

**THE EMPLOYMENT PERMIT SYSTEM AND  
THE FILIPINO MIGRANT WORKERS IN KOREA**

**By**

**DELA CRUZ, Mary Sol Dela Pena**

**THESIS**

Submitted to the  
KDI School of Public Policy and Management  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of

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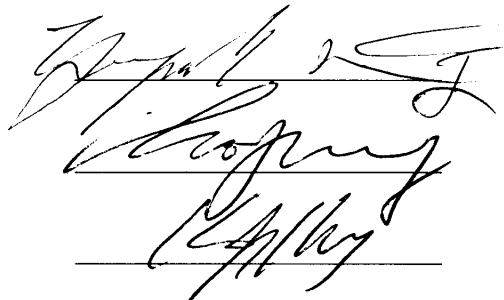
**MASTER OF PUBLIC POLICY**

Committee in charge:

Professor Kang, Younguck, Supervisor

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **THE EMPLOYMENT PERMIT SYSTEM AND THE FILIPINO MIGRANT WORKERS IN KOREA**

**By**

**Mary Sol D. Dela Cruz**

The complex phenomenon of increasing labor mobility brought about by globalization and the natural ability of Filipinos to move where greener pastures are, transport them to places all over the globe. Korea, like most developed countries in need of skilled labor, plays host to thousands of temporary migrant workers from the Philippines as industrial trainee in the 1990s and now as full-time workers under the Employment Permit System (EPS). This study aims to investigate whether Filipino workers are in better working and living conditions under the EPS.

Dedicated to

my loving husband, *Rolland*,  
my beloved daughters, *Sophia Alessandra and Rory Dominique*:  
my inspiration, my life;  
and to God Almighty, who made all things possible.

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*To the brilliant KDI professors whose high standards and expectations challenged me to study smarter; Professors Hung-ik Chung and Kyong Dong Kim whose wit and words of wisdom motivated me to be a better person and become the best teaching assistant; Prof. Dong-Young Kim for his much-appreciated endorsement and generosity; and to my thesis adviser, Prof. Yung-uck Kang, whose solid support and guidance inspired me to finish this thesis;*

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## **Chapter I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

International migration is a common phenomenon. According to the United Nations, 3% of the world population or 215 million people live away from the countries where they were born and 700 million migrate within their own countries. Moreover, in 2011 remittances to developing countries have increased 12% from the previous year, amounting to \$372 billion. The Philippines' share is \$23 billion worth of remittances, making it one of the top recipients in 2011 (World Bank, 2013).

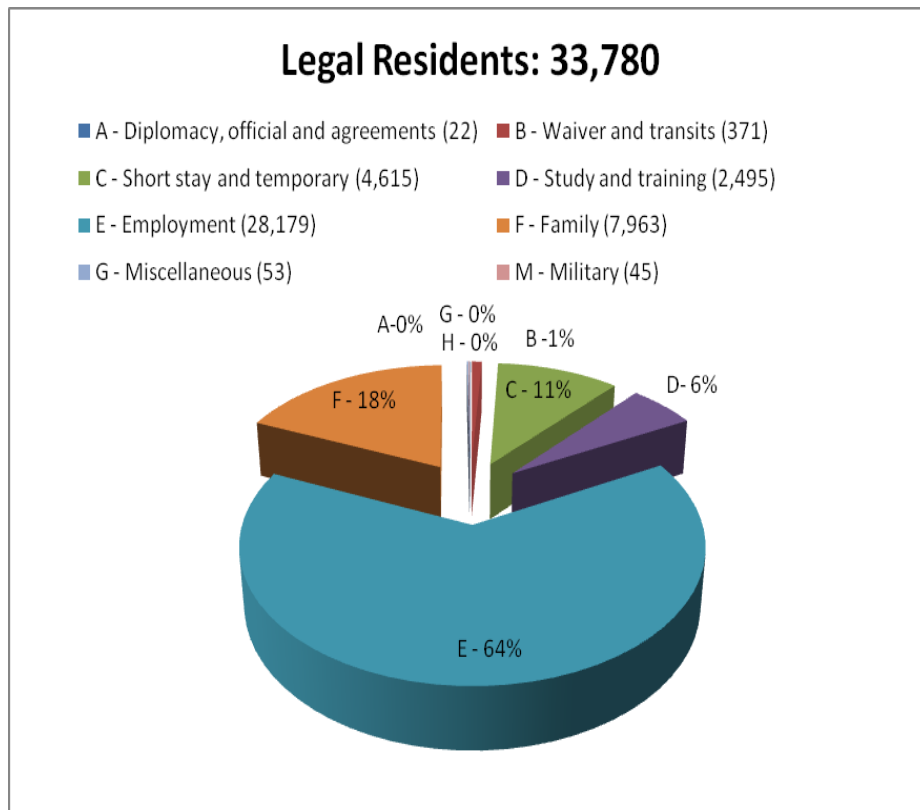
Filipinos can be considered natural migrant workers. Labor transmigration is an ordinary occurrence in the country of 7,107 islands. Its own people move from one town, city or region to another in search of employment opportunities and better economic conditions. "The archipelagic character of this island-state predisposes its inhabitants to migratory movement: where fate or weather has not been kind, there might be less oppressive or more benign future available just a trip away" (Sto. Tomas, 2004). This is true for both within and outside the country relocation. The prospect of increasing individual and family income is a very strong motivation for Filipinos to seek employment abroad.

Between 1906 and 1946 about 125,000 unskilled Filipino laborers worked as agricultural workers in the sugar and pineapple plantations in Hawaii (Tigno, Rye & Macabiog, 2000). The wave of overseas labor migration then shifted to the Middle East with the construction boom in the 1970s. It was only in 1991 that Korea began to receive workers from the Philippines (POEA).



The Commission on Filipino Overseas (CFO) estimated in 2011 that there are almost 10.5 million Filipinos in more than 200 countries across the globe. From this figure, 4.9 million or 47% are permanent immigrants while 4.5 million or 43% are temporary or whose stay overseas is employment related and 10% are deemed irregular or with no proper documentation or permit to stay in a foreign country (Commission on Filipinos Overseas, 2011). In contrast, according to a survey conducted by the Philippines' National Statistics Office (NSO) for 2011 also, the number of overseas Filipino workers is only 2.1 million (National Statistics Office , 2013), less than half of the figure from CFO. On the other hand, NSO figures are closer to those from the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) where there were 1.8 million workers with contracts processed in 2011. Irregular workers who did not pass through POEA could account for the difference between NSO and POEA figures.

According to CFO 2011 data, there are 87,884 Filipinos in South Korea where 67,714 are classified as temporary or employment related while 11,860 are classified as irregular. The rest are permanent residents. However, data from the Korean Immigration Service as of September 30, 2011 shows that there are only 49,182 Filipinos residing in Korea (Korean Immigration Service, 2011). This reflects an increase from the 45,946 Filipinos residing in Korea as of 21 August 2009. From the 2009 figures, 12,166 are illegal residents.



As shown in the above chart, employment comprised 64% of the total population of Filipinos in Korea; of which 24,186 are unskilled workers under E-9 or Non-professional Employment visa and 3,421 of these unskilled workers are on illegal status. These unskilled Filipino workers under the Employment Permit System (EPS) work in small and medium-size companies under industries characterized as 3D: difficult, dirty and dangerous.

These unskilled workers from the Philippines are taking on the menial and life-threatening jobs that native workers no longer want to do in exchange for a better life for their families back home. Even during the 1997 economic crisis that also affected South Korea, many companies had a hard time hiring native workers to fill the positions in the 3D sectors that were vacated by migrant workers (Seoul, 2009). While it is true that migrant workers benefit from labor migration, host countries benefit more by alleviating their labor shortage problems through cheap manpower from less-developed countries.

Temporary migrant workers play a crucial role in stimulating economic growth and development for both host and destination countries, primarily, by filling up the labor shortages of the developed economies and by increasing foreign currency reserves in the home country through remittances. “Parallel to this, however, are the sad facts on the social costs associated with migration and the perpetual issue on migrant workers being common subjects to abusive and exploitative employment conditions and various forms of discrimination” (Binghay). Moreover, many of these unskilled Filipino workers are not only subjected to harsh working conditions but also “experience physical and verbal abuse” (Cruz, 2009). Despite these facts, OFWs continue to seek employment overseas.

This study is an important attempt to determine whether Filipino workers now have better employment conditions in the wake of the abolition of the Korea Federation of Small and Business (KFSMB) Trainee Scheme under the Alien Industrial Technology Training Program (AITTP) and the institutionalization of the employment permit system in 2004. Are Filipino workers better off with the EPS? Although the implementation of the EPS in August 2004 was perceived as a positive development in the Korean government’s effort to provide adequate protection to foreign workers, there is still a growing criticism on the ineffectiveness of the system, the rising trend of irregular workers and the continuing saga of abuses against foreign workers.

This study stemmed from the following series of questions:

- Has the shift from the Trainee Scheme to Permit System made Filipino workers better off or worse off than before? What is the impact of the EPS on Filipino workers’ current working conditions?

- After its 5th year of implementation, has the EPS achieved its objective of protecting migrant workers' rights? If so, are Filipino workers highly satisfied?
- How can both governments expand the MOU to explore the possibility of opening the Korean market for highly-skilled workers?
- Is there a need for Korea to adopt or ratify international instruments on migration to align its national policies to global standards?

