

WHY HAVE KOREANS MIGRATED TO ANGELES CITY, PHILIPPINES?

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ABSTRACT – Koreans have migrated to Angeles City, Pampanga, Philippines since around 2008. This study was conducted to (1) identify the causes of such migration and (2) describe the impacts of Korean migration to the city. The study used the push-pull theory of migration as framework. Interviews and surveys were conducted among seven city government officials, 20 officials and staff of the five barangays where the Koreans reside and operate businesses, and six officials and staff of the Korean Community Association Central Luzon Inc. The study found that: (1) the relatively lower educational attainment of Koreans, and their underachievement in business in their home country as push factors; while business opportunities, cheap labor, English education, leisure, tourism, good climate, accessibility of Angeles City via the Clark International Airport, low cost of living, Filipinos being accommodating to foreigners, the opportunity to gain religious converts, and favorable national laws and local ordinances to foreigners as pull factors; and (2) the positive impacts of Korean migration to the city are the creation of employment and business opportunities and the generation of government revenues from barangay clearances, business permits, and taxes, while pollution, traffic, crimes, dilution or distortion of Filipino culture, repatriation of profits to Korea, and the relegation of Filipinos to mere employees of Korean establishments are the negative impacts. The study recommended (1) the validation of the push and pull factors that were identified in this study with the Korean migrants themselves as interviewees and respondents, (2) the valuation of the positive and negative impacts of Korean migration to the city that were enumerated in this study, and (3) the determination of the working conditions of the Filipino employees of Korean establishments. A prerequisite of these three future research endeavours, however, is the creation of rosters of Korean migrants, Korean businesses, and Filipino employees of Korean establishments in Angeles City.

Keywords: Korean migration, push-pull model, Hallyu, local government

Introduction

Korean migration to the Philippines is not a recent phenomenon. According to Kutsumi (2007), these foreigners have been settling in the Philippines since the eighth century due to the country's expanded trade with East and Southeast Asia. Trade and commerce, however, have not always been the reasons or causes of their settlement in the Philippines.

During World War II, some Koreans had come to the Philippines as members of the Japanese Imperial Army. The officer who had been in command of all Japanese prison camps in the Philippines was in fact a Korean – Lt. Gen. Hong Sa-Ik (Varangis, 2016).

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Why have Koreans migrated to Angeles City, Pampanga, Philippines?

Some scholars identify socio-cultural factors as the reasons for Korean migration to the Philippines. Kim (1979), for instance, says that Koreans have already developed a sense of belonging to Filipinos. Blanca (2013), on the other hand, claims that there are Koreans who consider themselves as assimilated to Philippine society.

Igno & Cenidoza (2016) suggest that Koreans have come to the Philippines due to the popularity of their culture among Filipinos. They say that Filipinos are very fond of Hallyu or Korean popular culture because there are a lot of similarities between Filipinos and Koreans. Both are hospitable, courteous, communal, expressive, and romantic people. Both have close family ties and a colonial past. Because of these similarities, they conclude that Hallyu is not just another fad, but a phenomenon that can be observed in the Philippines in the years ahead.

Koreans, meanwhile, have already settled in Metro Manila, Tarlac, Baguio, Dumaguete, and Cebu (Miralao, 2007), as well as in the Bataan municipalities of Orion and Limay (Sadia & Salvador, 2014) due to opportunities for business, English education, and leisure.

Sangil (2015) reports that about 15,000 Koreans reside along the Filipino-American Friendship Highway in Angeles City, due to: (1) its proximity to the Clark International Airport; and (2) Angeles City's favorable business climate.

The presence of Koreans in Angeles City was felt more strongly when the kidnapping and murder of a Korean businessman became national news in January 2017 (Lopez, 2017). Prior to the incident, there had already been speculation that some Korean drug and gambling syndicates are operating in the area.

The preceding two paragraphs confirm the existence of a phenomenon, which is the recent migration of Koreans particularly to Angeles City, Pampanga, Philippines. What needs to be ascertained are the reasons or causes of the recent Korean migration to the said city.

