MISSIONARY TO MIGRANT: HOW SERVING A MISSION FOR THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS IMPACTS MIGRATION DECISIONS

BY

HEATHER GIFFORD

DISQUERATION

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Doctoral Committee:

Professor Tim Liao, Chair
Professor Kevin Leicht
Professor Brian Dill
Professor Martin F Manalansan, University of Minnesota
ABSTRACT

This project aims to gain a greater understanding of the role continued global hierarchical power differences between the Global North and South play in driving domestic, international, and transnational migration trends. The Philippines is one of the greatest sending nations of migrants to countries throughout the world, which is immensely driven by individual and household economic strategy as well as national economic infrastructure that buoys the countries financial survival and development making it an ideal focus for migration studies. This study asks: How does participation in western-based, immersive mission experiences change Filipinos’ views of their household’s relative economic situation and what impact do these views have on post-mission decisions?; How are these factors impacted by gender dynamics?; and What extended impact is there on household migration strategies and processes? Findings indicate that exposure to more diverse ranges of socioeconomic statuses during mission service caused missionaries to express increased levels of gratitude and contentedness for their pre and post mission lives and provided perspectives and tools that allowed them to create new blueprints and strategies for economic and familial success. Although increased contentedness after mission service should have mitigated missionary’s likelihood to migrate the wide array of resources provided by the mission such as social networking and church resources overcame this effect to pull missionaries into migrant flows.

Gendered nuances showed that migration decisions were heavily impacted by stereotypical religious ideologies with women migrating prior to being married and having a family while men migrated after marrying in order to provide for their families and compensate for their wives wanting to follow central church doctrine and be stay-at-home mothers. Household focus groups
demonstrated the cultural import placed on international migration as a status marker and its necessity for survival and economic progress while revealing an emerging trend of Filipinos circumventing household structures to migrate abroad without informing their families until arrival in the receiving nation. Non-informing migrants accepted contracts in Middle Eastern countries in order to avoid upfront costs that their households couldn’t shoulder and chose to leave without informing their family to avoid dissuasion and fear they knew their family would express about working in this region of the world. This study’s findings shed light on how foreign organizations of the Global North interact in complex ways with local cultures and livelihoods that infuse new ideologies, motivate new behaviors, and significantly impact migration trends.
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

“Migration is a megatrend of the twenty-first century. We can no longer think about our economies, societies, or cultures without thinking about human mobility. How many of us do not have at least one migrant among our relatives, neighbors, colleagues? Which country can claim that migration has no role in its past, present, or future? Migration is a reality for us all, irrespective of whether or not we ourselves move.” -William Lacy Swing, Director General of the International Organization for Migration, October 2013

Global human mobility is an integral and burgeoning element of modern, advanced society. It encompasses complex, institutionalized processes that simultaneously buttress and police steady flows of people throughout the world for purposes such as tourism, war and conflict, marriage, education, and employment. Globalization and the institutionalization of migration processes have made human mobility easier, resulting in an estimated excess of one billion global migrants, 272 million of which are categorized as international migrants (2020, UN World Migration Report). With a current global population of 7.8 billion (Yale University) and almost twelve percent of them qualifying as migrants it is easy to see how the International Organization for Migration (IOM) referred to human mobility as a “mega-trend of our century.” Migration’s prevalence across and impact on domestic and global social institutions have made it one of the most studied social phenomena of our era.

The impact migration has on sending and receiving communities and the motivations driving migration are the most robustly addressed and understood topics in migration literature. Economic strain is one of the most persistent drivers of migration acting as both a push factor, driving migrants from communities with fewer economic opportunity, and a pull factor, drawing migrants to communities and regions of the world with more expansive economic resources.
Economic disparities in International Development, such as unemployment and economic downturn (Sassen, 1998), wage differentials in wealthier countries (Todaro & Marusko, 1987), and the ability to fill global labor niches (Piore, 1979) feed enduring flows of migration within and between countries typically from poorer rural regions to urban centers and, globally, from the poorer nations of the Global South to regions of the Global North.

Scales of Relative Deprivation (RD) are one way to measure the comparative economic situations that drive migration by examining how feelings of deprivation of income, wealth, material possessions, and/or social status act as motivators (Bernstein & Crosby, 1980). Original RD theories, developed by Walter Runciman, identified two forms of RD; fraternal, which focuses on comparisons among subgroups within society such as racial or generational categories and egoistic, which focuses on an individualistic comparison of the self to others in society and is the most applicable to this study’s focus. In the mid-twentieth century theories of RD provided a new lens through which to understand how individual’s perceptions of their economic situation drive larger social phenomenon like migration. Stark and Taylor (1984) found that the more deprived an individual or household feels in comparison to their surrounding community the more likely they are to utilize migration to increase their social position. RD studies also complicated our understanding of migration flows showing that migration’s positive correlation to poverty is complex. The highest numbers of migrants do not come from the poorest communities, but from the communities with the highest levels of inequality, where the very poor are motivated to migrate by their feelings of RD in comparison to wealthier households within their community.
Although economic factors and perceptions of RD are widely applied to migration studies on a macro level research frequently overlooks the examination of mediating factors that magnify or mitigate their impact, such as exposure to atypical social groups like religious organizations. Extended exposure to and engagement in social groups that shift an individual’s reference group, with whom they compare their economic situation, should also have the potential to shift the drive and propensity of migration. This study generally aims to examine the mediating factor of participation of citizens of the Global South in Western-based institutions (specifically religious missions) and how their participation magnifies or mitigates their economic motivations to migrate. The following specific research questions will be addressed; (1) How does the service of a mission for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS) impact Filipinos post-mission migration decisions?, (1a) How does exposure to relatively higher standards of living on a mission impact perceptions of Relative Deprivation (RD), which then impact migration decisions?, (1b) How do increased levels of social capital gained on the mission such as language, networking, and entrepreneurial resources impact migration decisions?, (2) What impact does gender have on the first research questions?, (3) How are household strategies and participation in migration decisions impacted by the first research question?, and (2a) How does LDS household participation in migration decisions compare to non-LDS Filipino household participation?

Chapter one will define key migration terms, explain the historical progression of International Development theories, describe the relationship between Development and Migration, and discuss the specific, historical dynamics of Development and Migration in the Philippines. Chapter two will discuss the role of Western-based organizations in global
development and migration, the specific role the LDS church, and the dynamics of LDS mission service. Chapter three will provide details on the methods of data collection and analysis used to procure the finding of this study. Chapters four through six will provide the findings of the study starting with a discussion of the impacts of mission service in chapter four, moving to a breakdown of gender dynamics in chapter five, and examining household participation in migration decisions in chapter six. Finally, chapter seven will provide a conclusive summary and discussion of the findings in relation to the background and literary information provided in chapters one and two.

DEVELOPMENT, MIGRATION, AND THE PHILIPPINES

KEY TERMS

It is important to begin by delineating several key migration terms. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) classifies a migrant as, “any person who is moving or has moved across an international border or within a state away from his/her habitual place of residence.” The most basic, dichotomous categorization of migration is **Internal/Domestic Migration** (MD), which is human migration that occurs within the borders of one nation-state and **International Migration** (MA), which is cross-border human migration. People also often migrate both domestically and internationally (MDMA), most commonly migrating to urban centers prior to migrating abroad.

**Serial Migration** (SM) is defined as migrants who have lived in more than two countries for an extended period and is typically applied to international migrants as they are highly likely to engage in serial migration to negotiate migration to increasingly desirable locations, but this study expands its application to domestic migrants as well. **Transnational Migration** is “a
process of movement and settlement across international borders in which individuals maintain or build multiple networks of connection to their country of origin while at the same time settling in a new country” (Fouron & Glick-Schiller, 2001, p. 60). Lastly, the meaning of sending and receiving communities/nations may seem intuitive, but for clarities sake sending communities are the communities from which migrants originate and receiving communities are the location where a migrant arrives after leaving the sending community. There may be multiple receiving communities for one migrant, but the sending community is typically the original place of “habitual residence.”

DEVELOPMENT THEORY

How International Development has been defined and measured has changed tremendously over the years. In centuries past, Traditional theories of Development were rooted profoundly in and measured exclusively by economic and capitalistic growth and nation-state expansion as evidenced by the common historical practices of slavery, colonization, and imperialism. Developed, or First-World countries, as they were called at the time, were wealthy, modern, industrialized nations whose global responsibility it was to bring salvation and advanced, civilized culture to the pitied, undomesticated populations of the less developed Second and Third Worlds. These ideologies, which fed practices of colonization and imperialism, were mitigated however by the social changes brought by processes of modernization and globalization that resulted in the solidification of nation-state identities, governments, armies, and geographical boundaries while simultaneously increasing cross-nation interdependence. Societal changes driven by these factors in the mid twentieth century coupled
with shifts away from imperialism and colonization necessitated new paradigms for understanding and measuring International Development.

The greatest shifts in International Development ideology and measurement occurred after the Second World War as international alliances and foreign policies were instituted and organizations, such as the United Nations (UN), International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) were formed. Modern theories of Development emerged advocating for more complex measures of development that take factors such as: politics, culture, environment, and the capability of an individual to achieve their desired life into account (Bradlaw, 2010; Naussbaum, 2010). Theories of Development Idealism also emerged stressing a need the creation and setting of effective Development goals and the means of achieving them, a call to action taken up by the newly founded organizations mentioned above (Thornton et. al., 2015).

The UN formally came into existence in 1945 with the purpose of maintaining international peace and security, but it also created international relationships of cooperation that provided the foundation from which to create new, standardized ideologies of how global development should look and be achieved. The concept of Development has never been as clearly defined, measured, and monitored as it is today. The United Nations (UN) assesses and calculates the amount of developmental progress made by each country around the world. Groupings are assigned based on economic factors such as per capita gross national income (GNI) and gross domestic product (GDP), but also include factors such as levels of poverty, access to clean water and food, unemployment rates, and social infrastructure. Not only does the UN assume global authority on measurements of development, but they also set futuristic goals
aimed at reducing inequality between nation states. The current Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) target ending extreme poverty, reducing inequality, and protecting the planet by the year 2030 and have been adopted by 193 of 197 countries in the world (unfoundation.org). The seventeen SDGs in Figure 1.1 show how far measurements of Development have progressed from the purely economic model (UN.org).

Global Development is an extremely important topic that impacts every nation’s governmental policies, economic and environmental health, and even household and family structures. The extent to which nations are dependent upon and intertwined with each other requires a renewed global awareness and responsibility for social processes that improve and/or exacerbate unequal development. New measurements of Development are key in pulling back the curtain of economic growth to show the complex inequalities created by global capitalism. These inequalities are most clearly seen in the divide between the Global North and the Global South. Globalization and technological advancements have made it easier and, even common place, for social institutions of the Global North to utilize countries and citizens of the Global South to increase their economic growth. From a purely economic standpoint this would seem like a win-win situation for both parties, as the Global South has greater access to jobs and other resources, but the new measurements of development expose the ways in which this economic growth creates and perpetuates factors such as gender inequality and health and well-being.

The Global North has a long history of utilizing their economic prosperity to impose their views of Development on countries of the Global South, in which migration processes play a central role. The next section will explain how migration has played a central role in the processes of colonization, how migration has both been fed by and feeds post-colonial
Migration and development are interdependent processes, driving change and stimulating new connections between individuals and societies in fields of economics, trade, technology, culture, and religion. Human mobility is a means to diversify and strengthen livelihoods, as well as an avenue to escape persecution, conflict, and disaster in times of adversity.” - Foreword of Ninth Global Forum on Migration and Development, November 2016

As stated in the quote above Migration and Development are interdependent. During eras of Imperialism and Colonization, when development was measured predominantly by economic gain, mobility was the means of development. If you had the economic resources for boats, labor, weapons etc. and the ability to move into and acquire new territories and bodies, your nation or people were developing. This form of expansion also caused ripples of tertiary migration as refugee groups fled, people were taken as slaves, and others moved to more developed regions or countries in search of economic resources. Rates of migration were lower than the latter years, but mobility was less regulated by nation-states since geographic and national boundaries were less politicized and militarized.

In post-colonial eras processes of modernization, industrialization, and globalization that fed International Development were reliant on migratory labor forces just as migrants were reliant on global, industrial centers for economic resources they did not have access to in less-developed regions. Migrants magnify social, economic, and political development in receiving communities by providing additional labor forces, bringing new knowledge and skills, or even
increasing access to economic resources and new capital. Simultaneously sending communities benefit from foreign remittances (money sent back to migrant’s families) and new skills and resources acquired in receiving communities (ILO). Sending community’s governments also benefit from taxation of migrant processes and foreign remittances, which are often used to fund national Development programs and the creation of social infrastructure.

Currently the Developmental progress of many nations would be significantly hindered by lack of migrant labor. The United States has been reliant on Filipino nurses, and doctors from around the world to fill labor gaps since the 1960’s (Guevarra, 2010). Countries like Hong Kong and Singapore as well the Arab States are reliant on migrant domestic workers, predominantly from the Philippines and Indonesia, because of massive shifts of women in those regions entering the formal workforce (Parrenas, 2001; Constable, 2007). In countries where Development is seen in the form of architectural and structural growth, such as Abu Dhabi and Dubai, not only are they reliant on migrants for menial, construction labor, but also for engineering positions that require advanced degrees (Hosoda, 2019). Many nations of the Global North are also reliant on the outsourcing of labor to countries of the Global South to increase their profits while keeping merchandise affordable to their populations, which drives domestic migration in the Global South as people seek new employment opportunities in global business centers.

Although there are many ways in which migration ensures a positive momentum for Development goals in both sending and receiving communities, the processes also have unintended and sometimes negative impacts. The ability of women to obtain educations and choose to enter the workforce at increasing rates is progress towards SDG number five: Gender
Equality, but it fails to address, and even further entrenches the feminization of domestic labor by importing women from poorer regions of the world. Every international domestic worker is also leaving their own household and family behind in their country of origin to be cared for by others, which has significant psychological impacts on families (Parrenas, 2005). Drawing skilled and innovative migrants to wealthier, developing nations also creates Human Capital Flight and Brain Drain causing sending regions to sacrifice rates of development to the needs of wealthier regions.

Two of the most prominent issues of international labor that defies the current Development goal of reducing global inequalities are disparities in migrant worker’s rights and enduring capitalist, economic goals that benefit from and are reliant on maintaining global inequality. Although, globalization and technological advancement have paved the way for great Developmental strides we still haven’t seen an emergence of global, cross-national regulatory bodies that can ensure migrants have basic human rights within receiving nations. This is particularly problematic for the 11.5 million migrant domestic workers (ILO) working in the unregulated, informal economy. Individual countries do enter into bilateral labor agreements (BLA) with each other that dictate the conditions of employment, but sending nations continue to have limited access to information about incidents and a limited ability to take punitive measures other than retracting their workers from the region (ILO).

Enduring capitalistic business approaches continue to benefit tremendously from access to cheap, foreign labor forces. Migrants continue to receive lower salaries, work longer hours, and are excluded from important benefits such as healthcare for big businesses to increase their gains. Regions that gain economically from the unfortunate outcomes of unequal global
Development will always have more economic resources to develop faster because, let’s face it, money still drives the capability for Development. Some poorer countries, with fewer alternatives for funding national Development programs even structure societal processes to benefit from the exportation of their citizens as migrants by creating national campaigns encouraging labor migration and then taxing incoming remittances to fund development programs.

The relationship between Development and Migration is anything, but simple. Migration is imperative for Development to continue to progress at current rates and creates many economic benefits for both receiving and sending communities. Continued Development is crucial for families from poorer regions of the world who can gain access to economic opportunities that are not available within their own home communities to better their lives. The global progress driven by Migration and Development is impressive, but still built on the rutted global landscape created by colonization and imperialism that continues to support and perpetuate global inequalities. The UN’s SDGs have taken a massive step away from economic Development measures by implementing lofty goals to reduce global inequalities by 2030 and, since most countries around the World have formally adopted these goals, the coming decades will reveal how Development will shift migration trends and global relationships between wealthier and poorer nations.

DEVELOPMENT AND MIGRATION IN THE PHILIPPINES

The Philippines can be categorized as a nation of the Global South because of historical and continued interventions by wealthier states, international organizations, and transnational and multinational corporations; their economic dependence on the Global North; and their
marginalization as a state in the global arena (Ayoob, 1995 & Misalucha, 2015). The Philippines has long-standing relationships with many nations of the Global North as a key location for many global business centers and one of the top senders of labor migrants throughout the world. The post-colonial economic state of the country was so dire that the nation was forced to enter the global stage, accessing international, economic resources that continue to drive both domestic and international migration trends. These shifts drive Philippine growth and Development in positive and negative ways. This section will discuss the history of Development and Migration in the Philippines, the ways in which it benefits and/or hinders the nation’s progress, and the gender dynamics at play.

COLONIZATION AND MIGRATION

Prior to Spanish rule of the Philippines in the sixteenth century indigenous populations subsisted on communal agriculture and crafts, produced typically by rural, female labor. Spanish rule brought the loss of communal lands as they were allocated to the Spanish elite who utilized them for their own production purposes. This left a majority-female workforce without employment and households without a means of subsistence. It also created a new male workforce of commodified labor as the Spaniards hired or forced Filipino men to work on their lands to produce rice and other products for export. There was little choice for survival, but to sell labor in exchange for small wages that didn’t even allow them to purchase the products they were producing (Bahramitash, 2005).

During this time Filipino men, in addition to providing labor to the Spanish, began to migrate abroad to work on sugar cane plantations in Hawaii, join foreign militaries such as the U.S. Navy, and work in factories in newly emerging industrial centers (Espiritu, 1995).
As Filipina women found themselves without a means of subsistence and unable to find employment in agriculture, they began to migrate to urban centers in the hopes of finding employment and greater economic opportunities. Impoverished women moving to urban areas in search of employment and economic resources were often met with intense competition due to limited jobs within the formal economy. Consequently, many women were pushed into informal labor fields such as domestic service, tourism and hospitality, and prostitution (often coupled with tourism). In fact, prostitution became a, “prominent occupational choice for rural women from low-income backgrounds” during this time frame (Bahramitash, 2005 pg. 161).

Although prostitution is currently illegal in the Philippines it was legal and supported by government programs during Spanish colonization (1521-1898), American colonization (1898–1946) and until 1991 when U.S. military bases were closed. Girls, as young as twelve, were required to register with the state as sex workers and utilize the Offices of Social Hygiene created in aid with foreign military leadership. The Offices of Social Hygiene certified the health and cleanliness of prostitutes and provided easy access and delivery to military personnel (Bahramitash, 2005). Not only did the institutionalization of prostitution create permanent rural to urban female migration flows, but it also created international male-dominated migrant flows into the Philippines that persist to this day.

Due to the legalization and governmental management of prostitution urban centers became popular, inexpensive hubs of sex tourism for men of the Global North. Two percent of men who travel to Cebu city go for business in comparison to an estimated two-thirds who go for sex tourism. In fact, the historical frequency of Japanese engagement in sex tourism in Cebu has resulted in the development of direct flights from Japan to Cebu Island (Chant and McIlwaine,
1995). Foreign patronage in sex tourism meant that women had significantly higher earning potentials in sex work than in most jobs in the formal economy. For this reason, many women used to be teachers and nurses who moved into the field of informal sex work for the money it promised (Bahramitash, 2005).

POST-COLONIAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Neither colonial rule by Spain nor the United States brought economic bounty to the Philippines. By the end of Spanish rule, the economy, national debt, and agricultural production were at their lowest and unemployment was at its highest (Bahramitash, 2005). American rule did little to improve the economic situation and by 1949, three years after winning their independence from the U.S., the Philippines trade deficit had reached an all-time high of $161 million (Villegas, 1988) and unemployment was similarly at crisis levels. In addition to the dire economic situation left in the wake of colonization there were also citizen uprisings and continued political and military pressures from the U.S. for the Philippines to open the nation to global trade. In response to this crisis the Philippine government utilized loans from the IMF and World Bank that required them open their economy to foreign firms, create international free trade zones (FTZ), and institute other neo-liberal policies with nations of the Global North (Hutchcroft, 1998).

Structural adjustment programs that provided development-based loans marked the presidency of Ferdinand Marcos, from 1965–1986. Four loans were obtained under Marcos’s presidency: The Extended Fund Facility (EFF) from the IMF, two Structural Adjustment Loans (SAL) from the World Bank, and the World Bank Sectoral Loan (Marcos, 1988). Although these loans provided a much-needed infusion into the Philippines economy they also came with
stipulations of enacting neoliberal economic policies, trade reform that required the removal of trade imports, and creating free trade zones (FTZs). The outcome of these programs was an increase in foreign ownership (Chant & McIlwaine, 1995), reduction of social services, curtailed regulatory activities, economic growth based on foreign investment (Bahramitash, 2005), and privatization of government controlled/owned corporations to the private business sector.

FTZs made manufacturing in urban centers tax havens for foreign investors producing garments, electronics, and furniture (Bahramitash, 2005). The Philippine economy was in desperate need of infusion of both money and jobs and these policies provided both. However, the low wages disproportionately attracted an 85% female labor force, many of them migrating domestically from rural areas. Employer’s preferred to hire young, single female workers who are believed to be more subservient and can be fired at will if their production drops, they get married, or become pregnant. Filipino women are also more likely to accept poor working conditions and low wages because of the guilt they experience about being able to send their income back to rural areas to support their families (Bahramitash, 2005). Workers have no recourse against labor violations, discrimination, or job loss because FTZs are free of all government labor regulation. These policies and procedures, or lack thereof, resulted in a perpetual flow of young, expendable female laborers from impoverished rural areas to urban centers that continues to this day (Bahramitash, 2005). Although FTZs provided Filipina women with an alternative to working in the informal labor market they did not provide greater employee rights or benefits and actually increased levels of poverty for women.

The creation of FTZs and the draw of foreign investors into the market were important economic wins for a struggling Philippine economy, but did not create the desired economic
development. The policies imposed by the IMF and World Bank drove an already flailing Philippine economy further into despair. By 1969 the Philippines had a trade deficit of $257 million (Bello, Kinley, and Elinson, 1982) and between 1970 and 1983 their external debt rose from approximately $2 billion to $24 billion. It was during this rapid degradation of the Philippine economy that President Marcos passed the Labor Code of 1974 by executive order entering the global market of labor exportation. The labor Code restricted the negotiation of Overseas Filipino Worker’s (OFW) contracts to a government-to-government process, forced other national governments to regulate and negotiate labor migration to receive highly desired OFWs, and created new governmental regulatory offices.

Prior to the 1970’s OFWs primarily consisted of Filipino men on plantations, in factories and sea-bearing occupations, and predominantly, as production and construction workers in the Middle East. The major migration shift, occurring in the wake of the Labor Code of 1974, was the utilization of newly opened, gendered markets like nursing in the U.S. and domestic work in Asian countries like Hong Kong, Singapore, and Taiwan (Ang, 2009). By 2006 female OFWs had overtaken male OFW deployment. Currently women make up 56% of OFWs while 44% are male (PSA). The gendered occupational dynamics of this shift are discussed later in the Gender section.

STRATEGIZING MIGRATION TO DRIVE DEVELOPMENT

The Labor Code of 1974 was originally developed as a temporary solution to the economic devastation left in the wake of colonization by Spain and the U.S. However, its temporality was abandoned due to growing economic reliance on remittances, continued economic stagnation and unemployment, and growing demands for cheap labor from the Global
North. In 2001 the government integrated management of international labor migration into the country’s official development plans and became so successful at it that the ILO designated the POEA as the global model that should be followed by other labor-exporting countries (Tyner, 1996). As of 2019 there was an estimated 2.2 million Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW’s) in over 130 countries (PSA) making the Philippines one of the world’s greatest sending nation of labor migrants with the most bilateral agreements (thirteen) with labor-receiving nations.

The OEDB in conjunction with the Philippine government developed many strategies to encourage labor migration, one of which was reliant on marketing that rooted and nurtured an ethos of heroism through migration in Filipino citizens. For example, the Saturday morning television show called *May Gloria Ang Bukas Mo* (*Your Future has Glory*) featured the president providing inspiring messages about the place of Filipinos in the global market. The messages glorified transnational Filipino workers as central to the nation building of the Philippines through their remittances and showed them as empowered with the ability to make their lives better socially and economically (Geuvarra, 2010). Filipino migrants not only take great pride in representing their nation abroad but are also welcomed home as national heroes and heroines as seen in the advertisement for an award’s ceremony in Figure 1.2.

The government has also established programs, such as the Balikbayan Program, that provides special benefits to Filipinos who have been continuously outside of the Philippines for at least one year as overseas workers. Bagong Bayani awards are also administered to outstanding overseas Filipino workers for, “their significant efforts in fostering goodwill among peoples of the world, enhancing and promoting the image of the Filipino as competent, responsible and dignified workers, and for greatly contributing to the socio-economic
development of their communities and our country as a whole” (Ang Bagong Bayani, 2017).

These programs have impacted the cultural understanding of labor migration in the Philippines. In some countries it may be perceived as an act of desperation to leave one’s country in search of labor and economic resources in other nations, but in the Philippines, it is framed as an honor and even a national duty to represent their nation to the world as seen in Figure 1.3 showing a banner hung at The International Forum on Migration held in Kuala Lumpur Migration Driven Development.

Both domestic and international migration rates in the Philippines have increased steadily since the colonization of the islands. Currently the Philippines has one of the highest rates of domestic migration of all Asian countries. Out of the current 108 million Philippine population 52 million have migrated domestically and over three million have migrated abroad. Of those who have migrated abroad over two million are classified as OFWs, the majority of which continue to work in the service sector or elementary occupations defined as, work involving the “performance of simple and routine tasks which may require the use of handheld tools and considerable physical effort” (PSA). In 2018 remittances sent back to the Philippines reached an all-time high of just over $32.2 million driving domestic consumption and accounting for 9.7% of GDP and 8% of GNI (PSA).

Statistics show a steady and robust increase of OFWs since the enactment of the Labor Code of 1974. The graph in Figure 1.4 displays the increase in OFW’s by 200,000’s from 1974 to 2011. In 2012 the OFW count surpassed 2 million and continues to climb every year. With a rise in migrant labor comes a consequential rise in remittances that provided the economic boost the national economy was desperate for. The graph in Figure 1.5, presenting data from Banko
Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), shows the steady increase in cash remittances sent back to the Philippines by OFWs in increments of $5,000 million USD ranging from 1974 to 2012. Similar to the trend of steadily increasing OFWs remittances have experienced a parallel trend culminating in over $2.2 billion USD received via remittances to date (Philippines Statistics Authority). As of 2005 the Philippines is the third largest remittance-receiving country after Mexico and India (World Bank, 2005).

