

MIGRANT WORKERS RESILIENCY THEORY: EXPERIENCES OF TECHNICAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION GRADUATES IN THE GLOBAL ARENA

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Abstract: The aim of this study is to explore the lived experiences of the Technical and Vocational Education (TVE) graduates who are working in the global arena in order to come up with a new curriculum that would address the needs to meet the global standards. The study utilized the phenomenological method and the participants were purposively sampled from the list of graduates who fell under the qualifications Health Care Services NC II, Food and Beverage NC II and the Household Services NC II now known as Domestic Work NC II. The data were gathered through an in-depth face-to-face interview and were analyzed using the Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis. It has come up with a Theory on Migrant Workers Resiliency which states that in order for a migrant worker to adapt in the global arena, all he/she needed is the interplay of preparation in terms of skills, knowledge and emotions. It further revealed that there is a struggle that each participant experiences due to the diverse culture of the employers which include their religion, rituals, beliefs, spoken dialect, lifestyle, food and the feeling of homesickness. All these struggles the participants endured because of the thought of sending back to the Philippines enough money to support the basic needs of the family including their education in order to hopefully uplift their standard of living.

Keywords: migrant workers, resiliency, global arena, workplace experiences, TVE graduates.

1. INTRODUCTION

With the introduction of the K-12 program of the Department of Education through Republic Act 10533 known as the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 and Republic Act 7796 known as the TESDA Act of 1994, the technical vocational education was given emphasis in the Grades 11 and 12 or known as the Senior High School to give way to those students who might not be able to continue through college earn the necessary skills and be employed in industries.

Along with these developments in the Philippine education system is the introduction on modern view of education which is the student-centered philosophy of education. Gone are the days when schools were established as places where fixed base of knowledge is passed from teachers to students. With the ever -changing world, students are also seeking answers through hands-on and experiential learning espoused by progressivism which is based largely on the belief that lessons must be relevant to the students in order for them to learn. The curriculum of a progressivist school is built around the personal experiences, interest and needs of the students. Teachers now serve as guides and facilitators in assisting students to reach their goals. The emphasis is on the future and on preparing students to be independent-thinking adults (Sadker, 2005).

Progressivism philosophy in education stresses the following: experiential learning- giving the students the chance to learn by doing or giving them laboratory activities where they can work on their skills; the scientific method which expects the students to pursue answers to their questions through problem solving and critical thinking, and are rarely expected to find their answers in a book; intrinsic motivation- rote memorization is discouraged because students don't see what they're doing as intrinsically valuable, they simply have to take the teacher's word for it and work towards extrinsic results.

Over the past years, trainers and curriculum developers have explored student's experiences and how learning were transferred from the training institutions to the workplaces (Mirko, 2008).

With the current curriculum of Saint Joseph College's TESDA qualifications namely: Health Care Services NC II, Household Services NC II, Food and Beverage Services NC II, students underwent dualized mode of training. This program contains both in-school and in-industry training or the field component (on-the-job training). The school believed that when the students experience the real setting taught in school, it would enhance learning.

Understanding how and what the TVET graduate experiences working in the global arena would give important implications for improving curriculum and instruction methods thus enhancing graduates' performance and meeting industry standards. Aside from the fact that Saint Joseph College is with the K-12 curriculum offering the TVL track with Food and Beverage and Housekeeping qualifications, additional knowledge generated could be integrated to the enhancement of the program for better assessment result performances and the employability of our students would be guaranteed after graduation.

However, since its conception and offering of the programs since 2007 at Saint Joseph College, no study was ever conducted to evaluate how the students fair in their performance especially those who worked in the global arena.

Having the above gap in mind and thinking there was no study conducted yet on this area in the institution, the researcher became interested in understanding the student's experiences during their on-the-job training and their current workplace experiences in order to be able to further improve the current training styles conducted by the institution through the development of new curricula, improving instructional techniques and methods. Furthermore, the researcher wanted to know whether the training offered in the school developed the student's skills which really addressed and matched with that of the industry needs.