Hence, this study was conducted from July to November 2017 with the following objectives: (1) to identify the reasons or causes behind the recent migration of Koreans to Angeles City; and (2) to describe the impacts of Korean migration to the city. The study could be used in getting to know the Koreans better and in fostering a more harmonious relationship with them. The study could also help the national and local governments in formulating and implementing policies on foreign migrants.

Review of Literature

In East and Southeast Asia, although most people migrate due to economic reasons, the crafting and implementation of a multicultural coexistence policy or multiculturalism for short, has been the most common government response to foreign migration.

According to Nagy (2013), the large number of foreign workers in Tokyo, particularly Koreans, Chinese, and Filipinos have prompted the local government to come up with a multicultural coexistence policy. Adachi Ward, on the one hand, established a multicultural coexistence committee and a foreigner advisory committee that implemented plans and programs aimed at integrating foreign residents to the local population. Shinjuku Ward, on the other hand, implemented multicultural coexistence plans and programs that promoted respect and understanding of foreigners.

In Singapore, meanwhile, the official policy on foreigners is called Chinese-Malay-Indian-Others (CMIO) multiculturalism. CMIO is a means to accommodate foreigners who do not have Chinese, Malay, and Indian ethnicities or nationalities. The Singaporean government tries to root and retain transnational elites and skilled foreign workers but regulates less skilled foreign workers (Ong & Yeoh, 2013). In other words, the government imposes a revolving door policy on less skilled foreign workers.

South Korea has differential treatment of ethnic minorities. The South Korean Government simultaneously incorporates (1) marriage migrants and mixed-race Koreans into the reproductive sphere, (2) ethnic Chinese into the economic sphere and partially to the political sphere, and (3) guest workers into only the economic sphere (Kim, 2013).

In Taiwan, multiculturalism is seen as a challenge to the government's exclusionary model of incorporation (Hsiao-Chuan, 2013). This means that the Taiwanese Government adheres to a conservative notion of multiculturalism and limits its initiatives to cultural activities.

Korean migration, meanwhile, has been driven not only by economic but also political reasons. The succeeding paragraphs specify those economic and political reasons, and describe the impacts of Korean migration and Korean businesses to East and Southeast Asians, especially to Filipinos.

From the middle of the 19th century to 1910, Korean farmers and laborers tried to escape famine, poverty, and oppression by the ruling class by emigrating to China, Russia, and Hawaii. From 1910 to 1945, they came to Japan to fill the labor shortage brought about by the war. From 1945 to 1962, Korean wives of American soldiers and their children moved to the United States. From 1962 onwards, Koreans went to Latin America, Western Europe, North America, and the Middle East as contract workers (Song, 2018, p. 765).

According to Kutsumi (2007), Koreans first came to the Philippines in the eighth century to trade with Filipinos. During World War II, they came to the Philippines as part of the Japanese Imperial Army (Varangis, 2016). More recently, they moved to various parts of the country for business, leisure, and English education (Miralao, 2007; Sadia & Salvador, 2014).

Korean migration to the Philippines today is driven by economic prosperity and modernization. Because of the appreciation of the Korean won and the high labor cost in South Korea, some Korean companies built production facilities in the Philippines (Song, 2018). One of these companies is Hanjin Heavy Industries and Construction (HHIC). Because the Philippine Government considers HHIC as a priority investor, it provides the said company a power subsidy and exemption from the payment of income taxes and customs duties (Gorospe-Jamon & Gonzalez, 2018).

The entry of Korean companies and businesses in the Philippines prompted the inflow of Korean migrants to various parts of the country. At present, they are found as far as Baguio City in the north to Davao City in the south. Then, Korean restaurants, supermarkets, resorts, spas, hair salons, and beauty shops emerged (Song, 2018, 766). Korean markets and restaurants soon became popular also among Filipinos. With Korean pop music and dramas, Filipinos have become more interested in Korean culture (Joo, 2011).

South Korea has recently used Hallyu – Korean wave or Korean popular culture – as a tool for exercising cultural diplomacy and obtaining soft power (Chua, 2012; Jiang & Paik, 2012; Shim, 2006). The South Korean Government even established two agencies – the Korea Creative Content Agency (KOCCA) and the Korea Foundation for Asian Cultural Exchange (KOFACE) – for the said purpose (Otmazgin & Ben-Ari, 2012). Hallyu has transformed Korea's negative image among Taiwanese people into positive (Sung, 2010) and made Malaysians consume Korean food and other Korean products (Cho, 2010).