Each wave of Filipino migration has correlated with specific patterns of Global Development. The early migratory patterns driving women to rural centers and pushing men into international labor markets were driven, not only by colonial rule, but also by processes of industrialization and agricultural and military advancements. International migration flows in the 1900’s were fed by construction booms in the Middle East and North Africa for men and nursing staff shortages and emerging global domestic care markets for women. Domestic migration during this era was driven by the creation of FTZ’s that brought foreign companies and capital to urban centers and attracted impoverished women from rural areas. Although these factors continue to be the major drivers of migration new technological advances and increasing foreign investment in businesses, such as call centers, are driving new domestic migration as well.

The Philippines has surpassed India and emerged as the world’s leader in international call center services. This industry employs about 1.2 million people in the Philippines and accounts for 8% of the nation’s GDP (The Economist, 2016). Experts estimate that increasing call center revenues will soon rival the economic impact of transnational labor remittances on the Philippines economy ((Lee, 2015; PSA). Companies like United Airlines, Citibank, Chevron, Aetna, and many customer and technical support lines have call centers in the Philippines (Lee,
According to the Call Center Directory issued by the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) there are 788 call centers in the Philippines that are centralized around twenty major urban centers. Not surprisingly many call centers (over 80%) are located in several business districts within the National Capital Region (NCR). Other major urban centers that house call centers are: Metro Cebu, Metro Davao, Laguna, and Baguio City.

Not only has Global Development driven domestic and international migration that allows Filipino households to improve their living conditions, consume more goods and services, and decrease levels of poverty, but the taxation of remittances has enabled the government to fund national development projects (Guevarra, 2010). The Labor Code of 1974 established a mandatory remittance of foreign exchange earnings, which made it legally mandatory for labor migrants to remit a portion of their income to their household in the Philippines through the Philippine Banking System. Rates of mandatory remittance vary based on occupation but range from fifty to eighty percent of a migrant’s basic salary. Since this act also made the national government the OFW governing body OFWs also must pay placement fees, which are often so high that a significant portion of the income of overseas workers is applied to the debt accrued by taking the overseas position and the remaining income must be used to meet mandatory remittance regulations.

By ensuring that the bulk of remittances are cycled back into the Philippine economy to fund national infrastructure and development programs the government ensures that international labor migration strategies continue to feed the progress of their national development. The economic gains made by leveraging labor migration are so significant that diminishing migration
is highly unlikely, especially as the Philippines becomes more reliant on the economic benefits and countries of the Global North become more reliant on Filipino labor sources.

Gender and International Labor Migration

Like the female-dominated colonial-era migration most OFWs are female, two-thirds of which are working in domestic labor (Guevarra, 2010). The feminization of out-migration from the Philippines started in the 1960’s when healthcare workers began to migrate to America. U.S. programs like the Exchange Visitor Program (EVP) and the 1965 Immigration Act increased the flow of skilled labor from the Philippines to the U.S. between 1956-1969 by increasing the number of work visas available and expediting their processing (Choy, 2003). Choy (2003) explained that, “by the late 1980’s the Philippines became the second largest sending country of migrants to the United States, second only to Mexico.” To this day America is reliant on the insourcing of Filipino nurses to fill their own nursing shortage.

In the 1980’s more Filipina women began to work abroad as unskilled labor because it paid better than professional work as a teacher or nurse in the Philippines. The market for Filipino domestic workers has grown since the 80’s to include countries like Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, the Middle East, and some European countries. Another major reason women are more likely to go abroad is that, when households negotiate their resources to send a family member, women are more likely to be pressured by their families to go abroad because daughters send more financial assistance back to their families and feel higher levels of guilt about the amount of assistance they can send (Chant & McIlwaine, 1995). Since the mid 1980’s almost half of migrating female workers leaving the Philippines have done so as “entertainers,” often prostitutes, many of them following migratory patterns established in the earlier colonial
era such as working in Japan (Hosoda, 1996). There are also many agencies in Metro Manila for mail-order brides that often work as fronts for sending prostitutes to other countries of which Japan is a prominent receiver. In this way the movement of female labor to the Global North reflects the historical movement of women from rural areas to urban centers for employment that often led to them entering the field of prostitution and the informal economy. Figures 1.6 and 1.7 show the employment distinctions between female OFW occupations and male OFW occupations.

Although every nation has made measurable progress in moving towards greater gender equality, we are far from global gender equality. In fact, the ways in which we are reducing other forms of inequality are even exacerbating global gender equality, such as women in countries of the Global North entering the workforce in greater numbers while importing women of the Global South, who leave their own families, to do their domestic labor. We can see in the charts above that, although Filipino women have greater access to employment, they are also more likely to work lower paid service jobs, often in the informal economy unregulated by government labor laws. Throughout the history of the Philippines gender has played an integral role in development and migration processes and the subsequent gender inequalities have become institutionalized into the nation’s development plans. This makes gender an important topic to examine when looking at the topics of development and migration in the Philippines.

The intent of this study and dissertation is to engage with the general topics of social hierarchy, power and dominance; domestic, international, and transnational human mobility; and the impact of gender on the former topics. Specifically, this paper will aim to address the role of global Development programs and processes in perpetuating national hierarchical structures that
significantly drive migration flows from less developed, poorer regions to advanced, prosperous locations both domestically and internationally as well as the impact that continued big-brothering of nations of the Global South by nations and programs of the Global North has on migration flows, domestic programs, and the perpetuation of cultural colonialism. I argue that global Development goals and programs give the superficial appearance of decreasing global inequality and do so in some respects but lack a critical awareness of the ways in which development goals and measurements continue to be rooted in colonial hierarchical power structures that perpetuate, crystalize, and have become dependent upon global inequalities. It should be the responsibility of global organizations and institutions to be aware of the impact their practices and presence has on foreign communities, not just economically, but also in relation to psychological impacts like emotional and mental well-being and their push and pull impact on patterns of human mobility. In addition to examining Development processes through a critical lens of global stratification this study adds to our current understanding of migration by discussing how relationships with foreign organizations of the Global North interact with cultural and development processes of the Global South to impact life planning and strategies, gender roles and identities and consequently migration likelihood and motivations.
CHAPTER 1 FIGURES

Figure 1.1 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

Figure 1.2 OFW Awards Ceremony https://ofwempowerment.com/category/overseas-filipinos/
Figure 1.3 International Forum on Migration, Kuala Lumpur

Figure 1.4 OFWs from 1974-2011 Philippines Statistics Authority
http://nap.psa.gov.ph/beyondthenumbers/2012/10122012fig1.jpg

Figure 1.5 OFW Remittances 1974-2012 Partnership against Poverty Summit
https://www.slideshare.net/Microcredit/building-savings-and-assets-through-remitances
Figure 1.6 Philippines Statistic Authority
https://www.bworldonline.com/by-the-numbers-overseas-filipino-workers/
CHAPTER 2: DEVELOPMENT AND RELIGION

Although religion seems unrelated to current trends in Development and Migration it did play an integral role in these social processes in previous eras. This chapter will begin by discussing the historic role religion played in migration and economically driven modes of global advancement as well as the shifts in religious missiology during movements to post-colonial and post-imperial societies. A brief history of the organization of the LDS church will also be provided including the role that migration played in its success and sustained growth.

The LDS church, being a relatively newly founded religion, did not participate in colonial-era processes, but engagement in cultural diffusion of their religious beliefs to the rest of the world is a central tenant of their belief system. In structuring missionary programs around the world, the LDS church has a significant impact on other nations and particularly nations of the Global South. Not only does LDS missionary work impact religious ideologies and practices, but it also impacts the individual and collective lives of foreign missionaries as they return to their home communities. The second half of this chapter will explain how LDS mission service is different from other religions mission work and how this dynamic uniquely impacts the lives of LDS missionaries during and after their service, the historical growth of the church in the Philippines, and the organizations created in the Philippines by the church to provide resources to Return Missionaries (RM). Finally, connections will be made to the dynamics of gender within LDS mission service and it is important to this study.

ROLE OF RELIGION IN DEVELOPMENT & MIGRATION

Visions of global Christianity have been pursued for thousands of years and were historically used to legitimize wars, the murder of indigenous populations, and colonization.
Bringing civilized, Christian culture to heathenistic, indigenous populations was the justification for colonialism and positioned world powers as saviors of the less advanced societies in the world. During the Age of Discovery (15th to 18th centuries) the Catholic Church initiated major missionary efforts to convert global indigenous populations, which were used as the underpinnings of colonial exploits by world powers such as Spain, France, and Portugal. Colonizing powers established missions, run by Catholic religious orders, in new territories to spread religious propaganda and convert native populations. Using this method, a large majority of the world’s nations had been colonized by European nations by 1914.

Migration played a central role in the colonial-era religious missions, which were reliant on the migration of religious personnel to newly acquired territories. Religious groups themselves also engaged in migration, often forced, as they experienced war, persecution, and even genocide. Over the centuries, religion has also been spread by migrant groups who carry their religion with them to new lands and who often renew or revive their religious commitment to cope with migration-induced alienation. The spread of religion today continues to be dependent, to some extent, on continued migratory processes as evangelical missionaries continue to be sent all over the world to spread the doctrine of Jesus Christ. The impacts of modern development such as increasing transregional human mobility, globalization, and technological advancement also magnify the global transmission of religious ideologies and draw migrants to particular religious-based locations (Hanciles, 2003).

In a post-colonial era, the same methods are not used to attain global Christianity, but the vision has not diminished. The global missionary movement is founded on the belief that missionaries are Christ’s ambassadors to the world. Missiology, the study of religious missions,
states that the central tenets of missionary work are to, “bridge cultures, cross frontiers, and celebrate the marvelous translatability of the gospel of Jesus Christ in an increasingly global context” (Tennet, 2010). Evangelical missions are founded on the deep-held belief that it is every Christian’s moral duty to bring the knowledge and gospel of Jesus Christ to the “four corners of the earth,” meaning that their mission will not be complete until every person on earth has had an opportunity to hear about and accept or reject Jesus Christ as the world’s savior. Some studies indicate that over three billion people, or forty-one percent of the world’s population, have yet to be reached through missionary work, which means it is not likely to wane any time soon (Joshua Project, 2021).

Beginning in the twentieth century religious missions were decoupled from imperial and colonial powers and had to be independently structured and funded through their affiliated religious organizations. There are over 400,000 evangelical missionaries throughout the world, over 100,000 of which are from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints making the LDS church the largest sender of missionaries throughout the world (LDS.org). The most significant difference between LDS missionaries and those from other denominations is the full-time nature of the work. Other Christian religions utilize member volunteers or employed staff from the church to perform missionary work in addition to daily life/work duties. Most LDS missionaries leave their homes to complete an eighteen-to-twenty-four-month, full-time mission. Of the total LDS missionaries 31,000 are part-time service missionaries while over 70,000 are completing full-time mission service.

There are 422 LDS missions throughout the world, 298 of which are outside the U.S. (LDS.org). The church is making focused efforts to assign missionaries to the countries they are
from, but low numbers of missionaries in foreign countries creates a continued need for American Missionary supplementation. This means that Filipino LDS missionaries are typically assigned to missions within the Philippines, though distant from their own province, while American missionaries have a higher likelihood of being assigned to an international mission. In this way LDS mission service is driving migration in two distinct and important ways. Outside of the U.S. it is increasing rates of domestic migration, which is exposing missionaries to regional linguistic and cultural differences within their own countries. It is also increasing predominantly unidirectional international migration by sending American missionaries throughout the world.

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS church) is a relatively newly founded Christian denomination established in 1830 by Joseph Smith after he reportedly saw a vision of God and Jesus Christ during one of his pensive strolls through the woods. This is famously known as The First Vision and the script of its occurrence is used as one of the most powerful missionary tools of conversion. Twenty years after my mission I still have it memorized word for word in Tagalog because I told the story so many times. Joseph, who had gone into the woods to pray about which established church he should join, was advised that the complete and true gospel of Jesus Christ was not present within any of the established churches and had been lost since the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. He was then given the sacred duty of restoring Christ’s full gospel to the four corners of the world, which is why missionary work continues to be such an integral part of the church’s foundation.

Two major migratory flows impacted the formation and continued success of Mormonism as a religion. The initial success of the LDS church was reliant on their mass exodus
from New York after an angry mob assassinated Joseph Smith in 1844 and persecution against members of the church reached an all-time high. The second prophet of the church, Brigham Young, led his followers to Salt Lake City, Utah where they built a temple and major city in the desert valley. Over the next two decades more than 60,000 Mormons made the journey to Salt Lake City (pbs.org). Early LDS missionaries sent all over the world also drove international migration as converts sought to join members of the church in Salt Lake City.

The church’s focus on missionary work has grown membership from six legal members in 1830 to a current global membership of over 16.5 million in over one hundred and fifty countries. In the nascent days of church development missionaries were predominantly male church members who traveled to parts of the world on their own to teach about Joseph Smith’s revelation. In the 1960’s the Prophet, Gordon B. Hinckley, developed a more systematic missionary structure setting the age for men to serve a mission at nineteen, twenty-one for women, if they remained unmarried and had no prospects for marriage. Men would serve for twenty-four months and women for eighteen to return home sooner in pursuit of their “highest calling” of marrying and creating a family. Missionary service was further institutionalized over the next thirty years by creating uniform missionary standards and processes, building Missionary Training Centers (MTCs), and embedding within church culture the belief that it is every young man’s Godly duty to serve a mission.

Serving a mission is an important rite of passage and there is no more prestigious title as a member of the church than RM (Return Missionary). The first question asked of a potential marital partner is if they are an RM, and the second is where they served so that exotic locations where missionaries learned foreign languages can be lauded. It is acceptable for women to have
not served missions, as their highest calling is to marry and create a family, but an LDS woman should always encourage her potential partner to serve a mission if he hasn’t done so prior to their marriage. In fact, it is typical for LDS women to wait two years to marry her boyfriend until he has served his mission. The unique dynamics of how LDS mission work is structured significantly impacts the growth of the church, but also has significant impact on the individuals serving mission.

DYNAMICS OF LDS MISSION SERVICE

Although serving a mission for the LDS church is predominantly a household decision, the daily constraints placed on individuals by missionary life are experienced solely by the missionary. Missionaries agree to leave their homes and report to a missionary training center where they receive two to sixteen weeks (depending on assignment and language requirements) of training in preparation for reporting to their actual mission assignments. The training centers prepare missionaries to teach others about the doctrinal concepts of the LDS church and begin language training for non-English speaking missionaries, but they also function as a space of cultural realignment. On the monthly reporting date for new missionary’s families line the drop off location in front of the MTCs. Missionaries-to-be say emotional goodbyes to their families as they forsake “worldly life” knowing that upon entrance into the training center they are submitting to a spiritual-focused life.

Once inside the training center missionaries check in and are given their first black rectangular name tag to pin to their chest boasting their missionary name; Elder or Sister followed by their last name. First names are not known and are often not shared with anyone until after missionaries return home. With their nametags proudly in place missionaries are then
funneled through a variety of checkpoints meant to ensure immediate adherence to mission lifestyle. One at a time each missionary steps into a room where their physical appearance is examined and comments are written in files about the appropriateness of the missionary’s haircut, dress, luggage contents, etc. Warnings are issued to missionaries not in adherence with the standards and items in violation of mission regulations are confiscated. Missionaries do not listen to the radio, watch television, and are not allowed to call family other than the two allotted days per year. Their life is structured to revolve around prayer, engagement with scriptures and church doctrine, and for them to be a living example of Christ whose life-focus was to live the gospel by example and teach it to the world.

Each mission is made up of an assigned geographical area and has a Mission President, typically a White, Western man who manages the mission from a central “Mission Home” where he chooses several Elders to do administrative work as his “Office Elders”. The mission area is broken down into zones where certain Elders are assigned to be “Zone Leaders” who meet with all the missionaries within their zone’s area once a week to gather work reports and address missionary issues, which he then reports back to the Mission Home. Every missionary, in addition to any of these upper tier assignments, is assigned a companion, who they must always accompany, and a smaller district area within which they do service work and proselyte. The Mission President can make changes to companions or area assignments whenever necessary, but typically missionaries stay with their companion and in their assigned area for seven to twenty-one weeks. Every seven weeks the mission has a transfer day when new missionaries arrive from the MTC, missionaries who have served their full time are taken out of rotation to start their journey home, and other missionaries are moved around the mission to accommodate
any necessary changes. This ensures that missionaries do not get too complacent by staying in one area and allows for the placement of new missionaries with older, native missionaries who can help them learn the culture and language of the mission.

When a new batch of missionaries arrives at the transfer day ceremony, they are seated in front of all the other missionaries who are eagerly hoping they will get to train one of the “greenies,” as they are called. Once all the missionaries have been assigned new companions and/or areas the missionaries return to their district, where the church has already rented and fully furnished missionary apartments. Once you have unpacked your two suitcases you get right to work. A typical missionary day includes waking up at 6 am for scripture study with your companion after which you bathe and have breakfast before heading out to work for the day. Missionaries are required to leave their apartments by 9 am every morning and, other than a lunch break, work until 9 or 10 pm. The day typically consists of a variety of appointments including teaching religious discussions to interested non-LDS members of the community, completing community service hours, visiting less active or inactive church members to encourage renewed church attendance, and visiting active church members to get non-LDS network teaching referrals, as those are the individuals most likely to convert. This makes for a very full and intense missionary workday all of which is typically in the homes of the local population. The intensity of the situation makes LDS missionaries uniquely successful in language and cultural learning.

MISSIONARY WORK IN THE PHILIPPINES

The Philippines was officially opened for missionary work in 1961 by the church’s prophet at the time, Gordon B. Hinckley, and progressed from having one mission to currently
having twenty-one. As the church in the Philippines gained more membership new mission areas were created to ensure the perpetual growth of church membership. Early LDS missionaries assigned to the Philippines were American and did not speak Tagalog, but by 2009 there were 1,638 Filipino missionaries. These numbers doubled in 2012 when the church lowered the age requirement from nineteen to eighteen for men and from twenty-one to nineteen for women. The church continues to grow in the Philippines with a current membership of almost 730,000 indicating that missionary work will likely continue well into the future (LDS.org).

The graph in Figure 2.1 reflects LDS church membership and mission growth from the 1960’s to date. Church membership effectively doubled between 1983 and 1987 and tripled by 1991. This is also the time when we see the largest growth in the number of LDS missions in the Philippines from seven in 1987 to fourteen in 1991. Moving forward from 1991 there is a steady increase in both membership and the number of LDS missions in the Philippines. LDS conversion rates were aided by the nations deep-rooted history in Catholicism brought to the Philippines during Spanish rule in 1565. The similarities in their central Christian-based religious tenets made LDS conversion easier and was predominantly based on LDS claims of being the one true church restored directly by revelation from Jesus Christ himself to their first prophet and founder, Joseph Smith. Although LDS membership in the Philippines has steadily increased over the years Catholicism is still practiced by over 80% of the Philippine population (Miller, 2017).

Although the LDS church has established its own membership in the Philippines who have interwoven religious and national cultures it is important to remember that the general functions of the church and particular functions of missions are still dictated and managed by the church’s central office in Salt Lake City, Utah. Managerial hierarchies in missions tend to reflect
the same type of racial dynamics as are present in the U.S. corporate world with white westerners in decision-making positions of power. The church itself has never had a prophet or member of their highest council who is non-white and/or foreign born and mission presidents are often white westerners assigned to manage areas abroad. Having universal standards eases the burden of managing sixteen million members and a continual rotation of over 70,000 missionaries worldwide (LDS.org), but it also demands an acknowledgment of how White American processes and regulations are impacting non-American members of their organization.

Missionary Housing

Household living standards in the Philippines are diverse, but it is fair to say that the average living standards of the Philippines, as a nation of the global south, certainly fall below the average standards of the U.S., as a nation of the Global North. The LDS church has standards of living that must be maintained for missionaries regardless of where they are in the world and it is the responsibility of each mission president to maintain housing that meets these standards. Missionaries are simply rotated into this pre-established housing as they are moved to different areas within the mission, but typically have the luxury of never needing to think about the quality of housing or managing housing expenses.

For American missionaries housing in the Philippines has a significantly lower standard than what they are accustomed to at home, but they will always have basic amenities such as a propane cooking stove, a refrigerator, and a local domestic worker who performs household tasks on a weekly or biweekly basis. Americans suffer from initial culture shock, adjust as their missions move forward, and return home with a new gratitude for things previously taken for granted like washing machines and heated showers that don’t require you to manually pour the
water over your head. Their missions become a nostalgic badge of honor, particularly within the church where their return missionary (RM) status garners them highly desirable particularly by potential spouses.

Conversely, the amenities provided on the mission are not things that typical Filipino households take for granted. Of the two apartments and one family home I lived in when I went back to the Philippines for a year after my mission, I never had a refrigerator, a bed that was more than a one-inch-thick matt on the floor, and I washed all my clothes by hand, just as everyone else did. The building materials of the homes I stayed in were far inferior to the lovely tiled and painted apartments of the mission. As a previous LDS missionary who left America to spend eighteen months in the Philippines, I have often wondered what it must be like for Filipino missionaries to return home to their daily lives knowing they may never attain mission standards of living again. It stands to reason that missionaries who return to a lower standard of living may often find themselves feeling more relatively deprived (higher levels of RD) and yearning for the lifestyle of the mission. This, coupled with the ease of national access to labor migration, may drive Filipinos to migrate who otherwise might not have felt economically deprived enough to take the risks of pursuing labor in another country.

Social Capital Gained on the Mission

In addition to fluctuating feelings of RD, there are also specific forms of social capital that are increased on the mission due to exposure to Western-based practices. For example, English language proficiency and an extended understanding of how to interact with and meet the needs of western-based companies and managers. Generally, the English-centric nature of the LDS church in the Philippines causes members to be exposed to the English language more than
the average Filipino. Although the church has maintained an established presence in the country since the 1960’s written religious materials did not begin to be translated into Tagalog until the end of the 20th century when the Book of Mormon, a companion scripture to the Bible, was translated to Tagalog. Throughout the beginning of the 21st century there was a push by the church to translate other resources such as hymnals and children’s religious books into Tagalog, but for most members of the church exposure to English, especially in relation to western missionaries, has featured prominently in their religious experiences.

Religious materials and doctrinal lessons taught by missionaries have been translated into Tagalog and missionaries are expected to teach in the native language, but internal mission practices are English-centric. Each mission has a mission president, as previously mentioned, who is typically a white American. The mission president chooses a set of missionaries to be his personal assistants “assistant to the president” (APs) and a set of missionaries to be office elders who handle all the bureaucratic processes of the mission. This inner circle of missionaries, in addition to several older married couple missionaries, and the mission president’s wife make up the leadership core of the mission.

Assistant to the Mission President and office elders are predominantly Americans or Filipinos with exemplary English because of their close daily interactions with the mission presidents and older, couple missionaries. Couple missionaries and mission presidents are not required to learn the language and are often not in daily immersive contact with the population in ways that would enable them to. Every missionary is required to send weekly written reports in English to the mission office for the president to read and is required to meet one on one with the mission president every couple months. Missionaries are also required to attend weekly district
meetings and bi-monthly zone meetings, which are the most micro missionary gatherings. District and zone meetings might be held in Tagalog, English, or a combination of both known as Taglish. Meeting language is often dependent upon the nationality of district and zone leaders, which have a higher likelihood of being Filipino, but remain predominantly American. The larger the missionary gatherings, such as in the case of zone and mission conferences, the more likely it is that English will dominate social interactions except for the occasional poorly spoken Tagalog jokes used by American leadership. The daily duties of missionaries may predominantly expose them to Tagalog, but the overarching bureaucratic processes require a basic ability to communicate in English and expose missionaries to American culture and language.

Filipino exposure to American culture is especially relevant for missionaries who were partnered with American missionaries. Missionaries operate in pairs living with and planning all their activities with their assigned companion until the mission president rotates one or both to different parts of the mission where they receive a new companion. Mission rules dictate that you must be always with your companion, which ensures high levels of interaction between the pairs. Mission presidents predominantly partner foreign missionaries with Filipinos to help them adjust to the culture and learn the language, but this also conversely exposes Filipinos to English culture and language daily. This daily exposure coupled with larger western-centric mission processes adhered to for the length of a mission leaves RMS much more proficient in the English language and adept at American cultural practices.

Organizations and business are often familiar with LDS missionaries who have a reputation for being hard working and proficient English speakers. They are often highly sought after by certain employers, such as international marketing agencies and call centers, but
employment in these industries tends to require individuals to relocate to urban centers. There are several motivating factors that draw RMs to urban centers for employment opportunities and these factors can be directly related back to the theory of RD. If RM's return home after their mission and experience higher levels of RD, but also have newly acquired social capital that makes the higher standards seem attainable they may be motivated to relocate to urban centers where they can seek employment that decreases their feelings of relative deprivation.

LDS Self-Reliance Centers (SRCs) providing employment resource services and entrepreneurial training centers are in urban centers such as Davao, Bacolod City, Cebu, and Metro Manila drawing RMs to urban centers to gain initial access to resources. The church entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Philippine Department of Labor and Employment, which provides SRCs access to national employment databases and includes their centers as resources for national employers to contact directly when looking to hire personnel in different areas (Newsroom, 2017). SRCs provide education and training in relation to job skills, entrepreneurial development, family budget and personal financial management as well as resume assistance and job location resources. Members of the church also have online access to SRC resources via ldsjobs.org where they can create a profile with their church membership information and access local jobs, tips on self-employment, and other education resources. SRC services are available to all church members, but RMs are often referred to these centers and can use their elevated social status as an RM to maximize resources in ways that typical members cannot (TCJCLDS).

Self-reliance centers fall under a broader church program called the Perpetual Education Fund (PEF), which was founded in the Philippines in 2001 and offers resources like loan
programs in addition to helping individuals and households become self-reliant. Loans can be used to pay for technical, vocational, or professional education; educational resources such as books and supplies; and the cost of obtaining a license or certificate that will improve employment opportunities. Though RMs are the first listed as those eligible for accessing PEF resources they are not overtly given precedence. The requirements for loans include good standing within the church, possession of an active temple recommend, and being a full tithe payer meaning you pay 10% of all your income to the church (TCJCLDS). Filipino members of the church are never more likely to meet all these requirements than when they first return home from their missions. Maintaining a temple recommend and paying a full tithe become increasingly difficult when RMs return to normal daily life outside the mission and active church participation for the Philippines in particular is known to decrease after the mission, especially when employment and financial situations conflict with church responsibilities.

One of the resources specifically created to cater to RM poverty is entrepreneurial education offered through the Academy for Creating Enterprise (ACE). The church’s SRC program partnered with ACE, a private, non-profit organization headquartered in Provo, Utah, to provide entrepreneurial education to RMs. ACE focuses on helping people in developing countries, “launch and grow successful businesses that lift families out of poverty and put them firmly on the path to self-reliance.” They have over 220 chapters in Mexico, Peru, and the Philippines. There are 117 chapters of Ace throughout the Philippines all run and managed by native Filipino staff who are alumni of the program. The program focuses on micro-enterprise education for individuals and households who live in areas with limited employment opportunities. It teaches them how to implement micro-business methods to increase household
levels of self-reliance. Resources include five days of classroom training accompanied by a certificate of completion from Brigham Young University Hawaii, one week of business observation and research, one week of business analysis and personal preparation, and internships and mentorship programs (ACE, 2017).

