted in the *Montreal Mirror* (March 5-11, 2009, Volume 24, Number 37) article entitled “Caregiver Blues” by Heather Robb saying on page 10:

“Not only is it ridiculous to ask the women to agree to such terms given that they’ve never met before, but that he deceives the women by leaving the additional clause section of the lease blank, and then filling it in after they’ve signed.”

During this period, interviews were being conducted with some of the respondents who were being sued by T.M.I and represented by Mr Harrar. There were four respondents who were at that time being sued for unpaid rent by T.M.I

In the 2009 March 5-11 edition of the *Montreal Mirror* we are informed that on November 20, 2008, *the Regie du logement* ruled in favour of these LCGs.

They were not required to pay any unpaid rent and T.M.I was ordered to pay them each \$1500 for damages (Robb, 2009).

We have seen above how the majority of the respondents have encountered problems with fraudulent recruitment agencies, ranging from extremely expensive fees to the lack of issuance of receipts for payments received from LCGs to more extreme cases of negligence and exploitation on the part of the recruitment agencies. These unscrupulous agencies charge these women “extra” fees whenever possible, claiming they are for the services provided. According to the respondents, the agencies are trying to maximize their profits through manipulation and exploitation.

Recently, the *Toronto Star* published on 14 March 2009 an article by Robert Cribb and Dale Brazao titled “Nannies trapped in bogus jobs”, which affirms the claims made by the respondents above. Within this article, we read about a Filipina Joelina Maluto who alleges Rakela Spivak, the owner of a recruitment agency based in Ontario mistreated her, violated the rules of the LCP, and exploited many LCGs which is similar to the accusations made by the 10 respondents regarding T.M.I and his agency. Similarly, Spivak sued Maluto for unpaid fees just as T.M.I sued Felicia, Bianca, Patricia, and Chloe. According to the article, Spivak also runs her agency from her home and has been accused of housing in crowded conditions at least a dozen LCGs in the basement of her house for a period of two weeks which is similar to the accusations against T.M.I made by the six respondents.

The article informs us that requiring LCGs to pay recruitment agencies a placement fee to find an employer is forbidden for the most part in Canada, but

recruitment agencies find ways to avoid that. This is confirmed by the following excerpt from the *Toronto Star* article “Nannies trapped in bogus jobs”:

“The practice of charging fees to the nannies to secure them work is banned by governments in all western provinces, but not in Ontario. The Philippines’ government also bans the practice, but it still goes on, with many agencies getting around the laws by recruiting nannies working in Hong Kong, Singapore and Dubai.”

The above excerpt is in agreement with the literature by Cohen (2000), Pratt (1997) and the AAFQ report (2008) regarding recruitment agencies, their fees and the international cities they advertise in to lure foreign domestics.

England and Stiell (1997), along with Bakan and Stasiulis (1995) discuss the stereotyped and racist practices of placement agencies in Canada. In particular, the article by Bakan and Stasiulis called “Making the match: domestic placement agencies and the racialisation of women’s household work” discusses in detail all of the aforementioned particularly the volatility of agencies which are they describe on page 304, as often being small, family-owned or operating as a single-employee business.

Bakan and Stasiulis confirm the existence of several unlicensed agencies which do fraudulent business. This is brought to the public’s attention ever so often via newspaper articles. On page 305, they inform us how it takes only the payment of an annual nominal fee to obtain a license to run an agency. During their 1991-1992 interviews, some agency owners admitted to accommodating to

the racially and sexually oppressive ideologies of how a good LCG should be as it meant good business with their clients (Bakan & Staliusis, 1995:323).

Valiani and Arat-Koc provide examples of abuse, where the LCGs are intentionally overworked and underpaid by their employers and constantly threatened of deportation if they complain. In certain provinces, such as Manitoba, British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan, recruitment agencies are forbidden to charge LCGs a fee to find an employer (CIC, 2008). Even though the federal government does not approve it, agencies continue to charge placement fees in Ontario and Quebec. CIC clearly states that, employers cannot hire a LCG on a trial basis to find out if they are suitable.

Despite that, we have seen from the respondents' testimonials that agencies still encourage employers to hire LCGs for trial periods. It is also illegal for the LCGs to work without the issuance of a new work permit each time they change an employer. For the most part, agencies are aware of this and chose to ignore it perpetuating the vicious cycle.

“Agencies play a powerful role in constructing for the prospective employer the idea of Filipinas as servant/housekeeper” (Pratt, 2000:228). Pratt informs us that “Filipinas are discursively constructed as housekeepers, with inferior intellects and educations relative to European nannies” (Pratt, 2000:229). She argues that historical geographies of colonialism and racism continue to define the distinction between nanny and domestic worker. Pratt says that nanny agents encourage Filipina women to represent themselves as exploitable. She provides an example where several LCGs were instructed by the agencies to

indicate their willingness to work long hours (Pratt, 2000: 228). Both agencies and employers intentionally remind the LCGs of their previous “personal and collective histories as domestic workers in cities such as Hong Kong and Singapore” where they were highly exploited in comparison to their Canadian experiences (Pratt, 2000:229).

3.5 Employment experiences

At the time of the interviews, the majority of the respondents were still actively working as LCGs. When asked if they were still working for their first genuine employer, the majority of the respondents replied that they were not. They felt that they had been subjected to harsh work conditions and that their employers were not respecting the agreements stated in their work contracts. The respondents mentioned that abuse of their employment rights and negligence were the main reasons why they were not with their first genuine employers. The respondents said their employer exercised power within their households as they knew there was no government body monitoring them. Only a small percentage of the respondents considered their first genuine employer fair and flexible. Karine was an exception as she was smuggled into the country to work illegally as a domestic by her Saudi Arabian employer. Her story will be discussed towards the end of this section.

Many of these women said they were either dismissed because they began asserting their rights which angered their employer or they quit the job as they could no longer tolerate the abuse. The respondents unanimously agreed they felt the regulations of the LCP empowered and protected their Canadian employers and left them vulnerable. The

frustrations expressed by the respondents above are reiterated within the available literature. Grandea and Kerr discuss these unmonitored employment practices put LCGs at a disadvantage. Furthermore, they mention how the peculiar status of LCGs as non-standard workers and as non-family members has circumscribed their ability to assert their rights (Grande & Kerr, 1998).

We will now proceed to explore in detail the work experiences of the respondents within the sample of LCGs. Out of the 31 respondents, there were six who, at the time of their interview, were still working for their first genuine employer, which included Amerie, Dina, Lulu, Hazel, Lydia and Eleanor. There were six others who, at the time of the interview, were no longer working as LCGs but had stayed with their first genuine employers until they received their PR and they were Sophia, Wendy, Samantha, Bessie, and Vivica. Tammy had also stayed with her first genuine employer until she got her PR. She then sponsored her sister Yolanda to come work for her first employer and then found herself another LCG job. Yolanda also stayed with her first genuine employer until she received her open permit. Before she left she sponsored her cousin to come work for her employer as they still needed a LCG. Despite being a PR, Tammy preferred to remain working as a LCG than working in a factory like her sister Yolanda.

At the time of the interview, there were 17 respondents who were no longer working for their first genuine employer, 15 respondents found their current employers fair. When asked if they had ever quit their job due to abuse on the part of their employers, 11 respondents replied yes. The respondents all had various reasons, Ophelia said it was because the elderly Québécois nanny in her employer's home did not like her and was

making it difficult for the two of them to work together. Ursula said the main reasons she left were the low salary, the little rest and food:

“I worked for 15 months under abusive circumstances in Brampton, Ontario. My employer was my cousin. I took care of the baby night and day, cleaned and cooked and slept with the baby. Meanwhile she and her husband went to the casino and concerts. I worked everyday of the week and was paid only \$250 a month. My cousin hid my tax papers from me so I could not see the calculations and only give me the check. She also took my passport from me and tore out the work permit.”

According to Ursula, she was deprived of any outside contact with people and made to fear the police and could not go to church. She felt very isolated and trapped within her cousin's home. Her means of communication with the outside world was via her cell phone which her cousin had bought. She said the monthly fees used to be deducted from her \$250 salary.

At one point, Ursula asked permission to find another job to get additional income so she could visit her aunt in Montreal. Ursula suspected her cousin refused in fear she would report the abuse work conditions and never return. She made the decision to leave when she found out the real intentions behind a vacation to the Philippines which her cousin had offered her. She said they intended to leave her in the Philippines and notify the CIC that they had released her:

“When I confronted her about it and told her I was leaving, she packed my clothes in a garbage bag, demanded me to give her back the cell phone and pushed me out of her door and slammed it. I called my Aunt, told her my

ordeal and she found me my current employer in Montreal, who paid for my train ticket and my new work permit.”

Ursula said that she initially lived with her Aunt whilst she started her new job. She said she left within a few months later because her Aunt’s husband was making sexual advances towards her and she did not wish to cause any trouble. At the time of the interview, she was living with the chairperson of PINAY and was hoping to move out and share an apartment with other Filipinas.

Of the 17 respondents, seven had been fired by their first employers for various reasons, ranging from their employer simply not liking them or not having the financial means to pay their salary. Some respondents said it was a mutual agreement between them and their employer that they should leave as they were not compatible. This was the case for Rita who said she was overworked and unappreciated. She said she worked every day of the week including holidays without being paid overtime for five months until she left. In addition, she filed a complaint against her first employer with the *Commission des normes du travail du Quebec*. After a year of waiting, the ruling was in her favour and her first employer was obliged to pay her for the overtime and holidays she worked without pay.

Patricia was fired by her first employer and she described her situation below:

“I stayed only a week with my first employer. The husband was kind and accommodating. He asked if I wanted a computer in my room and got me a laptop. But the wife was cold towards me from the beginning. I had a feeling she did not like me. The reason they said they were firing me was because they felt I was not compatible with their family.”

Patricia used an agency to find her a new employer and after four days of searching she secured a job with her current employer. As of October 2008, she had been working for them for a year and a half. Lulu stayed with her first employer for eight months, until she was released. She described her situation:

“They were a Jewish family with four kids, and the first day the nine year old son punched me in the back. The 13 year old was verbally abusive to me and would call me stupid and the F word. I ate at a separate table than the family and the kids would ask why I was given food if I am not part of the family. Their Mum never took my complaints seriously, and defended her kids. One day when taking groceries from the car I slipped on the ice on the stairs and fell down from the top. They did not care much. [Sighs] They made me work on a sprained leg. I worked from 11:30am till 7:30 pm from Monday to Friday plus overtime which they paid whenever they felt. After 8 months, the Father told me it was not working anymore and fired me, but the truth is he did not have anymore a steady job.”

Lulu informed me that her second employer, who was Québécois, was kind and she stayed 28 months with the family. She took care of the elderly husband who has chronic bronchitis and acute back pain whilst the wife was away at work. She did the cleaning, cooking, washing and accompanied the husband to his check ups. They were flexible time wise as they would allow her to go see the doctor and would let her rest if she was sick. She worked a regular eight hours a day, 40 hours a week and got paid for overtime. They stayed in LaSalle and she

lived with them from Monday to Friday and was allowed to share an apartment with friends on weekends.

Wendy and Bessie, who were citizens at the time of the interview, had remained with their first employers even after they became landed immigrants. They both got replaced with new LCGs which their employers had secretly sponsored from the Philippines. Bessie explained it is common that once a LCG has become a permanent resident they will stop living in their employer's home and reduce their number of hours. This was the case for Bessie who had additional family responsibilities once her husband and children had arrived in Montreal. Bessie said that her first employer replaced her with a new LCG as they had a new baby and needed someone to live in the home and be prepared to work long hours. Bessie said since then, she has found employment on a part-time basis working as a LCG.

Tammy, who was a permanent resident at the time of her interview, had also completed her 24 months with her first employer. She said she stayed with her first employer because for the most part, they were fair and flexible. However, she did not like the fact that they used to make her work overtime without pay. She explained that she never complained as she was scared they would find another LCG and release her. Whilst accompanying her employer's family to Florida on their vacation she used to work and was not paid for her days off. Tammy said she even paid for her own meals whenever they went out to eat. She explained "I felt like a slave. You know we as caregivers give our services, not our humanity". After Tammy became a permanent resident, her first employer

sponsored her sister Yolanda as their LCG. At the time of the interview, she was working for her first employer's sister where she felt the workload was less.

May, Eva and Gaby, Heidi, Jacinta, Ines and Nayla were either terminated by their previous employers or quit their jobs due to mistreatment. I will proceed to describe their individual work experiences. In November 2008, Ines sat down for her interview. She had recently been released by her first genuine employer for no justifiable reason. She had been working for them since May 2008. Prior to finding this employer, she had been searching 10 months for a new permanent employer as the one on her original work permit did not exist. According to Ines, her previous employer was fair and flexible with her work hours. She used to baby sit their children on weekends and got paid overtime. She explained that they provided a good letter of recommendation for her and wished her all the best. Surprisingly, some of the prospective employers she was visiting at the time of her interview were close friends of her previous employer.

Heidi, who had worked as a nurse previously in Saudi Arabia was employed to work as a LCG by the son of an elderly couple who were both 81 years old. She had to take care of his mother, who suffered from Alzheimer's and his father. She says the son was kind and always paid for her overtime and the only challenge was his mother who would accuse her of negligence. Heidi provides an example:

“She would sometimes lie to her son and say things like I did not give her enough food or that I did not give her a bath in the morning. Luckily her son knew she was forgetful because of her Alzheimer's and so I did not get into any trouble.”