In the Philippines, Hallyu has made two rival television networks – ABS-CBN and GMA – import Korean dramas for their regular programming (Kwon, 2006; Arpon, 2008 as cited in Igno & Cenidoza, 2016). Despite the popularity of Hallyu and K-pop endorsers, however, Filipinos have not been actively purchasing Korean skin care products. To make the Philippines a viable and sustainable market, Korean skin care companies have to conduct information dissemination on the use of their products (Capistrano, 2018).

As South Korea continuously uses Hallyu for cultural diplomacy and soft power accumulation, there are expectations for Koreans to initiate more cultural activities in the Philippines such as film festivals, cultural performances, and K-pop concerts (Wong, 2013). These cultural activities are necessary because Korean culture and language are still largely unfamiliar to most Filipinos (Yap, 2011).

The identification of the reasons behind foreign migration and the description of this phenomenon's impact to a certain locality can be facilitated through a review of the policy environment. For instance, national policies which are either explicit or implicit in national laws and executive issuances may indicate why foreign investors, students, retirees, and workers come to the Philippines and what they can and cannot do in the country.

Why have Koreans migrated to Angeles City, Pampanga, Philippines?

Two sections of Article 12 (National Economy and Patrimony) of the 1987 Philippine Constitution are generally protective of Filipino interests. Section 10 reserves certain areas of investments to Filipino citizens and to corporations or associations with at least 60% of capital owned by Filipino citizens (Official Gazette, n.d., "The Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines," Article 12, Section 10, para. 1). Section 12, on the other hand, promotes the preferential use of Filipino labor, domestic materials and locally produced goods, and the adoption of measures to make them competitive (Official Gazette, n.d., "The Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines," Article 12, Section 12, para. 1).

Republic Act (RA) No. 7652 or the Investor's Lease Act, in contrast, is beneficial to foreign interest because it allows the long-term lease of private lands by foreign investors. RA No. 9225 or the Citizenship Retention and Reacquisition Act, meanwhile, allows dual citizens to possess land (Official Gazette, 1993, "Republic Act No. 7652," Section 4, para. 1).

Executive issuances, likewise, are beneficial to foreign interests. Executive Order (EO) No. 188, for instance, allows the entry and stay of foreign students in the Philippines and mandates the establishment of an inter-agency committee for the said purpose (Arellano Law Foundation, 1994, "Executive Order No. 188," para. 2-3).

EO No. 1037, meanwhile, calls for the establishment of the Philippine Retirement Park System. It allows foreign retirees to settle in the Philippines through the issuance of special resident retiree's visa (SRRV) by the Bureau of Immigration (Embassy of the Philippines in Buenos Aires, Argentina, 1994, "Special Resident Retiree's Visa under E.O. No. 1037," para. 1).

Some department orders (DOs) and memoranda are similarly beneficial to foreigners. DO No. 97-09, for instance, allows foreigners to work in the Philippines through the issuance of an alien employment permit (AEP) by the Department of Labor and Employment (Bureau of Local Employment, Department of Labor and Employment, 1997, "Alien Employment Permit," para. 1-2).

Two joint memoranda of the Department of Labor and Employment, the Bureau of Immigration, the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, the Clark Development Corporation, the Clark International Airport Corporation, and the Subic-Clark Alliance for Development Council – DOLE-BI-SBMA-CDC-CIAC-SCADC Joint Memorandum Nos. 001-2014 and 001-2019 – facilitate the conduct of foreign businesses in Clark and Subic through the provision of efficient, simplified, and harmonized rules and regulations on AEPs, work permits, and visas for foreign nationals employed in economic and free port zones (Department of Labor and Employment-Bureau of Immigration-Subic-Clark Alliance for Development Council-Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority-Clark Development Corporation-Clark International Airport Corporation, 2017).

