

“But We're Professionals”

Reconsidering Filipino Migration Studies from the
Perspective of Filipino Teachers in Urban Indonesia

“

But we're professionals ...
Their diplomas must be forked.
Recto university, you know.

- A Filipino teacher from Jakarta

“

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Recto university, you know.

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We?

We

- Filipinos
- Have earned a degree
- Working in SEA
- Working as teachers

We

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They?

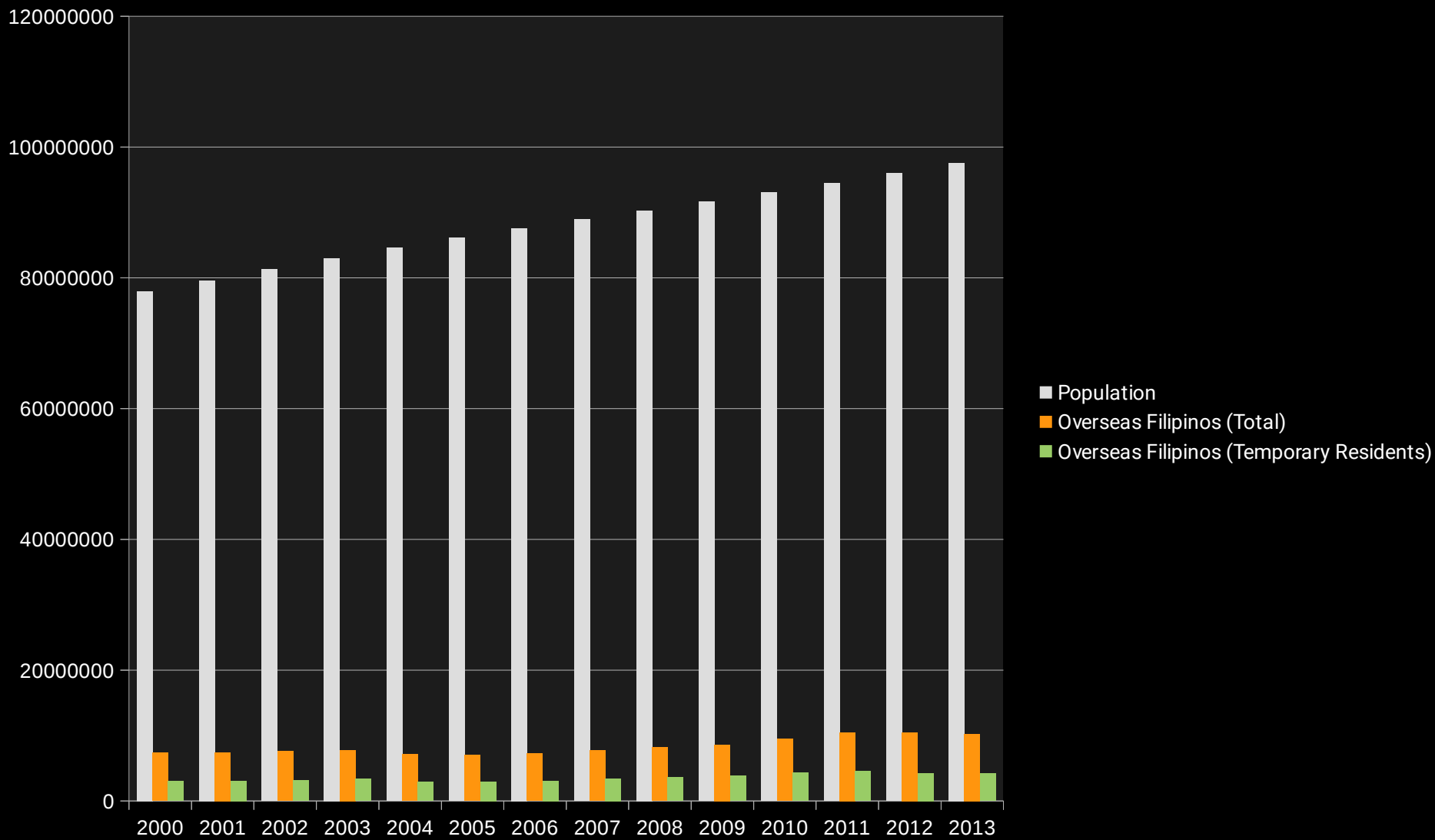
We

- Filipinos
- Have earned a degree
- Working in SEA
- Working as teachers

They

- Filipinos
- Have earned a degree
- Working in “the First World”
- Working as domestic helpers

Overseas Filipinos
and
Filipino Migration Studies



Source: World Bank; Commission on Filipinos Overseas

1973: Start of labor export policy

Early 90s: Diversification of labor export policy

Relevant scholarship developed
accordingly ...

Groups researchers primarily focus on ...

- Domestic helpers (SG, HK, USA, Italy, Middle east)
- Entertainers (Japan)
- Nurses (USA / Japan)

Regularly described features:

Who

- Feminization of labor migration
- Skilled workers / Middle Class Background
- Host countries: “First World” or the Middle East

Process

- Recruitment agencies
- Chain migration
- Onward migration

In host country

- Visa dependent on employer
- Housing organized by employers
- Intermediary position vis-à-vis competing migrant groups and locals

OFs and the Philippines

- Frequent communication with kin
- High levels of remittances
- (Female kin or) employed domestic helpers take care of “left-behind” children
- Return visits only once a year or less

There is little qualitative research
on *middle class migrants*.

Let's take the example of Filipino
teachers in Urban Indonesia ...

Background

- Mostly women
- College or higher education
- Previous internal migration

Process of migration to Indonesia

- *Chain migration*
- No recruitment agencies
- Employment websites

In Indonesia

- Visa dependent on employer
 - tricks might be necessary because of immigration legislation
 - Dependants can often follow
- Housing:
Dependents on employer
 - Shared houses & apartments

In Indonesia

Workplace

- Experienced teachers: Considerable bargaining power vis-à-vis employer
- *Intermediary position vis-à-vis competing migrant groups and locals*

OFs and the Philippines

- Comparatively low levels of communication home
- Frequent journeys “home”
- Investments: Houses (notably apartments)

Astonishingly many similarities:

... it's worth taking the
perspective of Filipino migration studies.

Many common features exist ...

... only in adjusted form.

Thank you!