Heidi worked there for 23 months and in January 2008, just short of completing her 24 months and applying for her open permit she got sick. Heidi explained that she had fainted on the floor and was found there by the janitor who called the ambulance. She said, the following four days she had continuous seizures whilst in the hospital and was transferred to the neurological unit where a tracheotomy was performed to place a tube in her throat to aid in her breathing.

According to Heidi, she slipped into a coma and stayed for almost two months in that state. Meanwhile, her employer had released her and found another caregiver for his Mother. During her interview, Heidi suspected that she had contracted something from his Father, who had died just before she fell sick:

“I think he infected me with viral encephalitis, which is the inflammation of the brain. It might have been the cause of the coma. I think I got it when attending to him as he used to cough a lot, or maybe I got in contact with his urine or faeces when cleaning him. I also got diagnosed with type 2 diabetes in Canada which might have played a part in the illness.”

Once she came out of her coma, she discovered she had lost her memory, and the only people she could remember were her sons. She left the hospital on June 2 2008, after intensive rehabilitation to help her walk and increase her mobility.

At the time of the interview, she had to rely on her personal notes which were based on her friend's recounts and what she could remember which she had jotted down as her memory partially returned. She was taking anti-seizure medication and having regular follow ups with her doctor, which she had to pay for as she was no longer covered by *Régie de l'assurance maladie du Québec*

(RAMQ), she had no work permit and had recently applied for an open permit. She also applied for her permanent residency based on humanitarian and compassionate grounds as she believed her application would be accepted based on circumstantial evidence:

“I have sent in all my medical documents from St Mary’s Hospital and my doctor as proof to show I fell sick just a month short of completing my 24 months. I also sent in my letter of recommendation from my previous employer to show I was a good caregiver. I pray that is enough.”

Nayla was the respondent who had switched employers the most as she worked with several trial employers. She was fired by her first employer after two days because the husband did not like her because she kept making mistakes and was unfamiliar with housework despite her one week training from her cousin. She stayed three months unemployed, during which she worked trial periods at different houses for prospective employers. She had six prospective employers for whom she worked trial periods, most of which were short lived as she quit or they dismissed her. She describes in detail her different experiences:

“The first employer was an Italian who lived in Laval. The first week they were nice to me, but in the second week I discovered that I had to work in five different houses, two of them were up north. I worked from 7am to 7pm everyday and was paid \$300 a week but not for my overtime. The employer was eager to sign a contract with me, but I quit as it was too much work for one person.”

This confirms the AAFQ's argument that LCGs are often abused by their employers as they are forced to work illegally and are in vulnerable situations (AAFQ, 2008). Granda and Kerr also discuss the various forms of exploitation which LCGs are subjected to. One such example is similar to Nayla's experience such as "In instances when a caregiver had more than one employer, a practice known as the 'sharing of nannies', the workload is heavier without a corresponding increase in wages"(Granda & Kerr, 1998:9). They confirm that this is often a more attractive option for employers who cannot afford to pay a domestic a full salary. The fact that this jeopardizes the status of a LCG or that she can be deported is of no concern to the employers as they are not held responsible. Often domestics work trial periods with no pay, which is illegal but still practised in Canada, the employers manipulate the situation as they are aware the LCG is desperate for employment (Granda & Kerr, 1998:9).

Nayla switched five more employers; the second employer she described as a woman who needed help managing her home as she travelled frequently. She worked there for two weeks, and then the woman requested her to wait for two weeks while she travelled to China. Nayla refused to wait as that would have equated to an entire month of uncertainty with no contract signed. She found her third employer who had three kids, two were twins and one had Down's syndrome. After working three days, the employer said she would call Nayla the following week to come and work for a few more days. Nayla said she never received a call which prompted her to eventually call the woman asking for her payment for the three days of work. Nayla said:

“She reassured me that once she received her check from the CLSC, she would call me. After a few days I called again and she shouted at me and accused me of calling over 20 times [Laughs]. She said it was harassment and that she would call the police. I was desperate for the money as my Father had died and I needed to send some home for the funeral.”

Nayla quit asking the woman for her compensation for the three days of work and was never paid. Her fourth employer was a middle-aged woman whose mother was elderly and suffered from Alzheimer’s. Nayla assisted the old woman in the house and accompanied her to the mall. She was advised by friends and relatives that the employment was not stable as the elderly woman might not have too long to live and she could be unemployed again. She explained her worries to her employer and did not sign a contract with her.

Her fifth employer was a Jewish family with two young kids which she described as being “out of control” as they would not listen to her in the morning. She explains:

“The boys would refuse to brush their teeth in the morning, and dressing them up was difficult as they would run away from me. In the morning, they would always be late for the school bus. So they often would car pool with a family friend who would get mad at me because the boys were wasting their time...like that was my fault or something.”

After two weeks, Nayla told the boy’s mother that she could not control the boys and decided to quit. She explains “I was thinking maybe I should quit and go home as I was starting to think that I was not a good caregiver, but my friends encouraged me to stay and keep trying”. In her final attempt, she landed a job

with a prospective employer in Ville St Laurent, with whom she has stayed with. Nayla recounted to me her exact words she told her current employer “I had to go through the head of a needle before I found you”. With a smile Nayla said:

“I told my employer that I was not a good cook, and they told me that it did not matter as they were not particular about food and not fussy. I cook for them Filipino food and the wife joins me in the kitchen....sometimes the husband helps me.....when I am washing the baby he gives me the shampoo and towel. When the baby cries, he takes it and puts it on his lap while he is on the computer... he owns a home business. That allows me to continue with the cooking and cleaning.”

At the time of the interview, Nayla had been working three weeks with her current employer as a live out caregiver and was in the middle of processing her papers, to get a new work permit and CAQ.

Gaby worked for her first employer for three months before she resigned. When she started working, her first employer lived in St-Basile, Quebec but because she was a nurse she was reassigned to a hospital up north in Val-d'Or and Gaby had to move with her employer and her three children. The husband remained in St-Basile as it was closer to his work. Gaby said she could not take the environment and the isolation in the township as it was depressing:

“There were two groceries, two boutiques and one post office in the entire township, and it was surrounded by woods, all you saw when you looked outside was snow and trees for miles ahead. Oh gosh I so was miserable.”

In addition, Gaby explained that in her contract, she was supposed to take care of three toddlers, but in reality she took care of four as the neighbour's child was included. According to Gaby, her employer abused her days off, requesting her to do housework and take care of the children. She explains below:

“She had ridiculous requests like asking me to clean a spot of toothpaste on the bathroom sink. I explained my frustrations to her explaining it was not fair that I was not being paid extra for caring for the fourth child and that I was being made to work on my days off with no pay. I told her it was inconsiderate as she knew I had no option but to stay on my days off.”

According to Gaby, her employer did not show any sympathy or agree to pay extra for her work done on her days off, instead her employer replied, “Do you think the government or an immigration officer will come over to check on you?”

Gaby continued to work there for a few more months, and then she gave her resignation letter two weeks prior to leaving. Her last few days with her employer were spent in their house in Montreal. On the day before she was to leave they took her to the movies, Baton Rouge restaurant and pampered her. They returned home and asked her to go to the park to play with the children:

“Whilst I was at the park, my employer was calling immigration to ask them to deport me and was filling a complaint. My employer was Québécois and she wrote my reference letter and release papers in French. It stated that, I was not a good nanny and that I did not deserve to stay in Canada. It said I almost killed her child in the bathtub and that I used the phone all the time and that I used them to get to Canada. I was shocked

and surprised as I treated her like she was my own sister. The immigration officer assessing the case asked my employer why did they not file a complaint earlier or get a lawyer [Laughs]. He knew it was not true”

A week later, Gaby found another employer, for whom she has worked for since May 2007. She says that for the most part they are kind, but they abuse her work hours. According to Gaby, her contract states that she must work eight hours a day but in reality, she works more hours and is not paid overtime. She said:

“I feel degraded as I am being made to work for my food and accommodation. I should be receiving an extra \$150 each week for my overtime. Instead, my employer gives me a tip once or twice a month or whenever she feels. I choose to continue, because on May 2009 I will have met my requirements and I can file for my open permit and my residency.”

Gaby expressed her frustration working as a LCG because she felt “bored” and “stagnant” as she was not using her professional skills as a nurse.

Jacinta has changed employers twice and at the time of the interview she was still working for her second employer. She arrived to Canada in July 2006 and discovered that her employer on her contract was not genuine. After two weeks, her agency which was T.M.I found her an employer who lived in Dollard-des-Ormeaux. Her work experience with her first genuine employer was one of the worst cases of exploitation amongst all the respondents. She described her first employer as very abusive and demanding, she said “my employer was the devil”. With a sigh, she described her work experience:

“The husband and wife had two kids and three dogs, the wife was a nurse. I slept in a room near my employers. I worked from 6:30am until 9pm and was not paid overtime. They never respected me, I felt like a servant and not their nanny. I was commanded to do things and never asked. For example, I have to pick the pen if they dropped it or get them a glass of water if they were thirsty. They left everything untidy on purpose, so I was always picking up after them. The kids would throw their clothes everywhere and the kitchen was a mess with trash and spills on the floor. I was not given enough food as they thought I did not deserve it.”

Jacinta shared an apartment with friends where she lived on weekends, she explains that when she was away, her employer would intentionally untidy their house so that when she returned on Monday she would have a lot of housework:

“The house every Monday for a year, had dog poop and pee everywhere, the sink would be filled with dishes. The dogs were let into my room and I would find that my sheets were soaked in dog pee. The kids would not flush the toilet. When I complained to their Mother, she told me if her kids did not want to flush their kaka, it was my job to do it and that was why I was hired by them. I went to the husband for help and when he talked to her, she would get even more mean with me, so I learnt I had nobody.”

After working there for almost a year, Jacinta provided a letter of resignation to her employer. She claims, the wife accused her of being a thief and demanded that she return everything she had taken from them and said she had

video evidence which she would send to CIC so that Jacinta would get deported.

Jacinta said:

“The stepson of the wife was visiting one day and upon hearing my intentions to leave, he asked me why I had stayed with them so long. He was shocked that I had stayed there for 11 months, because apparently many other live-in caregivers had come and gone, they would stay no more than a week or two and then quit. I told him I persevered because I really wanted to complete my 24 months and bring my family over.”

At the time of the interview, Jacinta had been working for her second employer in Pointe Claire for a year and four months. On average, she worked eight hours a day and was paid overtime. She described her employers as being kind and fair with very disciplined and respectful children.

Karine was an exception as she had been smuggled into the country by her Saudi Arabian employer for whom she worked as a domestic for six years. She accompanied her employer to Canada as a visitor in 1996, she said:

“My employer told me lie that I was coming into the country with her because she was sick and needed me to attend to her. But it was a lie as she really was smuggling me into the country to work as a domestic for her daughter Zaina who was studying medicine at McGill.”

Karine said she worked for three years and eight months as a domestic for Zaina (her first employer in Montreal) until she returned to Saudi Arabia. Shortly after, Zaina’s younger sister (her second employer in Montreal) arrived to study at McGill. Karine was her domestic for five and half years until she returned home.

Her third employer in Montreal was a family friend of her Saudi Arabian employer who smuggled her into Canada. They were a Saudi Arabian husband and wife studying to become doctors. She worked eight months for them until they transferred her to their friend who was her fourth employer. Karine said:

“My Saudi employers all treated me like a slave. They thought they had the right because they were paying me. The first daughter paid me \$208 a month, and her sister paid me \$500 a month. The first couple paid me \$600 a month and the family paid me \$600 on a monthly basis.

Everyday I started at daybreak and worked until midnight or early in the morning. Ramadan was the worst as I had to bring the groceries in, cook and prepare for their parties and cater to their many guests all night. I also had additional chores like garden work and washing the cars. I was treated like an animal, they yelled at me, pushed me, I was not allowed to ever sit down and had to stand all the time. I was not treated with any dignity.”

Her last employer had two children, who were two and four years old. As described above, she was overworked and exploited. The husband of her fourth employer would warn her to keep away from the police as they would deport her if she approached them and told her they would not protect her. Whilst working for this family, she suffered a stroke on November 28, 2006. The stroke happened at four in the evening and affected the left side of her body. Her employers were not concerned and only let her go to the hospital the next day in the morning as she was too weak. Her employer called a taxi once she had dressed the children and taken them to the bus stop. She explained further:

“I stayed for one month at Royal Victoria Hospital. The administration asked me for a piece of I.D., I told them I had none as my employer had my passport. After further investigation, they realised I had been illegally living and working in Canada for over a decade. The social worker and police who investigated my case ordered my employer to release my passport. I think my employer panicked, so they released me and disappeared. I went to rehab for one month and on February 3, 2007 I was released from the hospital.”

Karine went on to say that after she was released, she went to live with Tess Tesalona, a Filipina woman who is a coordinator at the Immigrant Worker’s Centre (IWC). The government paid for her medicines and she received welfare money for over a year. Meanwhile further investigations into her case were done by CIC, upon completion of the investigations she was informed she could apply for her PR based on humanitarian and compassionate terms. With a smile on her face, she said “I became a legal immigrant in Canada this year and I now have rights”. At the time of the interview, she was working with Lulu at a factory owned by Morris International in LaSalle.