2. METHODOLOGY

Study Design, Sample and Instrumentation

To get the lived experiences of the informants, a phenomenological design (Polit & Beck, 2012) was used. Seven graduates from the TESDA Qualifications namely: Healthcare Services NC II, Food and Beverage NC II and Household Services NC II now Domestic Work NC II were purposively selected. Selection was based on the following inclusion criteria as follows: studied and graduated from the TESDA Allied Health Program starting from School Year 2009 up to School Year 2014; resident of Southern Leyte and worked outside of the country; had finished a two year contract or renewed his contract; is employed based on his/her TESDA qualification and the informants must have experienced the phenomenon under study and must be able to articulate what it is like to have lived the experience. To gather the needed information and data a face-to-face semi-structured interview was conducted at the agreed time and day convenient for the participant with the help of a self-made interview guide duly validated by the three (3) experts in the field of Educational Leadership and Management..

Data Collection and Ethical Consideration

Prior to the approval to conduct this study, permission of the Dean of the Graduate School as well as permission from the President of Saint Joseph College were sought. After approval of the study was obtained, the study had to be submitted for review by the University of the Visayas Institutional Review Board/Ethics Review Board (UV IRB/ERB) to ensure protection and safety of the research participants and the study was guaranteed to follow the ethical standards and protocol of research. Once approval was obtained from the UV IRB/ERB, emails were sent to the participants who were chosen on the basis of the inclusion criteria. The researcher sent private messages through their Facebook accounts which contained the purpose of the study and the procedures about how the data were gathered and how the information are safeguarded to ensure the rights of the participants are protected, the questions that might be asked and Informed consent

for the assurance that all information will be dealt with confidentiality. The consent form included the approval of the recording of the interview using a digital recorder. A time and date was arranged for the face-to-face interview when the participants were home for a vacation from his/her work which is based on their time and date of convenience. Once agreed time is set, I started interviewing each participant using the semi-structured interview guide. The interview lasted from 30-60 minutes or more and was recorded using another cellular phone. During the interview, the participants answered open-ended questions related to his/her experiences while working in the particular qualification he/she applied for. Follow-up or probing questions were asked based on the responses and the research objectives. To keep up with the focus on phenomenology on the lived experience of a particular phenomenon, a starting question was asked: "Can you tell me about your experiences working abroad?" Based on the responses, the researcher asked follow-up questions or asked another question from the guide if the response moved away from the research topic.

The interview was conducted keeping in mind the process of conducting in-depth interview as adapted from Fundamentals of Nursing (Delaune, 2002) which observed the following stages: the interview preparation, interview phase (introduction, working phase, closure).

After the interview, the data collected were transcribed in whole part. The transcription was at the semantic level; one needed to see all the words spoken including false starts; significant pauses, laughs and other features which are worth recording. The transcribed data were sent to the participants for them to review and to schedule a follow-up interview if there were information to be clarified.

Based on suggested schedule for a qualitative study by Polit and Beck (2012), the researcher devoted two years in the conduct of my study starting with **Phase 1**, The Conceptual Phase followed by **Phase 2**, Design and Planning Phase then followed by **Phase 3**, Empirical/Analytic Phases and lastly **Phase 4**, Dissemination Phase.

3. DATA ANALYSIS

In the analysis of data, the researcher utilized the Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), the work of hermeneutic philosophers which include Heidegger who believed that "the meaning of phenomenological description as a method lies in the interpretation and interpretation is not an additional procedure but an inevitable and basic structure of our "being – in-the world" (Heidegger, 1962).