The discussion of the three major church resources above does not provide an exhaustive list of all the factors that impact RM migration decisions, but it does provide context for understanding how RMs unique access to resources provides them with a broader range of economic choices than the average Filipino. Access to training, education, language skills, and employment services can push RMs to urban centers within the Philippines to access better jobs and higher pay. Conversely programs like ACE may provide alternative entrepreneurial options and extended RM networks of support in places where jobs are scarce allowing individuals to stay in economically depressed areas while still being self-reliant.

*Gender Contexts of Missions in the Philippines*

The gendered nature of Filipino migration has already been laid out, but it is important to think about how that interacts with the gendered nature of mission service. LDS doctrine specifies that, while it is every young man’s religious duty to serve a mission, a woman’s highest calling is to marry and be a mother. This is the reason that men could go on missions at the age of nineteen, but women had to wait until they were twenty-one. If women are not married and have no pending marriage proposals by the age of twenty-one, they could then choose to serve a mission. Even with the recent age changes in mission requirements we see that women still must wait a year longer to be eligible to serve a mission. Mission length is also different with men serving for two years and women serving for eighteen months, again with the aim that women
should return home and build a family. For these obvious reasons there are far fewer sister missionaries than Elders.

Once on the mission elders and sisters adhere to the same standards and perform the same levels of work in their respective areas. However, gendered bureaucratic processes do exist at the mission level. Mission presidents are often very particular about what areas they assign sisters to, the quality of housing in those areas, and how far they are from the central mission offices to ensure their safety. It was a common dialogue among Elders to complain about how nice sisters’ apartments were in comparison to their own. The apartments still had the same basic amenities, but the overall condition, upkeep, and location of the elder’s apartments seemed to be consistently lower than what I experienced. For instance, sister’s apartments typically have a gated entrance and live in newer built homes. In general, Filipino missionaries are living higher than average standards on the mission that can cause them to have increased feelings of RD when they return home, but if sister missionaries are experiencing an even higher standard, they may also experience higher levels of RD and increased likelihood to migrate.

Migration decision making processes may be further complicated by taking specific cultural factors into account such as: how aging women are viewed in the LDS church and the gendered ability of Filipina women to utilize mission networks to find western spouses. LDS doctrine encourages members of the church to marry within their religion, but how does the gendered age dynamic impact marriage for men and women differently. According to the “marriage gradient” we know that men prefer to marry down in age and social class etc. (Veevers, 1988). If LDS men go on their missions at the age of 18 and serve for two years, they are coming home at the age of 20 as highly desirable RMs within the LDS community and
typically marry quickly. Women who serve missions, now at the age of nineteen but previously at a two-year gap, are going to be the women who were not selected for marriage by previous RM groups. If they go on a mission for eighteen months, they will return home almost twenty-one years old and over-age for newly returning RM groups. Additionally, RM status does not hold the same prestige for women as it does for men and, in the Philippines; these women are often referred to as “tumatandang dalaga” meaning an aging bachelorette.

The gendered positions female RMs find themselves in may be a highly motivating situation for them to turn to options such as working abroad or entertaining international romances. Despite gendered age differences western missionaries tend to find Filipina’s exotic and beautiful and many American RMs return to the Philippines to marry Filipina RMs. Online LDS dating websites have made international marriages increasingly accessible for Filipinos in general, but particularly for Filipino women who are seen as highly desirable. Additionally, some women seek employment abroad for reasons previously discussed, but end up marrying men they meet while abroad and often don’t return to reside in the Philippines. These varying gender experiences necessitate a deeper understanding of how LDS mission experiences impact Filipino men and women differently and drive migration decisions in different ways.

SUMMARY

Societal shifts away from colonialism and imperialism have ejected religious institutions from the once central role they played in processes of Development and Migration. These shifts have not however diminished the evangelical missionary efforts aimed at world exposure and conversion or the tertiary impacts they have on foreign communities. Although missionary work is continued by many Christian denominations it is important to understand how the unique
missionary method of the LDS church and their Western-based roots impact foreign missionaries, especially those from the Global South. These findings will be discussed in chapters four and five after the next chapter’s presentation of the research methods used in this study.
CHAPTER 2 FIGURE

Figure 2.1 The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Newsroom
https://newsroom.churchofjesuschrist.org/facts-and-statistics

LDS Presence in the Philippines

LDS Church Membership

Year

Number of LDS Missions in Philippines

-25
-20
-15
-10
-5
0
10
15
20
25
0
10,000
20,000
30,000
40,000
50,000
60,000
70,000
80,000


church membership
missions
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODS

As described in Chapter one the purpose of this study is to specifically identify the effects of serving an LDS mission on post-mission migration decisions (Missions and Migration) and to generally examine the dynamics between individual and household participation in migration decisions (Households and Migration). The research that informs this study was completed over a period of 12 months, from January through December of 2018. Online data collection (interviews) was conducted from January to June and provided a critical base for fieldwork, which was completed in the Philippines from October to December of 2018.

This study utilized ethnographic mixed methods including Survey, Life History Calendars (LHC), in-depth interviews (online and in the Philippines), household focus groups in the Philippines, and field observations. Ethnographic methods allowed for the nuanced study of complex migration topics among three groups of participants; Return Missionaries (RMs) for the LDS church, The RM’s households in the Philippines (RMH), and non-LDS households in the Philippines (FMH). Utilization of ethnography also allowed for necessary adjustments to be made based on complex and changing variables that occurred during fieldwork, such as managing the community-based nature of household interviews in the field. The effectiveness of interviews as a tool for studying cultural dynamics (Pugh, 2013 & 2014) and understanding how people see and understand the world around them and the social processes they participate in (Carr et al., 2018) made this a necessary methodological approach. The utilization of in-depth interviews supports the focus of this study in obtaining detailed life stories and perspectives from both individuals and households that articulate the way participants understand their migration decision-making processes and the extent of their own involvement in them. It also enables a comparison and contrast of the individual and household perspectives on their level of involvement in and support of the process.

My decision to conduct this research in the Philippines was based on my years of previous experience living in the Philippines in diverse social roles and the cultural competencies
and fluency in the local language that these experiences afforded me. I was an LDS missionary myself in the Philippines for fourteen months (2002-2004) and returned after my mission to live in the Philippines for one year (2005-2006) as the spouse of a Filipino national living with his immediate family in their province. My fluency in Tagalog and Filipino cultural competencies allowed me to strike an insider/outsider balance making in-depth interviews in Filipino homes significantly effective. Additionally, the Philippines has relatively high global migration rates (Philippines Statistics Authority) and is one of the top sending nations of labor migrants throughout the world (Choy, 2003), which makes this an ideal country to examine the dynamics of migration decisions and increases the generalizability of the study’s findings.

This chapter covers: researcher positionality and its impact on the development of the research questions, the major research methodologies and rationale for their use, and the strengths and limitations of the chosen methods. This study has three major bodies of research participants; former LDS missionaries who were interviewed online, the LDS missionary’s household in the Philippines, and non-LDS Filipino households living in the same communities as the RM’s households. RM and non-LDS Filipino households were interviewed face to face in the Philippines. In-depth, semi structured interviews and focus groups were implemented with both groups, but I will discuss each separately to delineate the nuanced methods of some households being correlated to RM interviews while others are not. The methods of used for LDS households will be discussed first as it is the most nuanced requiring more detailed methods of recruitment and analysis after which non-LDS Filipino Household methods will be addressed.

RESEARCHER POSITIONALITY

From October 2002 through March 2004, I served as a missionary for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in the San Pablo, Philippine’s mission. The San Pablo mission covers a 100-mile region south of Metro Manila including the two major outlining islands of Marinduque and Mindoro. Missionaries are randomly rotated throughout this region every six to
twelve weeks. The daily role of LDS missionaries is to be out in the local community visiting “less-active” members of the church to encourage increased religious participation, meeting with active members for weekly activities, obtaining referrals to families they can teach the principles of the church to with the end purpose of conversion, and going door to door to find families to teach.

When I arrived in the Philippines I had very limited knowledge of the Tagalog language and Filipino culture but spending ten to fourteen hours daily within the local community, where Tagalog was the predominant method of communication, provided the immersion necessary for rapid learning. Intense immersion in the language and culture, the drive to understand the words accompanied by children’s pointing fingers and laughter as I passed on the street, and the desire to express my own jokester personality pushed me to learn the language to a functional level within three months. By the time I returned home the following year I tested fluent in reading, writing, and speaking at my undergraduate university. Returning to the Philippines in 2005, quite confident in my language and cultural understandings I soon realized that my Tagalog and cultural awareness had been hampered by my narrow experiences of being an American missionary in the Philippines. Living with my Filipino partner’s family in the province necessitated a quick expansion of my household and daily vocabulary and cultural awareness to participate in and discuss basic life skills like doing laundry by hand, burning trash, and catching, harvesting, and preparing meals.

The skills gained by both experiences afforded me great advantages in the field, especially in conducting interviews. Filipinos are very private and selective about who they share personal information with due to their concerns for public appearance and the prevalence of gossip in local communities. Filipino households were initially quite standoffish about interacting with me, but my cultural and language efficiencies quickly broke down these barriers when I was in their homes. In fact, by the end of the interviews participants were demanding
pictures be taken with the whole family and that we be connected via social media so we could continue to keep in touch. This opening up also occurred for online interviews but was not as pronounced as when I was in the Philippines visiting with families in their own homes.

My time as an LDS missionary is what motivated my original research question: How does serving an LDS mission impact post-mission migration decisions. A common discussion among American missionaries was how sorry we felt for Filipino missionaries returning home to their relatively lower standards of living. The sense of relief and excitement we felt at returning to our lives of relative luxury and convenience was juxtaposed by our pity for Filipinos who would return to homes we would never want to live in, and the very limited financial and occupational opportunities present in the Philippines. This made me question how RM perspective of their household’s economic position and relative deprivation would shift after living at generally higher standards on their missions. The initial hypothesis stated that if standard of living expectations had increased due to mission experiences RMs may be more likely to migrate to meet their new expectations and standards. Using both survey data and qualitative methods is the most effective way to gain a comparative measure of feelings of RD before during and after the completion of a mission accompanied by the necessary in-depth stories that paint the full and complex picture of how these feelings motivated post-mission migratory decisions.

This study would be remiss in excluding the impact RM households have on RM post-mission migration decision as it is well established in literature that migration is often planned and strategized by entire households including nuclear and extended family. Conducting interviews with RM households allowed this study to capture parental/household perspectives on changes in the RMs expectations and desires before, during, and after the mission. Although Filipino missionaries tend to serve missions at older ages than American missionaries, they still tend to be quite young, in their early twenties, when they return from their missions. Their age
alone, but also the stressful and often chaotic transitional period of returning home and re-entering society, family, and the workforce can limit the RMs perspective and memories of what happened during that period. Additionally, children are often not privy to a holistic picture of household financial positions. For these reasons RMH interviews are critical to fully answering the studies micro-level research question. In the original research design an additional set of household interviews with non-LDS Filipinos were designed to operate as a control group that would allow the study to identify the variances in the LDS households from the typical Filipino household with no LDS affiliation, but during fieldwork this became problematic.

Early in fieldwork two major issues with household interviews were identified which led to the expansion from the specific research question to the more general question. The first, major issue was in making assumptions that the households of RM’s would also be members of the church. In the United States most missionaries come from households who are also all members of the church, and likely have been for generations, especially since missions are paid for by the parents and family of the American missionary. Conversion to the church and serving a mission in the Philippines is a very different process and often individuals are converted to the church as opposed to the generational membership that is prevalent in the U.S. The majority of RMHs interviewed for this study were not members of the LDS church and in some cases were partial member households. Only five RMHs were full-member, multigenerational households like the typical LDS household in the U.S. This fact alone made it impossible to use the non-LDS household interviews as a control group.

The second major issue with household interviews was that the more interviews I completed the more I learned that I was getting the same general stories from all Filipino households. I was hearing surprising stories about household members making decisions to migrate on their own regardless of their family’s desires. Often individuals were not even informing their household members of their decisions to migrate until they contacted them from
their new positions in another country with the news. Given these two major challenges early in the study I used Filipino household interviews to flesh out the more general research question that arose of looking at how individual and household dynamics in migration decision making processes may be shifting.

METHODOLOGY

RETURN MISSIONARIES

The micro-level research question: how serving an LDS mission impacts post-mission migration decisions, necessitated a methodology that would capture both RMs who were residing in the Philippines and those living and working in diverse locations around the world. Conducting online interviews using regionally available social media platforms including Skype, imo, Watsap, WeChat, BOTIM, and Facebook Messenger, was the most effective and consistent method for capturing data on the initial sample group. Aside from RMs residing in Middle Eastern countries Facebook was the most consistent and accessible platform and thus the most often used. Starting with initial online interviews allowed me to streamline fieldwork data collection by planning RM household interviews in advance of my arrival in the Philippines. The completion of RM interviews prior to traveling to the Philippines allowed me to obtain household consent for participation in the study before arrival and maximize regional travel, especially since participants were spread throughout the entire country.

Initial recruitment of RMs was done solely via Facebook (FB) where I created an independent business page for my research project. Research information and recruitment posts were done in both English and Tagalog. Most communication with potential participants via FB messenger was done in Tagalog per the comfort level of individuals. The page contained a brief description of the studies goals and objectives, a brief bio of the researcher, and a calendar of available interview dates. I posted a link to the research page with a brief call for participants, in English with a Tagalog translation, to LDS missionary related group pages. This included
general Filipino Missionary pages, as well as specific pages for each regional mission in the Philippines. All messages from potential participants were received via the research pages instant messenger where a standardized response message was sent verifying the individual’s qualifications and understanding of what participation included (see Appendix A).

Screening processes (see Appendix B for screening email) allowed me to ensure a balanced distribution of female/male participants and RM participants who chose to stay in their home provinces, migrate within the Philippines, or migrate outside of the country after completion of their mission. Most importantly, the process enabled me to minimize the bias that comes with using a convenience sample by ensuring I did not interview anyone that was a first or second level social contact from my own missionary days in the Philippines. A minimal number (3) of potential participants were turned away based on the initial screening with a message explaining that their demographics were outside of the scope of what the study was looking for, thanking them for their willingness to participate, and asking them to refer any RM contacts that met the list of attached demographics. No additional participants were obtained via this method.

A total of forty-five RM’s were interviewed (interview protocol in Appendix E); twenty-three males and twenty-two females ranging from twenty-six to forty-nine years of age. Most participants had some college or a four-year degree and there was an even representation of households with a variety of annual income levels ranging from $800 to over $5,000 (Philippine Pesos converted to US Dollars). Participant’s demographics are presented in Table 3.1. The non-applicable (NA) category for annual income represents RMs whose entire household resided outside of the Philippines and therefore their household income was not comparable to other RMs in the study.

After the initial exchange of messages on the research Facebook page an interview was scheduled with RM’s at a date and time that worked for them. An initial message was sent to them confirming the scheduled interview time and sending them a link to an online survey to be
completed prior to their interview. The survey included important demographic questions, consent forms, and relative deprivation (see Appendix C) scales to gauge their perceived change in RD before, during, and after their missions and its connections to their migration decisions. Both the online survey and interview questions were pretested with RMs from the researchers first level contacts. This was highly beneficial in finding errors and contextual issues within the Tagalog subtitles provided on the survey questions, which were corrected before the study went live.

To overcome recall bias for participants who may have served missions several years ago and prime them for the chronological nature of the interview each interview was started with the completion of a Life History Calendar (LHC) of key events such as receiving their mission assignment, returning home, any geographical moves, marriage, birth of children, divorce etc. up to their current location and situation (see Appendix D). The researcher asked questions about key life events and their correlating dates while writing participant responses on a paper timeline. Upon completion all events and dates were reviewed for accuracy with the participant and used as a reference base for topics that arose during the semi-structured interviews. The interview was formatted into three subcategories: before, during, and after their missions. Although, the participant was open to discuss events in any order the research provided key guiding questions and referred to the LHC to put discussed events within their chronological position. Upon completion of interviews permission to meet with the RM’s family/household in the Philippines was verified and all necessary contact information was obtained.

FILIPINO HOUSEHOLDS

Contact information for RM households in the Philippines was initially obtained via the online survey and verified at the beginning of each interview as well as the willingness of their household to participate in an interview. RM Households (RMH) were contacted immediately upon completion of RM interviews via their preferred social media to establish initial contact and
directly verify their willingness to participate in the study. This allowed me to begin building some rapport with RMHs prior to in-person visits and ensure efficiency of fieldwork travel based on their regions of residence. Several months prior to arrival in the field the researcher confirmed travel and interview time frames and confirmed RMHs willingness to participate in the study. On the scheduled interview day, the researcher traveled to each RM’s home and conducted face-to-face interviews or focus groups, based on dynamic of households, (interview protocol in Appendix E) with their spouses and/or immediate family members. As mentioned above, in RM demographics, there were four RM participants whose primary household were located outside of the Philippines, two of which had no family at all residing in the Philippines. For the latter RMHs online interviews were conducted with their parents residing in Oregon and Dubai. For the former households, online interviews were conducted with their spouses who resided abroad with the RM, but an additional interview/focus group was conducted with their extended family in the Philippines who resided with them at some point after their mission.

This study did not specify a region of focus within the Philippines so once RM interviews were completed a map was drawn up with the location of RM households in the Philippines. Locations ranged from the Northern tip of the main island down to the southern Mindanao region (see Figure 3.1). To streamline fieldwork RMH interviews were grouped by province around a central location throughout which the researcher could rotate. Most participants resided in or near the metro Manila region. This allowed the researcher to have a residence near Manila from which she scheduled day trips by neighborhoods. Moving further from the Metro Manila area required greater travel between participant locations at which point the researcher abandoned a central location and methodically traveled through the northern provinces for two weeks and the southern provinces for three weeks. The regions covered in this study include National Capital Region (NCR), Rizal, & Cavite (26% of participants); Laguna/Batangas (21%); Central Luzon (13%); Cagayan Valley (8%); Ilocos Region (12%); Visayas (10%); and Mindinao, Caraga, and
Davao (10%). A total of ninety-one household interviews were completed including forty-one RM/LDS households and forty non-LDS households. In each marked location one RM household and 1-2 non-LDS households were interviewed apart from Palawan and Mindoro, which were unreachable due to weather and timing of fieldwork.

During the first interviews it became evident that the social aspects of Filipino culture would not allow for controlled one on one interviews. Not only did the interviews become interactive household events, but often escalated into community gatherings as people called over neighbors and other extended family members. This resulted in a focus group type atmosphere structured around group conversation. The researcher supplied key questions, points of conversation, and follow up questions, but mostly allowed the participants to have open discussion. Being aware of this community dynamic I attempted to obtain as much detailed information from the spouse or parent, who was central to events in the RM’s life, as possible at the beginning of our interviews before other household and community members joined. The benefit to the development of group discussions in RMHs was the ability to obtain multiple perspectives on how participation in an LDS missions impacted the RM, their decisions, and other members of the family. It also allowed for unanticipated data collection on other members of the family who may have also served missions and or made migration decisions allowing for a greater comparison of variables. For non-LDS households group discussions provided migration information on extended family and community networks as well as a wider array of receiving destination information for migration within the local communities.

NON-LDS FILIPINO HOUSEHOLDS

Upon completion of RMH interviews the researcher asked the RM household if they knew anyone who lived in their area who was not LDS that would be willing to talk about their families with the researcher. The researcher was guided to neighboring houses and introduced. After brief introductions the study was explained to the family and consent for their participation
was obtained. These household interviews were a bit more difficult to manage as they were constantly calling other neighbors or friends, they knew had gone abroad, to join the discussion. They typically became quite a community event. Again, this format allowed for the gathering of a wider array of information about household migration decision-making processes applicable to the general research question. On occasion when RM households were unable to refer non-LDS households the researcher’s assistant would chat with other neighbors to find someone near the RM household who would be willing to participate in a brief interview. These typically proceeded, as the others, into community discussions.

A total of forty-one RM household interviews and 40 non-LDS household interviews were completed in the Philippines due to weather, travel, or timing issues in the field that caused several families to be inaccessible. Because RMH interviews were conducted by geographical location two southern regions were not reached during fieldwork and neither RM nor non-LDS household interviews were conducted in those areas. Due to the large representation of regions throughout the Philippines this should not cause significant loss in research findings.

DATA ANALYSIS

RETURN MISSIONARIES

Qualtrics surveys

The online survey completed by RMs prior to the interviews contained basic demographic questions such as gender, household income, and education attainment; measurements of RD perceptions and satisfaction; and mission demographics such as years of service and mission location.

RD scale variables measured outcomes before and during their mission, one year after completion of their mission, and present time of the interview. With a variance of timeframes at which participants served missions the inclusion of a measurement for the first year after their mission and present time allows for capture of changes for participants who have been home for
longer periods of time. RD scale outcomes include perceived RD, changes in RD, and level of RM contentment with expressed levels of RD. Perceived RD was captured by asking how the economic situation of the participant’s household compared to other households in their local community while providing a Likert Scale ranging from much worse off to much better off. The variables included the RMs perception of their household’s status (PRM), their parents/household’s perception (PRMH), and the community’s perception (PCOMM). To capture changes over time Perceived RD questions were asked in relation to each time frame; Before Mission (BM), During Mission (DM), One Year After mission (1M), Present (P*).

Contentment (CRD) with perceived levels of RD was only measured for the RM but included the same time frames. This data was captured by asking how content the participant was with their economic situation during each time frame and answered using a Likert Scale ranging from extremely unhappy to extremely happy.

The complete list of RD variables coded are as follows: RM’s perception of RD before the mission (PRMBM), RM’s perception of RD during their mission (PRMDM), RM’s perception of RD in the first year after their mission (PRM1M), RM’s perception of RD at the time of the interview (PRM P*); RM household’s perception of RD before the mission (PRMHB), RM household’s perception of RD during the mission (PRMHDM), RM household’s perception of RD the first year after the mission (PRMH1M), RM household’s perception of RD at time of interview (PRMH P*); RM community’s perception of RM household’s RD before the mission (PCOMMB), RM community’s perception of RM household’s RD during the mission (PCOMMDM), RM community’s perception of RM household’s RD in year after mission (PCOMM1M), RM community’s perception of RM household’s RD during time of interview (PCOMM P*); RM contentment with perceived RD before mission (CRDBM), RM contentment with perceived RD during mission (CRDDDM), RM
contentment with perceived RD in first year after mission (CRD1M), RM contentment with perceived RD at time of interview (CRDP).

Capturing these variables provides a strong basis for understanding each RM’s household economic situation and perceived levels of RD in relation to their experiences before, during, and after the mission and any changes that may have occurred since completion of their mission and/or migration. Analysis of these variables in conjunction with the Life History Calendar and interview data allowed isolation of affect RD had on the RMs post-mission life decisions. RD were analyzed in conjunction with demographic survey data using crosstab multivariate analysis. Life history calendar

Capturing post-mission RM migration decisions was done using the LHC images, which allowed me to capture key life events as well as any domestic or international migrations. LHCs included key life events beginning from the year prior to serving a mission and included: where RMs resided, migratory decisions and motivations, marriages and birth of children, employment changes, and utilization of church and social resources after their missions. The data obtained from LHCs was central to understanding overarching RM migration trends in relation to the general Filipino population and were quantified and manually entered into Qualtrics using the following variables: Migratory Decisions (MigDec), Frequency of Migration (MigFreq), Migration Motivation (MigMot), and Serial Migration Patterns (SerMig).

MigDec included four categories; Remained in Province (RP), Migrated Domestically (MD), Migrated Abroad (MA), and Migrated both Domestically and Abroad (MDMA) with migration being defined as leaving what participants considered their home province for six months or more or with the intent of not returning for six months or more. MigFreq is a simple interval variable that adds the total number of migratory moves made after an RM returned to their home province upon mission completion and ranges from zero to five. MigMot included five categories: Education, Marriage, Church Resources, Social Networking, and Employment.

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Each MigFreq was assigned one or more MigMot based on the complexity of migration reasons expressed during the LHC.

The standard definition of serial migration (two or more migratory moves) was used for the SerMig variable, which captured the complex pathways of migratory patterns. RMs who migrated more than once were assigned a string of MigDec codes related to each chronological move. For example, if an RM migrated abroad then returned home and worked in Manila before returning to another assignment abroad SerMig coding would be MA-MD-MA. This variable not only allowed for a more complex understanding of RM migratory patterns, but also provided a platform from which to examine SerMig in relation to MigMot, especially in relation to mission-induced motivations. LHC variables were analyzed independently and in conjunction with the demographic survey data and RD scales using crosstab multivariate analysis.

Interviews

All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed/translated at a later date. Interviews were conducted in the language participants felt most comfortable with, which was mostly Tagalog although several were in English and Vasayan (a southern dialect). Field notes were audio recorded following each day of interviewing and transcribed at a later date. All interview and field note transcriptions were saved as a word document and entered into Atlas.ti for data analysis at a later date. For ease of analysis and integration of survey and LHC data a header was created at the top of each RM transcript that included: basic demographic and RD information from the survey and data for each of the four LHC variables entered into Qualtrics. An image of each paper LHC was also uploaded to the end of each associated transcript in order to revisit the original papers if necessary.

Pseudonyms were assigned for each participant upon scheduling of their interview, which were the only names written on the LHCs and/or transcripts. Family pseudonyms assigned
during RM interviews were also assigned to the affiliated RM household interviewed in the Philippines for ease of connection during data analysis.

FILIPINO HOUSEHOLDS

RM household interviews were analyzed from two different perspectives, in conjunction with the associated RM interview and in comparison, with the non-LDS Filipino household interviews. To analyze them with the correlated RM interview the RMH transcript was added to the bottom of the RM transcript for coding of the affect mission service had on post-mission migration decisions. RMH transcripts were also coded and analyzed individually with the transcripts of the non-LDS Filipino households to examine general migration trends. Coding and analyses of household interviews in conjunction with the affiliated RM interview allowed for the capture of perceptual, memory, and ideological differences between the individual and household members as well as among the varying households. This was particularly important in fleshing out the impact of full, partial, or non-membership affiliation with the LDS church and its impact.