In order to help find answer to the above questions, the researcher consulted as principal sources of information reports from international organizations; The Act on Foreign Workers Employment of Korea; Evaluation Report on the Performance of the Korean Employment Permit System (EPS); texts of the MOU between Philippines and Korea on the EPS from 2004-2009; relevant documents from the Philippine Overseas Labor Office (POLO), Philippine Embassy (PE) in Seoul and Korean government agencies; and survey results.

Additional sources include e-articles, newspaper articles, journals, and websites of the Korean Ministry of Labour, Korean Immigration Service, Human Resources Development Service of Korea, Philippine Department of Labor and Employment, Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, National Statistics Office, Office of the President and other Philippine government agencies.

Furthermore, results of interviews with former Philippine Labor Attaché to Seoul, Atty. Delmer R. Cruz, employees of the POLO, and leaders of the Filipino community in Seoul provided valuable insights to this study.

Both qualitative and quantitative research methods are employed here. The paper provides an overview of the current policy and procedures of the Korean Employment Permit System. Moreover, a survey was conducted to check the correlation between the “new” system and the level of the Filipino workers satisfaction of their actual job compared to perceived employment, working environment, living conditions, wage, working hours, quality of work, and relations with employers and co-workers under the system.

The study used a non-probability sampling method, employing both open and close-ended questions, to survey Filipino workers on their current situation in Korea. A pre-survey was conducted to test the integrity of the questionnaire. Respondents were purposely identified and chosen according to their current work status; thus, only those Filipino workers under EPS who have worked in Korea for more than three months were requested to answer the two-page survey questionnaire either in English or Filipino language.

This paper delves into the plight of Filipinos in South Korea employed through the Korean Employment Permit System (EPS). It focuses on how the EPS affected the working and living conditions of Filipino workers. Although attempts are made to look at the flow of irregular labor migration vis-à-vis the shift to the permit system from the perspective of those already working under EPS, this study will not be able to provide a comprehensive analysis on the same as this issue in itself is very complex. Moreover, workers under illegal status are hesitant to show up for interviews or participate in surveys for fear of being deported.

The absence of a previously published research on Filipinos working under the EPS also makes it hard to present an in-depth review of related literature. Subsequently, due to budgetary and time constraints, the data collection were limited to a pre-test survey among

handpicked participants and one actual survey among randomly selected Filipino workers in Seoul.

This paper is divided into five chapters. Chapter 2 gives a short historical overview of Korea and Philippine relations and evolution of the employment permit system. The salient points of the MOU that underpin this system are also presented in this chapter along with previous studies done regarding labor relations between Korea and the Philippines. The third chapter discusses in more depth the Employment Permit System including the dilemmas generated and new policy developments. Chapter 4 presents the results of the survey and the statistical analyses. The last chapter presents the summary and recommendations of the study.

## **Chapter II**

### **HISTORICAL OVERVIEW**

Bilateral relations between Korea and the Philippines “began on March 3, 1949 when the Philippines became the fifth country to extend diplomatic relations to the Republic of Korea. The friendship was cemented by the deployment of Filipino soldiers in the 1950s to help South Korea defend itself from the invasion of the North. The friendship between the two countries grew from purposive military collaboration to a more comprehensive partnership that covers the political-security, socio-cultural, economic and development fields” (PE-South Korea). In the last sixty years, both countries forged sixteen bilateral agreements on various topics, with twenty-seven Memorandum of Agreements (MOAs) and Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) on technical cooperation including labor and social security (OP).

Three of the several MOUs concluded by Philippines with Korea were on the Employment Permit System. The first one was signed by former DOLE Secretary Patricia Sto. A. Tomas in 2004; this MOU was then revised and signed by former Secretary Arturo D. Brion in 2006; and has been renewed by Secretary Marianito D. Roque in May 2009, guaranteeing the employment of 8,000 new workers from the Philippines until 2011.

The Philippines was the first country with which Korea signed an MOU on EPS (Hicap). The current number of sending countries to Korea under the employment permit system stands at 15: The Philippines, Mongolia, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, China, Cambodia, Bangladesh, Nepal, Myanmar, Kyrgyzstan, and East

Timor. 112,000 workers from 13 countries have entered Korea under the EPS (Ministry of Employment and Labor).

## **2.1 Evolution of the Employment Permit System**

From the end of the 1980s, Korea's labor shortage for manufacturing industries loomed large, but only skilled workforce and professionals with legal sojourn qualifications such as professors (E-1), language instructors (E-2), researchers (E-3), technology instructors (E-4), professionals (E-5), arts and entertainment workers (E-6), and specific activists (E-7) are those who were able to work in Korea. In principle, unskilled and manual workers were prohibited from getting a job in Korea (Yoo, 2007).

The rapid development of the Korean economy exacerbated the labor shortage problems that had been present since the late 1980s in the so-called 3D industries requiring low-skilled workers such as small manufacturing business and construction (Yoo, 2005). As demands from employers to accept low-skilled foreign workers continued to increase, the Korean government introduced the Industrial Skill Trainee Program (ISTP) for overseas-invested firms in November 1991 and Industrial Trainee System (ITS) in November 1993. Under the ITS, foreign employees were employed as trainees rather than workers, thus opening a gate for various problems such as bending the law in hiring foreign workforce, leaving workplaces without authorization, overdue wage, and human rights violation (Yoo, 2007). The Trainee Scheme may have addressed the Korean economy's need for manpower but it failed to consider the importance of providing basic protection to the trainees under the scheme.



ITS “used to be the main framework for the admission of low-skilled labour migrants. Targeted at menial occupations, migrants under this scheme were formally considered as trainees and as a result did not enjoy the legal status of workers. This practice often resulted in below-minimum wages” (Koser) and it also opened the window of opportunity for other abuses against migrant workers.

The Act on Foreign Workers’ Employment, Act No. 6967, was enacted on August 16, 2003 and entered into effect in August 2004 which institutionalized the employment permit system to address the problems that arose from ITS and to cope with the labor shortages of domestic companies. The “number of foreign workers to be received under the EPS, their fields of employment, and sending countries are determined by the Foreign Workers Policy Commission” and adjusted every year; the quota given to a country depends on the number of illegal workers a country has. Under the EPS, employers “with fewer than 300 employees in manufacturing, construction, agriculture and livestock industry and six areas of the service industry (restaurant business, support services, social welfare services, cleaning, nursing and housekeeping) may employ foreign workers after getting employment permit for a period of up to three years” (Yoo). In the case of the Philippines, domestic workers are not included in the quota of workers under the system.

The EPS requires that a memorandum of understanding (MOU) or memorandum of agreement (MOA) be signed before a country can be allowed to send workers to Korea. The contents vary accordingly and validity is usually two years from the date of signing, renewable thereafter and can be revoked any time as necessary.

## **2.2 Salient Points of the MOU between Korea and the Philippines**

- a. The purpose of the MOU is to develop a more viable framework for cooperation between parties and to enhance transparency and efficiency in the process of sending and receiving Filipino workers under the EPS;
- b. The selection of Filipino workers for job posting in Korea may be done only through the accredited government agencies identified in the MOU;
- c. Setting the minimum qualification and disqualification for registration of jobseekers who can take the Korean Language Test (KLT) administered by the Human Resources Development Service of Korea (HRD);
- d. Inclusion in the jobseekers' roster does not guarantee employment in Korea;
- e. The Korean Ministry of Labor may reduce the allocated number of jobseekers or suspend the participation in the EPS if the number of Filipino workers staying illegally in Korea exceeds the average for all sending countries;
- f. Filipino workers have to bear the cost of sending and on-site fees;
- g. Filipino workers' rights are protected in accordance with related labor laws of Korea such as Foreign Employment Act and Immigration Control Act.

### **2.3 Review of Related Literature**

A previously published thesis of a KDI student in 2000 provided an initial backdrop and motivation to pursue this research on Filipino workers in Korea. Ma. Angelina I. Esteban's *The Dynamics of Illegal Migration: The Philippines-South Korea Case* discussed the factors that affect the propensity of a prospective (Filipino) migrant worker to use illegal channels over the legal means to be able to enter and work in Korea. Her study focused on Filipino workers under the trainee scheme while this research evaluates the situation of Filipino workers under the EPS.

The lack of ample research materials that primarily focused on the Filipino workers and the Korean employment permit system precluded the presentation of a comprehensive review of related literature. However, the related literature discussed in this section delves around the experiences of the Philippines as a labor-sending country and the role of Korea as host to Filipino migrant workers.

#### ***Labor Migratory Flows: The Philippine Experience***

The paper presented to the International Dialogue on Migration in October 2007 in Geneva, Switzerland by Philippine Assistant Secretary of Labor, Rebecca J. Calzado states that "the Philippines has people in practically every corner of the world, in 197 countries, and has one of the highest rates of out migration." She said that the country "first sent workers en masse in the early 1970s and has made it a primary state policy to promote and protect the welfare of Filipinos abroad." Indeed, the continuous outflow migration of Filipino workers is still evident to this date. The trend of sending Filipino workers to other parts of the world has not changed much since the first wave started in the early 90s except that Filipino workers are virtually everywhere.