Theoretical Framework

There are three approaches to the study of international migration. These are: (1) the push-pull theory of migration; (2) the labor recruitment approach; and (3) migration as a social process. The push-pull theory of migration focuses on macroeconomic conditions in both the sending and receiving nations as the key factors that cause migration flows. The labor recruitment approach, on the other hand, emphasizes the role of employers in receiving countries as the main factor for the emergence of migration streams. Finally, migration as a social process encompasses economic, social, and cultural variables as explanations of international migration (Velasquez, 2000, p. 138).

Among these three approaches, the push-pull theory of migration suffices for the modest objectives of identifying the reasons behind the recent migration of Koreans to Angeles City and describing the impacts of Korean migration to the said city. The labor recruitment approach is deemed inappropriate for the study because in the literature, the Koreans have never indicated the intention to become employees of Philippine companies as the main reason of their migration to the country. Migration as a social process is also deemed inappropriate because this approach requires prior identification of economic, social, and cultural variables to be included in the study.

The push-pull model, in addition, has been found to be the most commonly used theoretical framework in explaining the causes of migration. It has been used in the migration studies of the European Communities (2000), Kajiura (2008), Lynn & Lee (2013), Phanseub (2011), and Song (2013). Among these, Phanseub's (2011) push and pull factors of Korean migration to Chiang Mai Province, Thailand is considered as the closest and the most relevant or useful to this study.

The fundamental assumptions of the push-pull theory of migration are: (1) the more disadvantaged a place is, the more likely it will produce migration; and (2) given inequalities, there will be migration (European Communities, 2000, p. 3). Compared to South Korea, the Philippines is way too economically disadvantaged. In 2017, South Korea had a GDP per capita of USD 26,152.03 (Trading Economics, 2018, "South Korea GDP per capita," para. 1) while the Philippines only had USD 2,891.36 (Trading Economics, 2018, "Philippines GDP per capita," para. 1). Despite these facts, the direction of the migration flow observed in this study was from a developed (South Korea) to a developing country (Philippines). In addition, both countries have high income inequality. In South Korea, the top 10% of the population receive 45% of total income (Kim, 2016). In the Philippines, meanwhile, 20% of the population have incomes which are less than the national poverty line (Caraballo, 2017). These macroeconomic conditions of the two countries also make the push-pull theory of migration an appropriate framework for this study.

Methodology

This study used a case study research design because case studies according to Bautista (1998, pp. 144-145), allows researchers to focus on particular organizations and specific individuals.

The primary data required by the study were obtained through interviews and surveys with the aid of a questionnaire. The questionnaire included questions on the year the Koreans started migrating to Angeles City, the causes of their migration, how the barangay and city governments dealt with them, among others. Interviews were granted whenever the participants had time to spare. Otherwise, they just filled out the survey questionnaire in their free time and asked the researcher to pick them up on another day.

The study had three groups of participants. The first group consisted of seven officials of the following city government departments who all gave permission to conduct interviews: (1) City Tourism Office; (2) Business Permits and Licensing Division; (3) City Assessor's Office; (4) City Treasurer's Office; (5) City Engineer's Office; (6) Office of the City Legal Officer; and (7) Public Employment Service Office. The second group of participants consisted of 10 barangay officials who granted interviews and 10 staff members who filled out the questionnaires. There were four participants – two interviewees and two respondents – each from the following barangays: (1) Anunas; (2) Balibago; (3) Cutcut; (4) Malabañas; and (5) Pampanga. These five barangays were chosen because they are where the Korean settlements and establishments are located. There are no Korean settlements and establishments in the other 28 barangays of Angeles City (City Tourism Office Head J. R. Montances, personal communication, August 4, 2017). The third and final group of participants consisted of six members of the Korean Community Association Central Luzon Inc.

Secondary data on the number of Korean migrants, their businesses, the amount of their investments, and the number of their employees were obtained from the Bureau of Immigration-Clark One Stop Shop, the Business Permits and Licensing Division of the Angeles City Government, and the Business Development and Business Enhancement Group of the Clark Development Corporation.

Field notes, interview and survey responses were summarized into a spread sheet. Thereafter, the modal or the most frequent answers to questions and the most common descriptions and themes were used in the report, discussion, and interpretation of the results of the study.