A total of ninety-one (N=91) Filipino households were interviewed with forty-one being RM households (RMHs) and the remaining forty being Filipino households unaffiliated with the LDS church (PIH). In order to fully examine the variable of membership in the LDS church each RMH was placed into the most appropriate category; Full Member Household (FMH), Partial Member Household (PMH), or Non-Member Household (NMH). FMH was defined as a head of household who identified all members of their immediate household to be baptized members of the church regardless of current levels of church participation. PMH was defined as a head of household who identified only some members of their immediate household to be baptized members of the church. Finally, NMH was defined as the head of household who identified none of their immediate household members to be baptized members of the church except their RM child interviewed previously for the study. These categories were initially intended to create a
comparison between LDS and non-LDS households, but the lack of significant distinction in migration stories and the diversity among church membership in RM households made the categories unnecessary for analysis of the larger research question about individual and family dynamics in migration decisions.

CODING

The two research questions require data to be handled as two distinct data sets, therefore RM interviews and RM household interviews were coded and analyzed as one data set to examine the micro-level research question. All household interviews (LDS and non-LDS) done in the Philippines were coded and analyzed together, as one data set, in order to address the larger research question of overall individual and household dynamics in migration-decision-making processes. Although distinctions between data sets were made the process of coding and analysis followed the same general procedures.

Data coding and analysis was instigated by a basic coding and analysis of my field notes, which allowed me to identify broad recurring themes to be used as initial coding categories. Interview transcripts were reviewed in Atlas.ti and coded using the broad themes while more specific coding was added as necessary. All transcripts were reviewed once using the themes obtained from my field notes after which auto coding was utilized to identify key terms and topics that appeared in interviews such as perseverance, gratitude, and appreciation. The emergent themes were then compared with the previous codes to ensure that prevalent topics were not missed by field note themes. The titles of the major chapters of my dissertation emerged organically through this process and the subcategory coding functioned as an outline for the contents of each chapter. This process allowed me to minimize my own subjectivity by allowing the quantity and breadth of discussion provided by participants on each topic to guide the salience topics have in this paper.
VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

To ensure validity, reliability, and maximize researcher subjectivity in online interviews test runs were conducted. Ten Filipino RMs known to the researcher completed the online survey before it went live to test for translation and contextual issues. Upon completion of each test survey the RM and researcher discussed any concerns and corrections to the survey were made. Five sample online interviews were also completed with a random selection of the RMs that tested the online survey to identify issues with the LHC and interview process. Issues that could be addressed prior to the study going live, such as changes in wording or translations to Tagalog, were made while any other issues were noted for the researcher to be aware of as live interviews progressed.

During household interviews, their unexpected shift into group conversations provided an increased level of validity in that it decreased the level of guidance, and thus potential subjectivity, given directly by the researcher. I was able to gain a greater level of neutrality by spending more time observing the households and community members discuss the key research questions amongst each other. This method also allowed for a simultaneous triangulation of data from multiple sources that provides a greater variance in perspectives on migration issues within and between local households and communities. Lastly, validity is bolstered for both online and household interviews by the early levels of saturation reached during data collection (discussed further in results). This is enhanced further by the directly contradictory nature of the findings to the researcher’s initial hypothesis demonstrating the effectiveness of the researcher and methods of this study in creating increased objectivity.

LIMITATIONS

The main limitations of this study are embedded in the complex positionality of the researcher. Although Filipino households granted the researcher honorary inclusion this does not remove the limitations of fully understanding the culture surrounding day to day Filipino life,
family structures, and language/dialect nuances. The researcher’s also lacks the ability to neutralize her position as a white, American, single woman who is viewed through a very specific lens of wealth, privilege, and desirable beauty while in the Philippines. Although this increases a household’s desire to interact and develop a relationship with an esteemed foreigner it may also increase their likelihood to provide the answers, they think the researcher wants to receive.

The number and variety of interviews conducted may also pose issues in providing an accurate image of the complexity of variables involved in Filipino migration decisions. Some regions in the Philippines had significantly fewer participants than others and a more robust examination of the diverse regions will allow for a greater comparison of the nation as a whole. A larger and more diverse sample size will allow for a more accurate fleshing out of dynamics such as generational differences and receiving nation regions (i.e. the middle east compared to Asia) on the impact of individual and/or household migration decisions.

In terms of RM interviews, there was a wide array of timeframes from which participants had returned from the mission. Some participants had only been home from their mission for several months and were struggling with reintegrating into workforce and family life. These participants were not a very good fit for this study as they were in the process of making the types of decisions I wanted to measure, such as if they would stay in their local community or migrate domestically or abroad. This would be an ideal sample group to follow in a longitudinal study that could document, in real time, the decisions made and the motivations behind them. This subgroup was difficult to compare to other RMs, some of whom had been home for ten years and made significant life decisions multiple times over. Ultimately a real time, longitudinal study is the most ideal for looking at the impact of serving a mission on post-mission decisions as it alleviates any recall bias and paints a more accurate picture of RD before, during, and after the mission.
Lastly, a limitation of this study is that it cannot definitively conclude that its migration outcomes are caused by mission service without providing a non-LDS comparison group. Making a comparison between LDS and non-LDS migrants was not the intent of this study and moved beyond the scope of the study’s original design. Focusing mainly on LDS missionaries and their households allowed this study to gather more in-depth and richer information about the diverse aspects of mission service that have significant impact on post-mission lifestyles and decision-making processes aligning with the original hypothesis of the study.

**SUMMARY**

Despite the studies limitations, the utilization of mixed methods combined with the researchers privileged background allowed for a successful collection of data that provides new perspectives on important topics of migration. Both the chosen method and researcher’s background allowed for a unique connection with participants that evoked personal, family, and community background and perspectives that might not have otherwise been obtained. While utilizing available advantages to gain access to a rich data set all measures were also taken to ensure objectivity and allow the participants and data to tell an uninhibited story.

The remaining chapters will provide the findings of this study by focusing on analysis of different sets of data. Chapter four will discuss how mission service impacted the decisions Filipinos made after returning home using data from the RM interview, Qualtrics survey, LHC, and the affiliated household interview/focus group. Chapter five will use all of the same data to extrapolate gender differences in mission experiences. Chapter six will use the RM household and non-LDS household interviews to discuss household participation in migration decisions with potential minimal reference to RM interviews.
## Participant Demographics

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Table 3.1 Participant Demographics

![Figure 3.1 Locations of Filipino Households](image-url)
CHAPTER 4: BLUEPRINTS FOR SUCCESS

“Missionary work is, by definition, the most important thing you can do in the world, in time or eternity. For this reason, you are engaged in the saving of the human soul and that is the highest and holiest work in the universe. That is the thing that God Himself said was His work and glory. It is the purpose for which the Savior came to the earth and gave his life and was resurrected to open those possibilities and promises of Eternal Life. It is the purpose for which every prophet has lived, and every apostle has spoken. It is the purpose every missionary since Adam and Eve has gone forth to declare the truth. You join those ranks! You join that brotherhood and sisterhood, and it is, as I said, by definition, by theology, it is the most important thing you can do.” - Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints

From the over 15 million members of the LDS church over one million of them have served a full-time mission. Serving a full-time mission for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints is the highest calling and greatest honor a member of the church can hold. It is second only to the sacred duty of marriage and “multiplying and replenishing the earth” by having children. It is socialized from birth to be the sacred duty of every young man when he turns eighteen and an option for women nineteen and over who are not married. It is the missionary family’s responsibility to pay monthly mission fees to their local Bishop at a cost of $500 per month or $12,000 for a full two-year mission for men and $9,000 for the eighteen-month mission of women. This requires that LDS families start savings accounts from the time their children are born to fund their children’s future missions in addition to, or often in lieu of, the standard college funds, but the common dialogue heard among families with missionaries in the field is how the unexpected blessings and rewards they receive far outweigh their monetary sacrifices.
Members are also taught that when they return in glory from their missions, they will receive the highest blessings such as an “eternal companion” and family, blessings in employment and economic opportunities that will enable them to support their family, and leadership roles within the church. Serving a mission is not a requirement per se, but it is so deeply embedded in the socialized culture of the church that not serving a mission, for men, elicits familial shame and marginalization and a perceived loss of God’s goodwill and lifelong blessings.

In addition to the familial and occupational success promised to RMs, missionaries also gain important life skills on the mission that studies have found benefit RMs in all aspects of their post-mission lives. This is particularly true due to the unique nature of LDS missions where eighteen- and nineteen-year-olds are sent into foreign environments in groups of two to figure things out on their own. A common saying within the church is that you, “leave a boy and return a man” (there is no female equivalent). Missionaries learn how to set and achieve goals, manage time and household budgets, approach and communicate with strangers who are often rude and contemptuous, and sacrifice their own worldly desires for a cause greater than themselves. The experiences through which these skills are gained, when coupled with the spiritual and emotional intensity of serving a mission, make them life-long lessons that are not easily forgotten when one returns to normal life.

The skills gained on the mission greatly impact diverse post-mission success factors in the United States. Many have gone on to serve in leadership roles within the church with about seventy percent of priesthood (men-only) leadership roles being filled by RMs. RMs are also more likely to be well-educated and responsibly employed with studies showing that; 40 percent of RMs were college graduates compared to 18 percent of their respective peer groups, 95
percent of men and 63 percent of women are gainfully employed, and their incomes are generally above the national average. RMs are also more engaged in positive church and familial activities with almost 90 percent attending worship services regularly and maintaining personal and family religious activities such as weekly Family Home Evenings and daily scripture study (BYU Religious Studies Center, 2010). The vast benefits of serving an LDS mission are, not only applicable to individual missionaries, but also benefit, RM households, their future families, their local church groups, and even their local communities in similar ways to how migrants benefit their sending communities.

LDS missionaries not only engage in domestic and international migration when reporting to their assigned mission, but also engage in domestic migration throughout the course of their mission as they are assigned to diverse areas. Even a missionary who serves within their own country is typically assigned to a region a fair distance from their home community. In the United States, this is minimally in a different state so regardless of the domestic or international nature of the assignment missionaries are exposed to diverse cultures, populations, foods, languages and idioms, and a range of community demographics. This results in RMs returning home with broader global and cultural understanding, an abundance of new knowledges and experiences, highly expanded social networks, and new language competencies ranging from improved communication and interrelationship skills to new foreign language skills. These skills spur personal growth and development that feed the growth and development of the communities RMs return to, though this may vary greatly depending on where the missionary is originally from and where they served their mission.
American RMs experience cultures all over the world, but ultimately return to their relatively privileged lives in the Global North. RMs originating from significantly different locations, such as nations of the Global South, may not have the same experiences, gain the same skills and resources, or have access to the same opportunities after returning home from their missions. This chapter’s aim is to examine the experience of Filipinos who served LDS missions and how it impacted their lives and the major life decisions they made after returning home. This chapter will start with the researcher’s brief narrative of her relevant mission experience in the Philippines that led her to the central research question of how perspectives of RD are impacted by mission service. Then the impact of Filipino mission service on RD will be discussed, followed by how RD and other skills gained on the mission impacted post-mission decisions.

MY MISSION IN THE PHILIPPINES

I have two older brothers who both served a mission for the LDS church, but who were sorely disappointed when they received the same assignment to Salt Lake City, Utah, the Mormon capital of the world. This is also why I was so shocked when my mission call came in the mail and I read my assignment out loud for the first time, “You have been called to serve in the San Pablo, Philippine’s mission.” My family was so excited for my exotic, foreign assignment that they immediately started calling family while I nervously googled everything I could about the Philippine islands. I left the Missionary Training Center in the fall of 2002 feeling confident that my eight weeks of language and teaching training would be sufficient to converse effectively with local Filipinos and with no thought for how the culture of the Global South might impact me. After all, I had talked to several RMs recently returned from the
Philippines who shared photographs and stories, so I was sure I had this in the bag. My arrival in the Philippines, however; proved a very different experience.

San Pablo, Laguna is a region located about two hours south of Metro Manila. Its vicinity to the National Capital Region (NCR) makes it a predominantly urban location that maintains the prominent NCR cultural components including Tagalog as the common language. The morning after my batches (set of new missionaries arriving together) arrival in Manila we loaded into a van and made the two-hour drive to our new mission home in San Pablo. Most of the drive was along the highway where there wasn’t much to see, but I noticed at the top of a hill that ran along the highway occasional sheet metal sheds. Initially they didn’t register to me as anything more than something someone might build in the back of their house to store gardening tools, but at some point, as I was peering out the window, I saw a woman hanging her freshly laundered clothes to dry and it hit me, these were homes. This initial shock was compounded by the drive through the local San Pablo neighborhoods on our way to the Mission President’s home. I sat in silence the entire car ride, in fact, I sat in silence for two whole days because I didn’t know what to say and I didn’t know how to process what I was seeing.

I grew up in poverty, in a family of eight children living in a three-bedroom, one-bathroom house. My mother was a stay-at-home mom, and my father was a mere Sergeant in the Air Force. We got free breakfasts and lunches at school and cooked everything from scratch at home to make meals stretch as far as possible, a difficult task with five boys. We didn’t have a lot and we certainly didn’t aspire to much that the average person did like being able to pay for a college education. I thought I was all too familiar with what poverty and financial hardship looked like but being in the Philippines made me so grateful for all the minimal things I had back
home. On my mission, there were no laundry mats and clothes had to be washed by hand. For the first couple months my American trainer would wake up early to boil water for me so that when I took my bucket-shower it wouldn’t be freezing cold. We were lucky to have a two-burner gas stove top with a propane tank and an electric rice cooker, which many Filipino households go without.

After some tears I adjusted to mission life in the Philippines and had the support of other American missionaries with whom I could relate. We would talk about the things we missed from back home and laugh about cultural nuances and crazy food experiences. When my mission was ending, I would talk with other American missionaries about all the things I was excited to return to, things as simple as a washing machine, central climate control, and driving a car. However, this dialogue was always juxtaposed by the knowledge that our Filipino colleagues would be returning to very different lives. We pitied them for having to return to the average Filipino life after living in relatively nicer homes with the amenities that the mission life provided. We never asked any of the Filipinos how they felt about their return home we just assumed, from our own hegemonically Eurocentric perspectives, that it would be a harsh and depressing transition. The data in this chapter demonstrates how wrong our assumptions were.

Although being a missionary exposed me to what the average Filipino lifestyle was in relation to mission standards, living with a local family in the northern province for a year after my mission made the distinctions palpable and indisputable. I realized how comfortable mission life had been compared to living in the average Filipino household. We struggled daily to keep the utilities on and feed the family as we caught fish in the small lake behind the house, picked bananas and string beans from the neighbor’s field, and sat in the dark kitchen furiously weaving
basket to fill the propane tank for a week of not having to cook over fire. I felt a new level of gratitude for the simple life provided by the church on my mission.

These situations are what originally made me think about the application of Relative Deprivation as I realized that my life at the lower end of the American SES hierarchy is highly privileged on a global platform. In the Philippines I am privileged and perceived as wealthy, but as challenging and impoverished as I perceived mission life in the Philippines to be it was still relatively more comfortable and privileged than the average non-mission Filipino lifestyle. Quality of housing, access to daily necessities, and standard household appliances taken for granted on the mission and in wealthier nations are more than the average Filipino household can aspire to without major financial strategizing that typically necessitates sending family members to work in other regions and nations.

**RELATIVE DEPRIVATION**

The central question of this study is if Filipino perceptions of their RD were shifted due to their mission service. The first issue we will address is the assumption that Filipinos perceive the mission as having a higher standard of living than the average Filipino household. To capture RM perceptions of the standard of living on the mission I began LHCs by asking RMs to rank the quality of the homes they lived in before, on, and after the mission on a scale from 1 (the worst) to 10 (the best) and to elaborate on the reasons for their allocated rankings. 87% (n=39) of RMs ranked their pre-mission home between 5-7 while 93% (n=42) ranked mission housing between 8-10. Some of the reasons given for ranking mission housing higher were increased security and privacy, provision of basic household items such as refrigerators, stoves, and laundry service, and the ability to consume foods they couldn’t afford back home. The quotes
below epitomize the common reasonings given for home rankings and the pictures in Figure 4.1 show side by side comparisons of a typical Filipino home versus the typical missionary home.

“On the mission, the house was big and roomy. Before the mission my home had holes in it.” -Rowena, 36

“Of course, housing on the mission is better. The homes are beautiful. You have a refrigerator, all of the things you need. You have a good stove. Sometimes you have an air conditioner. The apartments are nice!” -Paul, 39

“When I served my mission, I can say that I was happy because for at least, those two years alone I was able to stay from that hardship of life. I was able to buy food that I never had the chance to eat when I was at my home. My mission gave me a good life. -Miguel, 28

The data indicates that the average RM does view mission housing and the mission lifestyle as better than the average Filipino housing and lifestyle so the next question that needs to be addressed is if RMs perceptions of their RD is shaped by the higher standard of living experienced on the mission. We’ll look at expressed levels of RD before during and after mission service as well as levels of contentment with RD in each timeframe. Perceptions of RD and levels of contentedness were measured using the Qualtrics survey data focusing on two specific questions; “How did your income and economic situation compare to other households in your area?” and “How happy or content were you with your economic situation.” The questions were asked three times asking participants to specifically think about each of the three periods: before, during, and after the mission.

Prior to mission service four RMs perceived their household’s economic situation to be Much Better (MB+) than others in their area, four perceived themselves to be somewhat better (SB+), thirty perceived themselves as average (AV), and seven viewed themselves as somewhat
worse (SW-) off. Eighteen participants did not perceive any significant changes in their RD with seventeen RMs ranking themselves as average before, during and after the mission and one RM ranking themselves as much better off. Fifteen participants perceived a decrease in their RD on the mission with five moving from SW- to AV, one from SW- to SB+, two moving from AV to SB+, three from AV to MB+, and four moving from SB+ to MB+. Three participants from the MB+ category and two from the SB+ category perceived their RD to be higher on the mission ranking the mission one category below their pre-mission status. Finally, seven participants who were AV before the mission ranked the mission as AV as well. 40% of participants didn’t perceive any RD changes before, during or after mission service while a little over 33% experienced an increase in lifestyle and a decrease in RD, 11% experienced higher RD and a decrease in lifestyle, and 16% ranked the mission the same as pre-mission RD, but post-mission RD fluctuated (see Table 4.1).

Overall, RMs viewed their post-mission economic situation more positively with only one participant perceiving their situation as SW- compared to seven pre-mission and two during the mission. The other biggest shift was seen in the SB+ category, which only four participants selected pre-mission, but ten selected for during the mission, and fourteen for post-mission. During LHCs the majority of RMs stated that they returned to the same home and households after their mission as the ones they lived in before their mission which had not undergone any significant changes and yet 42% of participants (n=19) ranked their economic situation higher after the mission than before the mission. Of those, thirteen ranked the mission as better than and six the same as their pre-mission lifestyles. Eight participants ranked their lifestyle after the mission the same as before the mission, but six of them ranked their lifestyle on the mission as
better than their pre or post mission lifestyle while two ranked the mission lower. The greatest positive change was for RMs who ranked their pre-mission households in the SW- category, with only three RMs viewing their lifestyle after the mission as worse than pre-mission or mission life (one who ranked pre-mission and mission as average, and two who were much better off pre-mission; see table 4.1).

Not only did many participants view and rank their economic situations as better on and/or after the mission, but their levels of contentedness about their economic situation also improved. From the RMs (n=26) who registered changes in perceived RD only four participants ranked their post-mission contentedness lower than before and during their mission while an additional four RMs ranked contentedness across timeframes as static. 58% (n=15) of RMs were more content with their economic situation on the mission with nine of them returning to pre-mission contentedness and six of them being more content. The remaining three RMs were just as content on their mission as before their mission but experienced an increase in contentedness post-mission.

As a testament to the impact mission experience had on how content RMs felt about their RD, almost two-thirds of the participants who expressed no perceived changes in RD before, during or after, the mission experienced changes in levels of contentedness with their economic situation. Out of the nineteen RMs only seven displayed static levels of contentedness about their unchanging economic situation; two of them neither happy nor unhappy, one slightly happy, three moderately happy, and one extremely happy. Of the remaining twelve RMs ten were more content on the mission, with only one remaining as content after the mission as on the mission and the rest remaining more content than before the mission, but less content than on the
mission. The last two RMs experienced greater contentedness on the mission, but post-mission levels returned to pre-mission levels (see Table 4.2).

Based on the survey and LHC data it is clear that mission service is impacting perceptions of RD and related levels of contentedness, but not in the way this study originally hypothesized it would. The expectation was that Filipinos, upon returning home from missions, would shift their RD reference group to compare their home lifestyles to the elevated lifestyle experienced on the mission, feel more relatively deprived, and have increased feelings of discontent about their economic situation that would make them more likely to strategize migration as a tool to reach higher levels of economic success. Many participants did view their economic situation on the mission as better than their pre-mission life and were more content about it, but when they returned home to the same pre-mission households, they weren’t increasingly discontent. In fact, they ranked the same pre-mission economic situation as better and displayed higher levels of contentedness so the next question that needs to be addressed is why the opposite of the hypothesized outcome is occurring.

The first reason for the contradictory outcome is that Filipino missionaries always saw their mission as something temporary that would end in an inevitable return to the lifestyle they had known their entire lives. This is exemplified in the quotes below.

“Going home, nothing changed. I went back to the same situation. I didn’t feel anything because I knew what I was going home to.” -Miguel, 28

“At first, I was a little sad, but it was okay with me because I didn’t really have any choices. I was going to accept what I had to. I can’t really complain.” -Reyna, 26

“When I got home, I compared the things, the foam I laid on at the house [to my mission bed]and it wasn’t very comfortable. On the mission I felt like, this is cool, this bed is really nice. After the mission I went back to foam at my house, and it
Because RMs viewed missions as temporary, exceptional experiences they did not make permanent perceptual or expectational shifts. Contrary to expected outcomes the elevated missionary lifestyle did not become a new standard of measurement, or reference group, from which to compare their daily post-mission lives. The critical question continues to be, what motivated RMs then to rank the same pre and post mission households economically better off and to feel more content with their levels of RD?

Interviews showed that the RD reference group did shift, causing the changes in post-mission lifestyle perceptions, but not because of lifestyle changes experienced by living at mission standards. As a missionary, you are not selective about what neighborhoods or homes you enter. It is your duty to fully reach every community within your assigned geographical location be it formal or informal housing. Working twelve-hour days in the community provides more than sufficient working hours to reach most areas several times over. That means the typical missionary sees the poorest and wealthiest homes in their areas and are expected to equally interact with, teach, and serve all those communities. In addition to economic variances within one assigned area the transferring of missionaries throughout the length of their mission means that missionaries see diverse regions and ways of life that they would not experience in their day-to-day lives. Most participants expressed a renewed understanding and gratitude for the things they had before the mission because of the hardship they saw other Filipino communities living with on their missions. This is evident in the RM quotes below.

“I felt a lot of pity (for the people I saw on my mission) they were only eating boiled bananas and they could only fish, which they couldn’t do any time there was a
storm. I realized my life before the mission was not so bad compared to them.” - Rowena, 36

“There was a family that slept on the street. Every day, we would go past them when we go home, and they would be sleeping on the ground. We talked with them and they said they didn’t have any work and they didn’t have any family, so they were staying there. Sometimes people would buy them food but if they didn’t, they wouldn’t have anything. I was thinking, if I was struggling in Manila, they were struggling much more than I was. So never, never compare your situation to other people because there are always people who are poorer.” - Lopez, 26

“I saw a lot of people that were poorer than us. More of them didn’t have homes and I couldn’t understand the way they lived. We visited a woman with a disabled child who lived underneath a house and the width was like a large box. That was the hardest situation I saw my whole mission. It was so small we couldn’t even all fit in the space. In the poorer areas you have to think about if you can go pee, sometimes there is no bathroom, and you have to really go. I will go on a towel.” - Pearl, 34

It was naïve and quite Eurocentric for American missionaries to assume that Filipino missionaries do not see new, diverse economic situations on their mission that they would not be exposed to otherwise. Just as Americans are comparing the lives, they grew up into the poorer culture of the Global South so too are Filipinos comparing their lives to the diverse communities experienced on their mission. Both missionary groups return home with a wider comparison group for household economic success and more grateful for what they have. If Filipino RMs rank their RD lower and are more content with their economic situation after their missions then, according to migration literature, they should be less likely than the average Filipino to migrate.

POST-MISSION MIGRATION DECISIONS

Now that we know how mission experiences impact RD, we must move on to the second important question. Do Filipino RMs migrate more or less than the typical Filipino? As a review of the Philippine migration statistics discussed in previous chapters, 55% of Filipinos age fifteen and over have migrated; 49% of them domestically, 3% Abroad, and 4% both domestically and
abroad. Out of the 45 participants in this study 93% migrated; 42% of them domestically, 49% of them abroad, and 44% of them migrated both domestically and abroad (see table below). Additionally Filipino RMs have particularly high rates of serial migration with 60% (n=15) of participants having migrated 2 or more times, 5 being the highest occurrence (See Table 4.3).

These statistics demonstrate a significantly higher rate of migration among Filipino RMs than typical Filipinos with almost all participants migrating. Not only are RMs migrating more frequently, but they are much more likely to migrate abroad with just shy of half this study’s participants migrating abroad compared to only 3% of the standard population. If the results of RD measurement had reflected the studies hypothesis this study could conclude and discuss how increasing RD motivated higher migration, but we know from the previous section that decreased RD and increased contentment should have decreased RM likelihood to migrate. Now we need to understand what motivated increased migration despite factors that should have mitigated it.

BLUE-PRINTS FOR SUCCESS

During interviews a common narrative emerged as Filipino RMs explained how their mission experiences, especially exposure to varying economic groups, impacted the life goals they set after the mission and how they strategized their attainment. Additionally, the increased access RMs had to important resources such as employment, church programs, social networking, language, and increased human and social capital played an integral role in driving and meeting post-mission goals. In seeing the life strategies and outcomes of both the extremely poor and well-off Filipino households RMs identified patterns that they wanted to avoid or emulate in their own post-mission lives and used what they learned on the mission to do so. Below are some examples of RM statements.
“All of your experiences on the mission prepare you for everything your life is going to be after the mission. Even your companions impact how you will treat your relationships with your future wife and kids. It helps you to be more positive after the mission.” – Gerard, 36

“I tell myself that I can do what they’re [the wealthy] doing too. I can do better because that’s in the person’s hard work and determination. Even in the Philippines we can attain those things.” – Rose, 32

“It [serving a mission] definitely had an effect, a big effect because you realize about yourself that, I don’t want this type of life. I want a different job, to have a better life.” – Antonio, 32

“We had investigators that had children after children after children. So I said to myself when I get married I won’t have children. I am not going to do that because they were so challenged, and they were even more challenged because they had a lot of children. That’s why I only had two children. From what I saw on my mission I wanted my family to be whole; to be able to pay for my kids to study and be strong no matter what happens in life. If I didn’t go on my mission my goals would be lower because I learned so much on the mission, like to save your money and spend your money on the right things.” – Ilana, 48

It is important to note that the impact of seeing economically challenged communities and the desire and motivation to ensure attainment of a better life than those households had a powerful enough impact on RMs that they were willing to override central tenets of church doctrine. For example, Ilana was adamant about limiting the size of her family to avoid financial insecurity although the LDS church is based on “multiply and replenish the earth” ideology. When missionaries return home and meet with church leadership to be released from missionary service the first direction, they are given is to find a spouse and start a family. Women, specifically, are taught that their “highest calling” is to be a Mother in Israel hence they are only allowed to serve a mission if they remain unmarried by the age of nineteen while men go at eighteen. Another doctrinal focus of the church specifically in the Philippines is to encourage church members to remain in and build up their own country.
The LDS church has been aware of and addressing the issue of transnational labor migration with church members in the Philippines for the past decade. In 2002 Elder Dallin H. Oaks was appointed to reside in the Philippines for two years and oversee all LDS church business in order to identify and address cultural barriers to church development. He is a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, which consists of twelve men, who are second in authority over the church to the prophet and his two counselors (Moore, 2002). He openly addressed transnational labor migration at stake (semi-annual) and general (annually) conferences discussing concerns about the high number of households with fathers or mothers working abroad and encouraged members to stay within their country and build up their families, nation, and local churches and community. The almost 50% of RMs who chose to migrate abroad in this study then are directly contradicting the church’s council and those who migrated domestically are still choosing not to stay and build up their local church communities. This means that the motivators for migration are stronger than the principles members are indoctrinated into.