In the same way, the 2012 paper, *Managing International Labor Migration: The Philippine Experience* by Aniceto Orbeta and Michael Abrigo, highlights the Philippines continued deployment of its workers overseas and how this became an enduring feature of its development. Orbeta and Abrigo said that the “long experience of deploying large number of workers has earned accolade for the country as a global model for managing the deployment of workers.” However, they found that “there is a glaring indication of lack of coordination between the branches of government, mounting cases of unresolved illegal recruitment cases, and lagging administrative capacity to handle cases.” Contrary to this, Calzado believed that the “Philippine migration management has always been grounded on the goal to make labor migration work for the benefit of the migrant workers themselves and that the Philippines uses a four-pronged strategy of regulation, protection, reintegration, and support to families (of overseas workers).” If anything, the government’s efforts of protecting its workers resulted to the enactment of a new law, Republic Act 10022 amending RA 8042 or The Migrant Workers Act, which aims to enhance the standing rules, regulations and mechanisms for the protection of overseas Filipino workers. Yet, the same does not guarantee full protection to workers from unscrupulous entities and endemic corrupt practices during the pre-deployment stage.

### ***The Role of Korea as a Host Country to Filipino Migrant Workers***

The 2005 study of Kil-Sang Yoo, *Foreign Workers in the Republic of Korea*, showed that Korea used to be a labor-sending country from 1960 to the ‘70s but this changed in the late 1980s when the country started to import foreign workers. He said that “the reversal in the flow of labor was caused by the higher income, elevated education level, and lowered birth rate among the Korean nationals.” In the past, Korea simply hired low-skilled foreign

workers as trainees under the Korean Industrial Trainee Program instigated in November 2003 to cope with the labor shortage in the so-called difficult, dirty and dangerous (3D) industries. To address the rising number of the undocumented workers entering Korea, the government institutionalized the Employment Permit System in August 2004 which allowed Korean employers to hire foreign workers through government-to-government agreements.

In 2009, the Korean Ministry of Labor, cited that the “employment permit system contributed to easing the labor shortage faced by small and medium enterprises; addressed discrimination against migrant workers and strengthened the protection of migrant workers’ human rights; and enhanced transparency and fairness of the sending and receiving process.”

Yet, in a 2004 article, *South Korea: Balancing Labor Demand with Strict Controls*, Young-bum Park refutes that the present employment permit system “may have reduced the number of undocumented workers, yet the high proportion of undocumented workers in the total foreign labor force is still significant, and most likely to jeopardize the system’s effectiveness if the proportion does not decrease.” He also emphasized that “so far, South Korea has not seriously considered integration issues (permanent migration), mainly because the foreign-born population is very small. But integration is likely to receive national attention because of the growing number of foreign spouses and the continued presence of temporary workers, whose numbers are also expected to increase due to the employment permit scheme.” Consistent to his view is my belief that as Korea continues to play host to temporary migrant workers from less-developed and developing countries, it will definitely grow to be one of the economic superpowers of the world. However, just like any other super economies, Korea can return the favor to the temporary migrant workers who may have

contributed to its development by giving them an option or opportunity to fully integrate into the Korean society through permanent migration.

## **Chapter III**

### **DYNAMICS, DILEMMA AND DEVELOPMENTS ON THE CURRENT SYSTEM**

#### **3.1 The Workings of the System**

The Employment Permit System is a “system introduced by the Korean government to manage foreign workers in an organized manner that allows employers who have failed to hire native workers to legally hire an adequate number of foreign workers” from countries that have concluded an MOU with the Korean government, provided that these employers have obtained the necessary permit from the government (EPS).

The introduction of the EPS was seen to minimize the labor shortages experienced by small and medium businesses, and, at the same time, provide basic protection to foreign workers under applicable labor-related laws such as Labor Standards Act, Minimum Wage Act, Industrial Safety and Health Act. These foreign workers are allowed to work up to a maximum of three years to prevent settlement of foreign workers in Korea. Foreign workers who worked under EPS and have left Korea cannot be employed again under the system unless they have stayed outside of Korea for more than six months if with a new employer or at least a month if with the same employer.

Prospective workers should be at least 18 years of age but not older than 40 years old, who passed the Korean Language Proficiency Test, in good health, with no derogatory or criminal record and who is not restricted from departure by his or her home country. Not all prospective workers are guaranteed employment in Korea as Korean employers have the right to select their preferred worker from among those jobseekers who meet their requirements (HRD Korea).

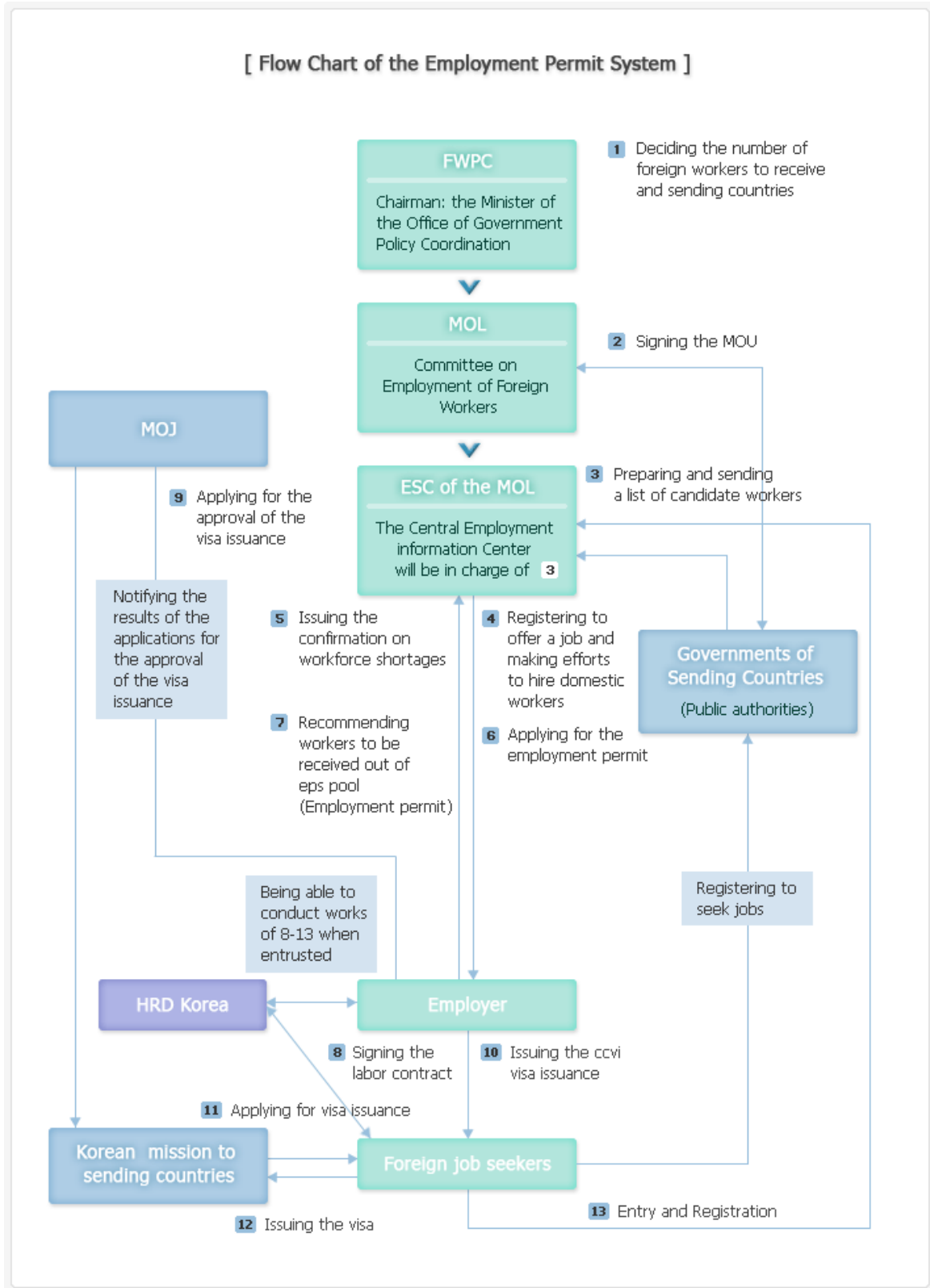
The Foreign Workforce Policy Committee, composed of twenty members from relevant Korean government ministries, with the Minister of the Office for Government Policy Coordination as Chairman, determines important EPS issues annually: such as the number of foreign workers needed; the industries in need of such workers; the countries that will provide these needed migrant workers after due consideration of the supply and the demand of the labor market. When the Committee decides on the total number of foreign workers (including ethnic Koreans with foreign nationalities) to be introduced and quotas for each type of business, the Committee makes sure that foreign workforce will not encroach on the jobs for domestic job-seekers (Yoo, 2007).

The actual operation of the EPS is managed by the Human Resources Development Services (HRD) of Korea. Its major function includes:

- Managing the job seekers roster;
- Applying for employment permit on behalf of the employers;
- Processing labor contracts and applying for certificates of confirmation of visa issuance on behalf of employers;
- Conducting the Employment Training;
- Assisting in foreign workers' entry and departure;
- Assisting in operating the EPS insurance;
- Providing post-management services; and
- Cooperating with public organizations in sending countries.