“I was told it is not good for me to work hard, and so this job is ideal as all we have to do is decorate the baskets and assemble Godiva chocolates that are sold in Wal-Mart and Sears, so it is not demanding on my body.”

Karine’s experience working as a LCG was different as she explained she was isolated in her employer’s house and not allowed to ever go outside or socialize

with other Filipinas in the community. She lived in constant fear and that was a crippling factor which perpetuated her exploitative situation.

Most of the respondents admitted they had tried to negotiate with their employers so that they did not live-in on the weekends. All the respondents except Karine had struck an agreement at sometime with their current or previous employers to live-out on their days off, which for most were the weekends. This allowed them to attend social events, do personal errands and work other part-time care giving jobs if they needed extra money.

When asked if they had ever worked an extra job as a caregiver, whilst holding their permanent job as a LCG, many respondents were reluctant to answer the question or were evasive. Only Ursula, Amerie, Bianca and Nayla admitted to working part time jobs on weekends. They all said they worked between six to ten hours on weekends or occasionally whenever they were needed. Nayla said she worked three hours each Saturday and Sunday for an elderly Québécois:

“The old woman complains to her daughter who hired me. She hardly understands me and there is a lot of miscommunication as I do not speak French, so I am looking into signing up for beginner French as I know nothing...maybe only bonjour [laughs], that is not enough.”

Most of the interviews were done in the LCG's apartment during the weekend or in the weekday in the evening. Some respondents were live-outs and went home at the end of their work day, which was the case for Nayla, Rita, and Augusta. Hazel was also a lived out caregiver and shared an apartment with her older sister Brenda and their friend Augusta. Wendy, who is now a citizen, said

she was always a live-out caregiver as she stayed with her sister and went home at the end of the day.

Heidi had no job at the time of the interview as she had been recovering from her coma. She had recently been given the go ahead from her doctor to start working and was looking around for part-time jobs. She was living in a duplex with several LCGs and was not required to pay rent as she had been jobless for the most part of the year due to her illness. All the respondents who shared an apartment with other Filipina LCGs shared the bills such as the rent, hydro and food with their roommates.

The respondents were aware it was against the requirements of the LCP to live outside their employer's home on their work days and that they could be penalized if caught but they were willing to take the chance. All the respondents said it allowed them to take a break from their work environment and more importantly, they felt that they had a safe place where they could avoid being exploited on their days off by their employer. Ines, at the time of the interview, had recently been fired and expressed her relief and joy that she had an apartment:

“I am so relieved I have a place to call home. Imagine if I did not have a place to go to once my employer's fired me? I would be now begging one of my friends to let me sleep on their couch whilst I search for a new job.”

These findings from Montreal confirm the conclusions made by other scholars who have examined the experiences of Filipina domestic workers in Canada. Thus, according to Grandea and Kerr (1998), living in the home of their employers has made LCGs prone to abuse, as Nayla, Gaby, Heidi, Jacinta, Karine

and Ines have proven through their testimonies. These respondents referred to experiences ranging from verbal abuse, to physical abuse from children, to deprivation of food and privacy. None of the respondents in the sample said they had experienced any form of sexual abuse from their employers and only a few such as Bianca dared to acknowledge its silent existence.

Bianca said that many LCGs do not like to speak of sexual abuse from their employers as they are ashamed and cannot prove it. Bianca said she had LCG friends who worked in homes with cameras in every room including the bathroom and bedroom which they believed their employers used to watch them as they showered or changed clothes. She said she knew of a LCG who claimed their male employer would undress in front of her and then ask for a hug. Abuse in various forms as described above can easily occur within the employer's home because "the private nature of the workplace conceals practices that are not acceptable in a regular work environment" (Grandeau & Kerr, 1998: 10).

Bakan and Stasiulis (1997), discuss the interrelationship between the non-citizen women of colour working as LCGs and their employer, who are usually white and female, or an employing male/female couple with considerable economic means. They discuss the power relations between the employer and the LCG. Employers to some extent, control the right of foreign domestic workers to stay in Canada. We have seen above how some of the employers abuse this control and use it to manipulate the LCGs. Bakan and Stasiulis concluded that the institutionalized asymmetry in power between the employer and LCG resulted in

cases of domestic worker abuse ranging from unpaid overtime to sexual harassment and assault (Bakan & Stasiulis, 1997).

Geraldine Pratt (1999) argues that the LCG is “defined in relation and in opposition to the category Canadian citizen, and it is the non-citizen status of job occupants that structures the work conditions” of LCGs. She points out that amongst LCGs there is “a great deal of uncertainty about their entitlement to the federal government’s Employment Insurance (EI) program”. Pratt says this “confusion is of considerable importance because access to employment insurance benefits could allow a domestic worker to leave an especially exploitative situation”. Based on conversations between LCGs and counsellors and focus group discussions at the Toronto-based Philippine Women Centre, Pratt concluded that many LCGs are uncertain about their rights as an employee while registered within the LCP (Pratt, 1999: 225).

Many scholars such as Pratt (1999), Aitken (1987), and Stiell and England (1997a) discuss the vulnerability of working as a LCG within a privatized space. Pratt says it justifies minimal state intrusion into the home of employers, which leads to the lack of regulation of the employment situations of LCGs. In regard to identity formations, LCGs are often regarded as family members rather than employees. Pratt argues that this social marginalisation devalues the work of the LCG (Pratt, 1999).

In a collaborative paper between PINAY and the Centre for applied family studies (2004), LCP workers were involved in focus groups. According to their survey, 45% of the respondents received overtime pay after 49 hours of work,

40% said they did not and 7% percent said they received sometimes, while 8% did not give a response. The cause of the problems associated with working overtime and being underpaid stemmed from lack of information on their rights and the unwillingness to complain or exercise their rights. The LCP workers expressed fear that if they complained to their employers about their work conditions, it could aggravate them or result in unpleasant consequences such as a call to MICC which was the case for Jacinta and Gaby. Jill Hanley and her fellow researchers noted that many LCP workers remain silent about their exploitation because in comparison to the previous countries they worked in as domestics, they have better pay and work conditions (Hanley, Oxman-Martinez, and Cheung, 2004).

All the respondents sent money home on a regular basis to the Philippines to support their family members. There were 13 respondents who sent money on a monthly basis towards their children's education and allowance. There were only two respondents who said they had send money for household expenses and renovations. Some respondents such as Ines, Ursula, Eva and Karine sent money to in-laws and family members such as siblings, cousins or adopted children so they could attend school or further their education. There were five respondents who said they sent money for sick family members who were in need of medication such as Ursula whose aunt needed medication for her liver disease. Just before her interview in October 2008 Sophia sent money for her sick brother who had recently been hospitalized.

There were nine respondents who were not married or had no children. They admitted to sending money less frequently and if they did it was to help out their close family members. At the time of her interview, Felicia was permanently separated from her husband, and had no children. She was in the process of starting up a computer business in Manila with her nephew:

“I just shipped 10 of the latest computers to the Philippines. The cargo will arrive towards the end of the year, I hope. I just sent to my nephew \$6000 towards the business and the rental of the shop. We have agreed to divide the profits in half. The shop is already open, we have a computer repair section and the other will be an internet café where people can surf the net and the kids can play online games.”

Dina, at the time of her interview was separated from her husband and had two teenagers. Like Gaby and May, she expressed her guilt being apart from her children and admitted to sending gifts which her children wanted like the Nintendo DS and the Wii console along with the latest clothes and accessories. Jacinta said that she was planning to send money so her two children could buy their own gifts. Bianca, who did her interview in November 2008, said she had just mailed a box full of gifts for her two children and wired money to her husband for Christmas.

A few respondents expressed how they transfer their motherly affection and love to the children they care for or even their employers. Gaby expressed that she felt genuine love for the children of her first employer and treated her like a sister and yet was mistreated. May admitted she considered her employer's

children like her own and expressed her close relationship with the family. She added that she hardly even spends time with her Filipina friends:

“The baby in the family calls me Aunty and the kids say that I am stricter than their own Mum and they welcomed me into their family and their house is like an extension of my home. I have my open permit and work in a factory. Sometimes after work I go visit my employer and sleep over at their home and help prepare the little ones for school, and then go to work.”

This display of attachment to their employer’s family is confirmed by Lan (2003) who noted that LCGs working in Taiwan were acting motherly towards the children they cared for. According to Lan, some employers manipulate this emotional bond between their LCGs and their children to obtain additional unpaid labour. This can be in the form of asking the LCG to baby sit, or requesting the LCG to accompany the children on their days off or to give up annual vacations for the children’s sake (Lan, 2003:197).

Lan says the establishment of emotional bonds with the children under their care provides the LCG with emotional rewards and social recognition for their undervalued work. The respondents who were mothers said the distance prevented them from performing their “labour of love” as described by Lan (2003) for their families and children. Parreñas noted that most of the domestic workers she interviewed felt less guilt for neglecting their families when caring for another family (Parreñas, 2000).

Pei-Chia Lan discusses how migrant mothers such as LCGs “send remittances and gifts to sustain family ties impaired by physical separation, while searching for emotional attachment and moral recognition in their paid mothering work” (Lan, 2003:205). Lan also mentions the various ways the money is used by the LCGs to support their households in the Philippines such as sending their “children to private schools, purchasing expensive gifts, and remitting generous allowances” as well as paying for the salaries of their own maids in their households (Lan 2003:195). Similarly, several respondents within the sample admitted to pampering their children as a result of the guilt felt from not being physically there. The gifts were used to pacify their children and to compensate for their absence.

3.6 Social networks, family and community

The majority of the respondents expressed the difficulty of being away from their family members. These respondents admitted to relying on their social networks in Montreal to find support and using volunteering within the Filipino community as a way to interact with other Filipinos. This is an important aspect that was noted as a result of my research. It should be noted there is currently no in-depth literature available on how social networks are used as a coping mechanism for LCGs.

There was a general agreement amongst the respondents that their Filipino social networks helped them maintain their culture, heritage and language. All the respondents confirmed they were part of a social network of Filipinos in Montreal

and that they met frequently to socialize and to discuss concerning issues in their community.

Food was an integral part of their culture and the respondents all said they often got together to share a meal which was an opportunity to cook their favourite meals such as *kare kare*, *pansit*, *bibingka* (*sweet rice cake*) *chicken adobo* and *fish sinigang*. This was usually followed by karaoke and dancing to the latest Filipino pop songs. Several respondents said that they like to watch Filipino movies and gather for Bible study. Most respondents kept up to date with Filipino celebrity news and soap operas via the internet and cable TV.

Ophelia said that she and many LCGs attend annually the fiesta called *Pista sa Nayon*, which is a cultural event involving traditional song, dance and food, hip hop concerts for the youth, fireworks, and athletic events. The event is held in the summer at the Mackenzie-King Park on Côte Sainte Catherine Street in the Côte-des-Neiges area which is the heart of the Montreal Filipino community. Hazel originates from the Cordillera Mountain Range, which is in the north of Luzon, Philippines. Hazel and her sister Brenda often went to the BIBAK Montreal organization to learn traditional folk dances and songs from their region.

The respondents often met each other on weekends, therefore several of the interviews were conducted within their homes during a movie night or whilst they sat down to dinner with friends and family. This was the case for Wendy, Bessie and Sophia who were referred to me by their friend Vivica during a mutual friend's dinner party which involved their families.

The interviews with Wendy, Bessie and Sophia were done in the bedroom with children screaming and running in and out. During her interview, Bessie who had been a citizen for over two years was breastfeeding her 11 month old baby. She explained she had no other time to meet for an interview as she was extremely busy with her three young children. It was often the case that I was invited to come to the LCG's homes during dinner as they wanted me to try their traditional Filipino dishes, socialize and meet their friends.

Many of the respondents (74%) in the sample were roommates and friends with each other such as Ophelia, Patricia and Queenie. After attending mass, I accompanied them to their apartment where they live on weekends. I ate dinner with them and then sat down for their individual interviews. Likewise, Augusta shared an apartment with sisters Brenda and Hazel. Yolanda and Eleanor lived in Brossard in the house of their oldest sister Tammy and her family. Lulu also lived in the home of the chairperson of PINAY and her husband, who happen to be her aunt and uncle. Karine, at the time of the interview, lived in the home of the chairperson of the IWC. Amerie and Chloe completed their interviews at their apartment which they share with other LCGs in the West Island which is closer to their employers' homes. This is exemplary of the Filipino community's cohesiveness and how they support each other in times of need.

Two pivotal Filipinas, who serve the immigrant Filipino community, are the coordinator of IWC, Tess Tesalona and the chairperson of PINAY, Evelyn Calugay. They have been long time advocates for the rights and protection of temporary immigrant workers such as LCGs and agricultural workers. The

majority of the respondents all expressed their gratitude and respect for these two women and said they held a motherly role in the eyes of many Filipina LCGs in Montreal. Most of the younger respondents addressed Evelyn Calugay as “Tita” which is used to address elders who are close friends.

Mrs Calugay and Ms Tesalona are renowned for helping Filipinas who are in distress or desperately seeking shelter and providing legal advice. Several respondents such as Karine, Ursula, Rita, May, Samantha and Lulu confirmed this as they have witnessed Tess Tesalona and Evelyn Calugay offering shelter in their homes, organizing peaceful protests, fighting deportations, spreading awareness, showing support at court hearings as well as offering information sessions. They have been known to help new LCGs with their paper work and even accompany them to their prospective employer’s homes to assess the live-in conditions and help them negotiate their contracts.