Filipino RMs chose to migrate for a variety of reasons, the most common being employment with 64% of RMs migrating due to lack of employment opportunities within their local or national communities. 38% of RMs migrated due to social networks that were created with other missionaries and members that live permanently within the areas they were assigned to on their mission. This field also overlaps with Employment and Marriage. 15% of RMs migrated either to marry another missionary or returned to a previous mission area to marry a local church member. 19% migrated to access church resources like entrepreneurial training and employment offices located in urban centers, which was the most common driver of serial
migration. Lastly, 12% of RMs migrated to access educational resources and/or obtain tertiary degrees (see table 4.4).

The two major goals of reentry into normal life after mission service is to find employment and/or complete a college degree and to marry, which is heavily reliant on the former for men. Reentry into life after a mission is a difficult transition for many who return home with little or no economic resources, but RMs are fortunate in that potential employers view them as honest, loyal, and hardworking. This is particularly true for U.S.-based companies in major urban centers in the Philippines like call centers and marketing and sales firms who favor Filipino RMs for their English language and cultural fluency. Several LDS organizations also give priority to RMs pulling them to the National Capital Region (NCR) for work such as Deseret Industries where sacred temple garments are made, the Missionary Training Center, and the LDS Administrative Building. These organizations, however, have fewer open positions and are more highly coveted jobs so rely heavily on influential social networking. The assurance of employment coupled with encouragement and referrals from other RMs, and church members already employed at these companies is a strong pull for RMs to migrate for work.

Social networks worked in several ways to motivate diverse migration patterns even when some participants preferred to remain in their home communities. When RMs struggled with finding employment after their mission in their home communities, as most of them did, they shared these struggles with people from their missions that they remained in contact with. This included fellow missionaries who returned to an array of provinces in the Philippines and church members who lived permanently in the areas they had served in on their mission. The most common result was that RMs were encouraged to migrate to the locations of their contacts
to access resources, most often employment opportunities, but sometimes to gain access to educational opportunities. Contacts also typically welcomed RMs to stay in their homes while they made transitions and/or offered to assist with transportation costs, which alleviated the typical financial stresses of getting established in a new region. The reduced risk and financial burden coupled with assurances of employment opportunities was the major driver of migration for participants as it made it nonsensical to remain in their home provinces.

Social networking was also used by RMs to pair or group up in accessing interim church resources, the most common of which was the Academy for Creating an Enterprise (ACE). ACE is a non-profit organization, based in Cebu, that provides micro-enterprise resources and education. Four RMs joined groups of other RMs to attend the ACE program before returning home and accessing other church resources. The other two most accessed LDS resources were the Employment Resource Service Center (ERC) and the Self-Reliance Services (SRS). The ERCs are in Makati (NCR), Cebu (central urban center), and Davao (southern urban center) while the SRSs are located in the NCR and Cebu. Because the ERC and SRS are contracted with the Philippine’s Department of Labor and Employment they also operate as resources access points that encourage further migration in pursuing jobs RMs qualify for in regions throughout the Philippines and even throughout the globe.

An important resource of the SRS is the Perpetual Education Fund (PEF), which was established to lift individuals and families out of poverty by providing educational loans that lead to self-reliant jobs. RMs are, again, given priority access to these loans and more likely to receive them as they have access to strong letters of support from Mission Presidents and other church leaders they networked with on their missions. Five participants from this study accessed
educational resources in combination with their mission network to pursue undergraduate degrees at Brigham Young University Hawaii (BYUH). Part of the requirement of accessing these resources is that Filipinos return to and build up their home communities after graduation. Two participants had completed their degrees and returned to their home communities away from major urban centers and were highly successful in their careers, but this would be true of any U.S. based degree in the Philippines. The remaining three participants were still in Hawaii completing their degree during the time of their interviews.

Typically, within a year of an RMs return from their mission they are reestablished with some form of employment or educational process at which point the focus shifts to marriage if it has not already happened. RMs are highly stigmatized if they remain unmarried after their first-year home. In the U.S. RMs typically return home to a wide array of singles in their home communities or even have the option of attending Sunday meetings at Singles Wards where everyone is between the ages of 18-35 and unmarried. In the Philippines the church membership is not large enough for the creation of singles wards and it is often hard for RMs to find partners within the limited membership of their home communities. Like the dynamic with employment opportunities RMs often turned to other RMs and members from their mission areas in order to find partners they felt were worthy of their RM status. The most common trend was RMs marrying other RMs they served with on the mission even though the church expects missionaries not to view each other romantically. This most often resulted in one RM migrating to the home province of the other RM (n=3), but in some situations both RMs migrated to new location to access economic resources (n=2). Several participants also migrated back to their
mission areas and became permanent residents to marry members they met while serving a mission (n=2).

SERIAL MIGRATION

Studies of serial migration demonstrate how migration decisions are more than an isolated movement and how multiple migratory steps are used to strategize long-term outcomes. Serial migration is utilized in both domestic and international migratory processes as a creative method to manage migratory hurdles. In domestic processes it is rare for rural migrants to move directly to large urban centers. Typically, they engage in multiple moves from rural to increasingly urban, industrial areas (Ravenstein, 1885; Riddell & Harvey, 1972; Conway, 1980). They settle for a period while working in more urban towns before pursuing new employment opportunities in larger and more distant cities. The development of strong social ties determines whether the migrant will feel integrated into the new destination and choose to settle long-term, use social networks and their new migrant capital to move onward to a new location, or return home due to weak connections and integration in the receiving location (Korinek et al, 2005).

More than half (60%) of participants in this study engaged in serial migration (SM) with 30% moving twice, 44% moving three times, 6% moving four times, and 8% moving five times (see table 4.5). Eighteen RMs engaged in serial migration domestically, but their strategies varied from the general trends discussed in the literature. As opposed to using SM to move from rural areas to more urban centers while building migrant capital RMs used their human capital gained on the mission to choose direct migration destinations and pathways. Mission networks enabled RMs to move directly to larger urban centers without having to use stepwise migration
techniques such as the network of RMs who migrated from rural communities to Manila to work in call centers or the church’s garment production factory. The most common cause of domestic SM was to access multiple church resources such as going to ACE training in Cebu and then moving to other urban centers (Dagupan, Manila, Cebu, and Davao) to access Micro-Enterprise and Self-Reliance Centers and/or become entrepreneurs. Domestic SM was also significantly impacted by RMs returning to their old mission regions to marry church members or migrating to marry RMs they knew from the mission living in other regions. These RMs engaged in their first post-mission migration to marry, but often had to renegotiate their household location when significant family events occurred like death, disability, aging parents, etc. In all cases social networks exhibited the greatest influence on domestic SM and also made it possible to circumvent the typical stepwise process.

In international mobility serial migration has been utilized as a long-term strategy to overcome hurdles of restrictive employment processes and visa criteria, cost barriers, and transnational impermanence and precarity. Much of the literature on international serial migration focuses on its use as a ladder to obtaining employment access to more desirable yet more restrictive nations, often in the West. Working in less desirable locations allows for the accumulation of migrant capital in the form of work experience, increased financial resources, and networking with migrants who move to other locations all of which increase their ability to find employment and shoulder the cost of moving to more desired locations (Parrenas et. al, 2018; Paul, 2011; Liao & Gan, 2020). Recent research has further supported the theory of stepwise migration showing that, not only are migrants strategizing multiple moves to reach more desired locations, but higher migratory frequency also makes migrants more content with
higher levels of job satisfaction. This study also shines light on how drivers of serial migration have complex relationships with demographic factors such as age, educational attainment, timing and duration of migrations, country of origin and duration and embeddedness of their migratory processes, and the strength of social ties in receiving and sending destinations that operate as both push and pull factors (Liao & Gan, 2020).

Other recent migration studies argue against the stepwise model stating that not all serial migration has an upward trajectory especially for migrants engaged in low-wage, informal work such as the predominantly female field of domestic work. Cyclical, non-elevating patterns of serial migration are seen where structural conditions of persistent financial insecurity, low-wage informal working conditions, and restrictive livelihood and settlement conditions that create a state of transnational impermanence exist. It is argued that this type of serial migration emerged in response to temporary labor programs, which we’ve established are the bedrock of the Philippine economy. (Parrenas et. al, 2018; Paul, 2011)

Seven of the twenty-two RMs who migrated abroad engaged in SM with varying motivations. Only two RMs used it as a stepwise strategy to gain employment experience, build social networks, and save financial resources that would increase their access to a more desired migratory location. Similar to trends in domestic serial migration expansive post-mission social networks decrease the need for stepwise migration strategies and provide the social networking and resources necessary for RMs to move directly to receiving destinations. RMs also expressed a desire to remain in their local communities if there had been access to economic resources therefore instead of making migration decisions based on desirable locations they were drawn to receiving destinations based on where members of their social network were located. The high
levels of contentedness expressed by RMs after their mission may also significantly decrease their desire the need or motivation for RMs to view migration as a stepwise strategy.

Three RMs engaged in SM to take advantage of church resources, social networks, and the Perpetual Education Fund (PEF). The PEF provides financial assistance to foreign RMs to study at church universities like Brigham Young University Hawaii (BYUH) with the agreement that upon degree completion the RM will return to their home country and build up their own nation. Participation in this program then requires a minimum of two migratory moves and often includes more as RMs utilize additional resources like living with members of the church in Manila to work, save money, and prepare their application materials. Hence, the PEF was the greatest driver of SM utilization for international RM migrants. The remaining two RMs migrated to urban centers (Manila) for marriage and employment opportunities and had no initial intent of migrating abroad but were offered opportunities by members of their social networks built on the mission that seemed foolish to pass up. Patterns of serial migration were also significantly impacted by age, marital status, and life cycles, but this will be discussed in detail in chapter five as these were gender-mediated nuances.

Having a wider array and broader dispersion of contacts and resources after serving a mission decreases the risk and cost of migration and motivates RMs to engage in SM to maximize opportunities that will allow them to attain their new Blueprints for Success. The end goal is rarely to end up in a specific location, but rather they find themselves in new locations because of the financial insecurity, lack of economic opportunity, and/or inability to create and support a family in their home communities all factors Parrenas et al. (2018) argued to be social drives of cyclical, non-elevating migration. The push of these factors coupled with the strong
pull of post-mission resources draws RMs into cycles of migration, albeit with different trajectories. Although they are using SM to enable their migration the pathways of domestic migration are not slow stepwise moves, but larger leaps to locations with long-established resources and networks.

SOCIAL & CULTURAL CAPITAL

“The purpose of missionary service is to teach the gospel of Jesus Christ to all who will listen, but the experience of that service, for the individual missionary, becomes a strong foundation for the future both within the family and Church and in academic and professional pursuits. Many missionaries credit their full-time service with influencing the direction of the rest of their lives.” -The Church of Jesus Christ Newsroom, August 2014

Underlying all the causes of migration listed above is the social and cultural capital gained by RMs on the mission. When asking RMs and their households what the greatest gains from their mission experience were participants resoundingly stated the strength and confidence the RM had when they returned home. More than anything participants expressed that the nature of missionary work requiring them to approach strangers and the resulting conflicts and rejection they endured made them stronger. RMs felt that they learned persistence, patience, endurance and the ability to rebound in the face of failure or rejection. The growing levels of confidence and courage developed after years of these types of experiences made them feel emboldened and confident in their ability to approach strangers, market themselves, and take independent risks. RMs also expressed that the language and communication skills they learned on their mission helped them develop better familial and work relationships. RMs felt that their mission
experiences made them more grateful for life, made them stronger individuals, and provided advantages that carried on far after the mission as exemplified by the quotes below.

“What I became now started on my mission.” I can apply some of the learning I did on my mission. I learned from failed decisions that I have to continue, you have to be optimistic, and have faith. Rebound from rejections.” -Immanuel, 27

“I was learning to be grateful because before I would complain about things, but now I don’t because I have a plan. You need to be grateful or you’re going to be very sad. You have an opportunity to grow and change.” -Rose, 32

“I learned patience and long suffering, budgeting, and loving your fellow man. I said long suffering because, you know, you’re walking all day, even if it is raining. You have to take care of yourself if you get sick. We were chased by dogs. There are some areas that are not safe.” -Jed, 29

“I was sad also because [going home from the mission] was hard, but I was also very happy because I had become strong. Not like before, that I can’t face my life. On the mission I got stronger because of the hardship of the people on my mission they gave me strength that I can handle and face the things in my own life.” -Ilana, 48

After returning home from the mission RMs unanimously agreed that the skills they gained on the mission made them more confident and independent in making post-mission life decisions, gave them advantages in the job market, and immeasurably aided them in structuring their families and households in ways they viewed as financial and economically healthier and more successful than they believe they would have been had they not served a mission. RMs resoundingly expressed that the strength and confidence they gained on the mission played an integral role in their ability and willingness to take migration risks and maximize post-mission resources. This was particularly true for RMs who migrated abroad, but this will be discussed in detail in Chapter six.
CONCLUSION

Although the practice of colonization and imperialism are, not only outdated, but viewed as abhorrent, in violation of human rights, and contradictory to modern Development goals it remains important to apply a critical eye to how current social processes and modern, global development continue to perpetuate ideologies rooted in these practices. For example, the belief that some regions of the world are superior to others in wealth, human value and ability, and scientific advancement and development. Development goals themselves are rooted in the ideology of a global hierarchy of progress and advancement with the Global North being viewed as superior and more advanced than the nations of the Global South. The SDGs are rooted in pulling the nations of the Global South to the levels or standards of the Global North, which indicates a higher value placed on the practices and cultures of the Global North. Although we cannot use the same historical methods to pass modern, advanced social practices on to less-developed nations we certainly continue to pass on colonial and imperial ideologies and standards in new ways that are expedited by globalization and technological advancement.

We can’t ignore the air of superiority in Christian missionary work that continues to view their religion as the only gateway through which salvation can be obtained. This is the foundation upon which global missionaries strive to reach every person in the world. They see themselves as so blessed to have obtained salvation through the atonement of Jesus Christ that it is their sacred duty to bring the same blessing to the rest of the world. This is the exact same ideology that drove and justified centuries of war and conflict, colonial and imperial behaviors, and continues to drive missionary work around the world. Regardless of how missionaries may view themselves as humble servants of the Lord the underpinnings of missionary work are
intensely rooted in bringing others to an awareness of their “less than” status and convincing them of the need to join the elite, saved group through ritualistic practices such as baptism.

Although colonial methods can no longer be used to force conversion and assimilation, migration continues to be a major tool utilized in missionary work as evidenced by the almost half a million full-time missionaries that served in countries other than their own in 2017. Missionaries originate from Western countries with high Christian populations like Europe and the Americas and typically serve in regions with low Christian populations as their need is the greatest. Although the conscious intent of missionary work is to spread religious knowledge, we shouldn’t miss the fact that most missionaries come from wealthier, Western nations, whose culture is often seen as superior and more desirable, if not only by the Westerner themselves.

Beyond religious conversion, it is impossible that the presence of Western-based organizations, their members, and their missionaries have no cultural and ideological impact on the regions they serve. Yet, there is very little attention paid to the cultural impacts foreign missionaries have on receiving communities perhaps due to a conflation of general cultural practices with religious cultural practices and conversion agency.

The LDS church has one of the most impactful and growing global presences through its use of migration to send missionaries throughout the world. Not only does the church view Christianity as necessary for salvation, but they believe they are the, “only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth,” (Smith, 1835; Doctrine & Convenants 65:1) which makes their prophets direction to, “roll forth [the gospel] unto the ends of the earth” that much more critical of a call to serve (Smith, 1835; D&C 65:2). The bulk of LDS missionaries are from the U.S. where the church has been established the longest and has the greatest membership. Most
missionaries serve in one of the 297 established missions located outside the U.S. and, although each individual missionary serves for a relatively short period (18 to 24 month), regional missionary presence is maintained by consistent rotations of missionaries throughout long-established mission territories and housing rentals. This means that, regardless of which individual missionaries are physically present in the assigned mission area, the dynamics of LDS mission service have long-term and meaningful impacts on foreign communities.

The impact American LDS missionary presence has on foreign communities is highly dependent upon dominant foreign attitudes towards the United States as a country, which impacts how missionaries are perceived and received by communities. The pervasive global attitude towards the U.S. continues to be rooted in the notion of the American Dream, which depicts the U.S. as a land of limitless opportunity and economic resources that enable anyone to achieve their vision of success. This tenacious imagery crystalizes the hierarchical position of the U.S. as one of the most desirable global destinations albeit the hardest to gain access to.

These attitudes about and imagery of the U.S. are especially potent in the Philippines partially reminiscent of colonial relationships where Filipinos saw the relative wealth displayed by military personnel and experienced economic infusion driven by America’s importation of Filipino nurses. The elevation of the U.S. was further driven by government-structured migration programs and associated advertisement campaigns as well as the developmental and economic insufficiencies of the Philippines government that leave many Filipinos regretful that the country wasn’t left to development and structuration under U.S. control. In a nation where households measure their relative economic progress and status by the value of OFW remittances sent home that allow them to display conspicuous markers of success such as housing, vehicles, small
businesses, and name-brand clothing and accessories, the U.S. continues to be the most highly sought-after location by virtue of the value of the U.S. dollar.

The perception of Americans and American culture as superior in the Philippines means that foreign organizations should be even more vigilant about the impact their presence has on the local population. Religious organizations, like the LDS church, tend to measure their impact by conversion rates and church growth while lacking an awareness of how their endeavors are supporting, contradicting, or even causing shifts in local cultural practices like family structures and migration trends. This study’s original hypothesis may have oversimplified the impact mission service for a Western organization has on Filipino missionaries, but the impact is nonetheless significant.

The data discussed in chapter four exemplifies the cultural impacts, extraneous to religious conversion, that the LDS church has on Filipino missionaries in ways that have elevated Western practices and ideologies. Organizational structures and mission practices forced missionaries to learn and utilize the English language while leaders encouraged them to take advantage of English language exposure while on the mission for the rewards it would bring them afterwards. Missionaries also mastered interpersonal communication, debate, and marketing skills via their daily missionary tasks. The value of these skills and English language competency is further solidified after missions when RMs successfully leverage these new skills to enter Western-based companies such as Manila call centers. We could rightfully argue that the LDS church is doing their missionaries a great service in providing them with skills, they would not have obtained elsewhere that increase their economic opportunities in a relatively impoverished nation, but this is also supporting a global hierarchy. Not only does this teach
Filipinos that Western-based skills will provide access to better quality and higher-paid jobs, but it also feeds the global labor market motivating western-based organizations to develop offices in countries who are influenced by Western cultural practices and language competencies. This was the main motivation for U.S. based companies to move call centers from India to Manila where spoken English was less discernable to American callers.

Like the Savior or even parent mentality implicit in bringing salvation to the world there is a sense of Savior Complex among mission leaders as they encourage domestic missionaries in receiving countries to maximize the mission tools and resources, such as household budgeting, time management, and resource allocation to improve their post-mission lives. Missionaries are also required to adhere to Western-based business attire, physical appearance, and standards of beauty. One of the experiences that had the greatest impact on me during my mission was when the mission President’s wife approached me during a meeting wielding a picture of me when I first arrived in the Philippines. As she showed it to me, she began remarking on how different I looked after having lost a significant amount of weight (due to illness). I didn’t know what to say so I just looked at her speechless as she encouraged me to “continue heading in the right direction.” She wanted me to have the picture so, “I would know what I didn’t want to go back to.” They weren’t just guiding and supporting us they were passing on superior Eurocentric standards and attitudes some of which were highly gendered. Keeping in mind that missionaries tend to be impressionable, young adults the things that are passed on from the retirement-aged mission presidents and missionary couples have a significant impact as we see from how Filipino missionaries used their mission experiences to create new blueprints for their post-mission life goals.
This Savior mentality is also seen in the plethora of church resources that have been created throughout the country to help lift Filipinos out of poverty such as the entrepreneurial programs, employment centers, and employment directly with church organizations like the Manila MTC and church office building. While these programs do validly provide necessary resources to church members they also teach, encourage, and further elevate Western business practices and standards. These church resources are also provided to assist members in combating domestic economic issues that push them into international labor migration and go against the church’s council to stay in and build up their local Philippine communities, so they are being provided with ulterior motive. As the data shows, they do not have the desired effect because of the level of economic stress in the Philippines and the nation’s deep-rooted history in labor migration nonetheless the church’s doctrine does create some conflict with local cultural norms and practices, which will be discussed more in relation to gender in Chapter five.

Serving a mission for the LDS church has far-reaching, long-term impacts on RMs lives that increase their ability and likelihood of migration, but not in the ways this study originally anticipated. Because the higher standard of living on the mission is seen as temporary and Filipinos are realistic about their inevitable return home their perceptions of RD are not shifted by the higher, Western-based standards. The mission dynamic that did significantly impact perceptions of RD was exposure to Filipino communities with vast ranges of socio-economic development. This exposure not only made RMs grateful for what they had but created new values and strategies that RMs used to negotiate post-mission success. RMs adopted tactics they saw in economically well-off households while choosing to avoid behaviors they saw as challenging and restrictive in economically challenged communities even when these behaviors
misaligned with their religious beliefs. RMs were generally more grateful for and more content with their levels of RD experienced after their mission, which should have decreased their likelihood to migrate, but this effect was overpowered by the wide array of post-mission resources.

Filipino RMs in this study were twice as likely as the general Filipino population to migrate, about sixteen times more likely to migrate abroad, and eleven times more likely to migrate domestically and abroad. Resources such as broad social networks; preferential access to church employment, education, and entrepreneurial training; and language and communication skills desired by Western-based organizations coupled with low employment rates in RMs home communities overpowered the impact of increased RM contentedness with their economic situation to pull them into migration flows. Use of church resources and social networking significantly decrease the cost and risk of migration making it, not only easier, but more likely for RMs to engage in serial migration while the psychological benefits of mission service gave them the courage and independence to do so. It is important to note that the migration trends found in RM participants in this study may vary from trends in the overall RM population or subgroup of Filipino RM population which requires further examination through future research.

Although RM perspectives on the benefits gained by serving a mission are unanimous it is important to consider how the highly gendered nature of mission service and LDS religious doctrine in general impact male and female RMs in different ways. Chapter five will begin by discussing the gendered doctrine of the LDS church and mission service and its potential impact on chapter four’s migration data. After which post-mission migration trends will be broken down and discussed in relation to religious and national gender dynamics.
CHAPTER 4 FIGURE AND TABLES

Table 4.1 Perceived Relative Deprivation Before, During, and After the Mission

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERCEIVED RD</th>
<th>Much Better</th>
<th>Somewhat Better</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Somewhat Worse</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Mission</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Mission</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2 Levels of Contentedness with RD Before, During, and After the Mission

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTENTEDNESS WITH RD</th>
<th>Extremely Happy</th>
<th>Moderately Happy</th>
<th>Slightly Happy</th>
<th>Neither Happy nor Unhappy</th>
<th>Slightly, Moderately, &amp; Extremely Unhappy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Mission</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Mission</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3 RM Migration Statistics Compared to General Filipino Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Findings</th>
<th>Remained in Province (RP)</th>
<th>Migrated</th>
<th>Migrated Domestically (MD)</th>
<th>Migrated Abroad (MA)</th>
<th>Migrated Dom &amp; Ab (MDMA)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population Trends</td>
<td>106.7 MM</td>
<td>48MM</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>59MM</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.4 RM Migration Motivations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivations</th>
<th>Marriage</th>
<th>LDS Services</th>
<th>Social Networking</th>
<th>Employment</th>
<th>Educ.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.5 Serial Migration Frequencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SERIAL MIGRATION</th>
<th>Number of Migratory Moves</th>
<th>Participant Occurrence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25 RMs 60%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

99
Figure 4.1 Side by side comparisons of typical Filipino home versus the typical missionary home (images obtained by researcher during fieldwork in Philippines)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXTERIOR</th>
<th>Average Filipino Home</th>
<th>Average Mission Home</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Newer Homes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Gated &amp; Secure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Fewer Residents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTERIOR</th>
<th>Average Filipino Home</th>
<th>Average Mission Home</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Fully furnished by Mission</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- More and newer household appliances</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Typically two-bedroom apartments for two missionaries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 5: GENDER DYNAMICS IN MISSION SERVICE

“By divine design, fathers are to preside over their families in love and righteousness and are responsible to provide the necessities of life and protection for their families. Mothers are primarily responsible for the nurture of their children.” – Gordon B. Hinckley, General Relief Society Meeting Sept. 23, 1995

“Our young women properly aspire to and prepare themselves for the experiences and blessings of motherhood, which is their highest calling and opportunity for service. The leaders of our Church have consistently taught that mothers who have young children in the home should devote their primary energies to the companionship and training of their children and the care of their families and should not seek employment outside the home unless there is no other way that the family’s basic needs can be provided.” -Letter from First Presidency of LDS church

“We affirm that missionary work is a priesthood duty—and we encourage all young men who are worthy and who are physically able and mentally capable to respond to the call to serve. Many young women also serve, but they are not under the same mandate to serve as are the young men. We assure the young sisters of the Church, however, that they make a valuable contribution as missionaries, and we welcome their service.” -President Monson, Acting President of LDS Church

Membership in the LDS church is very gendered with doctrine continuing to lean heavily towards stereotypical roles of women being in the home while men provide for their families. Women are taught from childhood that their “highest calling and opportunity for service” is to be a mother and nurture and care for children in the home. These ideologies are the underlying reason for the difference in age requirements for men and women to serve missions. Prior to the age reduction in 2012, women had to be twenty-one years old, unmarried, and have no prospects of marriage to serve a mission while men only had to be nineteen. The church’s goal is for young college-aged girls to marry twenty-one-year-old RM’s and begin families, which is still the prominent path of choice for most young LDS women. In 2012 the age requirement shifted to eighteen for men but continues to make women wait until they are nineteen and unmarried with no prospects while there were no shifts to the service time differentials. Men still serve for
twenty-four months while women only serve eighteen-month missions so they can return home and focus on their higher calling of being *Mothers in Zion*.