[ Flow Chart of the Employment Permit System ]



Source: Human Resources Development Service of Korea

### **3.2 Dilemmas of the Current Policy**

The Korean Employment permit system is a labor migration program for temporary migrant workers aimed at preventing irregularities in the sending process of workers to Korea; providing the legal framework for equal treatment and protection between natives and foreign workers; reducing the number of illegal foreign workers; protecting native workers' opportunity for employment by providing employment to foreign workers in firms that failed to hire local workers; and preventing migrant workers from permanently residing in Korea.

Generally, “there are a number of drawbacks with employment permits systems. First, where work permits are held by the employer and not the worker, there is a risk of exploitation. If the employer holds too much authority over the worker, this may lead to abusive situations, particularly if it is difficult or impossible for the migrant worker to change employment while in the host country” (Koser, 2009). In Korea, there were reported cases where employers refused to give Filipino workers their alien registration cards and passports (Cruz, 2009).

Apart from the drawbacks, there are also certain “conditions attached to the employment permits as regards their duration and renewability; occupational mobility; procedures governing migrant's rights upon loss of employment; possibilities for permanent residence; family reunion; and other social rights” (Koser, 2009).

Some of the problems reported to the Philippine Overseas Labor Office in Seoul by Filipino workers in Korea include a) unpaid salaries; b) discrimination; c) maltreatment either through verbal or physical abuse; d) job substitution, where the job promised in the Philippines is different than the actual job in Korea; e) lost in translation or the original job

description in the Korean language becomes different when translated to English, f) multi-tasking; g) overtime disputes and delayed salaries; h) long working hours; and i) difficulty to transfer to another employer despite the harsh working conditions and abuse (Cruz, 2009).

The Philippine Overseas Labor Office (POLO) in Seoul identified six (6) major problems commonly reported under the EPS, categorized as follows:

<b>Nature of the Problem</b>	<b>Specific Complaints</b>
A. Contract Violation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No overtime pay, no night differential, Sundays and Holidays are considered regular days</li> <li>- Forced overtime/work beyond normal working hours</li> <li>- Delayed salaries</li> <li>- Deviation from work stipulated in the contract, if disadvantageous to worker</li> <li>- Saturday's working hours go beyond 4 hours and not considered overtime</li> </ul>
B. Working Condition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Poor accommodation (sleeping quarters, toilets, etc.)</li> <li>- Life-threatening jobs</li> <li>- No provision of safety gadgets</li> </ul>
C. Personal Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No alien card after one month; and passport/alien card held by employer</li> </ul>
D. Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Misunderstanding with employer due to miscommunication</li> </ul>
E. Cultural Differences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Management style of Korean employers</li> <li>- Physical injury committed by employer/supervisor</li> </ul>
F. Adjustment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Homesickness, work, weather, food</li> </ul>
G. Other Matters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Human rights abuses such as maltreatment/physical abuse by employers/co-workers</li> <li>- No pay slips and computation of overtime pay</li> <li>- Non-payment of wages for 3 months</li> <li>- Company bankruptcy</li> </ul>
H. Prohibited Acts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Leaving current employer to transfer to another</li> <li>- Worker wants to go home before the expiration of the contract</li> </ul>

The current EPS does not allow family members to accompany the migrant worker nor allow family reunion at any time. The maximum 3-year employment period was necessitated to prevent migrant workers from applying for permanent residence in Korea.

One of the major issues lies in the condition of duration and renewability attached to the permit system. Under the current system, contract duration is up to one year and renewable every year up to a maximum of three years. However, once a migrant worker has completed 3 years of employment and the employer wants to rehire the worker, the worker should first exit Korea for at least one month. Employment permits for migrant workers can then be extended before a worker leaves Korea for at most 2 more years (for a combined total of less than 5 years). Although at first glance, this may seem partial to foreign workers, however, it favors employers more by giving them the upper hand to decide whether or not to extend the employment permit of foreign workers. Another implication is that while the contract can be extended, there is a mandatory gap in the duration of workers' stay, thereby forfeiting the foreign worker's chance to have access to naturalization procedures.

Another issue is the restriction on foreign workers' labor mobility. The existing policy prohibits workers to change their workplaces. Article 25 (1) of the Foreign Workers Employment Act of Korea stipulates that foreign workers may apply to be transferred to other businesses only if the worker finds it difficult to continue working in the present workplace due to the following reasons: a) employer's intention to cancel the labor contract or reject the renewal of the contract; b) shutdown, closure or other reasons not attributable to the foreign worker; or c) in case the employer fails to pay wages and violates the contract and labor-related laws.

In the same Act, under Article 18 (4), a foreign worker is not allowed to change his or her workplace more than two times within the 2-year extension period. The provision forbidding workers to change their workplace is superficially justified as “domestic employment protection” but in reality, the provision institutionally protects employers’ excess profits. Because of the vulnerable position of migrant workers compared to domestic (native) workers, employers can get away with paying migrant workers’ low salaries (Jung, 2009). “Advocates frequently argue that freedom to change jobs in destination country’s labor markets can be an important protection for lower-skilled migrants, allowing them to escape abusive employers” (Koser, 2009). Restricting mobility of workers only give credence to the allegation that the system is partial to employers. While regulation is needed in order not to disrupt productive employment activities, consideration should also be given to the right of worker to change workplace in view of a legitimate cause.

The third important issue is the procedure governing migrants’ rights upon loss of employment. Article 25 (3) of the Foreign Workers Act of Korea states that if a foreign worker failed to either obtain permission to change his or her workplace within two months and apply for a change of workplace within one month of the termination of his/her labor contract with the employer, the foreign worker shall be deported from Korea. “The Human Rights Organization in Korea believes that the current two months changing workplace provision is too short. The 2-month policy is cruel because under this system, migrant workers are at the mercy of the government’s employment policy” (Jung, 2009). It also usually takes time before a migrant worker can find replacement jobs.

“There is a consensus in the specific ILO and UN standards that if a migrant worker loses his or her job, he or she does not necessarily or immediately have to leave the country

but should be viewed as part of the normal workforce. In cases in which migrants involuntarily lose their jobs because of illness, or because the employer terminates the employment relationship or goes bankrupt, ILO Convention No. 143 (Migrant Workers Convention), Article 8 considers that a foreign worker shall enjoy equality of treatment with nationals in respect in particular of guarantees of security of employment, the provisions of alternative employment, relief work and retraining” (Koser, 2009). The problem with this statement is the fact that Korea has yet to ratify relevant international instruments on migration.

Another daunting issue that has to be addressed is social benefits. While foreign workers are covered by the industrial accident and health insurance, healthcare coverage is not comprehensive and foreign workers have to shell out additional money to pay for medical and related expenses (Cruz, 2009).

There is also the problem of high-processing costs where foreign workers themselves pay for pre-departure fees such as medical examinations, language test, training, processing, visa and airfare. Unlike many other receiving countries, which provide for the return tickets of once contract is signed, Korea does not. “Under the rules and regulations of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, airfare is always provided by each employer or principal” (Sunstar, 2008). Apart from the sending fees, migrant workers are also obliged to pay for on-site fees once they arrive in their workplaces in Korea such as “return cost insurance premium equivalent to KRW400,000 and one-time casualty insurance premium amounting to KRW20,000” (Cruz, 2009).

### **3.3 Recent Policy Developments**

In a welcome move by the Korean government, the amendment on Article 18, Clause 2 on the Act on Foreign Workers' Employment has been approved by the National Assembly on 16 September 2009 and the estimated date of enforcement is 19 December 2009 (PE-South Korea).

The revision will take into effect the following changes:

- a) increase the maximum employment period for migrant workers from three to five years to give them more job security;
- b) the one-year contract period will also be extended to three years and workers whose wage payments have been delayed or working conditions are seriously poor will be able to change jobs during the three-year period;
- c) the current two-month period for migrant workers to change jobs can be extended upon request if they are suffering from disease or injury from industrial accidents.

## **Chapter IV**

### **EMPIRICAL FINDINGS**

Prior to the actual survey, a pre-testing of the questionnaire was conducted among a small group of pre-selected Filipinos in Mapo-naru on 24 November 2009 to identify potential problems and test the integrity of the questionnaire as well as determine the average time needed to fill out the forms. A de-briefing session among the selected respondents eliminated superfluous data and identified vital questions for inclusion in the final questionnaire.

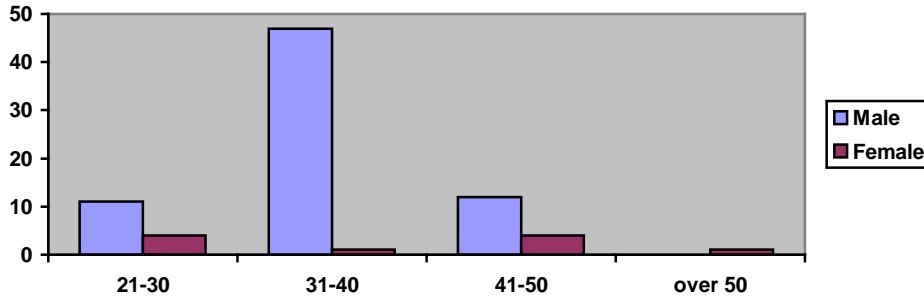
On 6 December 2009, a survey was conducted by a group of six KDI students in Hyewa-dong, Chongno-gu, Seoul, on the situation of Filipino workers in Korea under EPS. Many workers obliged to share fifteen minutes to fill-out the six-page survey questionnaire. Post-survey interviews were done randomly to validate the authenticity of the respondents' responses.