The case of Melca Salvador is an example where these two advocates fought against the federal government’s deportation orders for Ms Salvador and her Canadian born son Richard in the year 2000. They fortunately got the deportation orders withdrawn after more than a year of protesting, media coverage and a public outcry for her to be allowed to stay in Canada. Melca Salvador unfortunately died on 27 February 2009 from cancer. According to the March 15, 2009 *La Presse* article entitled, “L’Ultime bataille de Melca” Richard is in the care of Evelyn Calugay who he refers to as “Grandmother” as she has been in his life for a long time (Hachey, 2009). Some respondents said that Joe Calugay, the husband of Evelyn Calugay, often helped them review their application papers

prior to sending them for processing. Heidi said she relied heavily on Mr Calugay's help when she applied for her permanent residency after she got out of her coma and was slowly regaining her memory.

Most of the respondents said that they felt they had to give back to the Filipino community in return for the help and support they had received. Amongst the respondents, the majority had volunteered at various organizations such as the Filipino Solidarity Cooperative (COOP), the IWC and PINAY. They said they offered their time mostly on weekends or if they had extended lengths of time off from work. The one complaint the respondents who volunteered had about volunteering was that it left them exhausted as they had little time to rest. Apart from that, they enjoyed the interactions with other Filipinas and the general Montreal community as well as their organized outings such as hiking trips, apple picking, site-seeing and visits to the *cabane à sucre* (sugar shack).

There were exactly 14 respondents who were actively volunteering and most of them offered their time and skills to PINAY. There were 17 respondents who were not volunteering at the time of their interview and did not intend to do so due to time constraints. Of the 17, there were three respondents who had previously volunteered and they were Queenie, Tammy and Patricia. Queenie said that she had offered her time at the COOP's grocery store selling products and working as a cashier:

“...now I do not volunteer, but in the past I worked at the COOP. I like to help out in the community and I also learnt how to use the cash register. I gained more confidence working there as I had to interact with customers.

Since my employer is going to be in Florida from November to April and I will have time on my hands I will probably return to volunteer there.”

Only Gaby volunteered in an organization that was not Filipino affiliated. She was a crew member of the Breast Cancer Foundation where she provided first aid and free refreshments to participants of the fundraiser walk that takes place every summer. She said it was close to her heart as she had empathy for the patients and family members. She said, “Volunteering has helped me boost my social and spiritual life as I am putting the commandment “Love your Neighbour” into practice”.

Rita had previous experience as an accountant, and was the treasurer and part of the Organizing Committee of PINAY at the time of her interview. Eva gave her time to church where she taught catechism and visited sick people in hospital. Eva and Gaby both helped out at the AAFQ with administrative work. Similarly, Yolanda helped out at PINAY and taught tagalong and Filipino culture to the youth at her church in the Snowdon area of Montreal:

“I teach at St Malachi and I enjoy it as I am helping the kids to not forget their Filipino culture. I have taught them about our national heroes, the anthem, the traditional food and dance as well as our history.”

Most of the respondents said that they volunteered because it gave them a sense of fulfillment and that in turn they also learnt new skills or it helped them to become more outgoing and gain confidence. Patricia said that working at the COOP and volunteering in general unites Filipinos within the Montreal community. Sylvia

said she was helping to design the website for PINAY as she enjoyed computer programming and creating multimedia visuals.

Lulu explained how she enjoyed increasing awareness of the plight of LCGs, reaching out and interacting with the Montreal community whilst she distributed flyers and information pamphlets. Hazel described volunteering at PINAY as “one way of reaching out to Filipinas and helping each other through our problems”. Brenda said her reason for being a volunteer at PINAY was that she wanted to prevent new LCGs from encountering the same problems as she did by educating them.

Most respondents confirmed that in Filipino culture family was central and that respect for each other and a strong support system was essential. The women in the sample all expressed their support in the best way they could by communicating constantly with their family members back in the Philippines. The respondents who were married and separated from their husbands and children said they called on a weekly basis and some on a daily basis.

Ophelia said she called every night to talk for a brief period to her husband, eight year old son and 12 year old daughter. On Saturdays she said, she makes an effort to speak to them for at least half an hour. She said she used long distance call cards which cost her \$2.50 which in her opinion was not costly. During her interview Queenie’s husband called her and she talked to him briefly before continuing her interview. She admitted she talks to her husband who she has been married to for two years, at least twice a day. She was particularly excited because her husband had recently received his permanent residency and

would be arriving within two months. Eleanor called twice a day, in the morning to speak to her son 19 year old son and in the evening to speak to her husband and 12 year old son.

Some respondents such as Rita said they liked to use the internet as well as Skype video which allowed them to see their loved ones during video calls. Lulu said she stopped using her webcam on MSN messenger as she did not like to see her mother crying. Jacinta said she used online chat services such as Yahoo messenger and talked to her 14 year old and nine year old every night to ask them how their day was and if they were behaving themselves. Some respondents who were single admitted that family communication was less frequent. Chloe revealed that she called once a month and preferred to communicate by text messaging on a daily basis as many of the respondents did in addition to phone call and online chatting.

Many of the respondents as previously stated above have family members in Canada. Out of the 31 respondents, there were 18 respondents who had family members (including husbands and children) residing in Canada. Most of the respondent's relatives were residing in Montreal and Ontario and a few in other provinces. Lydia had maternal cousins in Toronto, Vancouver and Alberta and often visited her older sister in Montreal. Vivica's uncle lived in Winnipeg and her niece in Alberta. Bessie had over 40 immediate relatives (aunts, sisters, and cousins) living in Montreal, which was the main reason she chose to work in Montreal as a LCG.

3.7 Cultural differences

When the respondents were asked if they found that there were any major cultural differences between Filipino and Canadian culture, the majority agreed that there were distinctive differences particularly that French was spoken in Quebec. Eleanor along all the other respondents said they found it difficult to learn French. Vivica felt that she was continuously discriminated against at her daughter's school because she struggled with her French. Most respondents stated that Canada is very culturally diverse, liberal and open minded. A few respondents pointed out that they had noticed the secular nature of Canadian society as well as the fast-paced life as being different to them.

The major difference most of the respondents pointed out was that family is not as important compared to Filipino culture. What concerned some of the respondents was the lack of appreciation for the elderly especially those that cannot fend on their own and no longer independent. Brenda said:

“...in the Philippines, the youth must show respect and can't talk back to their elders. It took some time for me to realize that it is not expected of children here in Canada. The two year old boy I take care of calls his Mother by her first name and I found that unacceptable.”

Similarly, Wendy said from a Filipino perspective, family comes first and that their youth have less attitude problems than their Canadian peers.

Ophelia described how Filipinos greet their elders, “as a sign of respect you take the hand of the elderly person and put it to your head and say Manopo, it is a different form of a greeting like a kiss or a handshake”. Queenie noted that

there is less respect for the elderly and explained how Filipinos address their elderly with designated names. According to her “an elderly man is addressed as “Kuya” and “Ate” is used when addressing an elderly woman. She said it was used in the same way or format as Ms. and Mr. are used in English.

Gaby explained that in Filipino culture, the elderly are not looked upon as a nuisance to society but instead revered and welcomed as they often are knowledgeable, helpful within the household and care for the children. She disliked senior homes, saying that such institutions enabled people to transfer the burden of physically caring for the elderly. Queenie similarly said, “Canadians lock their parents in nursing homes instead of caring for them until they pass away”. Gaby added that in her opinion, Canadians were too money-minded and self-centered even with their family members. She expressed her disbelief upon learning that her employer’s cousin had to pay rent at his aunt’s home whilst he stayed there for a few months.

The next major difference which many respondents pointed out was that Canadians were less religious. The respondents that noted this said Canadians are generally liberal and open minded, making them more willing to adopt other spiritual disciplines. Bianca said, “They are more willing to pick up oriental practices like Buddhism, yoga, feng shui and shambhala”. This is unlike Filipino culture where the majority of the people are devout Catholics. Amerie quite frankly said, “The teachings of the Christian Church are not valued here. Canadians are less religious, many don’t believe there is a God and are therefore adopting other ways to feed their spirituality”.

The third major difference that was pointed out by almost all the respondents was how relationships were undervalued amongst married and committed couples. Most respondents said that the high divorce rate was a direct result of the infidelity and openness of their relationships. Ophelia explained that Filipinos were more conservative mainly because they were Catholic and followed the doctrines of the church. Eva said that marriage was not valued enough in Canada and that married people were quick to divorce if they had problems as opposed to resolving their differences. Yolanda explained that she had a difficult time coming to terms and accepting that her employers were married yet openly dating other people. Gaby said what she found most culturally different was that gay and lesbian relationships were accepted in Canada and that they were allowed to get married.

Felicia said the main cultural difference for her was that the youth did not court but rather dated. She added that in the Philippines, courting was time-honoured and usually supervised by parents and followed by marriage. Sophia found it odd that parents did not flinch at the knowledge their teens were going out and partying all night. She said, “Teens should not be dating at a young age and being sexually active as they are still immature”. Heidi said that she was not used to the open display of emotions amongst Canadian couples. She said “couples like to show in public their love for each other by kissing passionately”.

Ursula said that another difference between Filipinos and Canadians was that the latter were more impersonal and withdrawn particularly with neighbours. She said that they tend to mind their own business and not get into yours which is

contrary to Filipinos. Wendy said, “We are nosy people and like to get in each other’s business as we are concerned for each other’s welfare. I would say we are close-knit unlike Canadians”.

The cultural differences between Canadian and Filipino culture as described above all tended to be negative. A few respondents appreciated that Canada was accommodating and a free and democratic nation where men and women were equal. Those that expressed this had lived beforehand in Saudi Arabia under rigid rules such as Hazel, Nayla, Brenda and Karine. Nayla said:

“In Saudi you cannot stare a man in his face or talk to him especially in public. It is a sign of disrespect as women are not equal to men there.”

Hazel also added that in Saudi Arabia the society is very closed-minded unlike Canada. She said their religion belittled and disrespected women of all faiths:

“We were not allowed to mingle with Filipino men out in public as we would be seen as prostitutes by the Saudi people. We also could not practice our faith as there were no churches there, so we prayed in our rooms on Sundays.”

Lydia said that one major difference between the Philippines and Canada was the snow and the cold. She acknowledged that the sports were consequently different as Canadians enjoyed winter sports like ice hockey and skiing while Filipinos enjoyed playing basketball and *jai alai*, which according to her is similar to Spanish handball. She also noted that life was fast-paced in Canada compared to the Philippines but that the well organized infrastructure met the demands as the buses and trains were timely, frequent and convenient despite the traffic.

Karine was particularly grateful to Canada. She said the people were more compassionate than in Saudi Arabia where she had previously been a domestic. She said, “The people are nice and understanding, they helped me out when I had problems. I also feel at peace because Canada is war free”.

A few respondents such as Dina and Rita mentioned food as the main cultural difference saying that Canadians like to eat more processed food and junk food as opposed to Filipinos who enjoy healthier and less processed food such as rice and seafood. Amongst all the respondents, only Bessie and Augusta said they noticed no significant cultural differences between Canadians and Filipinos.

There were 16 respondents who said that they had observed significant changes in their mannerisms since they arrived to Canada. The other 15 respondents answered they saw no significant changes in themselves. The majority of the respondents who saw changes in themselves said they had become more empowered, assertive and verbally expressive.

Jacinta said she had become more independent and self-reliant. Brenda, Vivica and Ursula simply said they had become bolder. Tammy said it was only in Canada that she learnt to express herself verbally as she had to in order to defend herself and fight for her rights. She said:

“I learnt that if you do not speak up for yourself from the start, you will be abused and exploited, but if you know your rights and are articulate your employers will respect you to a certain degree. But it is a risky move!”

Lulu said her communication skills had improved and that she was better at expressing herself. Likewise Sophia said “I am now less shy and I can mingle and

converse with strangers which was something I could not do before and I am proud of myself for that”. Chloe said she had become “stronger, more resilient and knowledgeable” with time and that she had matured a lot. May said in a quiet voice “I am not as reserved and shy as I used to be. I am more open to communicating with people and speak with confidence when addressing them”.

Like Yolanda, Eva said she had become more “open verbally” and was proud to be independent. In addition, Rita said her accent had changed slightly and that she had “adopted all these new Canadian and French lingo”. Gaby said that she too had become more outgoing but had started to use more vulgar words which she had learnt from her employers. She said “I am more aggressive and assertive and not afraid to be articulate. Before I was shy, but now I speak up and I am not afraid to express myself”. Similarly Vivica said she had better communication skills:

“Before coming to Canada, I was very shy and would hide in my room in my house when people I did not know well came to visit. Now I am friendlier and not afraid to talk to people. I am more aware now and think before I speak in order to not offend people. I have also trying to learn to speak some French and as I know it would be ideal especially when I finish nursing school and I am looking for work.”

Vivica was amongst the 14 respondents who were taking French classes at the time of the interview or had previously taken them. She saw the advantages of being able to communicate in French with the general Montreal community.

There were a few respondents who said they had changed in their physical appearance. Karine admitted to dying her hair to hide her greys, whilst Eva said she had changed the way she dressed and was more fashion conscious. Like Eva, Rita said she had become more materialistic and concerned with how she looked.