Prior to the age change only 15% of LDS women served missions in comparison to 24% after the change. This rate still remains significantly below the 32% of male church members who have steadily served missions since the 1960s (npr.org, 2013). Regardless of shifts in age requirements missions are still viewed by the church as a duty for every able-bodied LDS man and an option for women who remain unmarried and feel inspired to service. This study focused on participants who had been home from their missions for longer periods of time in order to capture long-term migratory decisions so, other than two participants who had served missions after the age changes, RMs in this study adhered to the previous requirements. For this reason, it is important to keep in mind that the gender dynamics discussed in this chapter, such as motivations for mission service, may have shifted with more recent batches of missionaries serving under the new guidelines. The next section will discuss the role gender ideologies played in participant’s mission service and their continued impact on post-mission decisions.

MISSIONARY SERVICE

The deeply embedded beliefs of marriage and motherhood as a woman’s highest and holiest calling make it no surprise that the average LDS woman envisions her adult life through a narrow lens of romance, marriage, and family building. As a PhD student and college-level instructor people often ask me why I chose my field and profession and what I want to say is, I didn’t get married, so I had to figure out what to do with my life. I had no aspirations other than to be a mother of a large family like the one I grew up in. I thought if I attended church, lived the gospel, and adhered to church standards I would have the fairytale outcome we were sold
growing up in the church. I would meet a man, hopefully an RM, we would get married in the LDS temple, and I would stay home and be an amazing mother. I attended several different singles wards and went to all the weekly activities making many friends, but never meeting anyone interested in dating. Before long I was twenty-one and found myself contemplating mission service.

In the LDS church a single woman at the age of twenty-one is already past her prime. If you consider that most women want to marry an RM and that men, typically come home at twenty-one years old adhering to the marriage gradient, they are looking for younger LDS women. Like my own experience women in this study found themselves considering mission service because they were aging and unmarried and expressed that they would not have served a mission if they had marriage and family potential. Four female RMs (18%) expressed that the primary motivation for their mission service was feeling like it was what God wanted them to do and that they would have still served a mission if they had been in a relationship with marriage prospects. Adding that their partners should respect their decision and wait for them to return home if they wanted to marry. The remaining 18 (82%) female RMs expressed having made the decision to serve a mission in large part due to lack of other significant pathways. There are several examples below.

“I just felt like that (serving a mission) was what I was called to do. I had been working with our local missionaries a lot and everyone kept asking why I wasn’t a missionary and I decided to pray and fast about it. I just knew that was the next step for me in my spiritual progress... I don’t think it would have mattered if I was in love with someone because I felt so strongly about the answer to my prayers.” - Langit, 41

“I really thought I would meet someone before I graduated from college and be ready to marry and start a family. I worked for a year after my mission and when I realized I probably wasn’t going to meet anyone back home. I started thinking
about what direction I wanted my life to go in if I wasn’t going to have a family.”
- Ilana, 48

“I didn’t really know what else I was supposed to do. I was working at a local bank and serving as a Sunday School teacher, I was happy, but I also wanted to have my own family and that just hadn’t happened for me yet. I felt like I had to do something else in the time I had if I wasn’t going to be starting a family.” - Teresita, 37

It is also interesting to note that, out of the 18 women who served missions due to limited other opportunities, eight of them had four-year degrees prior to serving a mission so would have already been past the prime age for finding an LDS marriage partner. Some participants even used mission service with the intent of leveraging post-mission resources to have more control over the direction of their post-mission life and expand their education or employment opportunities as seen in the quote below.

“I was kind of in a hard spot. After I graduated from high school I really wanted to go to college, but I knew we didn’t have the money for it, so I had just been working at a salon in town. I got to the point where I wanted to do something more and I was unhappy. One day I was talking to my Bishop about it, and he asked me why I didn’t consider a mission. It was the first time I thought about it and only because the Bishop said the church could help with the cost. I knew my family couldn’t afford to pay. We talked about how I could fill more beneficial roles in my ward after my mission and how the church even had scholarships that could help with college after my mission. It was a great option compared to what I was going to do if I stayed where I was and I don’t regret it. My life has changed because of my mission experiences even though I am still not married.” - Lolita, 28

This is an important point to make because the very thing that pushes women into mission service is also the major driver for their decisions after the mission. If a major reason that Filipino LDS women serve missions is lack of opportunity to marry and start a family then how much more disadvantaged will they be in the marriage market after their missions. They return home even older, and their RM status is not as valued or sought after as male RM status is. I returned home from my mission and spent two years attending singles wards and activities
while still receiving very little interest from local LDS men. Eventually I decided to return to the Philippines and marry a Filipino RM I met on my mission and had kept in steady contact with. At my current age and with my desperate desire to be married and have the blessings of a family promised by the church I sold all my physical possessions and moved to the Philippines for a year to live with my spouse’s family in their provincial home while we waited for his U.S. visa approval so he could return to the states with me.

As I listened to the narratives of female participants in this study, I couldn’t help but reflect on my own experiences. Of the twenty-three women interviewed all but four of them expressed singlehood as the primary motivating factor for mission service while the men resoundingly referred to a fulfillment of religious duty as exemplified in the quotes below.

“I always knew I was going to serve a mission. I knew I wanted to do my duty and my family, and I started saving when I was young so I could serve a mission. We even planned my college out so that I could study for a couple years, serve a mission, and then return to my studies when I got home.” -Joselito, 49

“You know how it is, my family had raised me to prepare for mission service and I wanted to do my part. I knew that the Lord would bless me with an eternal companion and family when I returned from my mission because I had made the sacrifice to serve.” -Ramil, 43

This did not mean that participants were not also motivated by a desire to serve the people and share their beliefs, but their primary motives aligned with the prominent doctrinal teachings of the church.

The same gender issues motivating mission service impacted marriage trends after missions with the majority of men marrying within two years after their mission and women taking longer. Less than half (n=10) of the women married within two years, seven marrying within four years and the last five remaining unmarried until the time of this study. Female RM
were also more likely to marry non-LDS men, a highly stigmatized act for general members of the church and even more so for RMs, because of their inability to find marriage partners within the church. Female RMs in the Philippines experience a double gendering as aging women in the church, but also as aging Bachelorettes in the Philippines referred to as *Tumatandang Dalaga*, which significantly impacts the decisions they make after their mission. The next section discusses how the gender issues driving mission service and post-mission marriage trends impacts the likelihood of RMs to migrate.

**RELATIVE DEPRIVATION**

Gender factors had no significant impact on how RMs ranked their household’s relative SES status before, during, and after the mission or their perceptions of contentedness with it. The study’s original hypothesis expected to see some variance in RD perceptions with the understanding that Sister missionaries tend to be assigned to nicer and safer mission areas with relatively higher standard housing. The housing differentials were confirmed as female RMs tended to rank mission housing between an 8 and 9 out of 10 while elders generally ranked slightly lower from 7 to 8. Since the findings of this study showed that the mission housing had little or no impact on perceptions of RD nicer housing for the sisters had little impact on other variables examined in this study.

Although gender didn’t create any significant distinctions in how content RMs felt about their RD after the mission the ways in which RMs utilized the RD lessons gained from the mission did show gender differentials. Female RMs predominantly reflected on an application of their mission lessons to households and family structures while males applied their lessons to their ability to provide for their family’s needs as seen in the quotes below.
“I learned what kind of a partner I wanted and how important it is to find a good, hard-working man and a worthy priesthood holder. I told myself I wasn’t going to settle, and I didn’t, even though it took me longer and I am an older mother it was worth it not to be naïve, rush to marry, and struggle. It wouldn’t just be me struggling you know, I would create a family that would struggle, would do that to my children.” - Maria, 32

“I saw a lot of things on the mission, the ways that women from poor and wealthy areas had to take care of their families, had to figure out a way to get them food and clothes. I learned ways to make sure my kids have what they need even if we don’t have money, but I also learned how I can do things different to raise my children in a better home.” - Milly, 47

“You know I used to ask them, the wealthier families, listen to the things they did and the tools they used to get where they are. I know I was on my mission, but I was thinking, I am going to learn their secrets now so that when I have my family, I can make this kind of life for them so they won’t struggle, and we can live a good life. - Lopez, 26

“My mission experiences taught me to be more content with the simple life. I learned how to budget and live within my means and provide for the basic needs of my family and make them happy without having to go abroad to buy land and nice things.” - Merlin, 42

It is easy to see how the experiences and lessons that RMs gained on their mission were applied to their post-mission lives in a way that aligns with the gender-stereotypical doctrines of the church. Women thought about their experiences in relation to partner selection, mothering, and their role in the home while men thought about them in terms of negotiating their roles as breadwinners of the household. As seen in the previous two sets of quotes women most often referred to examples of other women they saw on the mission while men mostly referenced interactions with other men who served as strong examples to them.

POST-MISSION MIGRATION DECISIONS

Breaking down the general RM post-mission migration trends by gender (see Table 5.2) generally men (96%) were more likely than women (86%) to migrate. Out of the four RMs who
remained in their local province three were women. From the women who migrated 55% migrated domestically compared to 30% for men, 32% migrated abroad compared to 68% for men, and 23% migrated both domestically and abroad compared to 68% for men (see table 5.2). Overall, women migrated slightly less than men, but when they did migrate the majority chose to stay within the Philippines whereas the majority of male RMs chose to go abroad. This is interesting especially since we know that the international migration labor flows from the Philippines have become gendered with 56% being women and only 44% being men (PSA).

Migration motivations and frequency of migration were also impacted by gender dynamics. The two leading causes of female RM migration were marriage, commonly done through social networking, or family obligations and utilizing the PEF to obtain a four-year degree abroad. The leading motivation for male RMs migration was employment (64%), also predominantly done through social networking, and utilization of church resources (19%) (See table 5.3). Male RMs were more likely to engage in serial migration with 52% of SMs being male and 48% being female. The major gender difference in serial migration patterns is that the men had more migratory moves caused by accessing multiple church resources such as the ACE program in Cebu. In fact, all the RMs who utilized the ACE program in their post-mission strategies were male. Women had lower number of moves and almost half of them (n=4) only engaged in serial migration to access the PEF and study at BYU Hawaii before returning to their local communities per scholarship terms. The remaining women who engaged in serial migration did so due to familial care responsibilities (n=3) or because they remained single and made multiple employment moves, two RMs abroad and one RM domestically (see Table 5.4). Both male and female RMs used serial migration as a stepwise method though not the type typically
discussed in migration literature. Their migratory moves were motivated by their desire to access resources that would improve their economic, educational, and familial situations, but not necessarily gain them access to desired geographical location. Social networks were the primary drivers for both, but men were pulled to certain locations by members of their social network, the ties of which also motivated them to stay in the new location, while women utilized their social networks to gain access to destination locations such as staying in Manila with a Bishop while preparing to move to Hawaii to study. The lack of social networks for women while studying and the scholarship requirement to return home then resulted in female RMs returning back to the Philippines and their local provinces to use their newly gained educational tools and start families.

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter the gendered ideology and expectations of marriage and family development taught by the church was a leading factor in the gendered dynamic of RM migration trends. Female RMs ability to secure a marriage partner played the most important role in their post-mission migratory decisions. Of the four participants who stayed in their local province three of them were women who chose to remain in the province after marrying someone in their local community. The one man who stayed in his province also married someone from his local province but was currently in the process of deciding with his wife if they would move to a different location in search of employment opportunities that would put them in a better place to start a family. Of the five women who remained single, four of them chose to migrate abroad while one migrated domestically all for work. The women who went abroad followed the migration pathways of other single female friends and felt that the lack of familial ties and marriage opportunities back home meant they, “might as well do other things.”
The one woman who stayed in the Philippines continued to desperately seek a marriage partner to the extent that she confided in me she had been discussing a marriage agreement with another RM from her mission who was also still single, but for whom she didn’t necessarily have any romantic feelings. Four of the women who married within four years and three of the women who married within two years migrated abroad for similar reasons to the previous women but chose not to return abroad after their first contract due to renewed marriage potential in the Philippines. Women were also more likely to migrate domestically to accommodate their spouses and extended family’s needs.

Male RMs engaged in opposite behavior typically marrying shortly after their return from the mission and choosing to migrate abroad or domestically as a strategy for providing financially for their families. Several of the men (n=4) also took huge strides in negotiating ways in which their families could join them at their foreign assignments to follow the church’s counsel of avoiding familial separation. This is an immensely hard goal to accomplish so having four men who were successfully navigating this dynamic was impressive. Like the women men followed pathways of other RMs working abroad who would pass on referrals to their companies and tapped into their social networks to find employment opportunities in other urban centers in the Philippines, joined other male RMs in stepwise migration utilizing church resources such as the ACE program in Cebu. Marriage and family development was a migration push factor for male RMs whereas the lack of marriage and family development drove the female migration trend as women pursued work and education while waiting to meet someone to start a family with.
Female RMs also strongly adhered to the church’s council to abstain from working outside of their household so they could focus on nurturing the children. Of the seventeen women who married only three of them continued to work outside the home. This is particularly interesting when we consider the educational demographics in table 5.1 that indicate twice as many female RMs had four-year degrees as male RMs. Although the church discourages women from working outside the home, they do encourage women to obtain higher education as it benefits them in the running of their homes and education of their children and this is exactly what some of them did. Rosita, a thirty-two-year-old mother of two, used her degree in education to develop early learning programs for her children which she also shared online with her extended family living in other provinces and used in her church assignment of teaching primary children.

Women abstaining from the workforce had a major impact on their likelihood to migrate since the major migratory motivator was increased employment opportunities. Although this decreased female RMs likelihood of migration it had the converse effect on their spouses and the male RMs in the study. Men, who typically had lower levels of education and felt increased pressure being the sole financial provider for their households, often turned to migration to increase their household finances without needing their wives to enter the workforce. Men who chose to migrate domestically felt a strong pull to adhere to the church’s council of not being far from their family and most of them moved their entire household with them. The men who chose to migrate abroad were aware of and concerned with the church’s council, but they justified their decisions by viewing their migration as a short-term sacrifice that would pay significantly more than domestic jobs and allow them to quickly purchase land or homes and create savings that
would allow them to be closer to their family’s long term. Ironically men often stayed much longer than desired at foreign assignments due to rising and unexpected household costs that delayed original plans.

SOCIAL & CULTURAL CAPITAL

Generally, RMs felt a new level of independence and confidence in their post-mission social interactions that they felt improved their success in their post-mission ventures, which was confirmed by RMH interviews where the families were asked what the major differences were in their child when they returned home from the mission. Although RMs resoundingly agreed about the value of characteristics learned on the mission like perseverance, long-suffering, determination, and gratitude gendered nuances were present in the ways that male and female RMs talked about what they learned and how they utilized these skills after their mission. Female RMs viewed their mission lessons as personal growth and development that made them more empathetic and a better person, especially in relation to mothering, while male RMs discussed their experiences in relation to rational skill application like budgeting and networking in order to access new jobs and increase salary opportunities. This nuance can be seen in the quotes from chapter four (pg. 89) and in the quotes below.

“When I came home from my mission I was able to understand people differently, I mean better, since I had seen the different ways that people live on my mission and that no one is better or worse than the other I could understand them better and be more willing to accept them and help them. I can raise my children with a better understanding of how people live and with more gratitude, but maybe they will have to serve a mission as well to see it themselves” -Pearl, 34

“I am just a different person than I was before my mission, I can’t explain it any better, I have become a better person and it impacts everything I have done since my mission.” -Rachel, 47
“Because of what I learned on my mission I have the confidence to approach anyone on the street, I can talk to anyone. I can be confident at job interviews and feel like I know how to speak and deal with foreigners. It helps, you know, when you are trying to work in these (Western-based call center in Manila) jobs.” -Marc, 43

“My mission is the only reason I can be a good Bishop here in my ward. I have to be organized, keep our ward budget in order, and manage all of the members. You know how Filipinos are, there are always problems and chismis (gossip) to deal with and I can do it all much better than if I hadn’t been a zone leader and assistant to the president and gotten so much practice (he laughed).” -Paul, 39

Male RMs thought about how the skills they gained on their mission made them more employable, or better able to manage occupation or leadership roles while women thought about the personal growth they experienced and how it helped them in nurturing roles like motherhood or being a caretaker for elderly family members. For the female RMs that remained single and were working abroad they also viewed their mission experience related to personal growth, but in a way that also aided them in their gendered jobs. For example, Marta is a middle school teacher in Thailand who feels like the lessons she learned on her mission make her a better teacher and better able to nurture children from different backgrounds.

“I see a lot of kids here, from different types of families and homes. Some of them are very poor, but some of them are well off. Sometimes they don’t treat each other well and it is an opportunity for me to teach them some of the things I learned on the mission. Teach them to be kinder and more accepting, and to share. I don’t have children of my own, but I think I am like a mother in this way.” -Marta, 45

Although male and female RMs engaged in migration at even levels their timeframes, destinations, and drivers revolved around the central gendered tenants of their religious ideologies. Women’s migration decisions were impacted by their negative marriage status while men’s were impacted by their positive marriage status. Female RMs took longer to marry, were more likely to stay single, and migrated because they were not married and did not feel bound by
the LDS doctrine to stay at home rather than enter the workforce. Men were more likely to migrate because they were married and strategizing ways to financially support their developing families. Men were specifically pushed into international migration in search of higher wages and better employment opportunities that would compensate for their wives staying in the home.

CONCLUSION

GENDER AND RELIGION

Gender has and continues to play a prominent, institutionalized role in the developmental processes of the Philippines beginning with the impact Spanish, colonial rule had on the indigenous population. Not only did Spanish rule bring economic changes that dispossessed women of their agricultural trade and forced men into paid agricultural labor, but their Catholic missionizing efforts also forced restructuration of gender and sexual cultural practices. Pre-colonial sexual freedoms and non-binary gender practices were forcibly replaced with views of virginal maidenhood and nurturing motherhood, which proved to be the most impactful tool in conversion. Indigenous priestesses were labelled witches and punished as such and male ritual specialists who dressed as women were targeted and attacked. Filipinos were resocialized, often violently, into new models of rigidly binary sex and gender practices as colonial rule instituted a new Catholic culture. (Brewer, 2001)

Establishment of Catholicism during colonial rule is an important factor that eased the success of missionary efforts by the LDS church. The doctrines and ideologies, especially in relation to gender and sexuality, were similar enough to increase the likelihood of conversion. As we’ve previously established the LDS faith views a woman’s highest calling as being a wife and mother and being at home to nurture and raise children in accordance with the gospel. Sexuality
is also viewed restrictively as it is in Catholicism with sex outside of the sacred bonds of marriage being prohibited. Men are seen as the leaders of their household as only they can hold the priesthood, the power and authority to act in God’s name given to worthy men in the church from their higher leaders. They also carry the full burden of providing for all the spiritual and financial needs of their household members.

The gender dynamics created by the doctrine and practices of the LDS church and mission service have implications for household vitality and national identities. As a nation of the Global South the Philippines has relatively high rates of poverty and unemployment, which makes it common for most household members to engage in formal or informal economic ventures to assist in providing for the financial needs of the household. Counseling women to stay out of the workforce and in the home when a household’s economic survival is reliant on all family members significantly increases the financial burden placed on men and the household’s likelihood to experience increased levels of poverty. In a country where national wages are low and unemployment rates are high LDS men have few options, but to consider international work to allow their wives to fulfill her highest calling of nurturing and raising the children. For LDS families to adhere to the doctrine of women staying in the home they must then violate the church’s other council of not leaving their families to work abroad. The most obvious reason that LDS men predominantly chose to violate church’s counsel on going abroad in order for their wives to stay in the home is depth to which the gender norms are woven into the LDS lifestyle and the intensity with which they are taught and discussed. Terms like; “A woman’s highest and noblest calling”, “greatest rewards in this life and the next”, and “no more sacred work” are resoundingly ubiquitous in church texts, meetings, and leadership speeches. The church’s
guidance to avoid international work and the separation of family is seen as just that, guidance. It isn’t a part of the central doctrine of the church and thus can be rationally excused in order to adhere to more important and embedded expectations.

It remains interesting that the gendered doctrine of the church is internalized so deeply by Filipinos that it can overcome the nation’s longstanding, commercialized culture of migration. The integration of migration into governmental development plans began in the 1970’s at which point church membership was still far below 100,000 and didn’t reach half a million until the 2000’s. Even now LDS members make up a small percentage of the overall national population, so they are still surrounded majorly by non-LDS Filipino culture rooted prominently in labor migration and particularly the gendered nature of it. Most migrants leaving the country are women for reasons discussed in earlier chapters and, more importantly, the bulk of government migration campaigns are geared towards encouraging women to work abroad as heroines of the nation so why do LDS women feel more dedicated to adherence of religious ideology over deeply embedded national ideologies?

We’ve established previously that RMs have a high social status in the LDS church, tend to adhere to the doctrines of the church more rigidly and participate more in religious household practices. It is possible that this gender dynamic is unique to Female RMs in the Philippines because they are trying to live a more worthy and rigidly gospel-adherent life. Because non-RM female members of the church were not interviewed as a comparison group there is no way to know if the church’s doctrine also takes precedence over national migratory culture for them. The interplay of national and religious gender dynamics for non-mission serving LDS members would a unique and interesting direction for further research.
GENDER AND ECONOMY

In addition to imposed shifts in gender and sexual practices, colonial rule pushed Filipino women into urban centers seeking work in the formal economy and informal trades like sex tourism. They were disproportionately hired by global organizations established in FTZs as easily disposable labor. Men became Spain’s low-wage workers replacing women in local agricultural work and began participating in international labor migration in occupations such as, seafarers, agricultural work on sugar cane plantations, and industrial factory work (Espiritu, 1995). This trend continued until the 1960’s when Filipina women began entering the global labor market in larger numbers due to EVP programs drawing nurses to the U.S. and the growing demand for domestic workers and entertainers in nations of the Global North (Choy, 2003; Hosoda, 1996). The number of Filipina women entering the global labor market continued to increase until they became the majority in 2006. This continues to be the trend with women making up the majority of OFWs two-thirds of whom are employed in the informal field of domestic labor (Guevarra, 2010).

The feminization of global Filipino labor flows is a well-known and studied phenomenon, which the Philippine government has bolstered through their national advertisement campaigns marketing women as the heroines of their nation. The nation and Filipino households benefit more from women working abroad as they feel greater levels of guilt about their ability to send aid to their families and thus send greater amounts of remittances and other resources back to sending communities (Chant & McIlwaine, 1995). Among receiving nations Filipina workers are highly desired for English proficiency, high levels of educational attainment as many four-year college degree holders are opting to work in domestic labor abroad.
because it offers higher income than any degree-related occupations in the Philippines (Constable, 2007; Parrenas, 2001), and because their gender socialization causes other nations to perceive them as subservient, obedient, and hardworking (Lam & Yeoh, 2018; Geuvarra, 2010; Espiritu, 1995).

On the scale of global gender development these shifts can be seen as movement towards greater gender equality as more women have the freedom of moving into the labor force thus wielding more economic power within their households and causing renegotiation of gendered household labor dynamics (Guzman et al., 2007; Ghosh, 2009). However, the OFW feminization can also be problematic as it shifts gendered household labor within the Philippines but crystalizes domestic work in nations of the Global North as, not only women’s work, but the work of non-white women from relatively more impoverished communities (Lam & Yeoh, 2018). Additionally, because their increased economic power is dependent upon their transnational labor it may only be maintained if women stay abroad while their physical absence from their households may decrease their impact on factors like household spending decisions (Guzman et al., 2007). This is problematic because men tend to spend remittances on investments in businesses and property while women apply them to health, nutrition, and education (Sow et al. 2004; IOM & UN-INSTRAW, 2007; Guzman et al., 2007) meaning that while women are experiencing higher levels of economic and employment opportunity their remittances are not being used to invest in key resources women would invest in that lift families out of poverty (Orozco et al., 2009).

Although increasing participation of Filipinas in the global labor market increases their economic power in their households as well as in national and global economies it also comes
with disproportionately gendered risks. Most female OFWs work in informal, unregulated occupations such as domestic work which puts them at greater risk of labor violations and mistreatment while not providing them with programs and resources to manage these risks or exit dangerous work environments without making their presence in foreign nations precarious. The impact of feminized OFW flows also radiates outward to impact other important measurements of Development such as the emotional and psychological needs of families left behind in the Philippines (Parrenas, 2005) or families created while working abroad (Constable, 2014). One of the benefits of the stringent LDS value placed on the family unit and a women’s stereotypical role within it is their ability to circumvent the well-documented negative impacts of mothers leaving their children to be cared for by extended family in the Philippines while they work abroad. However, the impact of having a parent abroad remains as men are more likely to go abroad to make up for the economic cost of women staying home.

While Female RMs predominantly chose to stay at home after marriage and childbearing they did engage in higher-than-average participation in migration prior to settling down. Female RMs were 31% more likely than the average Filipino to Migrate, only slightly more likely (6%) to migrate domestically, but much more likely to migrate abroad (29%) and both domestically and abroad (19%). They are experiencing both the benefits and risks associated with migration in the Philippines at significantly higher rates than the average population albeit it for shorter longitudinal spans.

The complexity of gender dynamics in social processes like migration, development, and religious membership and their interplay with each other requires a more nuanced approach to understanding global progress. Although, global development standards are no longer based on
economic measures alone they are still using variables driven by finance and economy. For example, to say that women’s ability to enter the workforce is progress towards development, which the UN states, is saying that the welfare and freedom of women is advanced by their access to economic resources and yet it fails to consider how the jobs they are accessing could be putting women at increased risk of physical harm, exploitation, and decreased emotional and mental health. To laud the ability of migrant remittances to decrease levels of poverty in the Global South while failing to examine the standards of living endured by migrants in pockets of the Global North is also an inadequate analysis. It is also problematic to create global standards for what goals like gender inequality look like without taking into consideration divergent cultural and religious beliefs that may contradict those standards. The U.S. is viewed as one of the central Developed nations of the Global North and yet it is where the LDS church is based where antiquated and arguably repressive gender ideologies continue to be strongly rooted. It is necessary to problematize the way global development goals are created, measured, and potentially perpetuate the very unequal global development they give the appearance of combatting.