First, transcripts were read and re-read to immerse in the data. IPA does not include a single step of data analysis, but must include the following characteristics: a) movement from what is unique to a participant to what is shared among the them, b) description of the experience which moved to an interpretation of the experience, c) commitment to understanding the participants' point of view, and d) psychological focus on personal meaning-making within a particular context (Smith et al., 2009). Following the IPA process, the researcher conducted initial noting, which included descriptive, linguistic, and conceptual comments (Smith et al., 2009). Each interview transcript were examined in detail before moving on to examine the others, case by case. This followed the idiographic approach beginning with particular examples and only slowly working up to more general categorization or claims (Smith et.al, 1996).

Analysis of individual interview passed through 10 stages according to Polit and Beck (2012), which included the following: **Stage 1**, reading the transcript. In **Stage 2**, margin notes about key points were inserted into the right hand margin. The notes should be very similar to the informant's own words which will ensure that the analysis is grounded in what the informant actually says. In **Stage 3**, summary list of margin notes were made. Once the whole interview had been analyzed, the margin notes were compiled into a list. This helped ensure that all aspects of the interview had been covered. **Stage 4** was grouping of margin notes. In this stage the margin notes were grouped into initial thematic areas which involved close examination of the margin notes, and was a gradual cyclical process of clustering together similar items involving several revisions. The clusters were viewed as initial themes, which encompassed similar items. Each theme was given a heading which encapsulates the tone of the theme, and wherever possible the informant's own words were used in the creation of the headings in order to ensure that the analysis remained close to the text, reflecting the informant's experiences. The themes were further organized into groups and involved clustering together themes that seem to be related to each other. The groups containing these themes, now called sub-themes, were organized under a thematic heading, or superordinate theme. **Stage 5** involved left margin codes. Having identified and organized the themes, the next stage involved coding the themes on the left hand side of the transcript. This ensured that every instance of each theme occurring in the transcript was identified. It also provided the opportunity to re-examine the 'fit' of the

themes. The themes were then compiled into a final list of themes for the individual interview. Once each interview had been analyzed individually, the process was then extended to look across the full set of manuscripts. **Stage 6** involved full listing of theme summaries. All the themes and sub-themes identified from each of the interviews were compiled into a single list. **Stage 7** was the grouping of theme summaries. The themes from the individual interviews were reviewed and grouped together with similar themes from other interviews to form new clusters of themes, each of which comprised a number of sub-themes. The themes used for the final overall account needed to reflect the experiences of the participants as a whole, and occurred in most of the transcripts. As a general rule, to be included in the final account, themes should appear in at least two-thirds of the transcripts, depending on the sample size. The result of this stage was the list of themes with associated sub-themes. **Stage 8** was the recording of transcripts with overall themes. All transcripts were recoded with the finalized theme headings identified in stage 7. **Stage 9** was making the final list of themes with extracts. All extracts from each transcript were entered under the appropriate headings on the final list of themes, provided a complete account of the group-level thematic analysis. **Stage 10** was the writing up of the findings. The final list of themes with associated extracts formed the basis of the results' sections. The themes were described and illustrated with extracts from the participants' accounts.

Before the conduct of data analysis, the researcher consulted an expert in phenomenology for the interview and data analysis.

To protect the privacy and the confidentiality of the data, all video recordings taken in the interview were destroyed after transcription had been made.

4. RESULTS

To showcase the participant's experiences while working in the global arena themes were generated. There were five themes identified in the analysis process namely: On the Job Training (OJT), struggle, culture, salary and motivation. In keeping with the research design that is phenomenology, the researcher presented excerpts from the transcript of the conducted interview.

Theme 1: OJT : My Mentor, My Guide

The author found out that majority of the participants remarked positively when asked regarding the relevance of undergoing the On-the-Job training (OJT) in their respective qualifications.

“ Yes it really helped a lot. Of course you will get an idea and remember that it was like this or like that. Yes, I was able to apply our training in Household Services.”

” I was able to use my experiences when I had my OJT. Yes it was easy for me to adjust because I had already experience but it is important that what I know will be enhanced because it was different working abroad compared to working in the Philippines because employers in the global arena are more strict than the employers here in the Philippines especially with how tables are set-up. They would even smell the glass.