Lydia said she had adopted other ethnic foods whilst living in Canada and had a particular liking for spicy Indian food as it was so different from Filipino food. She admitted to having become more broad-minded as she had learnt a lot from interacting with other ethnic groups and making new friends which gave her the opportunity to try their various ethnic cuisines. She said that in the short time she had been in Canada she had developed a deeper appreciation for Canada's cultural diversity.

3.8 Medical and legal Services

At the time of their interviews, the respondents were asked if they had access to healthcare via Quebec's public health-insurance plan, the *Régie de l'assurance maladie du Québec* (RAMQ). There were 25 respondents who said they were covered by the RAMQ. Amerie, Bianca and Eleanor were aware that their coverage would expire soon and were fearful of getting sick or needing medical care. There were six respondents who were not covered by the RAMQ at the time of their interview. At the time of their interview, May, Yolanda, Augusta and Brenda had their open permits and they informed me that because of their status they were not covered by RAMQ until they became permanent residents.

Heidi had no coverage at the time of the interview as she said it had expired and she had sent in her application for her open permit and was waiting to receive it. Heidi as previously mentioned, had been in a coma for the first half of 2008 and was taking anti-seizure medication and had several follow-up visits at the doctor. At the time of her interview, she was paying for all those costs out of her pocket and finding it very expensive. During her interview, Heidi said:

“My doctor recently gave me a note to say I am fit to work, so now I am searching for part-time work as a caregiver, I hope to find one soon as I need the money to cover my expenses. I can’t keep relying on my friends. I recently decided to pay for life insurance just in case I am hospitalized again, you never know.”

At the time of her interview, Amerie said she was covered by RAMQ, but knew that in a few months she would no longer be covered and she said:

“I will have my open permit within a week. I am still covered by Medicare but only until March, 2009. Then I lose my privileges and about then I plan to have completed my permanent residency application so I can send it in to be processed.”

Augusta was a temporary worker at the time of her interview and was covered by RAMQ. She mentioned the difficulties she had encountered when attempting to see a specialist when she was not feeling well:

“Even if you have a Medicare card, it is hard to see a specialist. I waited a few weeks to get an appointment with a thyroid specialist. The doctor then scheduled me for a thyroid scan and blood tests which I had to wait two

months for. He set up an appointment for another blood test but later rescheduled me so another more urgent case could take my place. So I had to wait another week.”

Chloe had her open permit and was no longer working as a LCG but had found a new job at a La Senza warehouse. She said that according to company policy she was required to work at least three months fulltime in order to become a permanent worker. She was eager to complete her three months as she would then be eligible for health insurance coverage.

May had an open permit at the time of her interview and was therefore not covered by RAMQ. She was eagerly waiting for her selection interview with a counsellor from Immigration Québec. According to May, if she had a positive assessment, she would receive her *Certificat de selection du Québec* (CSQ) and be able to re-apply for her RAMQ and continue with her immigration process. May was upset that she was not covered by any medical insurance despite the fact that she was still working as a LCG and paying taxes.

Lulu who was a permanent resident at the time of her interview said that while she had her open permit and was waiting for her permanent residency she had no medical coverage for eight months. She added that as a temporary worker she had a few short periods when she was not covered:

“I had no Medicare during the first three months and my employer was not willing to pay for private coverage, so I went without until I got my RAMQ card. When I found my second employer I had to renew my work permit, I waited six months for it without any Medicare. When I received

my work permit I was disappointed because it was only valid for five months instead of a year which meant I would be going through the same ordeal all over again five months later.”

The *McGill Daily* published an article entitled “Immigration program holds workers captive” which was written by Andrea Damiano on November 17, 2008. The article highlights the findings of a collaborative report between PINAY and Jill Hanley, an assistant professor at the School of Social Work at McGill University. Jill Hanley confirmed Lulu’s testimony in regards to RAMQ coverage and was quoted saying “Currently, domestic workers face a three month delay before they can receive medical coverage upon entry into Canada” (Damiano, 2008). This means that if their employer does not provide private medical coverage during this period then the LCG is responsible for her personal medical expenses. Hazel, who was new to Canada, had been working for her first employer for five months. She was relieved that she had completed her three months without falling sick. She said “I am expecting my health card to arrive in the mail any day now”.

The article entitled “Caregiver blues” by Heather Robb which was published in the March 5-11, 2009 *Montreal Mirror* informs us that LCGs do not receive compensation for work-related accidents or illness under the *Commission de la santé et de la sécurité au travail* (CSST). The article informs us that Jill Hanley has been continuously fighting for recognition from the CSST that the work of LCGs can be risky and result in injury. She is quoted on page 10 of the *Montreal Mirror* saying, “It doesn’t mean their accident was so bad that they couldn’t continue to work, but it does show that

there is a risk,” she goes on to ask “Why wouldn’t they have the same protection as other workers” (Robb, 2009)?

PINAY participated in a collaborative report entitled “Another look at the Live-in-Caregivers Program” which was an analysis of an action research survey. The reader is informed that only 8% of the respondents to their survey received additional health benefits beyond provincial health care. The focus group consisted of LCGs who were sceptical of the 8% of respondents who said they received extra health benefits from their employers.

The focus group said that the figure was abnormally higher than expected and possibly a misrepresentation (Hanley, Cheung & Oxman-Martinez, 2004:21-22). According to some participants in the focus group, often employers illegally claim the LCG as an employee of the company they own so that their LCG would receive health benefits. The focus group said inevitably the employer ends up not paying directly for their caregiver’s extra health benefits as the employer receives tax breaks as the benefits are considered a company expense (Hanley, Cheung & Oxman-Martinez, 2004:21-22).

The authors inform us that this can have severe repercussions when the LCG is applying for residency. This is because the immigration officer would see evidence that the LCG was receiving cheques and claiming taxes with a T4 from a company other than the name of their employer stated on their visa and work permit. This is a violation of the LCP regulations which can lead to denial of their permanent residency application as they will most likely not be defended by their employer (Hanley, Cheung & Oxman-Martinez, 2004:21-22).

Most LCGs cannot afford to pay for private insurance as the wages they earn go towards more urgent needs such as their children's education. This often results in the neglect of their own health for the sake of their family as they cannot follow up on eye examinations or dental care (Hanley, Cheung & Oxman-Martinez, 2004:21-22).

Respondents within my research were asked if they had access to legal support which they had used at any point in time. In order to clarify, legal support is used to refer to legal advice clinics, lawyers, community organizations that offer legal advice and their knowledgeable advocates. There were 10 respondents who said that they had been aware of legal aid and used it to defend their case when necessary. There were 17 respondents who said they never used legal support. There were four who answered "no" but admitted to having referred to organizations such as PINAY, Project Genesis or the AAFQ occasionally when they needed clarification or advice. In total there were 14 respondents who had used legal support at one point in time.

Of the 10 respondents who categorically answered "yes" to having access to legal support and using it, there were some who said they used a lawyer to defend themselves in court. Patricia, Felicia, Chloe and Rita said they were sued by T.M.I. for unpaid rent and summoned to appear at a hearing by the *Régie du logement du Québec*. At the time of their interviews, which took place in October 2008, they were in the midst of the battle and being represented by Mikki Harrar who was referred to them by PINAY's Evelyn Calugay. Bianca had been previously sued by T.M.I for unpaid rent in 2007. She initially went to housing advocate Arnold Bennett's advisory clinic for help and was told there was no need for a lawyer as she had a strong case. She said she lost the case as she did

not have enough documents to support her argument and was told by the commissioner she should have been represented by a lawyer contrary to what she was advised.

Lulu, Tammy and Vivica said they went to Project Genesis for legal support which was offered to them in various forms such as legal services and advice. Vivica said that she went there to have her documents notarized whilst she was preparing her application for her residency. Ophelia, Eva and Gaby said they had been referred to AAFQ by other LCGs when they were seeking legal advice. Eva said that the AAFQ staff helped her review government applications before she mailed them in for processing and were always willing to inform and advice her on her employment rights as a LCG.

Lulu said she had previously gone to seek advice from Walter Chi-Yan Tom, a practising lawyer of immigration law. She said that he often works with PINAY and Project Genesis and is always there to offer legal advice to LCGs. Likewise Ines, Queenie and Karine said they had at one point in time contacted an immigration lawyer to ask how to proceed with their legal issues. Heidi and Karine who had both been hospitalized said that Joe Calugay of PINAY had helped guide them whilst they were preparing their applications for the open permit and permanent residency. Heidi said:

“Joe has been helping me complete all the necessary documents. He is on our side fighting for our legal and employment rights. So I know he is knowledgeable about the legal issues as he had years of experience.”

In addition, Lydia also said that she asked Evelyn or Joe Calugay for legal advice whenever she was unsure about anything regarding her papers or employment rights.

During the fall of 2008, PINAY's leaders and active members were on a campaign to get its members and Montreal-based LCGs to sign up to be unionized with the United Steelworkers (USW) in an attempt to gain further collective bargaining power. Attempts such as these by LCGs and their advocates to collectively improve their work conditions and change policies that affect them have been ongoing (Fudge, 1997). At a general meeting in October, I learnt that their main hurdle was getting enough LCGs to agree to sign up and be willing to pay their dues to the USW. The propelling reason PINAY wanted to become unionized was the leverage LCGs would gain which would lead to job security, higher wages, legal representation and additional health benefits such as dental coverage.

Brenda said that if more LCGs in Montreal worked towards unionizing with USW, they would have access to “union education programs, health and safety training, workers' compensation assistance, grievance representation, research and legal services, bargaining support, pension expertise, organizing and political campaigns” (United Steelworkers, 2009).

3.9 Summary

The findings from the interviews with the respondents have been numerous as well as tremendously insightful and overwhelming. It is therefore necessary to summarize the main findings of my research in the following pages. We have seen that the majority of the respondents who were interviewed were mainly in their thirties and forties and married as well as university educated with dependants in the Philippines. Most of the married women chose to enter Canada's Live-in Care Program in order to provide a

better lifestyle for their families. The majority of the respondents said that the main reason they chose to come to Canada was because of Canada's higher economic status and the lure of permanent residency which countries they had previously worked in as domestics did not offer to them and their families.

Almost all the respondents had a university degree and had years of professional experience in their field of expertise and were therefore highly-skilled. They said the poor economy and lack of good paying jobs drove them to seek employment abroad in places like Hong Kong, Singapore, Saudi Arabia and Taiwan. Many women said they went to do low-skilled jobs as they were higher paying than their professional jobs in the Philippines. Many of the respondents had been working as domestics in the places mentioned above and therefore sent their LCG applications from these foreign cities. This resulted in shorter processing times compared to the lengthy processing time in the Philippines.

The use of placement or recruitment agencies was common amongst the respondents especially with processing their documents and finding them an employer in Canada who would be willing to sponsor them. The respondents who used an agency all complained of the high fees they were charged by the agencies which left them indebted to family members or the agencies upon arrival to Canada.

In addition, there were many who arrived to Canada only to discover the employer specified on their work permit did not exist and that they had no job. That left them vulnerable to exploitation by their agencies and prospective employers for whom they worked illegal trial periods. The main complaint amongst the respondents that I interviewed was that while they worked trial periods, they were caught in a precarious

situation as they were working illegally which meant they often were manipulated into being overworked and underpaid.

A few respondents spoke of an unscrupulous agency which sent them papers whilst abroad to sign to secure a room in an apartment only to find out upon arrival they had signed a binding one year lease. A handful of respondents said prior to moving into their designated apartment, they were forced to live in the private home of the agency owner and had to pay rent. According to them, the place was overcrowded with access to few amenities. They eventually relocated to their apartments which they described as poorly maintained and far from their work. Some of these respondents said they broke the lease by going to live somewhere convenient and were consequently sued by the agency owner for unpaid rent and forced to get a lawyer to defend themselves.

Within the sample, the majority of the respondents in the fall of 2008 (when interviews were being conducted) had been in Canada for less than five years and were temporary workers. There were six respondents who had their open permits and nine were already permanent residents or citizens. Those that were temporary workers or with an open permit (not yet reunited with their family in Canada) expressed the difficulty of being away from their children and husbands for such a long period of time. A few said it caused strenuous relationships with their husbands resulting in permanent separation or divorce. The respondents with children all said they felt guilt being physically away from them. They admitted to calling regularly as well as sending gifts and allowance money to compensate for their absence.

We have also seen that a number of LCGs have had to face numerous challenges such as exploitation by their employers and agencies, family separation and lack of

employment protection. In regard to employment experiences, we have seen that several of the respondents were no longer working for their first genuine employer due to their employer's mistreatment and negligence. The main issue that concerned my respondents was that they often worked over-time without being paid. The majority of the respondents said the abuse of their time was unavoidable due to the fact they lived with their employer during the weekdays. Employment termination was also common amongst the respondents. Most of the respondents who were fired said it was either their employers disliked them or had found another LCG who was willing to put in the extra work and receive less pay.

We have seen examples of severe mistreatment by employers such as deprivation of medical attention or food as well as a private room. The seizure of personal identification papers and imprisonment was also witnessed by a few respondents. This involved their legal documents, such as their passport and work permit being seized by their employer. In some instances, employers threatened the respondents that they would be reported to the *Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles* so they could be deported, while some were accused of theft and negligence of their employers' children. In particular, LCGs who are illegally working are more in danger of exploitation as they fear turning to officials to report mistreatment.