Results and Discussions

This section starts with the identification of the reasons or causes of Korean migration to Angeles City and ends with a description of the impacts of the said phenomenon to the city.

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Reasons of Korean Migration to Angeles City

The exact number of Koreans in Angeles City including the Clark Freeport Zone is unknown. Both the Angeles City Government and the Bureau of Immigration Angeles Field Office could not provide the said information. A report from the Bureau of Immigration-Clark One Stop Shop, however, roughly indicated their number. From 2012 to 2017, a total of 8,816 Koreans have moved to Angeles City. Out of this total number, 6,344 had working visa, 2,199 had special study permit, and 273 had special work permit.

The influx of Koreans in Angeles City was mostly felt in 2008. This was according to five out of seven interviewees from the city government, 15 out of 20 interviewees/respondents from the barangays, and four out of six interviewees/respondents from the Korean Community Association Central Luzon Inc.

Four interviewees/respondents in Barangay Anunas and another four in Barangay Pampang recalled that 2008 was the year when many Korean missionaries had come to Angeles City. As a way of gaining converts, they constructed deep wells, comfort rooms, and day care centers. They also conducted feeding programs and medical missions. These interviewees/respondents, however, conceded that gaining converts may not be the only reason behind the recent migration of Koreans to their city.

According to all seven interviewees from the city government, all 20 interviewees/respondents from the barangays, and all six interviewees/respondents from the Korean Community Association Central Luzon Inc., both the barangays and the city government have given permission to the Koreans to put up their business establishments and settlements in the city. The barangays, in particular, have given them barangay permits while the Business Permits and Licensing Division of the Angeles City Government has given them business permits.

Asked why the Koreans have moved to Angeles City, all six interviewees/respondents of the Korean Community Association Central Luzon Inc. have said that it was because of opportunities for business and leisure in the city, particularly its casinos and clubs.

All 20 interviewees/respondents from the five barangays, meanwhile, cited business opportunities, English education, leisure, tourism, good climate, and accessibility of Angeles City via the Clark International Airport as the reasons or causes of Korean migration to their city. Four interviewees/respondents in Cutcut and another four in Pampang, meanwhile, mentioned security as another reason for the recent migration of Koreans to their city. They speculated that in an attempt to avoid the nuclear threat posed by North Korea, the Koreans had moved to Angeles City and to the other parts of the Philippines.

The seven interviewees from the city government also cited business opportunities, English education, leisure, tourism, good climate, and accessibility of Angeles City via the Clark International Airport as the reasons or causes of Korean migration to their city. The interviewees from the City Assessor's Office, City Engineer's Office, and the Public Employment Service Office, added the relatively low cost of living in Angeles and the general tendency of Filipinos to be accommodating of foreigners as reasons for the recent migration of Koreans to their city.

Another pull factor of Korean migration to Angeles is the availability of cheap labor. All seven interviewees from the city government attested to the large number of jobs that have been created by the Koreans in their city. According to the Business Permit and Licensing Division, the number of Filipino employees of Korean establishments in the five barangays of Angeles is indicative of the number of jobs created by the Koreans (see Table 1).

Table 1. The Number of Filipino Employees in Korean Establishments in Angeles City as of December 31, 2016.

Barangay	No. of Filipino Employees
Anunas	3,019
Balibago	200
Cutcut	2,191
Malabañas	200
Pampang	960
Total	6,570

Source: Business Permits and Licensing Division, Angeles City Government

Five of the seven interviewees from the city government distinguished the type of Koreans who migrated to and established businesses in Angeles City from those who stayed and established businesses in their home country. But the interviewee from the Business Permit and Licensing Division gave the most concise distinction:

“Yung mga Koreano na di masyadong nakapag-aral pero mayaman ang mga nagtatayo ng negosyo sa Angeles. Yung mga mas nakapag-aral na Koreano, sila yung mga nagtatayo ng negosyo o kumpanya sa Korea.” (Koreans who are less educated but wealthy are the ones who establish businesses in Angeles. The more educated Koreans are the ones who put up businesses or companies in Korea.)