These statements showed how the participants were able to use and apply the skills they learned through their OJT in the real work setting. All of them were really ecstatic although it may not always be the case but at least they recognized it has helped contribute in their easy adjustment to their workplaces.

” I was able to use my experiences in OJT as a Health Care graduate when my employer was hospitalized. In a foreign country, one is not allowed to handle a patient in the hospital unless you are

licensed to do so. That is precisely the reason when she was hospitalized I was there just to help in assisting my employer not assuming as a caregiver or a nurse.”

It was noted that when asked about the OJT, most participants were happy having experienced exposure in the industry relevant to their work. It was also noted that they have high regards to their mentors and the activities done in the laboratory.

“ I can imagine how it is done by my Teacher and how we did it during return demonstration. ”

They find it easy to adapt to their new working environment having experienced a similar situation during OJT.

Theme 2: First Year of Work: TEARS

The researcher found out that all participants verbalized having experienced difficulty and anxiety working the first time in a foreign country far from the Philippines.

“My first experience there was I started as a waiter. Of course I was nervous because it was my first time that I was there. There were adjustments and I had to set up and handle guests, like that. After that, I had to stack tables...Aw, kanang plates, table napkin, cutleries, and glasses, like that. When you can't do things properly you will always be scolded. When you make little mistakes, the manager will correct you and there are co-waiters who will tell you, 'Next time you do that, it's not like that. The proper way should be like this.' It was difficult at first but eventually when I already had many ideas on how to do things, it became okay. There's no more problem. “It was only difficult at first. It was difficult because others who kanang, when they kanang, speak in their Arabic language and they were also not fluent in speaking English because they were Arabic so it was difficult to adjust and understand their language. “

“Two weeks. I adjusted for two weeks because I was homesick. That is also one disadvantage.”

“ Yes. I cry there when I feel really lonely unlike before when I almost cry every night because of loneliness.

” The loneliness was really hard when there are birthdays, occasions, especially Christmas.” She added that, “It took me long to adjust Ma'am since it was my first time to be far from my family. The most difficult is when you feel homesick because I am close to my family. I cried there all the time. I cried for like a year.”

The participants shared that adjustment was made by them for more or less over a year depending on how close the family ties were. Loneliness was felt when they were alone and especially when there were special occasions. The degree of pain being away from the family is often times equated to the number of times the participant left the family for work abroad. As narrated by a participant who worked for the third time abroad, she noted that the first one was the toughest to conquer than the instances that followed. Most of the time, they will cry to release the tension they felt inside.

Theme 3: Moving on amidst diversity

All of the informants agreed that what they find difficult at first to adjust to foreign employers was the culture of the people where they were employed. These included the attitude, traditions, belief, religion and food.

“ Women were not allowed to talk to men. If the male employer has to say something to the household worker, the woman should look down and avoid eye –to-eye contact.”

This is a behavior very much contrary to the culture of Filipinos who emphasized the use of solid eye-to-eye contact when communicating.

“You were always hungry there because they only have one full meal a day unlike in the Philippines. During breakfast they have only bread and coffee and for dinner they only have pizza. Lunch there in Saudi was served between 5:00PM-7:00PM. The foods were different and tasted differently.”

“ The food is usually noodles and the time they eat is 11:00 AM. If you are not wise then you will really starve.”
“It is with their religion, particularly on what they prohibit. It was in the hospital when my employer was hospitalized, I tried to wash the dishes. I didn't know about it because the sign was written in Hebrew. I did not know it. The spoon that was used was one that was also used in meat. It wasn't allowed to be used on cheese. I was heavily scolded and I just replied, ” I did not know about it. Why are you scolding me?”

The participants shared that language was very important for a good employer-employee relationship. If the employee cannot understand well the employer, then the former cannot perform well in accordance to the wishes and standard of the employer. They shared when your boss cannot speak English would be hard for them to communicate.