Isolation and vulnerability within their employer's home was also an issue that was brought up by several respondents. Most of the respondents were concerned that there are no government officials who frequently monitored their living and working conditions. There was a general consensus amongst the majority of the respondents that their work was invisible to Canadian society and therefore not unappreciated. In addition,

they felt that they had limited bargaining power as well as access to employment insurance and protection.

The majority of the respondents had changed employer at least once and eventually settled with employers who were, for the most part, fair and flexible except for occasionally not paying overtime for their extra hours worked. Many respondents said they tolerated this as they just wanted to complete their 24 month requirement. Emotional attachment also played a part as a few respondents expressed the view that with time they had grown fond of the families they worked for and come to love the children as their own.

All the respondents had a place to stay other than their employer's home on the weekends. Most of them shared an apartment and the expenses with other LCGs. The majority of the respondents expressed that having an apartment provided them with a place to find respite from their work and some degree of independence from their employer. Secondly it provided a venue to host parties and to socialize over movies, dinner and karaoke, which were their favourite pastimes. Some respondents had negotiated with their employers to be live-out caregivers which meant at the end of their workday they went to their own apartment. This was particularly appealing as it meant fewer opportunities for the employer to over-work them as they are not physically present at all times in their employer's home.

Family was of the utmost importance to all the respondents and so they frequently communicated with their family in the Philippines via the phone, internet and email. Most of the respondents had a few family members residing in Canada, some were in Montreal and others were in other provinces such as Winnipeg, Ontario and Alberta. The

majority of the respondents had their close family members in the Philippines. All the respondents who had children in the Philippines sent money regularly towards their education, allowance, gifts and for household expenses. When needed, they sent extra money for hospital and medical expenses for loved ones.

Cultural/ethnic identity affirmation was valuable to many of the respondents. Through social networks many of the respondents affirmed their cultural identity. Social networks were important to most of the respondents as it provided them with support and was an opportunity for them to interact with other Filipinos in the Montreal community. Social networks enabled them to keep their language, culture and heritage alive through various activities such as summer festivals, teaching the Filipino-Canadian youth tagalong, dinner parties, folk dancing and volunteering. Several respondents said it helped them cope whilst they are away from their family as it kept them busy on their days off from work. Within the community, there were many community organizations and advocacy groups the respondents relied on at one point or another for legal advice and knowledge to empower themselves. Leaders within these community organizations were seen as being advocates fighting for the increased rights of LCGs and providing support to them whenever possible.

When it came to eligibility to medical coverage, the results showed that the respondents experienced moments when they were not covered whilst working as LCGs, the first being the first three months upon arrival to Canada as their application for medical coverage is being processed. Respondents who were temporary workers were covered by Quebec's health insurance except when they were in the process of renewing their work permit. The respondents with an open permit had no access to public health

insurance for approximately eight months as they waited for their permanent residency. The respondents who had become permanent residents and citizens were covered and all expressed their relief. The respondents who were not covered at the time of the interview all expressed their fear of falling ill or being hospitalized as that meant they would have to personally cover all the expenses or pay for private health insurance.

As previously mentioned, several respondents had encountered legal issues at one point or another. They often found help at legal clinics or were referred to immigration lawyers who helped them out with processing their papers or dealing with their pending legal cases. We have read about the respondents who were sued for unpaid rent and how they sought out the help of a lawyer to defend their case against their previous landlord who was also the owner of the agency they used.

Likewise we learnt how LCGs have shown resilience by fighting for their rights with the help of community organizations and their social networks. Collective organized resistance and inter-ethnic alliances to protest political alienation are other ways Filipino LCGs show their will to fight for their rights. LCGs continuously seek to empower themselves and gain employment protection. An example of this was when the members of PINAY were exploring the option of being unionized in order to profit from the additional employment protection, bargaining leverage and health benefits that the union had to offer.

Within this chapter we have covered all the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents and their personal and work experiences as a LCG and learnt about their coping mechanisms. We have come to see the cohesive nature of the Filipino community in Montreal and how the LCGs have found their niche within this community.

CHAPTER 4

Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

4.1 Conclusion

The previous chapters have looked in detail at the socio-economic experiences of Filipina women who migrate to Canada via the Live-in caregiver program (LCP). Upon careful examination of the LCP, we have seen that the program was created by the federal government to bring in foreign workers on a temporary basis with the promise of permanent residency upon fulfillment of the requirements of the program. I have attempted to demonstrate the role governmental policy, state regulations and non-state actors (recruitment agencies and employers) have played in creating socio-economic barriers, marginalizing, exploiting and devaluing migrant Filipina live-in caregivers (LCGs). They work secluded within the private homes of the rich and therefore they are highly invisible to society. Consequently they are exempted from “societal security” and human rights legislation (Bakan & Stasiulis, 1997:132).

I have also sought to show the interconnectivity between domestic labour, transnational migration and globalization. The nation-state plays a role in the global structuring of gender, class and race in the context of globalization. The exploitation of LCGs, through their construction as non-citizens, is a direct effect of globalization (Bakan & Stasiulis, 1997). The Philippine government plays an active role in promoting labour export to Western countries through its policies. The Philippine government’s

labour export policy is a consequence of structural adjustment policies imposed on Philippine development and the demands from Western countries (Lindio-McGovern, 2004: 233). Domestic workers and nurses constitute the majority of migrants from the Philippines which means that the economy relies heavily on the export of care (Parreñas, 2005). Filipina domestics have become a popular commodity that is sought after by labour-receiving Western countries which has created a global south to north flow of these migrant Filipina workers. They often find themselves at the bottom of stratified labour markets in labour-receiving countries providing cheap reproductive labour (Lindio-McGovern, 2004).

My findings confirm that beside the promise of eventual citizenship that the LCP offers, the program is racist and sexist in many ways. It attracts mostly visible minority women from Third World countries who come to live and work as domestics within the homes of their affluent Canadian employers where they are often subjected to abusive conditions whilst providing effectively unregulated labour for a period of two years. The LCP is an example of how Western labour-receiving countries set policies on the import of foreign migrant workers that benefit more so their society, economy and way of life than that of the migrant workers.

This seemingly constant flow of Filipina live-in caregivers (LCGs) into Canada is due to the never-ending demand from middle and upper class Canadians for private childcare as opposed to reliance on the public daycare system. In addition, there is an increasing need for privatized care for the disabled and elderly in Canada. This need for domestics is the pull factor for these Filipinas and the poor economy and unstable labour market in the Philippines acts as their push factor. The Filipina LCGs are often highly

educated and skilled but because of the lack of high-paying professional jobs in the Philippines, they are forced to seek employment abroad to support their families. This has resulted in an increased number of trans-national families as a result of the Filipinas working abroad in the global north and sending remittances to their families.

Historically, Canada has opened its doors to immigrants especially in times when there was a need for an increased labour force within certain service sectors and industrial domains. Similarly, the LCP was created in response to a Canadian child, elder and disabled care crisis and the lack of an internal labour force willing to work in the care giving industry. As research discussed in the literature review suggests, the government tends to tighten and slacken its regulations or entry requirements for foreign immigrant workers depending on Canada's labour scarcity or economic status (Pratt, 1997). It is also typical for the government to be biased during the selection process by showing shifting preferences for foreign workers from certain source countries. This is usually in the manipulation of legislation so that it is lenient towards preferred immigrants that meet the government's search criteria and restrictive of immigrants that are not wanted. In the case of the LCP, the restrictions are observed in the requirement for a higher education and further training in order to meet the eligibility criteria (Stasiulis & Bakan, 1997).

As previously mentioned, the LCP continues to thrive due to the constant demand for privatized childcare especially for those who have the financial means such as the upper-middle class dual income households. In addition, the chronic shortage of people willing to take paid domestic work because of its poor status, low wages and lack of employment benefits means Canada is always looking for foreign workers willing to do the "dirty work" as Audrey Macklin describes it (Macklin, 1999). Hiring private care has

become a particularly appealing alternative for professional Canadian women who can afford to pass on the burden of mothering and household responsibilities to someone else. This is also due to the fact that licensed daycare is often unreliable, costly, limiting and sometimes inaccessible to parents. This has resulted in further class divisions amongst women as the Canadian female employer has the power of hiring, supervising and firing these foreign migrant workers at her will (Pratt, 1997; Gregson & Lowe, 1994; Macklin, 1999; Mikita 1994).

It is evident there are various systemic and structural flaws within the LCP which LCGs are obliged to accept in order to eventually become permanent residents and reunify with their family. The federal government issues work permits that oblige LCGs to work for the employer stated on their work permit. With a precarious legal status they are also expected to live and work for 24 months with that employer in an overly regulated environment regardless of the conditions. Only upon completion of these requirements along with a good employment record can they become eligible to apply for their permanent residency (Hanley, Cheung & Oxman-Martinez, 2004).

In addition, the Filipina LCGs receive less pay, worse treatment and recognition for their contribution to the household compared to the Western European nanny who only provides childcare versus Filipinas who also perform household chores. This hierarchy amongst caregivers is reflective of the stereotypes regarding different national identities which are perpetuated at the state level by gatekeepers during the selection process as well as at the placement agencies when matching employers with their ideal LCG (England & Stiell, 1997b).

Filipinas are viewed from a racist stereotypical outlook to be compliant, less resistant and hard workers and therefore there is a strong preference for them amongst prospective employers according to recruitment agencies. These pre-conceived notions that prospective employers already have towards Filipina LCGs means they are usually more subjected to exploitation from the moment they are hired.

We have also seen that as the demand for live-in domestic workers has increased, so have the number of operating Canadian-based recruitment agencies that advertise in all the major Asian cities. They have taken up the role of helping to prepare LCP applications for the LCGs as well as matching them up with a suitable employer in Canada (England & Stiell, 1997b). They essentially profit financially from the trans-national trade of migrant reproductive labour between labour-exporting countries and labour-receiving countries. They often charge the LCGs exorbitant fees in exchange for their placement and application processing services which leaves many of these women indebted as previously mentioned.

As this thesis has reported, in Montreal and Toronto there has increasingly been negative media coverage regarding recruitment agencies. Ongoing investigations by news reporters often reveal the plight of LCGs who have used agencies to secure employment and process their LCP applications. We have learnt about agency abuse in different forms such as conniving with employers to hire LCGs illegally on trial basis during which they are overworked and underpaid. Recruitment agencies are not monitored by the government which is a prime example of legislative and regulatory inadequacies at both the provincial and federal levels.

Upon completion of their requirements set by the LCP, many of the former LCGs often encounter downward occupational mobility. This is partially a result of their prolonged period out of the professional work environment and the lack of years of Canadian experience within their previous professional field. As we know many of the Filipinas have college degrees and years of professional work experience from the Philippines in areas such as nursing and education. Unfortunately their qualifications are not recognized in Canada and are often devalued. The LCGs often resort to either obtaining Canadian certified academic or professional credentials or they give up and continue working as caregivers or in other related fields.

Unionization is seen amongst LCG advocates as a solution to the lack of employment protection and bargaining rights that many LCGs face. It would empower them through collective bargaining and possibly lead to sectoral employment standards being set by the government that are specific to LCGs. The first step towards unionization is the recognition of the domestic sphere as a workplace (Valiani, 2009). As we have seen above, PINAY and its LCG members have taken the initiative of exploring the requirements to become unionized with the United Steel Workers of Canada and they are in the process of organizing and informing as many Montreal-based LCGs possible about the benefits of becoming unionized so that collectively there are enough members to sign up. LCGs frequently rely upon their personal strength and local community organizations and advocacy groups when fighting abusive employment situations or pending legal battles (Pratt, 1999; Arat-Koc, 2001; Robb, 2008).

Filipina LCGs are increasingly becoming organized and are showing collective resistance towards targeted nation-state authorities and non-state actors such as the

Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, recruitment agencies and employers of LCGs. In addition, they are supported by several advocacy groups and community organizations throughout all the major metropolitan cities in Canada. We have seen in Montreal there are many such groups that cater to LCGs and most of their members are LCGs. It is in creating resistance that LCGs are able to unite and become agents of change as they gradually gain political clout.

I have observed how these Filipina LCGs are involved in “place making,” a “spatial extension of home building,” as described by Lindio-McGovern (2004:229) and community building as they congregate in certain areas of Montreal creating their own ethnic neighbourhood and niches. In particular the Côte-des-Neiges borough has become home to the majority of the Filipino community which is inclusive of the Filipina LCGs.

Most of the Filipina LCGs found the church environment provided an opportunity to congregate within the same geographical space and socialize with friends and find peace away from their work environment. Their religion (Roman Catholicism) served as an additional common culture amongst the LCGs and they used it not only to find strength through their faith but to also affirm their Filipino identity (Lindio-McGovern, 2004). After mass, the LCGs often went to eat at each other’s homes where they cooked traditional food and enjoyed each other’s company while speaking in their native languages. There are many Filipino restaurants, grocery stores, cultural centres, and traditional folk dancing groups throughout Montreal where you will find numerous Filipina LCGs. It is by using these spaces in different ways that these Filipina LCGs help to shape and transform Montreal’s urban landscape. We have observed in these examples how within a foreign host country the LCGs use their common cultural traits to express

their identity which in turn helps them feel less culturally alienated within a foreign society (Lindio-McGovern, 2004).