The anonymous, random-sampling questionnaire was divided into two parts: 1) basic information, and 2) EPS-specific questions, with a total of fifty-nine questions. The survey questionnaire employed a combination of open-ended and close-ended questions. Of the one hundred thirty (130) questionnaires prepared, one hundred twenty four (124) were disseminated and eighty-one (81) were duly accomplished, eight (8) were nullified and thirty-five (35) were not returned. A short debriefing was conducted to validate and clarify indistinct information provided by respondents. The tabulation was done by the researcher and found that the sample of eighty-one respondents represented workers from major workplaces in Korea where there are large concentrations of Filipino workers.



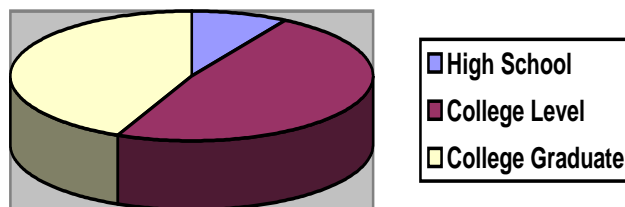
## 4.1 Survey Results

The gender distribution of the respondents is as follows:



As shown in the graph, majority of the respondents were in their prime working years between the ages of 31-40. 72% were married, 18% were single and 2% were separated. Most the respondents have unemployed spouses left in the Philippines, some spouses are factory workers in Korea and a handful are overseas Filipino workers in other countries.

Respondents were educated (48% reached college level, 43% finished college and 9% have high school diplomas) and have considerable working experience prior to deployment in Korea.

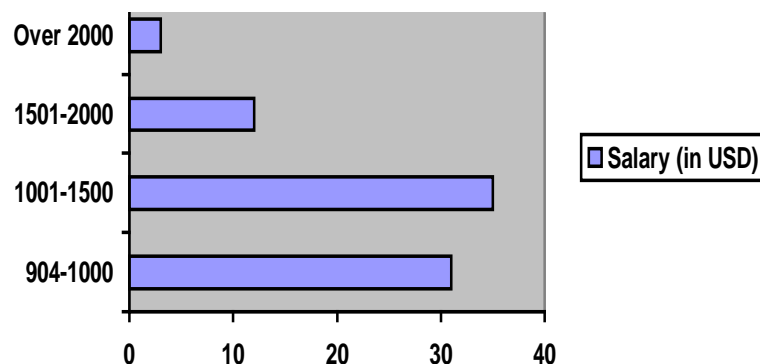


The survey found out that 80% of the respondents signed another contract upon arrival in Korea but the articles stipulated in the contract were the same as the one they signed in the Philippines. However, 18% said that there were changes in the contract such as

salary, board and lodging, and different company or place of work and the last 2% did not provide any information.

Six percent said that their actual job is different from the one indicated in their contracts; 51% received the same salary, 30% got higher salary and 19% received lower salary than what is actually written in their contracts. On the other hand, 94% are paid overtime pay and 72% receives additional benefits such as bonuses, tips, food, and lodging allowances.

Most respondents consider their wages as higher compared to when they work in the Philippines. The basic wage in the Philippines is approximately USD 260.00 while in Korea, the minimum salary is approximately USD 904.00.



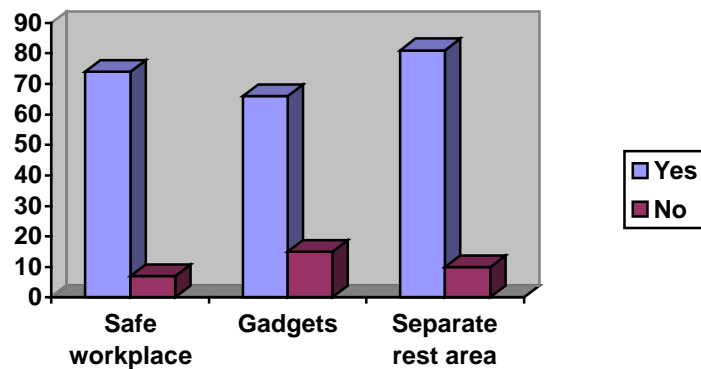
Eighty-eight percent of the respondents send most of their money to their families in the Philippines as remittances and 12% of the respondents set aside a portion of their salaries for savings.

The survey showed that 90% of the respondents work for six days; 7% have a five-day work week and 3% work everyday. Ninety-three percent work in the manufacturing

industry, 2% construction, and 5% in agriculture and poultry. Fifty-seven percent of the respondents work outside of Seoul.

The survey also revealed that foreign workers from Vietnam, Indonesia, China, Thailand, India, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Myanmar, and Uzbekistan were employed but considerable preference were given to ethnic Korean workers.

A few of the respondents experienced minor problems such as exposure to dust, chemicals and other harmful substances. Most of them consider their work environment as 3D (dirty, difficult and dangerous) yet 91% thought that their workplace is generally safe. In addition, 18.5% said that their employers were stingy they were not provided all the safety gadgets needed at work. Overall, workers in the manufacturing and other industries were provided with separate toilet facilities for men and women as well as rest area and 12% of the respondents mostly working in the agriculture sector were not provided with such facilities.



Ninety-one percent of the respondents were provided board and lodging (dormitories, small room or container type) by their employers while 9% were given cash subsidy as living quarter's allowance. Eighty-six percent were satisfied with the accommodation provided for by their employers, 11% were not satisfied and 3% believed that their living conditions needs

improvement. Seventy-four percent are living with fellow Filipinos, 7% with foreigners and 19% lived alone.

It was surprising that even though majority of the respondents were already receiving higher wages, 20% indicated willingness to accept a job with a higher salary even if on illegal status. Fifty-one percent were interested to join a union but 49% believed that doing so may affect their jobs and that of other Filipino workers.

Fifty-five percent of the respondents chose to work in Korea because of high-paying jobs; 25% were enticed by family and friends already working in Korea; 11% took this employment by chance and 9% wanted to work in a different climate.

Ninety-two percent of the respondents would like to go back to Korea to work if given another chance but 8% wanted to try countries such as Canada which gives opportunity for permanent settlement. Fifty-six percent of the respondents would like to live permanently with their families in Korea and 44% have different reasons of not wanting to migrate such as high cost of living, culture, Koreans are difficult to live with, extreme weather conditions, and the idealism that there is no place like home.

Likewise, respondents were requested to assess the level of their satisfaction in terms of their actual job compared to perceived employment, wage, quality of work, working conditions, living environment, relations and overall satisfaction.

**Table 1. Statistics**

	Actual Job	Wage	Quality of Work	Work Conditions	Living Environment	Relations Co-workers	Relations Employers	Overall Satisfaction
Respondents	81	81	81	81	81	81	81	81
Mean	3.94	4.27	3.81	3.77	3.74	3.74	3.91	4.06
Median	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00

*Note: The mean value is the average figure obtained by giving 1 point to “Very Dissatisfied,” 2 to “Not Satisfied,” 3 to “Somewhat Satisfied,” 4 to “Satisfied,” and 5 to “Highly Satisfied.”*

**Table 2. Frequency**

Category	Highly Satisfied	Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Actual job	9	59	12	0	1
Wage	31	41	9	0	0
Quality of Work	10	47	23	0	1
Work Conditions	9	46	24	2	0
Living Environment	8	49	19	5	0
Relations (co-workers)	10	45	21	5	0
Relations (employers)	11	57	8	5	0
Overall Satisfaction	15	56	10	0	0

The above findings suggest that most of respondents are satisfied with their situation as workers under the EPS. Respondents get the most satisfaction from their wages, garnering the highest level of satisfaction at 4.27 points and the least satisfaction level at 3.74 points in their living conditions and relations with co-workers.

Despite the significant satisfaction level of Filipino workers, however, significant number of them experienced difficulties or obstacles at some point of their sojourn in Korea.

## 4.2 Specific Complaints and Problems Encountered

### A. Problems encountered during their sojourn in Korea

Problems	Frequency	Percent
Homesickness	8	9.9
Language	30	37.0
Living Conditions	6	7.4
Discrimination from native workers	13	16.0
Human rights/abuses by employers	2	2.5
Cultural and religious differences	2	2.5
Weather/food	4	4.9
Delayed salary/overtime pay	1	1.2

### B. Pre-deployment Woes

Eighty-eight percent of the respondents encountered a number of difficulties in the pre-deployment stage. They cited corruption, red tape and ‘*palakasan*’ system, a cultural phenomenon where government officers give due preference to people they know, as still the norm. Many of the workers felt inadequately trained, particularly, on language and culture and believed that the Philippine government needs to develop a more comprehensive pre-deployment training program that will include a subsidized language course. Majority of the respondents believed that the government should be more transparent in disseminating information on the job quota for workers in Korea.

### C. On-site Challenges

Fifty-six percent of the respondents are not familiar with the services offered by the Philippine Embassy and the Labor Office and claimed they needed more help from the embassy officials, particularly, in providing assistance during lunch hours; having a more

approachable Embassy employees; and an open Embassy during Sundays, which is the rest day of most Filipino workers.