“At first of course it will be really difficult for you because of the ways they speak. You will recognize their words for a long time but if you really understand it and really listen to what they say you will be familiar to the basic words that you will hear and then you will soon adjust.”

A participant shared that speaking English should be practiced more in delivering and explaining while on training so it would not be difficult when talking to the employer.

“I experienced there the difference in language. It was really difficult Ma’am. I tried to learn it. I learned it in over a year.”

“It is really good to keep on learning all the time even if you learned something today you still have to keep on studying, experiencing something else to make yourself better. Much better.”

Despite the many adversities in their working life abroad, all the participants still managed to adjust and later on adapt the kind of life of the people in their respective workplaces.

Theme 4: My Salary, My Reward

All the participants agreed that they worked hard because of financial difficulties back home and looked at their salaries as bonuses or rewards for the sacrifice they endured being away from the family.

“ Good things... I think uhm... Being given big salary compared to just working here... was also able to send my children to school, some were able to graduate and others are still continuing.”

“Yes I started with minimum wage of 10 dollars and then I went up to 10.50 in the second week and then went up to 11.20 dollars in the other week until I got 15 dollars.”

“I never expected my salary to be this big in Israel.”

All the participants shared the same reason why they decided to work abroad and that is to support their family. Comparing their salaries back in the Philippines, they said that they cannot earn as much as they earn abroad.

Theme 5: Me Working for Others-The HERO

Majority of the participants shared that having a challenging emotional experience made them stronger and motivates them to work even harder for the sake of their family and loved ones.

“I have to work hard because I have to support the schooling of my children. I had to endure the reality that I am far from my family. It was very lonely like you were imprisoned there.”

“It is hard working outside of the country but I had no choice, I need to work for my family. I had to endure the pain of missing my family.”

“I had difficulty adjusting at first. It took me several weeks to adjust because I feel homesick. But I had no choice. I cannot go back because I am far.”

We don't usually look at the side of the worker who earns abroad, but with all the sacrifices they had, and the kind of life they gave us back home, they should be revered and considered the modern day hero for they have sacrificed a lot for their family to have a better and modest life back home.

As can be noted from the stories of the participants, working abroad means leaving behind your family and being away from them for several months if not years. Tears might have been shed but in the end what was considered the most was the comfort it can give back to the family who were left in the country where they came from. It can also be noted that preparations in terms of skills, attitudes and knowledge through the different TESDA trainings were considered important by the participants on how they were able to adapt and adjust to their respective employers. Considering the diverse culture, religion, attitude and beliefs of their respective employers, they were still able to survive and deliver the best service they can offer.

The researcher came up with three (3) propositions and a theory.

Proposition 1: Working abroad needs preparation in terms of skills, knowledge and emotion.

As narrated by the participants in this study, the training that they underwent while they were in the Philippines in their respective TESDA qualifications including the On-the-Job training in the industry were considered very instrumental in the preparation for their work abroad. Part of the training is the knowledge that would give them the background information regarding the different procedures how a skill is to be correctly acquired and remembered by them through the different return demonstrations performed. This is mentioned by participant 6 when she shared that when she is performing a task in her work she is able to recall what she was doing while on training. Learning by doing is theorized by John Dewey (1938) and David Kolb (1984). Aside from the skills learned by doing, it is believed that learning takes place all the more when learners know the background knowledge about the skills they need to learn. This is supported by the theory of Kant. Kant espoused that these ideas must be innate, and their purpose is to create an organizing structure for the data that is received by the senses. Kant was also one of the first to recognize the cognitive processes of the mind, the idea that the mind was a part of the thinking process and capable of contributing to the thoughts that it developed. This learning theory opened the door to Piaget and others who would further develop the ideas of cognition (Monroe, 1925).

A study by Jane Jackson (2015) on Chinese university students who were given international experience for a semester abroad revealed that the experimental group were more globally ready in terms of intercultural competence, second language self-efficacy and global mindedness compared to the control group whose participants regressed slightly.