I have shown how social networks provide Filipina LCGs with social, moral and emotional support. Being a member of an organization or religious group contributes to the women's high spirits, positive attitude and general health. Collectively these women demonstrate empowerment as they increase their knowledge, skills and values to become critics and agents of change. With time they also become critically aware of cultural, social and legal aspects that influence their experiences in Canada. They display courageousness and assertiveness as they gain confidence and learn to demand for their rights. Educating LCGs of their rights will create awareness on their part both individually and collectively so that they can fight for better employment rights and protection.

4.2 Policy recommendations

The process of empowerment is gradual as it is hindered by the regulations of the LCP and systemic barriers that are imposed by the state. Currently, the LCP regulations and systemic barriers are designed to benefit the Canadian economy and protect the employers of the LCGs. Therefore I will proceed to identify and challenge some of these unnecessary restrictions that are imposed on LCGs which result in their continuous exploitation and vulnerability. At the end of the interviews that I conducted, the respondents were asked if they could provide any suggestions on how the government can improve the socio-economic experiences of LCGs who migrate to Canada via the LCP. The suggestions and recommendations put forward by the respondents will be

discussed in detail below. In addition, a few of my personal recommendations were included as I thought they were important and therefore noteworthy.

The recommendations were put into categories, and the first focused on LCG work requirements and employment. The second category dealt with health care and worker's compensation for LCGs, whilst the third category looked at mainly the monitoring of abusive recruitment agencies and employers. The fourth category looked at document renewals, applications and their processing times. The fifth category of recommendations were asking the government to show a more compassionate and humanitarian side. The sixth category focused on recommendations towards the re-entry of ex-LCGs who have completed the LCP into professional occupations. The last category provides suggestions on how LCG advocacy groups can be helped through increased government and financial support.

It should be noted that these recommendations are targeted at decision-makers within the federal and provincial government who have the power to change the socio-economic outcomes of LCGs and the regulations of the LCP such as Jason Kenney, Minister of Immigration, Citizenship and Multiculturalism and his Quebec counterpart, Minister Yolande James.

Work requirements and employment rights

Upon arrival to Canada, it is often the case that LCGs have no knowledge of their rights and where to find an immigration officer or a lawyer or how to report an abusive employer or unhealthy work conditions. Together the Canadian government, the

Philippine embassy, and the Philippines Overseas Labour offices in Canada should collaborate to inform and educate the Filipinas prior to arrival to Canada about the LCP and the requirements that they must adhere to. Upon arrival, the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) could have officials present LCGs with a guide to rights and duties and offer an orientation seminar where they would be briefed on the laws of Canada and their legal and employment rights. Furthermore, LCGs should have access to a help hotline and a contact list of advocacy groups, the RCMP, immigration lawyers, as well as local non-profit and community organizations.

It was recommended by some respondents that the requirement for LCGs to work 24 months be reduced to 12 months. It would be beneficial to the LCGs as it would reduce the length of time they are separated from their family in the Philippines. The LCGs would have the opportunity to send in their application for permanent residency after completion of 12 months of domestic work. The LCG would have to wait on average just over a year before she and her sponsored family would know if they have been granted their residency. Shortly after that they would be reunified in Canada and start their lives.

Most LCG advocates are against the requirement for the LCG to live at all times with their employer for the duration of their employment. They are especially against the fact that if the LCG does not respect that rule they risk being deported. It was recommended that this requirement should not be imposed on the LCGs by the federal government but instead should be left to the LCG and her employer to decide if it is more convenient for the LCG to live with their employer or not. This would decrease the number of cases of mistreatment and would provide fewer opportunities for exploitation

of LCGs. Furthermore the flexibility to live in and out of the employer's home can allow the LCG to get a break from their employer and work environment when required. Such negotiations between the employer and the LCG on living arrangements could make the employer/employee relationship more amicable and less stressful resulting in both parties being satisfied. As a result, the LCG performs her duties more efficiently and the employer is more appreciative.

According to Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), the government of Canada has no authority to intervene in the employer/employee relationship or to enforce the terms and conditions of an employment contract. LCGs are expected to know the laws prevailing in Canada and their legal rights. They are to look after their own interest and in case of a mistreatment they are directed to the authorities for employment standards where they can file a complaint.

A few respondents suggested that the government should be more involved in protecting the LCGs and ensuring their contracts are being respected by their employers. That could be achieved by making it a requirement that a copy of the signed contract goes to CIC and HRSDC offices. Periodically, an immigration or labour inspection officer could be assigned to review the contract and physically check with the employer and the LCG to see if the mutual agreement is being respected. By doing so both the employer and the LCG are monitored and can report to the immigration officer. Respondents said it would be beneficial to them as the immigration officer would be able to assess if the LCG's basic needs are being met such as having a private room and being paid for overtime.

Health benefits and worker's compensation

Upon arrival to Quebec, Canada, LCGs do not have health insurance coverage for the first three months as they wait for the processing of their provincial health insurance. During this time, most LCGs prefer to go without health coverage rather than pay for their own private health insurance as they find it is their employer's responsibility and that the costs for coverage are too high. A recommendation made by the respondents was that LCGs should be exempt from the three month delay. Others suggested that if the three month period cannot be avoided then the employer should be required to pay for the LCG's health coverage during the waiting period. They argued that by doing so, in the event of a work-related injury or sickness they could get medical treatment immediately and get back to work faster which would be beneficial to the employer.

Another proposal was that LCGs should not lose their provincial health insurance coverage when they get their open work permits. However this proposal seems to not have been given much attention by the federal government as it is presumed the LCGs will seek employment elsewhere once they have an open permit and will probably benefit from company insurance from their new employer. Another alternative is to obtain their own private health insurance in the interim period whilst waiting for their permanent residency especially if their employer does not provide any health insurance benefits.

Currently, LCGs in Quebec are not covered by Worker's Compensation legislation unlike LCGs residing in Manitoba, Ontario and British Columbia. In addition, Québec employers are not required to pay *Commission de la santé et de la sécurité du travail* (CSST) premiums. It should not be an option for Quebec employers to decide

whether to contribute or not to Worker's Compensation. Instead it should become mandatory for employers as is the case already in other provinces. According to provincial CCST legislation, LCGs do not fit the definition of "workers" as their workplace is within the home of their employer (Hanley& Shragge, 2006). In the event of a work-related sickness or accident LCGs do not get any form of compensation in Quebec and are therefore not protected. The Quebec government needs to recognize that domestic work can result in injury and illness just like other occupations.

Furthermore, it should be acknowledged that domestic work can also be risky and can lead to physical and/or psychological harm and deserves more merit despite it being within the home environment. The Quebec government should take heed and follow the other provinces that have already extended Workers' Compensation legislation to their LCGs. Together with PINAY and the AAFQ, the IWC have launched a campaign fighting for LCGs to get access to compensation for workplace accidents or illness under the CSST.

Abusive recruitment agencies and employers

There is a dire need for increased monitoring of the operations of recruitment agencies by CIC and HRSDC (in Canada) and the *Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles* (MICC) which is specific to Quebec. There are too many agencies that are not being held accountable for their unscrupulous practices. Through media exposure, the vulnerability of LCGs has brought about awareness of their plight

and how they fall prey to agencies that charge exorbitant fees and provide fake employers on their work permits.

In order to reduce the number of abusive agencies they need to all become licensed and registered with the provincial government, it should be mandatory that recruitment agencies be approved or recognized by the Canadian law society, the Canadian society of Immigration Consultants or the *Chambre des notaires du Québec*. In a further effort, an online public registry could be created that lists all licensed and operating recruitment agencies.

Ideally recruitment agencies should not be charging LCGs for their services. That is already the case in Manitoba, Alberta, British Columbia and Saskatchewan. Unfortunately, Ontario and Quebec agencies continue to charge placement fees to LCGs. In order to make it fair for LCGs who have are forced to pay, the fees should be affordable. The placement fees should not be decided by the agencies as they tend to be expensive and vary from one agency to another. In an effort to avoid this, I would propose that the provincial government creates an acceptable standardized fee. Some respondents even suggested that agencies should not even charge LCGs but instead charge the employers seeking to hire a foreign domestic worker. The respondents suggested that agencies should be required to issue receipts for the placement fees and rent they charge LCGs. By doing so, agency owners cannot make false claims against the LCGs and the government could benefit by reducing legal tax avoidance which numerous agencies attempt.

In addition, the requirements necessary to obtain an operating licence need to become more restrictive for individuals intending to start a business recruiting foreign

domestic workers. The operations of new agencies need to be rigorously monitored and regulated by the government so that there is no room for exploitation of LCGs. In the event of abuse, the agencies should have their licences revoked and face severe financial penalties. A further step would be to create a publicly accessible blacklist of abusive employers and agencies including the names of the owners as they often change the names of their agencies to avoid negative publicity. Similarly LCGs should have access to a list of reputable recruitment agencies which do not charge high fees and can find them a genuine employer swiftly.

By implementing some if not all of the above mentioned proposals, the LCGs would be protected and not get exploited as much by recruitment agencies. The agencies would be held accountable for their actions and be forced to adhere to the regulations imposed upon them by the government making their business more legitimate.

A few respondents suggested that abusive employers should be blacklisted by CIC, MICC and HRSDC so that they are prevented from hiring another LCG regardless of which province they live in. In addition, abusive employers should be handed stiff penalties if they mistreat their LCGs or violate the rules of the LCP. Provincial legislation regarding labour standards need to be strictly enforced so as to ensure that LCG are getting paid vacations and public holidays as well as being paid minimum wage and for their overtime. LCGs should have access to federal immigration offices or to a labour inspection office in order to report if labour standards are not being met by their employers or to make a query if they are uncertain about something.

Document renewal, applications and processing time

The federal government needs to review the procedures that govern the issuing and renewal of work permits. For example, the lengthy processing times for work permits and CAQs need to be shortened in order to minimize the risk of the LCG not meeting the 24 month requirement when applying for permanent residency. To avoid working illegally for the new employer, some respondents suggested that CIC or HRSDC should issue a temporary (three month) work permit during the waiting period. In order to further expedite the processing of work permits, I would suggest that a few more processing units be opened that help to reduce the backlog at the Case processing Centre located in Vegreville, Alberta. These new processing units would help to reduce the processing times by a couple of months which would be beneficial to the LCGs.

In regards to work permits, it was suggested by many of the Filipinas I interviewed that work permits should no longer be employer-specific but instead be occupation-specific. By doing so, LCGs would not have to apply for a new work permit each time they change their employer and endure the lengthy processing times. In addition, they would be able to avoid the negative consequences of processing delays such as risking having a precarious status as they work illegally for their new employer whilst waiting for their new work permit. A few respondents suggested that it would be more convenient if the government would allow for the issuance of a work permit that was valid for a longer period of time. Some respondents suggested two years and some even said it should be valid for three years. Their argument was that the delays when processing their applications for new work permit ate into their 36 months (in Quebec) they have been granted to complete their 24 month requirement.

A few respondents suggested that they should be allowed to apply for permanent residency upon arrival to Canada and not be required to first complete the 24 months working as a LCG. The federal government has refused to budge on this issue and has not given this proposal much consideration despite the urges from LCGs and their advocates. It can be argued that the federal government has good reason for insisting that LCGs first complete their 24 month requirement before being eligible for permanent residency. First of all it ensures the LCGs continue to provide care to Canadian families as it is the main reason they were granted admission into Canada in the first place. Second, in order to apply for permanent residency, all applicants must have lived in the Canada for a minimum of 730 days (two years) which the LCGs would have completed at the end their 24 month live in requirement with their employer.

I propose that if a LCG applies for permanent residency, her application should not be denied if one of her sponsored family members is denied residency based on their medical exam. It is highly inconsiderate to deny the principal applicant (LCG), especially if she successfully completed the 24 month requirement and has a good record of employment. In such a situation, it would be more ideal to grant the LCG and her healthy family members their permanent residency and then once reunited in Canada they can contest or plead for a medical re-evaluation of the family member left behind in the Philippines. Since there is always room for human error, a second medical exam could be done which might turn out to be more optimistic and could result in positive outcomes for the LCG and her family.

Compassionate and humanitarian considerations

Canada has in the past implemented regularization programs in response to several immigrant groups' demands and struggles. These regularization programs have sometimes been implemented in response to failed immigration policies or the overwhelming numbers of immigrants without status. Since the government is not unfamiliar with this, it should listen to the current demands of the LCGs' rights organizations and advocacy groups that call for a regularization program instead of deportation. This would be in the favour of non-status migrant workers like LCGs who did not complete the 24 months within the required time or who were caught working illegally due to unfavourable circumstances.

I also would recommend that it become a priority on the political agenda to coerce the federal government to ratify the United Nations Convention on Protection of Rights of All Migrant Workers. By making this step, Canada would show to the world and its allies that its government values the protection of its migrant workers and respects their human rights. Canada would also be taking an exemplary step by being the first Western migrant-receiving country to have ratified the Convention. Canada has historically been a country that stands for international peace and humanitarian support efforts. By adopting the Convention, the federal government would be leading by example and showing other countries Canada's commitment to incorporating the moral obligation to protect migrant workers into national laws and legislations.

Re-entry into professional occupations

The LCP contributes to the loss of occupational skills for many of the Filipinas entering the program. These women face immigration and accreditation barriers that limit their long-term upward mobility in the Canadian labour force. The majority of Filipinas in the LCP are nurses, midwives and teachers and their numbers are on the rise due to the requirement that applicants to the LCP be educated or have training in the care giving field. Often Filipinas have several years of experience working abroad as nurses in countries such as Saudi Arabia. Unfortunately, their qualifications are not recognized in Canada despite the shortage in nurses and health professionals. Therefore in order to migrate to Canada they have to enter via the LCP as opposed to applying as independent immigrants.