Furthermore, 70% of respondents clamored that Philippine government officials should exert more effort to look at their actual situation, provide workers with ample protection from abusive employers, and negotiate better contract terms. Respondents also articulated that the Korean government needs to do its part in thoroughly checking the employer's history of abuse before granting them permit to hire foreign workers; it should also be more lenient to allow movement of workers to work in another category; and perhaps, in the future, emulate the Canadian immigration system.

#### *D. Post-deployment Issues*

Although respondents enjoyed working and living in South Korea and receiving a comparatively high salary, many still hope that the Philippine government can create employment opportunities in the country so that Filipinos will not be forced to go overseas to work in dangerous, dirty, and difficult environment.

### **4.3 Statistical Analysis**

Although Filipino workers are generally satisfied on their overall well-being as workers in Korea, the researcher extends the study by answering specific question: could there be an underlying pattern in the worker's level of satisfaction as related to education, wage, and other variables?

Using the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS), with overall satisfaction level as the dependent variable (Y) and the education level as the independent variable (X), the following are the outputs of the regression analysis:

**Simple Linear Regression Output**

**Correlations**

		Overall Satisfaction	Education
Pearson Correlation	Overall Satisfaction	1.000	-.298
	Education	-.298	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Overall Satisfaction	.	.003
	Education	.003	.
N	Overall Satisfaction	81	81
	Education	81	81

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.298 <sup>a</sup>	.089	.077	.534

a. Predictors: (Constant), Education

**ANOVA<sup>b</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2.193	1	2.193	7.700	.007 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	22.499	79	.285		
	Total	24.691	80			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Education

b. Dependent Variable: Overall Satisfaction

There is a negative correlation. The Pearson's r value is -.298 which means that when the Filipino worker's education level is high, his or her satisfaction level is low. On the one hand, when the Filipino worker's education level is low, his or her satisfaction level is high. The Sig (1-tailed) value is .003 which is less than .05 indicates that there is a statistically correlation between the overall satisfaction level of the OFW and his or her education level. The coefficient of determination is 0.089 hence; about 8.9% of the variation in the overall



satisfaction level is explained by education level. Meanwhile, the F value of 7.7 is statistically significant.

Moreover, a multiple regression analysis was also conducted, still using overall satisfaction level as the dependent variable while considering five independent variables such as gender, age, civil status, working experience, and salary.

**Multiple Linear Regression Output**

**Descriptive Statistics**

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Overall Satisfaction	4.06	.556	81
Gender	1.11	.316	81
Age	2.99	.536	81
Civil Status	1.78	.474	81
Work Experience	2.35	.897	81
Salary	1.84	.813	81

**Correlations**

		Overall Satisfaction	Gender	Age	Civil Status	Work Experience	Salary
Pearson Correlation	Overall Satisfaction	1.000	-.111	.129	-.137	.107	-.144
	Gender	-.111	1.000	-.139	-.083	-.005	-.027
	Age	.129	-.139	1.000	.333	.243	.139
	Civil Status	-.137	-.083	.333	1.000	.153	.263
	Work Experience	.107	-.005	.243	.153	1.000	-.077
	Salary	-.144	-.027	.139	.263	-.077	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Overall Satisfaction	.	.163	.126	.111	.170	.100
	Gender	.163	.	.107	.230	.483	.405
	Age	.126	.107	.	.001	.014	.108
	Civil Status	.111	.230	.001	.	.086	.009
	Work Experience	.170	.483	.014	.086	.	.247
	Salary	.100	.405	.108	.009	.247	.
N		81	81	81	81	81	81

As indicated in the table above, only two independent variables namely, age and work experience, have Pearson's r that are closer to 1, which suggests a strong relationship between these variables and the dependent variable, the overall level of satisfaction. They are also positive which implies that as the OFW got older and acquired more working experiences; his or her level of satisfaction also increases. Meanwhile, salary has a negative strong relationship with the dependent variable. Thus, an OFW who earns less is more likely to be more satisfied with his or her work. But such finding is not statistically significant.

**Model Summary<sup>b</sup>**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.291 <sup>a</sup>	.085	.024	.549

a. Predictors: (Constant), Salary, Gender, Work Experience, Age, Civil Status

b. Dependent Variable: Overall Satisfaction

The R Square of .085 indicates that the model with salary, gender, work experience, age, and civil status as the independent variables could explain 8.5% variation in the dependent variable which is the overall satisfaction level. The rest or about 91.5% could not be explained.

**ANOVA<sup>b</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2.090	5	.418	1.387	.239 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	22.601	75	.301		
	Total	24.691	80			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Salary, Gender, Work Experience, Age, Civil Status

b. Dependent Variable: Overall Satisfaction

As shown by a very large value of Sig. at .239, the model that is:

$$OSL = 4.145 + (-.184 \text{ GEN}) + .177 \text{ AGE} + (-.217 \text{ CIVST}) + 0.52 \text{ WE} + (-0.79 \text{ SAL})$$

is not a significant fit to the data. In other words, the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable is not a straight line. Hence, it is reasonable to conclude that there is no significant evidence that the independent variables have effect on the dependent variable.

**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Correlations		
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Zero-order	Partial	Part
1 (Constant)	4.145	.468		8.865	.000			
Gender	-.184	.196	-.105	-.940	.350	-.111	-.108	-.104
Age	.177	.125	.171	1.413	.162	.129	.161	.156
Civil Status	-.217	.142	-.186	-1.530	.130	-.137	-.174	-.169
Work Experience	.052	.072	.085	.734	.465	.107	.084	.081
Salary	-.079	.079	-.115	-.994	.324	-.144	-.114	-.110

a. Dependent Variable: Overall Satisfaction

The above table shows that all of the sig. values of the independent variables considered are above 0.05 therefore, it is safe to conclude that the independent variables such as gender, age, civil status, work experience, and salary do not have statistically significant impact on the dependent variable that is, overall satisfaction, of this study. Thus, it may be interesting to pursue further research on this subject to find out what really impacts on the satisfaction of Filipinos working in Korea.

## Chapter V

### SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall, the shift from the trainee scheme to the employment permit system made Filipino workers better off than before. The EPS is a huge improvement from the earlier labor migration programs implemented by the Korean government. Unlike with the trainee scheme, Filipino workers under the EPS are considered like native workers in the sense that they have better wages and are covered by labor and labor-related laws. Although EPS is still a temporary migration program, it appears that the Korean government is slowly relaxing its immigration policies given its ageing population. Yet, for Korea to be a truly world-class destination of workers, it needs to provide an opportunity for permanent migration.

The amendment on Article 18, Clause 2 on the Act of Foreign Workers Employment which is the basis of the system, marked an important milestone in the 5th year of implementation of the EPS. The current revision of less than 5-year sojourn period of workers, from the previous 3-year sojourn, will provide an opportunity for the workers to work continuously without having to exit from Korea. This new procedure will give workers the security of tenure as well as cut the exorbitant cost of returning to the Philippines prior to the renewal of the contract.

Generally, EPS achieved its objective of protecting migrant workers' rights; however, it failed to curb the flow of irregular labor migration from the Philippines with the number of illegal residents rising consistently. One major factor why people continue to choose irregular work is the fact that workers earn more when they have the flexibility to work with various

employers. Another factor is the high pre-departure expenses including language test and on-site costs when workers go through the EPS – unlike when workers opt to enter illegally, they just need to secure a tourist visa and round-trip ticket. The government-to-government scheme was conceptualized in order for workers to cut on excessive cost of going through recruitment agencies. However, allegations of red tape and corruption from the lowest tier of relevant Philippine government agencies defeat its noble purpose of providing employment without having to spend a lot of money in exchange of decent work in Korea. It is therefore imperative that the Philippine government addresses the alleged corrupt practices and devise policy alternatives that can strengthen the system in this regard.

It is also important for Philippine government officials in Seoul to improve the delivery of services by being more accessible and accommodating to the needs of the workers, i.e. having a skeletal workforce on Sundays and during lunch break so as not to hamper the delivery of its services to workers who have little time to spare.

Subsequently, provision of on-site assistance should not be limited to welfare, counseling and membership collection; it has to include training on financial literacy and reintegration preparedness for the workers. Evidently, majority of workers send almost all their salaries back home and when their contracts end, most have not saved anything and will continue to resort to overseas work. The cycle goes on and Filipino workers do not get any wiser. Thus, it is the duty of the government to provide sound financial education and adequate training to better prepare Filipino migrant workers for reintegration upon their return to the country.

While Korea has yet to sign and ratify pertinent international instruments on migration, the existing reality is that ratification of international instruments does not actually guarantee migrant workers protection. It is fitting perhaps to cite that on 4 May 2011, the Korean EPS was awarded the first prize of the United Nations Public Service Awards as the best system in preventing and combating corruption in the public service. Corollary to this is the perception that indeed the system work in favor of Filipino workers upon arrival in Korea, however, the pre-departure burden that the workers are subjected to has yet to be fully addressed.

Like any other immigration programs in its infancy, the Korean employment permit system has birthing flaws and successes that may open new doors to expand its scope. The high level of satisfaction that Filipino workers demonstrated in the survey is a positive indicator that the Korean labor market is growing to be one of the top labor destinations of temporary Filipino migrant workers. As Korea continues to strengthen its place in the powerhouse economies of the G-20, it may have to accept that its society is undeniably ageing fast like most developed countries. Now is a good time to open its labor market to accommodate high-skilled workers to help out with its elderly people and working couples with children. This is an initial step that will help address the lack of local supply in this sector.