Earlier in 2011, a study by the European Centre for Development of Vocational Training among 21 European countries studying the benefits of vocational education and training resulted with a positive effect on the employment rate and the shaping of professional and personal development. Likewise, the same study revealed that the training had resulted in increased self-esteem and self-confidence. Because of higher employment rate, it satisfied individual and family needs.

Emotional preparation is on one hand equally important in working abroad. As mentioned by the participants, all of them experienced a feeling of emptiness and loneliness being away from the family when they started working abroad. This alone is very significant why mental or emotional preparedness is necessary in order to survive working at a foreign land. A study on Migrant workers in Sri Lanka (Hettige, 2011) revealed that pre-departure preparations made the migration of workers as well as the families easily adjust to the change in the family set up.

According to a study by Haan and Caputo (2012) entitled, "Learning in the Workplace: A literature Review", they capitalized that in order to develop human resources, it is essential to match people, education, and training with extant employment and opportunities. Furthermore, both stressed that this matching must be accomplished by encouraging individuals to engage in relevant formal training opportunities. Given the quality of education and training makes these human capital givers of quality services and thereby giving their employers satisfaction to the services rendered.

Proposition 2: Working abroad needs adjustment and adaptation to different culture.

While it was encouraged to be globally minded, we cannot deny the fact that culture is still imminent in each individual that makes us unique from each other as a nation. Through this uniqueness, an individual or collective group of people had developed this innate nature that comprise the attitude, behavior and character ways of thinking of individuals. These factors, which form part of culture, gave the participants the difficulty and struggles to adapt to their employers. They experienced the difference in handling situations where their employers are so forthright, which sometimes offend them.

Another incident is the culture of religious beliefs and rituals wherein an object when considered sacred is not to be stepped on during menstruation because the body of the woman is considered at that time dirty. Another struggle is the type of food and the time when they are to eat. Majority of the participants in this study had experienced difficulty adjusting to the smell, taste and kind of food they had back then in their respective workplaces. They experienced eating only once a day while back in their homes in the Philippines, they were used to eating five times a day including in between snacks. What a big difference. True enough, these participants ventilated that they would sometimes resort to tricks in handling their employers. Besides that, the feeling of loneliness has taken them aback for a year an example of which one of the participants kept on crying at night because of homesickness. This alone manifested how family ties could greatly affect the member of the family emotionally once she is away from her family; though the researcher did not seem to observe this same degree of feeling from the gay participant in this study. Maybe because, generally, gays always had the funny side. They easily get along and find friends. Good to note they did not inflict pain to their employers. They reciprocated them with love and affection because they were considering them as like their own family back in the Philippines.

This predicament among migrant workers were noted in a study on Domestic Workers from the Philippines in 2015 which identified the migration related stresses and their coping. The study identified same migration related stress as that of attitudes of employers, food, tradition and that coping were addressed to seeking social support from friends, cultural integration as in adapting the culture of the employers and the religious practices one had been doing.

In one of the study by Van Der Ham (2014) entitled, "the Dynamics of Migration-Related Stress and Coping of Female Domestic Workers from the Philippines: An Exploratory Study," its result concluded that an OFW experiences higher stress working outside of one's country than working in the Philippines and that the stress and coping is strongly related to loneliness due to the sense of loss of family, working condition and employers. It also mentioned the challenges in the adaptation to the country of destination as a source of stress. As the participants were coping, it was mentioned in the same study that one way of coping will be talking to friends they met abroad. Participant 5 mention this that she was able to cope with loneliness when she met lady friends and hung out with them when they prepare Filipino foods.