A proposed reform that would benefit both the Canadian health sector and the Filipina nurses who are LCGs would be for them to be allowed to continue practising their profession once they have their open permits upon completion of their 24 month requirement. This would be on condition that they complete a one year program or paid stage during which they become familiar with the Canadian health system as well as train. Then they would be equipped to write the Canadian nursing exam and upon successfully passing the exam they so they would be licensed to work in any Canadian hospital. This is highly plausible as it has been done in the past during the 1960's and 1970's when Filipino nurses and teachers were allowed to migrate to Canada and continue working in their professions. Their skills and education were being recognized then, so why is it not possible for the government to revert? The Canadian government can create agreement or policies that help this to become more feasible and make it

possible for nurses within the LCP to continue working in their professions once they have their open permits.

Advocacy groups

Advocacy groups within the Montreal community also need more financial support. They cannot constantly rely on fundraisers and donations in order to keep their establishments open. It is often the case that they are struggling to remain operational and this is usually because they lack funds and their work is not receiving the recognition it deserves from local government bodies. It should be acknowledged they are essential to LCGs within the Montreal community as they provide information, referrals for various services, counselling, support and access to LCG networks. The Quebec government needs to step in and develop and provide core funding to these LCG advocacy organizations so they can improve their services, conduct more pilot projects and research assessing the socio-economic outcomes of LCGs.

These policy recommendations can help to improve the overall work experiences of Filipinas LCGs by increasing their employment and negotiation rights. They will help to empower them making them less vulnerable to discrimination and abusive recruitment agencies, employers and work environments. In addition, they would allow for their work within private households to be regulated by state officials therefore improving their employment experiences and live-in conditions and reducing the risk of abusive situations.

Furthermore, these policy recommendations are intended to also improve their socio-economic outcomes once they enter the Canadian workforce as open permits holders or as permanent residents. The suggestions put forward are intended to ease their entry into the Canadian professional workforce so they can be given a chance to work in jobs related to their previous professional experience. Their previous work experience should be looked upon as an asset to the Canadian workforce and economy especially in the industries where there is a lack of skilled workers. These visible minority immigrant women should be granted their basic human rights whilst they are working as LCGs in Canada and it is the responsibility of the federal and provincial government to ensure this. They should not be subjected to injustice or prejudice as a result of their race, gender, ethnic origin, class or legal status in Canada.

4.3 Further research interests

My research has focused on the socio-economic outcomes of Filipina migrant workers working as LCGs in Montreal. It would be of particular interest to further my research and look at the role of recruitment agencies in procuring Filipinas from central countries and cities such as the Philippines, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, and Saudi Arabia where the majority of Filipinas are found either working already as domestics or struggling to get a good paying job as is the case in the Philippines for many Filipinas. I would research the advertising strategies that placement agencies use to attract these women and how they operate within Canada. I would focus particularly on the

interdependency relationship between Filipina LCGs and the recruitment agencies they used to find an employer and migrate to Canada.

The prolonged separation of LCG's families is of interest, and I would want to conduct a study on the emotional strains and psychological effects of the distance between these trans-national families as a result of the LCG working abroad. I would pay particular attention to the coping mechanisms of the children and the LCG's heavy reliance on family members who act as the surrogate parent in her absence.

Other interests for further study would be the labour integration of LCGs upon becoming permanent residents. I would be interested to find out what percentage of them continues working as caregivers until they retire and what percentage successfully enters the professional work force. It would also be particularly interesting to find out if the Filipinas who were once LCGs and later obtained professional jobs in Canada were working in a field similar if not identical to their previous professional careers in the Philippines or if they were working in a professional field that is not at all related to their previous professional experience.

This leads me to question if the husbands of LCGs find it equally as hard to integrate into the Canadian work force. I would want to know if they find it a challenge to find work and if they feel they are disadvantaged. I would be interested to find out if they face as much discrimination as their female counterparts and how they perceive their economic outcomes compared to their wives. I would ask the LCGs' husbands if they are frustrated with their place in the labour market and also seek to explore if they are holding jobs similar to their previous work experience in the Philippines.

Lastly, I would be very interested to study the socio-economic outcomes of children of LCGs who were either born and raised in Canada or sponsored from the Philippines at a young age and are therefore Canadian-educated. My research would ideally focus on how these children perceive themselves compared to their white Canadian peers. I would also look at labour integration if possible and how well they fare economically by looking at their incomes. I would seek to compare the outcomes of children of LCGs with their white Canadian counterparts who were born and raised in Canada. This would be ground-breaking research as it would show how influential the socio-economic restrictions of the LCP can be on the future of the children of LCGs.

As the above-mentioned areas of further research show, there are various aspects that remain to be explored that concern LCGs and their spouses and children. In order to improve their socio-economic outcomes and work conditions policy makers have to strive to improve current legislation that affects these immigrant women.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC INTEGRATION AND PERSONAL EXPERIENCES OF FILIPINAS IN MONTREAL, QUEBEC

PROJECT INFORMATION

This research seeks to explore the socio-economic integration and experiences of immigrant women of visible minority in Montreal upon their arrival from their country. My focus is on a sub-category of Filipina women who migrated to Montreal through the Live-in caregivers program as they face adversities and discrimination at work, and in the community.

The research will attempt to assess how accessible resources are to these women and how much support is available to these women within their community and their families as this indirectly influences how successful their integration into Montreal's workforce is.

During the interviews with the Filipinas, I will seek to tell their story, pinpoint the institutional, governmental and language barriers they face, as well as their coping mechanisms and community involvement.

The interviewees will be asked to give suggestions on what changes can be made to improve their socio-economic integration within the workforce and their community. The structured interview is based upon my findings in my literature review, observations and informal conversations with immigrant women of visible minority.

This research is in fulfilment of the thesis requirement for my M.Sc. Geography, Urban & Environmental Studies at Concordia University. I will be the sole person in possession of the completed interviews, collected data and or recordings. However, the research work will be overseen and approved by my supervisor, Dr. Alan E. Nash, and my thesis committee.

The research will adhere to the rules and regulations set by the Ethical Guidelines of Concordia University's Research Ethics Board. These guidelines are based on the *Tri-Council Policy Statement (TCPS)* which is the human subjects ethics policy.

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Appendix B

THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC INTEGRATION AND PERSONAL EXPERIENCES OF FILIPINAS IN MONTREAL, QUEBEC

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE

Part 1: Project Description:

This research aims to discover the experiences of recently arrived Filipina women who migrated to Montreal through the Live-in caregiver program. The research will explore the difficulties they have experienced, their successes as they attempt to establish themselves in the Montreal workforce and community.

The research will focus on Filipinas who have been in Montreal for less than ten years and will examine their past and present socio-economic experiences as they attempt to find employment and successfully integrate into Canadian society. The research will also attempt to assess how available resources are to these Filipina women and what are the necessary changes required to improve their experiences.

Through interviews with Filipina women who belong or associate with an organization that helps them with information and aid for visible minority women, I will attempt to highlight the obstacles they face such as institutional barriers, language barriers and access to facilities within Canadian metropolitan cities such as Montreal. I will also explore coping mechanisms and community involvement.

The interviewees will be prompted to also give their opinions and suggestions on how to improve the socio-economic integration of immigrant women of visible minority into the labour force and community.

Part 2: Invitation to Participate in Interview:

I hereby extend to you an invitation to participate in this research project exploring your socio-economic integration into the Montreal workforce as an immigrant woman who is a visible minority. I can relate to your socio-economic experiences as I myself am an immigrant woman of visible minority in Canada.

The details of the interview will be kept confidential between yourself and I and your identity will be kept anonymous so as to protect your privacy.

The research is meant only to bring forward your socio-economic experiences in Montreal.

The successful integration of immigrant women into the workforce is also influenced by the availability of resources and support within the family and community and I will seek your opinion in regards to this.

Upon agreement to participate in this research study, you will be asked to participate in an open-ended interview that will need about an hour of your time.

Your participation is on a voluntary basis and you are free to voice your opinion if you dislike or object to any questions or the methodology and are free to decline to participate in the research study at any time.

Your privacy is well respected and your personal information will not be disclosed.

Upon completion, the research may be used or referred to by other researchers, academic and governmental institutions, policy makers and the social and scientific community.

This micro-level research is meant to be a reference tool towards the larger scope leading to improved immigration policies, in particular government funded socio-economic integration programs for immigrants and to make resources more readily available to immigrant women. Your contribution to this research is highly appreciated.

THANK YOU.

Appendix C

Consent for Participation in Interview Research

I volunteer to participate in a research project conducted by Isabelle Kapiga who is a M.Sc. graduate student from Concordia University. I understand that the interview is designed to obtain information on the socio-economic integration of Filipina caregivers such as myself and our life stories. I understand I will be one of approximately 30 people being interviewed.

1. My participation in the interview is on a voluntary basis. I understand that I will not receive any financial compensation for my participation. I am aware I can opt to discontinue an interview or withdraw at any point without penalty.

2. I understand that most interviewees will find the discussion interesting and thought-provoking. If, however, I feel uncomfortable in any way during the interview session, I have the right to decline to answer any question or to end the interview.

3. Participation involves being interviewed by a researcher from Concordia University. The interview will last approximately one to two hours. Notes will be written during the interview.

4. I understand that the researcher will not identify me by name in any reports using information obtained from this interview, and that my confidentiality as a participant in this study will remain secure. Subsequent uses of records and data will be subject to standard data use policies which protect the anonymity of individuals and institutions.

5. I understand that this research study is in fulfilment of the thesis requirement for M.Sc. Geography, Urban & Environmental Studies at Concordia University

6. I understand the research will adhere to the rules and regulations set by the Ethical Guidelines of Concordia University's Research Ethics Board. These guidelines are based on the *Tri-Council Policy Statement (TCPS)* which is the human subjects ethics policy.

7. I have read and understand the explanation provided to me about the research. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction, and I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

8. I have been given a copy of this consent form.

SIGNATURE

DATE

Appendix D

THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC INTEGRATION AND PERSONAL EXPERIENCES OF FILIPINAS IN MONTREAL, QUEBEC

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Personal Questions:

- 1.) How old are you?
- 2.) Are you single or married?
- 3.) Which country were you born in?
- 4.) Are you a Canadian permanent resident/ Citizen or a temporary worker?
- 5.) Do you have children?
- 6.) How often do you communicate with them?

Pre- arrival:

- 1.) What were your reasons for moving to Canada via the Live-in caregiver program?
- 2.) How did you feel leaving your country of origin?
- 3.) How much did you know about Canada before coming here?
- 4.) What was your level of education pre- immigration to Canada?
- 5.) What was your job prior to immigrating to Canada?
- 6.) Did you use an employment agency to get a job as a Live-in caregiver?

The application process:

- 1.) What are your comments on your application process?
- 2.) Had you secured a job with an employer in Canada prior to arriving?
- 3.) Did you have a choice to live and work in Montreal?
- 4.) How long was the application process to come to Canada as a Live-in caregiver?
- 5.) How much money did u invest?
- 6.) Did u use your own personal funds/savings?

Work experience:

- 1.) Describe your work (past & present) experience as a live-in caregiver?
- 2.) Have you encountered any challenges as a live-in caregiver?
- 3.) Are you still with your first employer?
- 4.) Where does your employer reside?
- 5.) Are you a live in or do you live out?
- 6.) How long have you been with your employer?
- 7.) Do you consider your current employer fair and flexible?

If interviewee is NOT a Permanent resident (PR):

- 1.) How much time do you have left to complete the required months as a Live-in caregiver (LCG) before applying for PR?
- 2.) Do you intend to apply for your PR once you have met the requirements?

3.) Will you sponsor any family members in the Philippines?

If interviewee has completed required months and is a PR:

- 1.) Are you still working as a Live-in caregiver?
- 2.) Have you attempted to look for a job related to your previous academic/professional experience?

If interviewee answered yes:

- 11.) How long did it take for you to get that job?
- 12.) Do you enjoy the work?
- 13.) Are you taking courses to further your education, French skills or work skills?

The home experience:

- 1.) Do you live with any family members or friends?

If living with others on days off:

- 2.) Do you share the bills and responsibilities?
- 3.) Do you have extended family in other parts of Canada?
- 4.) How old are your children?
- 5.) Do you send money or gifts to your family back home?

The cultural differences:

- 1.) Are you interactive with women from your community group in Montreal?
- 2.) Are the majority of your friends Filipinas?
- 3.) How do you keep your culture alive?
- 4.) In what ways is Canadian culture different than yours?
- 5.) Have you observed any significant changes in yourself or mannerism since you left the Philippines?

The community:

- 1.) Do you do volunteer work within the community?
- 2.) If so where do you volunteer?
- 3.) How are you involved as a volunteer?
- 4.) What was your reason to volunteer?
- 5.) How has volunteering helped you?
- 6.) Is it difficult balancing work and volunteering and other responsibilities?

Access to resources:

- 1.) Do you have access to healthcare?
- 2.) Do you have access to legal support?
- 3.) What changes do you think the government has to do to improve conditions for Filipinas who come in through the Live-in caregivers Program?

Comments and suggestions:

- 1.) Do you have any suggestions or further questions which you think I should include in my interview?