The current Philippine government's policy was never geared towards overseas deployment but the biting reality of high unemployment/underemployment rate and the scarcity of decent jobs in the country may well favor the proposition that it has no choice at the moment but to accept the fact that the Philippines will continue to be a supplier in the spectrum of labor migratory flows.

There will be continued prospects of forced labor migration due to unfavorable domestic labor situation and thus, it is more beneficial if the government seizes the opportunity to work towards:

- a) Improving standing policies on overseas employment to curb corrupt practices in relevant Philippine government agencies handling pre-deployment programs;
- b) strengthening on-site services to include partnership with local governments in Korea on financial literacy programs to encourage workers to save more and/or place their money on investment portfolios offered by government banks in the Philippines;
- c) enhancing the current reintegration programs to encourage migrant entrepreneurship; and
- d) negotiating further with Korean counterparts to open the market for other categories of workers such as skilled professionals, medical personnel, and highly-trained caregivers/household service workers.

After all, the current trend of increasing global interdependence will allow transnational labor mobility to grow unabated as societies in developed countries rapidly age; the prospects of local jobs continually shrink; and so it seems that one of the better options for Filipino workers at this time is overseas employment. And while it is very difficult to admit the harsh reality that the Philippines' role in this labor migration spectrum remains on the sending side, it is fervently hoped that the present administration will choose to take on an active role to eradicate corruption in the pre-deployment aspect, improve the provision of

basic services to Filipino workers on-site and devise a coherent reintegration program that will actually help returning overseas Filipino workers.

Naturally, Korea will be on the other end of the line and will continue to play host to thousands of Filipino workers. The efforts of the Korean government to accord foreign workers equal protection through its national policies, while lacking ratification of international instruments, is commendable, yet it can further expand its role by offering free trainings on financial literacy, such as the one being done by the Ansan government, to encourage savings and improve entrepreneurship among Filipino workers.

Finally, it should be the mandate of both governments to strengthen the employment permit system to ensure additional protective mechanisms on-site; reinforce measures that will actually help integrate these workers into the Korean society during their stay; and collaborate further on implementing effective reintegration programs that will prepare these Filipino workers to assimilate well in their respective communities once their contracts expire and their sojourn in Korea end.



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## **MATRICES**

### Matrix A. Survey Data

Observation	Gender	Age	Civil Status	Education	Work Exp. In PH	Salary (US\$)	Type of Korean Firm	No. of workers	Workplace
1	1	3	2	2	2	1	3	1	2
2	1	2	1	2	2	1	4	1	1
3	1	3	2	2	2	1	1	2	2
4	1	3	1	2	2	1	1	3	2
5	2	3	1	2	2	2	1	2	1
6	1	3	2	2	2	1	1	2	2
7	1	3	2	2	2	2	1	3	2
8	1	3	2	2	4	2	1	2	2
9	1	3	2	3	1	4	1	2	2
10	1	2	1	3	2	2	1	1	2
11	1	3	1	3	1	1	1	1	1
12	1	3	2	3	3	1	1	1	1
13	1	3	2	3	2	2	1	3	2
14	1	3	2	3	2	1	1	2	2
15	1	3	1	3	1	3	1	3	2
16	1	4	2	3	2	1	1	3	1
17	1	4	2	3	3	4	2	6	1
18	2	3	1	3	3	1	1	3	2
19	1	3	2	3	2	1	1	3	1
20	1	3	2	3	2	1	1	1	1
21	1	3	2	3	4	2	1	2	2
22	1	2	2	3	2	2	1	3	2
23	2	2	2	3	1	2	1	1	1
24	1	2	1	3	2	1	1	3	2
25	1	3	2	3	3	2	1	4	2
26	1	3	2	3	3	1	1	2	2
27	1	4	2	3	2	1	1	1	2
28	1	4	1	3	2	2	1	2	2
29	1	3	2	3	4	1	1	2	2
30	1	3	2	3	2	2	1	3	1
31	1	2	1	3	2	1	1	1	1
32	1	2	2	3	2	2	1	2	2
33	1	3	2	3	3	3	1	2	2
34	2	3	2	3	4	2	1	2	2
35	1	4	1	3	2	1	1	2	2
36	1	3	2	3	3	1	1	1	1
37	1	3	2	3	4	1	1	3	1
38	1	3	1	3	3	1	1	1	2
39	1	3	2	3	2	1	1	2	2
40	1	3	1	3	2	2	1	2	2

41	1	3	2	3	2	2	1	1	1
42	1	3	2	3	3	2	1	3	2
43	1	3	2	3	2	2	1	1	1
44	2	3	3	3	2	2	1	3	1
45	1	2	1	3	2	1	1	3	1
46	1	3	2	3	2	2	1	2	2
47	1	2	1	3	1	2	3	1	2
48	1	3	2	3	1	2	1	3	2
49	1	3	2	4	2	3	1	2	1
50	1	4	2	4	2	3	1	2	2
51	1	3	2	4	3	3	1	2	2
52	1	3	2	4	4	3	4	1	2
53	1	2	1	4	2	3	1	3	2
54	1	3	2	4	3	2	1	1	1
55	1	3	2	4	2	3	1	1	2
56	1	3	2	4	2	3	1	2	1
57	1	4	3	4	2	4	2	6	1
58	1	3	1	4	3	2	1	2	2
59	1	3	2	4	1	2	1	2	2
60	2	3	1	4	3	2	1	3	2
61	1	3	2	4	1	3	1	2	2
62	1	4	2	4	3	2	1	2	2
63	1	3	2	4	2	2	1	3	2
64	1	3	2	4	2	2	1	3	1
65	2	3	1	4	2	1	1	1	1
66	1	3	2	4	3	2	1	3	2
67	2	2	2	4	1	1	1	3	2
68	1	3	2	4	1	1	1	4	2
69	1	2	1	4	2	1	1	6	2
70	1	3	2	4	2	2	1	1	2
71	1	3	2	4	2	2	1	1	2
72	1	4	2	4	2	1	1	2	2
73	1	3	2	4	2	2	3	1	1
74	1	4	2	4	3	1	1	2	1
75	2	3	2	4	3	3	1	2	2
76	1	3	2	4	5	1	1	2	2
77	1	4	2	4	5	2	1	3	2
78	1	3	2	4	3	2	1	1	2
79	1	3	2	4	2	2	1	2	2
80	1	3	2	4	2	3	1	1	2
81	1	3	2	4	4	1	1	1	2
	1 - Male 2 - Female	1 < 20 2 - 21-30 3 - 31-40 4 - 41-50 5 - > 50	1 - Single 2 - Married 3 - Sep. 4 - Annul.	1 - Primary 2 - HS 3 - College 4 - Grad 5 - Master	1 - < 1 yr 2 - 1-5 yrs 3 - 6-10 yrs 4 - 11-15 yrs 5 - >15 years	1 - 904-1000 2 -1001-1500 3 - 1501 -2000 4 - > 2000	1 - mftng 2 -construct 3 -agri. 4 - livestock 5 - service	1 - < 9 2 - 10-29 3 - 30-99 4 - 100-149 5 - 150-200 6 - > 200	1 - Seoul 2 - Other

### Matrix B. Respondents' Satisfaction Level

Actual job vs. perceived emp.	Wage	Quality of Work	Working conditions	Living Environment	Relations with co-workers	Relations with employers	Overall Sat.	Problems Encountered
4	4	3	3	3	3	4	4	1
4	3	2	4	4	4	3	4	2
4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	2
4	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	2
4	4	3	3	3	4	4	4	3
4	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	6
4	5	4	4	4	4	4	5	9
4	4	3	4	3	4	4	4	7
5	5	4	3	4	2	4	4	9
4	5	4	4	4	4	4	5	4
4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4
3	5	4	4	3	3	4	4	9
4	5	3	3	3	3	4	4	4
4	4	4	3	3	2	2	3	5
4	5	5	4	5	5	5	4	7
4	5	4	4	4	3	3	5	9
5	5	5	5	4	4	5	4	2
4	5	5	4	5	5	5	4	9
4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	2
4	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	9
4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	9
4	5	4	4	5	4	4	4	2
4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	2
4	4	3	3	3	3	3	4	2
4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	2
4	5	4	4	4	4	5	4	2
4	4	3	3	3	2	3	4	4
4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	2
5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	2
4	4	4	5	4	4	4	5	9
4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4
5	5	4	3	2	3	2	3	3
4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	2
5	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	2
4	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	2
4	5	4	4	4	4	4	5	1
4	5	4	3	4	4	4	4	1
4	5	4	4	4	4	4	5	7
4	3	3	4	3	4	4	4	2

4	5	4	4	4	4	4	5	9
4	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	8
4	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	9
4	5	4	4	4	4	4	5	6
4	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	4
5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	9
3	4	3	4	2	3	3	4	5
3	4	3	2	2	2	2	3	3
5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	9
4	4	5	5	5	4	4	4	2
5	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	3
3	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	4
3	4	3	3	2	3	4	4	4
3	5	3	3	3	3	4	3	2
3	5	3	3	2	3	5	3	3
4	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
4	5	3	3	3	2	2	4	2
4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	2
4	5	3	3	4	5	4	4	2
4	4	3	3	4	5	4	4	2
4	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	1
5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	1
3	4	4	3	3	4	4	4	2
4	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	2
4	4	3	3	4	3	4	3	4
4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	1
4	4	4	4	4	5	4	4	2
3	3	3	5	4	4	4	4	2
3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	4
4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	2
4	4	5	5	5	5	5	4	1
3	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4
4	4	4	3	3	5	4	4	9
2	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	2
4	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	9
4	5	5	4	4	4	4	5	9
4	4	4	3	3	3	4	4	2
3	4	4	5	4	3	4	4	4
4	4	4	4	4	3	5	4	7
4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	2
4	5	4	4	3	4	4	4	1
4	3	3	3	4	4	2	4	3

*Legend: 1: "Very Dissatisfied," 2: "Not Satisfied," 3: "Somewhat Satisfied," 4: "Satisfied," and 5: "Highly Satisfied."*

## **APPENDIX**



## APPENDIX

This section contains a blank survey form used during the actual survey of Filipino workers.