This claim was proven to be true in one of the stories written by Ellen Ellecanal entitled "From culture shock to culture bridging" who was an OFW herself for 22 years. She had lived in four (4) different countries namely: India, the United Kingdom, Hong Kong and Singapore and she had visited France, Australia, Indonesia, Thailand and Malaysia. In her recollection, she vividly recalled that when she arrived in India she was shocked seeing women as construction workers and there were hundreds of homeless lying on the sidewalks. She said to herself she is still lucky as a Filipina. This could attest the difference in culture at how society looks at women and their roles in society. In the same study, it was noted that language barriers cause much stress due to miscommunication. The participants in this study may had difficulties in the language but had proven that they easily learned the dialect through listening and recalling and mentoring by their own boss. Religion and the employers' beliefs had taken a toll in the lives of the participants since some were beyond ordinary like in most Muslim countries, employers believed that a woman is dirty when having menstruation and is not allowed to touch nor step on objects considered as holy. Discrimination was greatly felt by participant 7 when she worked in a fast food restaurant in Canada but she did not mind it but proved instead that she is worth the dime her employer had paid her.

Proposition 3: Working abroad is mainly for family welfare.

Family is considered important to a person being the unit of society. Much so in the case of Filipinos who would always seek employment to be able to provide for the family's basic needs. Majority of Filipinos who did not find work in the Philippines resorted in applying for work abroad to earn bigger salaries to send back home to the Philippines and provide a decent living condition to their family members. Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) were considered the modern-day heroes by the Filipinos because they were the ones who uplifted the economy of the country. But behind the happy faces of the family members waiting for the monthly allotment are the struggling OFWs willing to sacrifice everything just for their family. This effort could be sending the children to good schools or allowing them to take courses that are promising and have a good chance at employment, for the construction of their dwelling places in order for them to live with security and safety having only shanties to cover their heads at night time or to be able to buy the daily necessities for survival like food and clothing and paying the monthly bills like electricity, water and home rentals. These given scenarios had been playing for years that majority of these OFWS spent decades working abroad just for their families.

This is of no question why we are enjoying life's perks because of our relatives who have chosen to be away to be able to give us a good life back home. In a study by Asis (2013) on the impact of migration on left-behind families, it can be noted that the motivation to decide to work abroad is for the promotion of family welfare. Such households have better economic conditions made possible by the overseas employment.

An article by Perez-Amurao (2016) entitled, "OFWs as modern-day heroes: Seriously?" reported that more than 10 million Filipinos who were working abroad kept the economy of the Philippines afloat despite some recession. This just showed the valuable contribution of these workers and they should be protected by the government and given the necessary benefits they deserved.

The Theory: Miras Migrant Workers Resiliency Theory (2018)

The theory as developed from the propositions mentioned earlier discussed that the Filipino Worker's selfless act and main drive and motivation in seeking overseas employment is for the family welfare. This is due to the fact that majority of the Filipinos in the Philippines are hard up and earn only a meager amount not even enough for the family's daily needs and sustenance. Because of this predicament, the OFW is pushed to seek employment outside the country.

However, in order for this worker to survive working abroad, be able to achieve cultural adjustment and adaptation, this theory emphasized the preparation needed in terms of kinesthetic, cognitive and emotional preparedness. Kinesthetic preparedness involved the skills training including the how's and why's of a procedure to arrived at mastering it without memorizing. The cognitive preparation involved the knowledge acquired through the lectures. On the one hand, the emotional preparation is the mental conditioning needed to make the overseas worker accustomed to the idea that he/she will be away from the family at a given time.