Chapter six will delve further into general Filipino perceptions about and participation in domestic and international migration patterns. The central role of global labor migration in household economic success and status will be discussed as well as the dismissive attitudes towards domestic migration. A new trend of Filipino migrants who go abroad without informing their households until arriving in the receiving destination will also be presented and discussed. All of these topics will then be discussed in relation to their connections to global processes of colonization, development, and global hierarchical structures.
CHAPTER 5 TABLES

Table 5.1 Participant Demographics by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Age Range (26 – 49)</th>
<th>Highest Degree Completed</th>
<th>Annual Household Income (Converted from Fil. Peso to USD)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>31-39</td>
<td>40-49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
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Table 5.2 RM Migration Statistics by Sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Findings</th>
<th>TOTALS</th>
<th>Remained in Province (RP)</th>
<th>Migrated</th>
<th>Migrated Domestically (MD)</th>
<th>Migrated Abroad (MA)</th>
<th>Migrated Dom &amp; Ab (MDMA)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>45</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MALE</td>
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<td>4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population Trends</td>
<td>107 MM</td>
<td>48MM</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>59MM</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>52MM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.3 RM Migration Motivations by Sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marriage/Family Obligations</th>
<th>LDS Services</th>
<th>Social Networking</th>
<th>Employment</th>
<th>Educ.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.4 Serial Migration Frequencies by Sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SERIAL MIGRATION</th>
<th>Number of Migratory Moves</th>
<th>Participant Occurrence</th>
<th>GENDER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25 RMs 60%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
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CHAPTER 6: HOUSEHOLD PARTICIPATION IN MIGRATION DECISIONS

Prior to the 1980’s migration theory utilized Neoclassical Economics to examine migration as an individual decision made based on global wage differentials and labor supply and demand. This theoretical framework was challenged in the 80’s by the New Economics of Migration theory (1985), which challenged the idea that migration decisions are made by isolated, individual actors. This was the first theory to posit that migration decisions are a collective process through which households maximize income and employment opportunities while minimizing risks. This theory also states that developing countries, like the Philippines, are more likely to engage in household migration strategies due to the lack of state welfare programs and insurance systems. To compensate for the lack of government welfare programs and shoulder growing national economic strain migration is used as a form of household welfare in which household financial resources are pooled to send a family member abroad who will in turn send monetary remittances home (Porumbescu, 2015). Migrant remittances are central to the economic survival of sending households and the sending nation’s economic and global development. This is especially true in the Philippines where labor migration has been embraced and institutionalized as a national development strategy, easing the burden of the state to create welfare systems and confront domestic infrastructure issues and further encouraging and perpetuating the use of migration as a method of household welfare.

Since the 80’s a robust field of migration research has been established to further explain the phenomenon of household participation in migration strategies. The Household Strategies Approach (Chant & Radcliffe, 1992) states that households often play an integral role in migration decisions and often strategize and pay the cost of sending a family member abroad to
benefit the family as a whole (Massey et al., 1993; Stark, 1991). Individuals often sacrifice their own needs and desires to meet their household’s needs (Chant & Radcliffe, 1992; Tacoli, 1996). This is especially true for developing countries in which households must strategize all their economic resources to send one family member to a more developed country where the higher income will provide a return on their initial expenses. In addition to households, communities often play an important role in the likelihood of community members to migrate, and the typical migration locations chosen (Gurak & Caces, 1992; Mines & Massey, 1985; Massey et al, 1994).

Due to the important and integral role households and communities play in migration decisions this study would be remiss in looking at the mission’s impact on RM migration without considering the role their families and communities played, if any, in their decisions. This makes RM Household (RMH) interviews just as critical, if not more so, than RM interviews. The results presented in this chapter include one interview with the RM’s household of primary residence in the Philippines and one interview with a household living in the same community as the RMH that has no ties to the LDS church. Due to the cultural dynamic in the Philippines many interviews obtained household and migration information on several families living near the primary focus of the interview as others were invited to join the discussions.

Initially non-LDS household interviews were meant to function as a control group allowing a comparison of the RM household interview data to general Filipino households who had no affiliation to the church. However, as mentioned in Chapter three, RM households had inconsistent affiliation with the LDS church. In the U.S. most missionaries belong to multi-generational LDS families and are raised in the church from birth, but this is not true for the way the church has developed in the Philippines. Of the forty-one RMHs interviewed only three were
Full Member Household (FMH) with both parents belonging to the church. Eighteen were Non-Member Households (NMH) meaning that, although the RM had converted to the LDS church at some point, no one else in their household was a member of the church. The remaining twenty RMHs were Partial Member Household (PMH) where one parent was a member of the church, but the other was unaffiliated. Within the PMH category there was also a delineation between households who were actively participating in the church (n=13) and those who did not view themselves as active members of the church (n=7). Due to the complexity of RMH LDS affiliation, the inability to utilize the comparison group as such, and the congruency of narratives for both LDS and Non-LDS households the results will be presented as they apply to general Filipino household participation in migration decisions and processes.

HOUSEHOLD VIEWS ON MIGRATION

Due to the ubiquitous and heightened migration culture in the Philippines it is no surprise that everyone I talked to knew at least one person who had migrated and jumped at the opportunity to share their stories. The most interesting aspect of migration conversations was the constant default towards international migration with a disregard of domestic migration narratives. The previously reviewed statistics reveal that only slightly over 3% of Filipinos migrate abroad while almost 50% migrate domestically and yet, without fail, when asked about migration participants always discussed international migration. If pressed specifically about domestic migration all households had several family members who had migrated domestically typically for marriage or work, but participants kept these discussions brief and displayed dismissive attitudes inevitably returning to discussion of where their friends and family are abroad.
There was an air of pride in conversations as individuals competed to tell me where their family was or had worked abroad and called over other neighbors and family who had been abroad or knew others abroad. In addition to the general sense of pride about migration hierarchies of job title and destination countries consistently emerged in conversations with the initial participant calling on someone with more desired experience. For example, Mrs. Reyes told me about her sister who was working as a domestic worker in Singapore and had just sent them several large boxes of gifts but, she pointed out, “Tony who lives across the street went to Canada to work in hospitality, so they were able to build that new addition onto their home.” At which point a child would be instructed to bring Tony over to join the conversation and he would share his story, but end by pointing at a passerby and saying, “but there’s Jose and his wife’s a nurse in the U.S., they have it made! Come over here and talk to us Jose.”

There was an evident status attached to having a household member working or living abroad, but there was also a very clear hierarchy of desired occupations and destinations. At the bottom of the hierarchy was a clear disdain for Japan. It was a well-known joke that when you go to Japan to work you go as a “singer” on paper, but everyone knew you were going to do some kind of sex work. This aligns with what we know about Japan’s history of sex tourism in the Philippines. Domestic work in other Asian countries was seen as the lower end of the totem pole while domestic work in Western nations was seen as a step up. Mid-level migration included jobs that required degrees like engineering and nursing but were in less desirable regions like the Middle East. Migration pathways that Filipino households displayed the most pride regarding were occupations that required degrees and were in nations of the Global North like nursing in the U.S. or engineering in Germany.
The displayed migration hierarchy was not just related to the obvious occupational and location prestige but was highly connected to how the migrant’s household in the Philippines was able to display conspicuous consumption. The most common mode of display was in the quality of housing as exemplified in the example of my interview with Mrs. Reyes where she pointed out the addition to Tony’s home. Filipinos benefit from obviously higher exchange rates from wealthier nations that allow them to invest in land, housing, and home repair; entrepreneurial ventures such as tindahans (the little stores built onto the front of their homes) or purchasing tricycles and jeepneys to run for fares, and simple status markers such as personal vehicles and name brand clothing and accessories. These were the most referenced topics in my conversations about migration with Filipino households. As interviews shifted into community conversations groups would point out homes within the local community and explain who had migrated in the household, where they went, what their occupation was, and what economic strides they had seen take place with the home and household in the Philippines as seen in the quotation below and Figures 6.1-6.3.

“My husband is in Dubai and he sends money home to help pay for school and our household needs, but we really wanted to fix the house. Until now we have only been able to build the addition to the front for the tindahan (see Figure 6.1), which helps us also make some income of our own here. Look there, at Maricel’s house (see Figure 6.2) they have been able to add brick, paint, and some security gates. They’re lucky because their son is in Dubai, but he is an engineer, and my husband just works in a personal household (a driver). Some day we want to buy our own land and build a nice new house like the ones you see over there (see Figure 6.3), but there are always unexpected expenses, and we don’t make as much progress towards our goal as we want. Those families (of the nice houses) have to send multiple people abroad and they have degrees, you know.” -Mrs. Lopez, 42 years old, mother of three

The general Filipino attitudes and rhetoric about migration aligned with the pervasive national culture that views international migration as an important social and economic
household marker. All participants personally knew Filipinos who had migrated both domestically and abroad, yet conversations were dominated by stories of international migration and their impact on local households while domestic migration was acknowledged, when specifically asked about, but was generally disregarded. Discussions about international migration were founded on hierarchies of destination desirability and economic success displayed through patterns of conspicuous consumption that are strongly supported by previous decades of migration literature. Although the general Filipino household displayed attitudes about migration consistent with their national culture and global migration trends when discussions moved to topics of the processes of migration stories began to emerge that conflicted with the household migration strategies discussed at the beginning of this chapter. The rest of this chapter will discuss the major receiving regions of Filipinos, their migration requirements and nuances, and their impact on individual versus household decisions about migrating to these regions.

MIGRATION PROCESSES

Filipinos live and work all over the world, but the largest number of Filipinos reside in the Americas, where there is an average of four million, and the Middle East, where there is an average of just over two million. One and a half million Filipinos reside in Asia and the Pacific region and about half a million reside in Europe (Department of Foreign Affairs, 2015). Each region draws migrants for specific reasons such as skill sets, economic advantages, and ease of employment processes. This section will discuss the RM Household (RMH) and Filipino non-LDS Household (FNLH) migration statistics, motivations for migration and destination selection, the impact of regional differences on employment processes, and the connection of mission service to these topics.
Although all household participants knew of someone within their family who had migrated either domestically or internationally I wanted to gather the migration statistics on members of their immediate household who had migrated. Participants were asked to identify anyone who belonged to their immediate/nuclear household who had migrated within the Philippines or abroad especially those who were sending financial resources to them. From a total of ninety-one households a total of forty-four individuals migrated domestically (RMH=19; FNLH=19) with thirty-eight households having one domestic migrant and three households having two. From the FNLH five individuals migrated to other provinces due to marriages or other relationships, eight migrated to Manila for employment purposes, and six moved to regional urban centers other than Manila mainly for employment and economic opportunities. The RMH data is very similar to the FNLH with three individuals moving for marriage, ten moving to Manila for employment or educational opportunities, and six moving to urban centers in other regions for increased employment and economic opportunity. A total of thirty-two individuals migrated internationally (RMH=22; FNLH=10). All but two households had one international migrant with the remaining two having two family members abroad. Twelve migrated to Asia/Pacific (RMH=9; FNLH=3), seven to the Americas (RMH=4; FNLH=3), and thirteen migrated to the Middle East (RMH=9; FNLH=4).

Resoundingly and not surprisingly Filipinos chose to migrate both domestically and abroad to seek wider access to economic resources primarily through sources of employment opportunities. Migrants generally sent resources back to their families in the province though this varied dependent upon the type of migration engaged in. Domestic migrants, who were still operating within the limits of the Philippine national economy and were not advantaged by
foreign exchange rates, sent the least amount of financial aid back to their households and typically only in the form of money. International migrants sent their households resources in a wider array of methods in addition to sending monetary remittances, the most popular of which is the balikbayan box. A balikbayan box is a large box packed full of things such as candy, chocolate, health and beauty supplies, name brand clothes etc. for which taxes and governmental fees are waived for all international Filipinos. International Filipinos also help family by purchasing land, equipment, or vehicles that will aid their households.

Up to this point in interviews and community discussions everything that was shared by participants aligned with what research has already established about migration in general. Migration is highly motivated by the need for economic opportunity, typically flows from rural to urban centers, and migrant households benefit immensely from the remittances and other resources sent back to them by migrants. However, an unanticipated narrative emerged as both RMH and FNLH households explained the decision processes their family members went through prior to migrating.

To capture the household level participation in the individual’s decision to migrate participants were asked if migrants from their households consulted with them prior to deciding if they would migrate and what counsel they sought about the destination they would migrate to. The average domestic migrant shared their concerns about remaining in their local communities and their desire to seek economic opportunities in other locations with their households for several months to one year leading up to their move. They also leveraged household resources and networks in choosing their migration destination and mobilizing resources prior to their
migration. Most international migrants followed the same trend however an additional, divergent narrative emerged.

I began to hear surprising stories of migrants who, not only didn’t consult their households before migrating, but did not even inform them of their intended move until they were already in the receiving destination. I originally heard these stories in RM interviews since they were done online before I started fieldwork and, although I was surprised, I did not expect to hear of the same things occurring in non-LDS households. Based on the data already discussed in chapter four the independence, boldness, and courage to strike out on their own gained by RMs on the mission seemed like an intuitive driver for RMs to engage in this kind of an intense risk. Although, this may have played a role in RMs decisions there must be other drivers as well if non-LDS Filipino households are having the same experiences. Out of the thirty-two international migrants six of them migrated abroad without discussion or informing their families (RMH=5; FNLH=2). Once the migrant had arrived in their destination, they contacted their families to let them know where they were located and how long their contracts would last.

The one common denominator in the migrants who failed to inform their households was that they all went to the Middle East. To understand the full story of what was happening in these situations I had to piece together the stories told in RM, RMH, and FNLH interviews. Although Filipinos have been going to the Middle East since the early 60’s the households I interviewed still displayed a sense of trepidation about sending family members, particularly women, to the Middle East. They worried about what they perceived to be a rigid culture and criminal justice system and the ability of migrants to move and worship freely. They particularly worried about the rigid covering and behavioral requirements for women and the harsh punishments that they
believed could include death. The households indicated that if their family member had discussed wanting to work in the Middle East with them, they would have discouraged it out of concern for their safety and happiness. Two of the non-informing migrants were male and four were female.

Households also explained the key difference in migration processes between the Middle East and other locations that made it possible for migrants to complete the process without consulting their households. Because the international labor flow from the Philippines is managed by the national government through recruitment agencies it is not an easy or cheap process. Therefore migrants typically have to strategize with their households in order to mobilize the economic resources for application fees, documents, and deposits. However, according to participants, the locations the non-informing migrants went to had zero placement fees and allowed for things like visa expenses to be automatically deducted from their paychecks upon arrival in the receiving nation reducing their reliance on household financial strategies.

When the non-informing migrants were asked directly why they made their decisions without consulting or informing their families responses overwhelmingly displayed a strong independence coupled with a desired avoidance of familial disapproval or discouragement as seen in the quotes below.

“I already knew what I wanted to do. I had researched it and talked to the people I knew. I had already gone to a recruitment agency when I visited some friends from the mission in Manila and gotten the necessary paperwork. I knew what I was going to do, and I didn’t want my mother (single mother) to worry about things or feel that she had to help. So I just called my Mom when I was in Dubai and let her know what was going on. She wouldn’t have changed my mind anyway, but this way she didn’t have to worry.” -Tony, 34 yr. old RM who cleans palaces in Dubai

“I didn’t have a lot of choices. I knew my family couldn’t help me with expenses and if I told them I was going to Kuwait they would just be afraid for me. I know
other RMs who are there, so I won’t be alone, and I need to make more money to help my family back home. They may not like it, but they will appreciate the financial support. -Ruby, 43 yr. old RM working as a domestic helper

“I knew several people who were already working in Qatar and they kept encouraging me, telling me I didn’t have to save a lot of money first. I knew my parents would prefer to save money and go somewhere that is better for women, but we just never had enough (financial resources) so I just did it on my own. I told them I was going to Manila, which I did, but then I called them after several days and told them I was contracted in Qatar for two years and they didn’t have to pay for anything. I know they are worried, but I told them I am not the only Filipino here. I will be okay, and it will be worth it.” -Lola, 28 yr. old Non-LDS working as a nanny

Although they chose to migrate without consulting or informing their households, they still chose to migrate with the primary intent of sending financial assistance back to their families in the Philippines, so their primary motive didn’t shift or become more individualistic.

A permutation of multiple social factors may be creating new avenues through which individuals are able to use more independent agency to strategize global resources and life planning. The most liberating factor is the easing of migration processes and reduction of upfront costs that release individuals from the necessity of strategizing costs with their household members. We must keep in mind though that only certain migration destinations are offering these eased restrictions and fees to attract the more economically challenged migrants to what have been expressed as less-desirable locations and this may have other negative impacts. The most documented impact of this process is that migrants are unaware of the extent of fees and costs that will be deducted from their income in the receiving destination, which ends up accounting for a large percentage of their wages, limiting the money they can send back to the Philippines and typically causing migrants to stay for longer periods of time to pay off hidden costs (Tomacruz & Santos, 2017).
The second social factor that may be causing shifts in household participation in migration decision is the ability of individuals to create their own independent social networks. All non-informing participants utilized their own social networks both in other regions of the Philippines and abroad to facilitate and support their migration. In the past migrants were reliant on longstanding, household social networks whereas ease of access to social media allows individuals to build and maintain individual networks of others they have gone to school or worked with more easily. Platforms like Facebook allow individuals to stay more connected and up to date on other members of their social network who have migrated to urban centers or abroad and reach out to them for help and guidance. The use of social networks works in both directions as those in the Philippines reach out to Filipinos in destination they would like to travel to, but Filipinos who have migrated also reach out to people they know from previous locations to encourage them to join them in the new destination or at their new employer.

The third, and last, major factor that impacted the non-informing migration trend was the migrants display of personal characteristics such as: independence, willingness to take risks, and confidence in their ability to figure things out on their own to ensure success. These are all traits that RMs developed strength in just due to the nature of missionary work. The two non-LDS non-informing migrants believed that this was just their personality, “the way they had always been” and their parents concurred. This cannot be the sole driver of migrants leaving without consulting or informing their families or we would have seen a greater number of RMs engaging in this behavior out of the twenty-two that went broad and surely there would be more Filipinos in the general population with these types of independent personalities so their frequency would also be much higher. These characteristics provide migrants with the courage to strike out on
their own, but for participants in this study they were combined with access to expansive individual social networks and new migrant programs that minimized economic cost allowing migrants to circumvent the typically necessary mobilization of household resources.

As this finding was unexpected and a bit surprising the data from this study was not exhaustive enough to fully explain either the frequency or cause of the non-informing migrant trend. Further research is needed that can look at larger numbers of migrant groups to see if this is a growing trend. It is likely that this may be an increasing dynamic within younger generations who have increased access to social media, technology, and are developing new social methods for engaging in old behaviors. Additionally, studies should aim to understand how this dynamic is impacted by the specific receiving nation, their migration processes, and their desirability as a migrant destination. If this is a growing trend it is important to watch and understand how migrants may start to take a more individualistic approach to migration decisions and what overall impact this will have on the economic health and well-being of the households left behind.

CONCLUSION

The findings in this chapter demonstrate the extent to which national programs built upon processes of transnational globalization and development have been internalized and integrated into the culture, psyche, and daily lives of Filipinos. They demonstrate pride and express identity and social prestige based on where members of their household have arrived beyond their own national borders and in their ability to demonstrate consumption patterns emulating countries of the West. They measure success by their level of participation in global spaces, which is only
possible because of unequal global development and economic success experienced by nations of
the Global North that draw people from less developed and economically successful nations.

Like the ways LDS church services are providing necessary resources to Filipinos the
global labor market is a lifeboat for Filipinos who rely heavily on international remittances for
household economic survival and the growth and development of their nation. OFWs are
marketed by the national government and perceive themselves as the modern-day heroes of their
households and nation. Their identities are rooted in their ability to provide for the welfare and
well-being of their families, which is only possible because of a global demand for their labor
(Garcia & Victoria, 2004; Guevarra, 2010). Despite these benefits the global labor market also
solidifies the global hierarchical framework that depicts processes in the Global North as
superior and imitation worthy if less-developed nations want to become developed. It also creates
a reliance on external, global forces to maintain the internal economic well-being of the
Philippines as opposed to developing internal processes and infrastructure that would create self-
reliance.

Economic and developmental reliance on external nations with higher development status
comes with a certain level of risk. While it eases the economic burden on Filipino households by
allowing them to strategize migration as a mode of household welfare, they are also
disproportionately impacted by how they are perceived through the lens of the Global South and
by global crisis such as the current COVID pandemic. Despite the reliance of more developed
nations on labor from less developed nations they tend to view foreign workers and their culture
as subordinate to their own. This is exemplified in the fact the majority OFWs fill labor gaps in
occupations that locals do not desire to work in such as elderly caregiving and domestic work,
which also tend to be predominantly female. The temporary status of OFWs in foreign countries also leaves them especially vulnerable to labor rights and contract violations in the formal economy. This is an even greater problem in the informal sector of domestic work which continues to be unregulated exposing workers to excessive overtime, underpay, and even diverse forms of abuse with few resources and little recourse for filing complaints and moving to different employers.

While global actors may view the transnational labor market as a tool for nations of the Global South to move towards attainment of the SDGs economically the ways in which it perpetuates colonial hierarchies and ideologies should be critically considered as well. Examining the impact of the transnational labor market specifically on Filipino household’s ability to be heroic actors in moving their nation closer to the SDGs we see that even their successes are problematic. The first three goals of reducing poverty, hunger, and increasing health and well-being can be improved by the economic influx of OFW remittances, but only if we measure the progress of the households in the Philippines to assess the nation’s domestic progress. The problem is this does not consider the situations that OFWs live in abroad. There are more documented cases than can be recounted of OFWs living in impoverished situations as they work abroad to send as much money back home as possible, neglecting their own health and well-being or being faced with labor demands that cause this, and even being exposed to neglect and abuse by their employers. We also miss the complexity of measuring progress when we look at a nation’s overall progress without examine individual social institutions. For example, it is true that OFW remittances can provide the necessary monetary resources to improve access to food and quality medical care giving the façade of progress towards SDG 3, but there must also
be a consideration of the psychological health impacts a transnational labor culture has on children left behind in the Philippines and the way it changes family structures and processes in problematic ways (Parrenas, 2005; Constable, 2014).

OFWs exist in a global gray zone where they have no rights in the receiving nation and the Philippine government has limited access to regulate and, more so, enforce labor regulations and OFW treatment. When we measure a nation’s progress towards global development standards are we measuring the internal conditions of a nation or are we considering, as well, the conditions of their citizens wherever they may be in the world? If the latter were true, we could argue that many of the conditions of transnational labor are actually reducing equality in the Global North by creating an even lower hierarchical rung of marginalized, disposable, low-wage laborers, who remain invisible in development statistics of the Global North and South and only partially move nations of the Global South towards higher levels of development through problematic processes.

Global issues, such as the COVID pandemic bring these issues further to light as we liken OFWs to the non-white lower-SES essential workers of the Global North who do not have the luxury of being able to quarantine at home during the pandemic. The reliance the Philippines has created on OFW remittances coupled with the limited development of domestic welfare programs leaves OFWs with few alternatives, but to continue risking their own and their family’s health by working abroad during high-risk social events. Having a large portion of Filipino citizens in nations throughout the world is also problematic when major issues like COVID happen where borders are shut down and international travel is restricted leaving workers stranded and potentially overstaying work contracts and visas making their foreign legality even
more precarious. These current social issues provide potent examples of the ways in which economic growth predominantly fed by participation in global processes are problematic for both receiving and sending nations.

NON-INFORMING MIGRATION

The internalization of national hero rhetoric, continued stagnation of internal welfare programs, and easing of migrant restrictions and processes in certain global labor markets are also shifting the processes of migration Filipinos engage in. Some Filipinos are so determined to provide additional financial support to their households that they are, not only going despite familial dissuasion, but without discussing or informing the decision with their households. This is only possible as particular regions give the appearance of limited or no upfront financial costs, while deducting high fees and travel costs from salaries upon arrival and because of the long history of global migration in the Philippines that allows individual Filipinos to develop their own migrant networks beyond their household’s. Several elements of this trend can be viewed as beneficial such as allowing migrants to act more individually and step out of the constraints household decision-making processes might place on them and providing migration potential for the more impoverished Filipino households who lack the financial capability to go through more standard processes of finding global labor contracts, but there are still far more reasons that this process is problematic.

First and foremost, there are a lot of safety issues with individuals engaging in global migration without their families knowing where they are. All the participants in this study, who failed to inform their families of their migration, also went to the Middle East region for which Filipino households expressed the greatest safety concerns. Participants didn’t inform their
families to intentionally avoid the concern and dissuasion they knew would be expressed, but this also makes the family incapable of maintaining contact throughout the processes and ensuring the migrants safe travel and arrival in the receiving nation. The migrant and the family are also robbed of the opportunity to provide and utilize important guidance and generational knowledge about the processes that can make the migrant better equipped to cope with safety, culture, and financial processes in the receiving nation which are critical tools despite familial approval/disapproval. The fact that participants chose the region of migration because of limited up-front costs and failed to inform their families to spare them the stress and financial burden they knew they could not shoulder also means that, if these migrants found themselves in precarious position, neither the individual nor the household would have the financial resources to provide emergency assistant. Non-informing migrants would thus be more likely to get stuck abroad, accept exploitative labor contracts, and stay in unhealthy or dangerous working conditions because of their lack of economic resources. This raises the question of whether we may see an even more exploitable group of labor migrants entering the global stage who are taking higher risks without household support and security and accepting more financially restrictive and exploitative labor contracts just to access the opportunity to work abroad.

Waiving initial processing and travel fees for labor migrants only to deduct large amounts from their salaries abroad reminds me of predatory loans provided in the U.S. to households who are so economically challenged they cannot gain access to other financial resources, but through which they end up even more financially underwater. Many migrants who take advantage of this process, both informing and non-informing, find themselves staying much longer than anticipated abroad chasing some degree of economic independence beyond the financial burden
of migration with no household safety net in the Philippines. This again brings us back to the hierarchical and exploitative nature of our current global system where nations of the Global South, like the Philippines see little alternative but to integrate and strategize migration into national development plans. Not only do these global processes disproportionately impact citizens of the Global South, but they create hierarchies within nations of the Global South that pull those living in abject poverty into migration processes and flows that put them at increased risk without necessary national or household safety nets.
CHAPTER 6 FIGURES

Figures 6.1 - 6.3 obtained by researcher during fieldwork in Philippines

Figure 6.1 Lopez Family home with tindahan built onto the front left (husband is driver in Dubai)

Figure 6.2 Maricel’s house with added brick and paint (son is engineer in Dubai)

Figure 6.3 Model home aspired to (multiple OFWs with degrees)
CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The post-colonial era not only brought an end to colonial invasion, rule, and cultural domination, but cemented national borders and shifted global processes of trade, development, and migration. However, the impacts of colonial rule did not end with their expulsion from ruled territories but had long term impacts in some cases severely crippling national economies and stunting their global development. Spanish, colonial rule in the Philippines drove the indigenous population from their female-dominated subsistence agriculture into male-dominated wage-based agricultural work, made women low-wage, disposable workers in urban centers, and made the nation a major exporter of goods to the extent that natives couldn’t afford to purchase their own products. Despite the notion that colonial rule was supposed to save and make weaker nations flourish Spanish rule caused the greatest decline in agricultural production and economic vitality and the greatest rise in unemployment and national debt (Bahramitash, 2005). It also had a hugely detrimental impact on gendered cultural practices subverting gender norms, pushing men into international low-wage work, and driving women into informal and high-risk urban occupations like prostitution and sex tourism. Spanish rule also delegitimized female-headed spiritual practices and embedded rigidly gendered Catholicism, which persists as the national religion to this day.