The said narrative implies that lower educational attainment is a disadvantage if not outright impediment in establishing businesses in Korea. This, in turn, can be considered as a push factor – a reason or cause for Koreans with the said qualification to move somewhere else. On the other hand, business opportunities, English education, leisure, tourism, good climate, accessibility of Angeles City via the Clark International Airport, low cost of living, Filipinos being accommodating to foreigners, and the opportunity to gain religious converts can be considered as pull factors in the receiving country and city.

Impacts of Korean Migration to Angeles City

Although Article 12 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution is generally protective of Filipino interests, the same could not be said about the local government of Angeles City. According to the seven interviewees from the city government and 15 interviewees/respondents from the barangays, they have the same requirements for Filipino and Koreans businesses – barangay clearance and business permit.

All seven interviewees from the city government and 18 interviewees/respondents from the barangays thought that the migration of Koreans is not being regulated. The Koreans are free to roam around the city, buy houses, and put up businesses. According to the interviewee from the City Engineer’s Office, the only regulation that has been imposed on Koreans in Angeles was Ordinance No. 225. It requires advertisements in foreign languages to have Filipino or English translation.

An interviewee from Barangay Cutcut, meanwhile, explained how the Koreans were able to circumvent the constitutional prohibition on full ownership of real property by foreigners. She said:

“Tulad ng ibang foreigner dito sa Angeles, ang mga Koreano ay pwedi lang rumenta ng lupa o building sa loob ng 15 taon. At dapat meron silang asawang Pilipino kung kanino dapat nakapangalan ang lupa o building.” (Like the other foreigners in Angeles, the Koreans are only allowed to lease a land or a building within 15 years. In addition, they must have a Filipino spouse to whom the land or building must be named.)

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Employment and business opportunities have also been considered by the 20 interviewees/respondents from the barangays and six interviewees/respondents from the Korean Community Association Central Luzon Inc. as two of the benefits of Korean migration to Angeles City. These are apart from the barangay clearance fees, business permits, and taxes that the Koreans remit to the local coffers.

The costs of Korean migration to Angeles City according to six out of seven interviewees from the city government are pollution, traffic, and minor crimes which were not specified. The City Tourism Officer and the City Engineer, meanwhile, said that the dilution or distortion of Filipino culture and the repatriation of profits to Korea are also costs of Korean migration to Angeles City. The City Tourism Officer, in particular, explained further:

“Sa halip na turuan natin ang mga Koreano na kumain ng adobo, tayo ang tunuruan nila na kumain ng kimchi at samgyeopsal. Ang kinikita nila sa mga restaurants nila dio sa Angeles ay pinapadala rin naman nila sa bansa nila.” (Instead of us teaching the Koreans to eat adobo, it was us who they taught to eat kimchi and samgyeopsal. Their earnings from their restaurants in Angeles are only being sent back to their country.)

Meanwhile, the 20 interviewees/respondents from the five barangays cited serious and minor crimes as the costs of Korean migration to Angeles. The serious crimes they mentioned were human trafficking, cybersex, illegal drug trade, online gambling, and corruption of public officials and policemen. The crimes they considered minor, on the other hand, were traffic violations, fixing, and delayed payment or non-payment of salaries of Filipino employees.

The six interviewees/respondents from the Korean Community Association Central Luzon Inc., meanwhile, cited only one cost of Korean migration to Angeles City, and that was the relegation of Filipinos to mere employees of Korean establishments.

According to all seven interviewees from the city government, they do not provide special services to Korean migrants. Just like Filipinos, they are being assisted whenever they apply for business permits. The 20 interviewees/respondents from the barangays likewise claimed that they do not give preferential treatment to Koreans. Just like Filipinos, they require a barangay clearance before they allow them to set up businesses in their barangays. The six interviewees/respondents from the Korean Community Association Central Luzon Inc. validated the claims of the interviewees/respondents from the city government and the barangays.

Four out of seven interviewees from the city government had positive perception of Korean migrants in Angeles. They described them as cooperative, law-abiding, and friendly. Three out of seven interviewees, on the other hand, had a negative perception of Koreans. They described them as arrogant, disrespectful, rude, and materialistic. One of the six interviewees/respondents from the Korean Community Association Central Luzon Inc. acknowledged these negative descriptions of Koreans and implied that differences in language and culture are to blame. He explained further:

“Some Koreans are seen as arrogant or rude. I think this is because of cultural and language differences. Despite language and cultural barriers, however, we Koreans try our best to establish a harmonious relationship with Filipinos.”