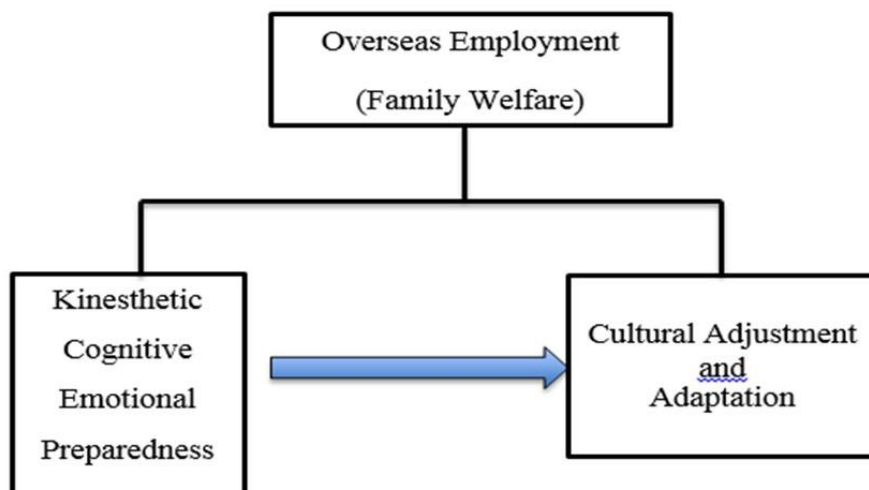


Fig. 1 Schematic Diagram of Miras Migrant Workers Resiliency Theory

Figure 1 illustrates the interplay of the 3 important elements namely:

Kinesthetic, cognitive and emotional preparedness so that a migrant worker easily adjusts and adapts to her new work environment abroad. This in turn makes a migrant worker happy and suffers less stress.

Kinesthetic preparation refers to the skills needed by a migrant worker to be able to work abroad. These skills will be acquired through the TESDA trainings the migrant worker undertakes prior to employment. Training should be dualized; meaning conducted partly in the school setting and partly in the industry. Cognitive preparation refers to the acquired new knowledge of the migrant worker when she undergoes training and industry exposure. Added knowledge is gained and better understanding into the nature of her work in a foreign country boosts her self-confidence and increases her self-esteem. Emotional preparedness lessens the loneliness she feels while she is away from the family. This could be achieved when she is able to have social connections with friends through either social media or direct contact and meet up during days off and the role of religion which is very important for Filipinos.

All three (3) elements when achieved will result to a well adjusted and better adaptation into the new environment of a migrant worker and thus gives her the satisfaction she longed for and especially for the family's welfare back home.

5. DISCUSSION

Coming to an end in the study, made the researcher reflect not only on what lies ahead but on the stages in the conduct of the research as well as the learning it has brought to her.

This study has given the researcher the opportunity to explore what phenomenology is all about in terms of the experiences and the workplace learning of those Technological and Vocational graduates who were working in the global arena and had given her the wider perspective into their lives. In addition, the tedious task of revising the methodology and improving was a big challenge at first. Through readings the researcher was able to discover how wonderful phenomenology is as a research design. It made her appreciate more qualitative studies.

The study revealed that skills' training gave the graduates the necessary preparation in the working situation and was very much relevant and contributory in the success and survival of a worker in the workplace outside of ones country.

This study also discovered that the first year in the life of the participants who worked outside of ones country means shedding a lot of tears due to the struggles they encountered either from the treatment of their employers towards them or through the loneliness they encountered being away from their families. Even the thought of being away means a lot because Filipinos are known for its close family ties.

Another finding in the study revealed that despite the difficulties encountered adjusting to the culture which includes the ways of life of the employers, their tradition, beliefs, religion and language all participants were able to fight back amidst these difficulties and eventually were able to adjust.

Amidst these differences participants were able to manage themselves to adapt because of the thought that all their sacrifices were meant for their children to support schooling, for their family's finances and uplift in the standard of living. They endured being away from their respective families. For the first timers, they were very happy receiving their salaries and considered them as reward for they were not able to get such amount in the Philippines.

6. CONCLUSION

This study had proven once again the roles of OFWs especially in the economy of the Philippines that is why they were considered as modern day heroes. This study had revealed that workers need proper training to be globally competitive and be able to deliver what is expected of them and that they decided to work outside of ones country despite the difficulties because they want to provide for their families back home. Because of these sacrifices and their role in the economy of the Philippines, they were considered as modern-day heroes.

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