*Control No.* \_\_\_\_\_

***Mahal kong kababayan,***

*Ako ay kasalukuyang nananaliksik tungkol sa EPS at manggagawang Pinoy dito sa Korea. Gusto kong malaman kung gaano ka-epektibo ang EPS sa pagbigay ng karampatang proteksyon sa ating mga manggagawa pati na rin yong kalagayan sa trabaho at buhay dito sa Korea. Bilang kawani ng DOLE, gusto kong makapagbigay ng rekomendasyon para sa ating mga pinuno sa kagawaran upang sa gayon ay kanilang maisusulong ang mga karampatang pagbabago sa negosasyon nila sa gobyerno ng Korea para sa susunod na MOU na magaganap bago matapos ang taong 2010. Salamat po.*

Dear fellow Filipino,

I am currently a graduate student at the KDI School of Public Policy and Management conducting a research entitled "The Employment Permit System and the Filipino workers in Korea." I want to know the plight of our workers here in Korea and examine the effectiveness of the EPS relative to basic protection and working conditions. As a government officer from the Department of Labor and Employment, I want to provide recommendations to the Philippine Government on how to improve the current policy in their future negotiations with the Korean government for the next Memorandum of Understanding between our countries, set in the last quarter of 2010.

Mary Sol D. Dela Cruz  
Student, Master of Public Policy  
KDI School of Public Policy and Management

### **A. Basic Information**

1. Gender

- Male  
 Female

2. Age

- less than 20 years old  
 21 to 30  
 31 to 40  
 41 to 50  
 51 to 60  
 over 60

3. Civil Status

- Single  
 Married  
 Separated  
 Annulled

4. If married, spouse is

- Not working

Working, how much is your spouse's monthly salary? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Number of Dependents: a) Children \_\_\_\_\_ b) Parents \_\_\_\_\_ c) Siblings \_\_\_\_\_  
Please specify age(s) of children: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Highest educational attainment

- Primary
- High School
- College level \_\_\_\_\_
- College Graduate
- Master's Degree

7. Length of work experience in the Philippines

- Less than 1 year
- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- over 15 years

8. Type of work in the Philippines

- Factory
- Construction
- Office
- Agriculture
- Teaching
- Others, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

## **B. EPS-SPECIFIC QUESTIONS**

### **I. CONTRACT AND TERMS OF CONTRACT**

1. Have you worked in Korea for more than three months?

- If **yes**, please continue
- If **no**, terminate

2. How long have you worked in Korea?

- less than 1 year
- 2-3 years
- 4-5 years
- more than 10 years

3. Are you a first-time EPS worker?

- Yes
- No, specify if 2<sup>nd</sup> contract, etc. \_\_\_\_\_

4. Have you worked as a trainee under the ITS scheme?

- If yes, please answer 4a
- No, please proceed to 5

4a. How long did you work as a trainee?

- less than 1 year
- 1 to 5 years
- more than 5 years

5. Did you sign another contract upon arrival in Korea?

- a) If **yes**, please proceed to question 6
- b) If **no**, please proceed to question 7

6. Is it the same as the one you previously signed in the Philippines?  Yes  No  
If no, what are the changes? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Is your actual job the same as the one stipulated in your contract?  Yes  No

8. Do you work a minimum of 6 days per week?

- Yes  
 No, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

9. Do you receive your salary on time?

- Yes  
 No

10. Is your actual salary

- higher  
 lower  
 the same as the one written in your contract?

11. Do you receive your full salary? If no, what are the deductions? \_\_\_\_\_

12. How much is your basic monthly salary (approximate excluding overtime)? \_\_\_\_\_

13. Are you being paid when you work overtime?

- Yes  
 No

14. Does your company provide you with additional benefits?

- Yes, please specify: a. commission b. tips c. bonus d. allowance e. others \_\_\_\_\_  
 No

## II. JOB AND FINANCE-RELATED

1. What is the type of your employer's business?

- Manufacturing  
 Construction  
 Agriculture  
 Livestock  
 Service, please encircle your appropriate answer below:  
a. Restaurant b. Support c. Social welfare d. Cleaning e. Nursing f. Housekeeping

2. What is the total number of employees in your workplace?

- less than 9  
 10-29  
 30-99  
 100-149  
 150-200  
 over 200

3. Where is your work located?

- Seoul  
 Other province/city, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

4. How many Filipinos are working in your company? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Aside from Filipinos, what other nationalities are employed by your company?

- Vietnam

- Indonesia
- Ethnic Korean (example, Chinese-Korean, etc.)
- China
- Other, please specify\_\_\_\_\_

6. How comfortable are you speaking Korean in the workplace compared to your native language?

- Very comfortable
- Comfortable
- Somewhat comfortable
- Not comfortable

7. How comfortable are you speaking English in the workplace compared to your native language?

- Very comfortable
- Comfortable
- Somewhat comfortable
- Not comfortable

8. What percentage of your salary is spent on:

%

a) Remittance-----→	
b) Personal needs-----→	
c) Savings-----→	
d) Loans repayment---→	
e) Others-----→	

9. If you are sending money to the Philippines, what is the mode of remittance?

- Bank-to-bank through a Philippine Bank (Metrobank, etc.)
- Bank-to-bank through a Korean Bank (Woori, KB, etc)
- Money Transfer through Western Union, LBC, etc.
- Others, please specify\_\_\_\_\_

### III. WORKING AND LIVING CONDITIONS

1. Do you consider your workplace generally safe?

- Yes       No, please specify\_\_\_\_\_

2. Does your company provide you safety gadgets at work?

- Yes       No, please explain\_\_\_\_\_

3. Does your company have facilities such as separate toilet for men/women, rest area?

- Yes       No

4. Does your company provide you with accommodation? *If no, please proceed to question 5*

*If yes, please specify the type of accommodation:*

- Dormitory-style    Apartment    House    Others, please specify\_\_\_\_\_

*Are you satisfied with your living quarters?*

- Very satisfied    Satisfied    Somewhat satisfied    Not satisfied    Needs improvement

5. Where do you live?

- Dormitory-style    Apartment    House    Others, specify\_\_\_\_\_

6. Are you living with other Filipinos?    Yes       Living with foreigners    I live alone

7. Did you experience any kind of difficulty or problems at work? *If no, please proceed to question 8*  
If yes, what kind of problems? \_\_\_\_\_

Who helped you solve the problems? \_\_\_\_\_

8. If you're offered another job with a higher salary but on illegal status, will you accept it?  
 Yes       No

9. Will you be willing to join an employees' or trade union?  
 Yes       No, why not? \_\_\_\_\_

**IV. Filipino Workers' Level of Satisfaction on EPS and working life in Korea:**

Category	Highly Satisfied (5)	Satisfied (4)	Somewhat satisfied (3)	Not satisfied (2)	Very dissatisfied (1)
Actual job compared to perceived employment					
Wage					
Quality of work					
Working conditions					
Living environment					
Relations with co-workers					
Relations with employers					
Overall satisfaction (all things considered)					

**V. Problems or difficulties encountered in Korea (put a ✓ as needed):**

Homesickness	Communication or language barriers	Living conditions	Discrimination from native workers	Human rights abuses/violations by employers
Religious and cultural differences	Weather and food	Delayed or non-payment of salary/OT	Employers prohibit workers in joining a union	Other problems/ Difficulty

**VI. Others**

- Why did you choose to work in Korea?  
 Family/friends are currently working in Korea  
 Climate is different from the Philippines  
 Others, please specify \_\_\_\_\_
- How did you learn about work opportunities in Korea?  
 POEA  
 TV and Radio Commercials  
 Print Advertisement  
 Internet  
 Family/Friends  
 Others, please specify \_\_\_\_\_
- If your period of sojourn has ended, would you like to come back if allowed?  
 Yes

- [ ] No, why not? \_\_\_\_\_
4. If there is a chance, would you like to live permanently in Korea with your family?  
 [ ] Yes  
 [ ] No, why not? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Do you have any complaints regarding EPS?  
 [ ] If yes, please specify \_\_\_\_\_  
 [ ] If no, please proceed to question number 6
6. Is there anything you want to improve in the current EPS?  
 [ ] If yes, please specify \_\_\_\_\_  
 [ ] If no, please proceed to question number 7
7. Is there any advice you want to give the Philippine government regarding additional services they can provide to our OFWs in Korea?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

*- End of questionnaire, thank you.-*