Finally, among the seven interviewees from the city government, the one from the City Assessor’s Office perhaps had the most insightful experience with Koreans. She said:

“Yung mga Koreano na di masyado nagtatagumpay sa negosyo nila sa Korea ay kadalasan bastos o arogante kapag dumayo dito sa Pilipinas. Defense mechanism nila yun. Paraan nila yun para mabawi ang halaga nila. Ang kamalasan, iyon ay sa pamamagitan ng mga Pilipino.” (Koreans who have been underachieving in business in their own country tend to be rude and arrogant when they move to the Philippines. It is their defense mechanism. It is their way of regaining their self-worth. Unfortunately, it is at the expense of Filipinos.)

Eighteen out of twenty interviewees/respondents from the barangays also had insightful experiences with Koreans. They said that the Koreans were friendly and generous to them. All six interviewees/respondents from the Korean Community Association Central Luzon Inc., meanwhile, professed that they have seen how hardworking the Koreans in Angeles are, and that they are truly proud of their culture.

Conclusions

Koreans have recently migrated to Angeles City, particularly since around 2008. The push-pull theory of migration has been useful in (1) identifying the reasons behind Korean migration to Angeles City and (2) describing the impacts of the said phenomenon to the city.

Two intertwined push factors have been found by this study, namely: (1) the relatively lower educational attainment of Koreans; and (2) their underachievement, if not failure, at business in their home country. These safety nets resemble the incentives provided by the Philippine Government to HHIC in Subic (Gorospe-Jamon & Gonzalez, 2018). The pull factors identified in this study, on the other hand, are: (1) business opportunities; (2) cheap labor; (3) English education; (4) leisure; (5) tourism; (6) good climate; (7) accessibility of Angeles City via the Clark International Airport; (8) low cost of living; (9) Filipinos being accommodating to foreigners; (10) the opportunity to gain religious converts; and (11) favorable laws and ordinances to foreigners. Taken together, these push and pull factors are the causes or reasons why Koreans have migrated to Angeles City. Although the push factors are mostly found in poorer countries such as the Philippines, and the pull factors are usually found in richer countries such as South Korea, the push-pull theory of migration does not rule out the possibility of finding push and pull factors in the opposite direction.

The positive impacts of Korean migration to the city are the creation of employment and business opportunities and the generation of government revenues from barangay clearances, business permits, and taxes. On the other hand, pollution, traffic, crimes, dilution or distortion of Filipino culture, repatriation of profits to Korea, and the relegation of Filipinos to mere employees of Korean establishments are the negative impacts.

The city government and the barangays in Angeles City have been treating the Koreans and the local people in the same way. Both have been required to secure barangay clearances and business permits before opening their establishments. The lone regulation imposed on the Koreans was the translation of their advertisements to English or Filipino language in accordance with Ordinance No. 225. It can be deduced that local governments do not always come up with explicit policies in response to the influx of foreign migrants.

Recommendations

The push and pull factors of Korean migration to Angeles City were identified mostly by participants – interviewees and respondents – from the barangays and the city government of Angeles. To be more acceptable, the said push and pull factors have to be validated through a follow up study with the Korean migrants themselves as participants.

In addition, the present study only gave a qualitative description of the positive and negative impacts of Korean migration to Angeles City. To better serve as inputs to policymaking, there should be a monetary valuation of the said positive and negative impacts.

Moreover, the study only cited the number of Filipinos working in Korean establishments in Angeles City as of 2016. No intervention can be made by government or civil society unless the working conditions of these workers are determined.

A prerequisite of these three future research endeavours, however, is the creation of rosters of Korean migrants, Korean businesses, and Filipino employees of Korean establishments in Angeles City. The said rosters should serve as sampling frames. If the said rosters prove impossible to construct, then, follow studies may resort to snowball sampling.

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Statement of Authorship

The author was solely responsible for conceptualizing, designing, conducting, writing, and revising the whole study.

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