American colonial rule did little to improve economic, developmental, and gender dynamics within the Philippines and, in fact, perpetuated many derogatory practices from Spanish rule such as prostitution and sex tourism, which was so abundant that the Philippine’s government developed agencies to manage it. American rule ended with the national trade deficit and unemployment at all-time highs and the Philippine government desperately struggling with
how to revitalize their nation’s economy. It is ironic that colonial rule, touted as the big brother who will save the lesser nation, left the Philippines in such dire straits that they had to seek relief via loans from the IMF and World Bank. These loan programs are also touted as a global resource that will lift nations out of poverty and create sustainable economic growth but failed to have this impact on the Philippines. Structural loans came with caveats that the Philippines institute neo-liberal economic policies and create Free Trade Zones where foreign companies could operate outside of government regulation and taxation, which further exploited female rural-to-urban labor migrants. The institutionalization of neo-liberal policies and the draw of foreign organizations and investments to FTZs in the Philippines, not only failed to infuse the economy, but created a trade deficit of $257 million by 1970 and increased their external debt from $2 billion to $24 billion by 1983. Colonial rule failed to raise the Philippines to the level of development and success of their so-called advanced rulers as did global developmental loans, which just exposed the nation to increased economic exploitation furthering global development disparities.

The desperate economic situation caused by colonial rule and global development loans left the Philippines government with few options, but to integrate global labor migration into their economic and development strategies. Labor migration, originally male-dominated and driven by Spanish rule, was formalized, codified, and overseen by the government agencies beginning in the 1970’s. The nation became so reliant on the economic influx of migrant remittances that, although originally a temporary fix, labor migration has continued to be a central economic endeavor funding many of the nation’s developmental programs (Gueverra, 2010). A large part of the success of the Philippine migration programs is the growing demand
for low-wage labor in nations of the Global North to fill occupations less desired by local populations. This is also the major driver for gender shifts that have made the current labor migration flows female-dominated mirroring the female rural-to-urban migration that took place under colonial rule as Filipina women work abroad in informal occupations such as domestic work, elderly and childcare, and sex work. Despite the inability of nations of the Global North to pull the Philippines to their developmental level through colonial restructuring and global development resources the Philippine government has found a way to successfully tap into resources of the Global North and their market demands to improve the economic and developmental processes of their nation albeit through the unconventional method of marketing their citizens.

It is undeniable that migration, as a strategy of economic growth and development, has been successful in the Philippines as is evident by the replication of their methods by other nations entering the global labor market. It has solidified their location in the Global context as nations of the Global North rely on their market of highly desired migrant labor although it has done little to lift the nation from its categorization as a member of the Global South. It continues to be a nation ripe for the location of offices and factories of the Global North where they can exploit low-wage labor while maximizing one of the few benefits left from colonialism, English language proficiency and continues to be a central hotspot for global sex tourism. Although colonial presence has been withdrawn from the Philippines since it gained its independence in 1946 its economic and cultural impact are profound and enduring.

Despite the negative impact colonial rule had on the economic and cultural state of the Philippines ubiquitous perceptions of nations of the Global North as superior and emulation
worthy persist among Filipinos especially towards the United States. Global entities, like the United Nations, still deem some nations more advanced and “developed” than others and find programs and measurements to assist the challenged nations in reaching global standards of progress. Although global development goals measure important factors such as levels of poverty, gender equality, and access to key tools like education they are missing a complexity of measurement as their mode of analysis only examines the progress of nations as a whole without considering internal pockets of underdevelopment, stagnation, and perpetuated inequality and domination. This is exemplified in my discussion of gender in chapter five where the view of increasing Filipino women in the labor force as positive economic growth is problematized for its perpetuation of global patterns of gendered low-wage labor and missing an analysis of the quality of conditions for workers abroad. Global Development goals also play a key role in the modern ways that colonial ideas of global hierarchy and domination are perpetuated in a post-colonial era.

Because the impact of global hierarchies of power, influence, and domination are more obscure than colonial and imperial practices it is even more essential that an import is placed on a global awareness of how the presence of institutions and organizations of the Global North and their economic, religious, and developmental practices continue to impact nations of the Global south for the better and the worse. Often the impact of global conversion rates and missionary efforts are not considered in discussions of global economic development since religious movements were decoupled from colonial style development. This study has shown how the presence of LDS missionary programs in the Philippines significantly increases Filipino’s likelihood to migrate both domestically and abroad.
Chapter four explained the general impact of mission service on post-mission migratory trends while chapter five presented the gendered nuances to these findings. Although Filipino missionaries live at higher, western standards of living on their mission this does not impact their perceptions of relative deprivation as missionaries see missions as temporary and know they will return to the lifestyles they are used to at home. The most significant factor that impacted their perceptions of RD was exposure to diverse SES situations throughout their mission areas in the Philippines, which caused RMs to feel more grateful for their economic position, rank it less relatively deprived than before the mission, and express higher levels of contentedness. RMs learned lessons from the families they saw on their missions and created new blueprints for their post mission lives of behaviors they wanted to avoid or maximize. Women discussed their lessons in terms of personal growth and development and their ability to apply them to be better mothers while men discussed them more in relation to economic tools that would help them better fulfill their breadwinner role aligning with the gendered doctrine of the church.

Feeling less relatively deprived, more content, and having access to new blueprints for success should have decreased RMs likely to migrate, but the data revealed that the opposite was true. Filipino RMs were twice as likely as the general Filipino population to migrate, about sixteen times more likely to migrate abroad, and eleven times more likely to migrate domestically and abroad and also had high rates of serial migration more so domestically than internationally. Generally men (96%) were more likely than women (86%) to migrate. Out of the four RMs who remained in their local province three were women. From the women who migrated 55% migrated domestically compared to 30% for men, 32% migrated abroad compared to 68% for men, and 23% migrated both domestically and abroad compared to 68% for men (see
Despite feeling more content with their household economic situation lack of employment and marriage opportunity in their local communities couple with the pull of strong social networks developed on the mission drove RM migration.

Common migratory motivations were employment (64%) followed by social networking (38%), marriage (15%), church resources (19%), and education (12%). Male RMs migrated more for employment accessed through social networks and utilization of church resources while the leading causes of female migration were marriage through mission social networks or education through the PEF. Men were more likely to engage in serial migration (52%) than women (48%) and did so to utilize multiple church resources in conjunction with social networks and employment referrals while the leading cause of female serial migration was education abroad through the PEF or familial responsibilities. Men were also motivated by marital status and their religious breadwinner burden to migrate for greater economic opportunity that would allow them to adhere to the church doctrine of allowing their wives to stay at home and care for the family. Conversely, women took longer to marry after their missions and migrated while they did not have marriage prospects while opting to settle down and exit the workforce once they married. Interestingly the gendered doctrine of the LDS church, emphasizing a woman’s most important duty to be in the home, was able to overpower the long-standing, national rhetoric of a Filipina woman’s duty as heroin of the nation working abroad and sending remittances home.

Chapter six discusses examples of how central and powerful the image of the global Filipino worker is as Filipino household attitudes were dismissive about domestic migration, although each household had a minimum of one nuclear member who migrated domestically and touted the stories and symbols of success experienced by international migrants. Patterns of
conspicuous consumption were referenced in examples of homes, vehicles, and brand name clothing purchased by remittances to demonstrate hierarchies of neighborhood success that others hoped to achieve. An interesting emerging trend was also discussed, that of non-informing migrants who are engaging in international migration without discussing their decision with their households, mobilizing household resources for the move, or even informing their household that they will be going abroad to work until they are in the receiving destination. This pattern of migration was utilized by individuals who chose receiving destinations in the Middle East for their limited up-front cost, but for which their households expressed fear and disapproval. Migrants knew their households would not be able to mobilize economic resources to assist in the migratory move and wanted to reduce the pressure placed on their households as well as circumvent dissuasion as they were determined to go in order to help their households in the Philippines. This behavior comes with its benefits, such as increased autonomy and individual freedom in the decision-making process but is also accompanied by increased risk as households are not aware of where their family members are during the migration process and are unable to provide an economic safety net for unanticipated events.

This study’s findings support the original hypothesis that the process of serving an LDS mission has significant impacts on how Filipinos strategize and behave in their post-mission lives albeit caused by different factors. Exposure to higher, Western standards of living on the mission didn’t make RMs less content with the lives they returned to after the mission and push them into migration in order to attain mission like standards. Contrarily the myriad of skills and resources gained on the mission pulled them into migration despite having more positive outlooks on their economic situation after the mission, being more content, and having desires to
stay within their local communities. As anticipated these post-mission impacts also had gender variances driven by LDS ideology that the women’s highest calling is in the home causing women to migrate before marriage and exit the workforce after marriage, while men married quickly after the mission and strategized global migration, even against church council, to fulfill their breadwinner obligations and allow their wives to stay in the home. The church doctrines surprisingly exhibited enough pull to overcome the national heroin rhetoric that women should work abroad for the betterment of their households and nation. This study also showed how strong the pull of labor and increased economic resources in the Global North is to the people of the Philippines and how global agencies and national governments strategize migratory processes in order to pull even those with no household resources to stigmatized and risky regions of the world. These findings suggest that it is critical to engage in a global awareness of how organizations of the Global North, both physically present and not, continue to impact nations of the Global South economically and ideologically in ways that utilize and perpetuate big-brother colonial mentalities and, similar to historical colonial practices, only further entrench less-developed nations in their reliance on outside economies.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

First and foremost I have to acknowledge my limits as a researcher both as an outsider being a white, American woman in the Philippines, and an insider, as a former LDS missionary who is fluent in Tagalog and was welcomed into homes in a way others may not have been. I was also born and raised in the LDS church and, although I have not participated in its practices for over ten years, my childhood indoctrination runs pretty deep so my ability to be an objective outsider in relation to religion may still be limited. This is useful for the in-depth understanding I
have for the religion, its doctrine, and its practices, but limits my ability to view them as an average American researcher might. Admittedly there may also be some biases present towards the church and their doctrine due to my past lived experiences although I have done my best to step outside of them and allow the data to speak for itself.

To fully understand the general impact of LDS mission service on religious adherence, internalization and practice of stereotypical gender roles, and personal and social characteristics that may drive migration a more robust sample of RMs should be studied in comparison to LDS members who did not serve mission. This is particularly true to gain a deeper understanding of how LDS ideologies in countries, like the Philippines, that have strong national cultures of migration mitigate or magnify common national practices. It would also be useful to examine the universal traits gained by missionaries such as increased confidence, social skills, and social networks in a comparative study of nations of the Global North and South to see how these new tools are utilized differently during their post-mission reentry period.

Timeframes and generation gaps are a potential shortcoming in this study as well. Participants who had been home from the mission for over five years were selected for this study in order to capture long-term patterns, but this also makes recall bias a potential issue. A longitudinal study of young adults who are preparing the MTC through their reentry and post-mission decisions would capture, in real-time, a more accurate picture of how mission service and religious ideologies impact RMs. Additionally mission impacts may vary from before and after the age requirement changes, although I posit more so for women than men as the age shift was greater and there was a subsequent increase in women serving missions. The largest generational impact that is absent from this study is technological advancement. Social
networking played a central role in post-mission decisions and now that there is technology that makes these networks even stronger and easier to connect to RMs ability to use them as a resource must be magnified. I remember when I came home from my mission I didn’t think I would see most of the people I had grown so close with again and now I can call them, for free, anytime I want on Facebook.

Technological advancements and the ease of maintaining more extensive networks also makes me think of other ways that missions impact migration, through marriage. Having returned to the Philippines myself to marry someone I met on the mission due to lack of alternative marriage opportunities I also developed relationships with many other American RMs who had returned to the Philippines to marry, typically men marrying Filipina women. There are LDS dating sites that even cater to finding LDS marriage partners all over the world. This is an interesting dynamic for several reasons. Missionaries are not allowed to date and not supposed to think about marriage or romantic relationships on the mission so it is highly stigmatized to marry someone you met on your mission. Also, it is fairly common for sister missionaries to strategize relationships with American elders while on their missions and contact with them after the mission with the hopes of marrying a foreigner. It continues to be highly stigmatized for Americans to return to other countries for marriage partners as well with families being concerned that foreigners are using the RM just for a visa. In some cases, such as mine, the RM is even cut off from their family for acting against their disapproval. This topic would examine many of issues regarding transnational marriages and how they are impacted by global hierarchies of power.
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(http://nap.psa.gov.ph/beyondthenumbers/2012/10122012fig1.jpg)


Hello, my name is Heather Gifford (Sister Gifford), and I am a previous missionary from the PSPM from 2002-2004. I am currently a PhD student at the University of Illinois Urbana Champaign and am conducting research to understand what impact Filipinos believe their mission experiences had on their post-mission life decisions, specifically in relation to work and migration.

I am looking for volunteers to participate in my research that are willing to:

1. Be interviewed by me online via Skype, IMO, or Facebook
   - Interviews can be conducted using any preferred social media
   - Interviews will last an average of 70 minutes and be audio recorded
   - Interviews can be conducted in Tagalog or English based on your comfort

2. Have their household and community in the Philippines interviewed by the researcher

Please note that, in order to protect the privacy or participants, all names and identifying markers will be removed from documentation and a pseudonym (false name) will be assigned.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please contact me directly with the contact information below or private message me on Facebook. If you would like me to provide documentation to support the validity of this study and contents of this message, I am more than happy to do so as well upon request. If you know other RMs you think might be willing to participate in this study, please pass this message on to them.

Hgiffo2@illinois.edu
1-217-390-6042

Tagalog

Magandang araw po sa inyo! Ako po si Heather Gifford (Sister Gifford) dating missionary sa PSPM noon 2002-2004. Ngayon PhD student po ako sa University of Illinois Urbana Champaign at gumagawa po akong research para maunawaan ang effect ng pagseserve ng LDS mission sa buhay ng mga RM. Lalo gusto kong maunawaan kung anong effect the mission sa mga decisions ng RM tungkol sa mga trabaho at migration nila.

Naghahanap po akong mga volunteer na maging part ng research ko. Kinakailangan na wiling kayo na:

1. Maging interviewed sa Skype, IMO, o Facebook
   - Sa interviews pwede pong gamitin kahit anong social media na gusto nyo
   - Ang interview ay pwede maabot ng 70 minuto at marerecord po siya
   - Ang interviews ay pwede magawa sa Tagalog or English (kung saan ka comfortable)

2. Mainterviewan and pamilya at kababayan mo sa Philippines
Para protectahan po kayo at iyong pagkakabuhay and lahat ng pangalan ng mga participants and
pamilya nila ay papalitan ng researcher at ang ibang pangalan ay massign sa lahat ng
documents.

Kung willing po kayo magparticipate sa research study nito pakicontact nyo ako sa email or cp
ko sa baba or imessage nyo ako sa Facebook. Kung gusto nyo na magprovide akong
documentation para malaman nyo na totoo and study nito o lalo kayong maunawaan ang layunin
ng study willing po ako magsend the documents siyo kung request nyo poi to sa message. Kung
mayroon po kayong ibang kilalang RM na maaring gustong maging part ng study nito paki-
passalong ang message nito.

Hgiffo2@illinois.edu
1-217-390-6042
APPENDIX B: INITIAL SCREENING EMAIL

Dear (name of contact),
Thank you for your interest in participating in this study. In order to verify your eligibility for this study please provide the details below. You can copy and paste the outline below with your answers directly into a response message. Thank you again for your time and willingness.

Full Name:
Name of LDS mission:
The years you served a mission:
Home province:
Current Location:
Contact phone number:
Contact email:
Preferred method of contact

Tagalog

Magandang araw po (name of contact),
Maraming salamat sa interest nyo sa study na ito. Para makapagverify ang pagkakasya po ninyo sa study nito pakisagotin and mga tanong sa baba at ibalik po sa akin. Pwede po ninyo icopy ang original sulat at mga sagot nyo sa reply message. Salamat ulit sa oras and pagpayag po ninyo.

Buong Pangalan:
Pangalan ng LDS mission:
Ma taon kung saan kayo nagserves ng mission:
Provincia nyo:
Lokasyon ngayon:
Contact phone number:
Contact email:
Pinakagusto nyo paraan na macontact ko kayo:
APPENDIX C: PERSONAL RELATIVE DEPRIVATION SCALE

Measured on a Likert scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree)

<table>
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<th>1</th>
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<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Slightly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Slightly Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
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Original PRDS Questions
1. When I think about what I have compared to others, I feel deprived.
   Kapag nagiisip ako tungkol sa mga bagay na magkaroon ko compared sa mga ibang tao nararamdaman ko na kulang ang aking buhay.
2. I feel privileged compared to other people like me.
   Compared sa ibang mga tao na katulad ko mas masuwerte ako sa buhay.
3. I feel resentful when I see how prosperous other people seem to be.
   Kapag nakikita ko ang kayamanan ng mga ibang tao maging masama ang loob ko.
4. When I compare what I have with others, I realize that I am quite well off
   Kapag icocompare ko ang aking buhay ko sa ibang mga tao nararamdaman ko na maganda and aking buhay.

Adapted Questions
1. a) When I think about what I had before my mission compared to what I had
   During the mission I feel that I was deprived before my mission
   b) When I think about what I had on the mission compared to what I had after my mission
   c) When I think about what I have now compared to what I had on the mission I feel deprived
2. a) I felt privileged before my mission compared to my life on my mission
   b) I felt privileged on my mission compared to my life before my mission
   c) I felt privileged after my mission compared to my life on my mission
   d) I feel privileged now compared to my life on the mission
3. a) When I was on my mission I felt resentful when I thought about how prosperous I was before my mission
   b) After my mission I felt resentful when I thought about how prosperous I was on my mission
   c) I feel resentful when I think about how prosperous I am now in comparison to when I was on my mission
4. a) When I compare what I had before my mission to what I had on my mission I realize I was quite well off before my mission
   b) When I compare what I had on the mission with what I had after the mission I realize that I was quite well off after my mission
c) When I compare what I have now with what I had on my mission, I realize that I am quite well off now.

Additional questions added to the scale (using same Likert scale)

The next set of questions will ask you to think about your standard of living before, during, and after your mission. Standard of living refers to any combination of the following: quality of housing, ease of purchasing daily necessities, satisfactory income level, feeling content with what you have in your life.

Para sagotin mo ang mga tanong na ito kailangan mo pagisipin ang kagandahan ng iyong pamumuhay. Kalidad ng pamumuhay ay maari isama ng mga bagay na ito; kalidad ng tahanan, kadalihan na makabili ng mga pangangailangan, kasiyahan sa sahod, at kasiyahan sa mga bahay na maryoon ka sa buhay mo.

1. I feel that my standard of living on the mission was higher than it was before my mission
   Nararamdaman ko na aking pamumuhay habbang nasa mission ako ay mas maganda kaysa aking pamumuhay bago ako nagmission.

2. I feel that my standard of living after the mission was higher than when I was serving my mission
   Nararamdaman ko na aking pamumuhay pagkatapos ang mission ko ay mas maganda kaysa aking pamumuhay habbang nasa mission ako.

3. I feel that my standard of living after the mission was higher than before the mission
   Nararamdaman ko na aking pamumuhay pagkatapos ang mission ko ay mas magandang kaysa aking pamumuhay habbang nasa mission ako.

4. I was more content with my life before my mission
   Mas masaya ako sa aking buhay bago ako nagmission

5. I was more content with my life on my mission
   Mas masaya ako sa aking buhay habbang nasa mission ako

6. I was more content with my life after my mission
   Mas masaya ako sa aking buhay pagkatapos ang aking mission

7. The standard of living I experienced on my mission made me less content with the lifestyle I returned home to after my mission
   Hindi ako masaya sa kagandahan ng aking buhay pagkatapos ang aking mission dahil sa kagandahan ng pamumuhay ko sa mission

8. Adjustments from mission life back to my home lifestyle played a significant role in my decisions to stay or leave my hometown.
Ang pagkaadjust mula sa buhay ng mission sa araw araw pamumuhay pagkatapos ng aking mission ay may malaking epekto sa aking desisyon na lilipaat sa ibang lugar or tuloy ako sa pinagalingan ko.
APPENDIX D: LIFE HISTORY CALENDAR PROTOCOL

We will start of the interview by making a timeline of the major events in your life and where you lived from before the mission to your current situation.

1. Where did you live before your mission?
   - What province?
   - Who lived in your household?
   - Was this the same household you returned to after your mission?
2. What mission did you serve in and during what years?
3. Where did you go after your mission
4. Tell me the years of … (came out naturally in the course of creating the timeline)
   - geographical moves, why you moved, and to where.
   - employment changes
   - marriages
   - deaths
   - births of children
APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Return Missionaries
Upon completion of LHC the following guiding questions were used in completion of online RM interviews.

(1) Tell me about your life prior to serving a mission
   - What made you want to serve a mission?
   - Who did you live with?
     - How many people resided in your household?
   - Where did you live?
   - What was your household’s economic situation like?
     - How did you feel about the whether your daily needs were met?
     - Tell me about any worries or concerns your household had about meeting basic needs such as food, electricity, water etc.
   - RD & Housing comparisons
     - On a scale of 1 to ten rank the quality of your home from 1 being the worst to 10 being the best
     - On a scale of 1 to ten rank the quality of most of the houses you lived in during your mission from 1 being the worst to 10 being the best
     - On a scale of 1 to ten rank the quality of the home you returned to after the mission (1 being the worst to 10 being the best)

(2) Life on the Mission
   - How did your life on the mission compare to your life before and after the mission?
   - How did you pay for your mission?
   - What was better or more challenging about your economic situation on your mission?
   - What lessons did you take away from your mission?
   - How did your mission impact where you are today in your life?

(3) Immediate return from the mission
   - Where did you return home to after your mission?
     - With whom did you live?
     - What region or area did you return to?
   - What were your experiences while transitioning from mission life back to family life?
     - What was the best thing about returning home? Why?
     - How did these impact your choices about where to live and work?
   - What was the most challenging thing about returning home? Why?
     - How did these impact your choices about where to live and work?
     - In what ways did your mission experiences aid you in this transition?
     - In what ways did your mission experiences cause challenges in this transition?
Did you access any resources to help you manage this transition?
· What were the major differences between how you lived on the mission and how you lived when you returned home?
  · What were the major financial differences?
  · How did you feel about this?
  · How did you deal with this?
· How did your mission, if at all, impact the choices you made about family and career?
  · How did the mission impact whom you chose to marry?
  · How did the mission impact where you chose to work?

(3) Making the migration decision
· Tell me about the factors that impacted your decision to …(stay in your local province/move to a different city or country)
  · where were you and what you were doing in your life when you made this decision?
  · Who else played a role or had an impact on your decision?
  · What factors had the largest impact on your decision?
  · Why was migration this a better option than the other choices you could have made?
  · What process did you go through to decide where you would migrate to?
    o What types of resources did you access to make the decision?
      § Social networks
      § Church resources
      § Governmental resources
    o What role did your parents play, if any, in your decision?
    o What role did your partner or children play, if any, in your decision?
  · How did you manage/balance your desires with the desires of your households to make your decision?
· What experiences did you have on the mission that impacted this decision and why? (Encourage or dissuaded your decision)
· Looking back what would you have done differently, if anything?

(4) From where you are right now
· Tell me what your life is like now
  · Tell me about your family life
  · Tell me about your work and employment history
· Tell me about any decisions you made about moving to a new location for work
· Tell me about the decisions you made in your life that led you to be where you are now
  · What other opportunities did you have that would have led you somewhere very different and what impacted your decisions about those opportunities?
  · What were the largest factors you consider when making these decisions?
-Looking back on your mission experiences and the decisions you have made between then and now in what ways do you feel that serving a mission has impacted you negatively & positively?

GENDER
-How were your mission experiences similar or different than the elders/sisters of a different gender than you?
  - How were your experiences similar/different to missionaries with the same gender?
    - Before the mission
    - On the mission
    - After returning home and integrating back into life
  - How did these differences/similarities impact the differential access to resources and opportunities after the mission?
  - What additional advantages/disadvantages did people of your gender or the other gender experience.
  - What role did your gender play in deciding to serve a mission?
  - What role did your gender play in the decisions you made after your mission?

RM Filipino Households

Specific RM Household Interview protocol that is irrelevant to non-LDS Filipino households. RM Household interviews were started with this short series of questions followed by any non-repetitive questions from the general protocol below.
- Tell me about (their RM child who already completed the online interview)
  - What role did you and your household play in their decision to serve a mission?
  - What was the greatest difference you noticed in (RM) when they returned home from the mission?
  - What did they learn on the mission that you think benefited them the most in the decisions and adjustments they had to make after their missions?
- What role did you and your household play in the decisions and adjustments made by (RM) after their mission?
  - How were their decisions impacted by the sole desire of (RM)?
  - Was there an expectation that (RM) follow household advice?
  - What guidance/advice did you and your household give to (RM) in relation to their post-mission decisions?
    - How did they adhere or divert from and follow the household guidance/advice?
      - How did the household react to this?
      - How has this impacted the RM/household relationship?
      - What impact did serving a mission have on (RM)s adherence or divergence from household guidance?
  - How might (RM)s decisions been different if they hadn’t served a mission?
-How does (RM) contribute, if at all, to household finances or resources?

**General Filipino Households**

-Tell me about your household
  - Your partner
  - Your children
  - Where are you originally from?
  - How have you come to reside where you are now?

-Tell me about your religious affiliations
  - What, if any, religious group are you affiliated with?
    - Are there members of your household who have different religious affiliations?
    - When and why did you convert?
      - Explain any past changes to your affiliation.

-Tell me about any members of your primary household (children or partner) that live outside of the home
  - Where do they live?
  - What impacted their decision to reside there?
  - How much impact did the households/parents have on their decision?
  - How do they help the primary household, if at all

-Tell me about the economic situation of your household
  - How simple/difficult is it to meet financial expectations
    - Pay bills like water, electric, rent
    - Have daily access to food and water
    - Provide for the needs of household members
  - What activities do you participate in to help you manage the household financial obligations?
    - Who else assists in this duty
    - Tell me about any decisions your household has made together about members of the primary household moving in order to meet household financial needs
    - Tell me about any independent decisions made by members of the household to leave
      - How are they assisting, if at all, to the households financial needs?
      - What factors impacted the household member making an independent decision without referring to household members?

-In what ways have decisions helped or worsened the household’s financial situation?
  - Are there any negative feelings between or towards household members for making decisions that did not benefit the primary household?