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THE PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF IMMIGRANT FILIPINO CAREGIVERS: A STUDY OF THEIR INTEGRATION INTO CANADIAN SOCIETY

BY

SUSAN BRIGHAM

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

IN

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FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read and recommended to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled THE PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF IMMIGRANT FILIPINO CAREGIVERS: A STUDY OF THEIR INTEGRATION INTO CANADIAN SOCIETY submitted by SUSAN BRIGHAM in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education in International/ Intercultural Education.

.....

Dr. Toh Swee-Hin, Supervisor

.....

Dr. Marilyn Assheton-Smith

.....

Dr. Olenka Bilash

Date: OCT 5, 1995

DEDICATION

I myself am not an immigrant woman but my mother was twice an immigrant. First from her island of Saint Helena, in the South Atlantic Ocean to England at the age of 15 as a foreign domestic worker. After marrying my father she immigrated to Canada.

My mother, an ethnic and racial minority, with Elementary education faced all challenges with strength and preserverance.

Her courage and determination inspired me to travel and explore, and after completion of my undergraduate degree, to teach and live abroad.

During my first year of the Masters programme (1993) my mother suddenly passed away. It is to her that I dedicate this thesis. Her courage and her faith in me encouraged me to complete this thesis.

ABSTRACT

THE PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF IMMIGRANT FILIPINO CAREGIVERS: A STUDY OF THEIR INTEGRATION INTO CANADIAN SOCIETY

To date there has been little scholarly research done on one segment of immigrant women in the Canadian context, namely live-in caregivers in Canada who have come to Canada in the thousands to perform domestic labour. Except for a survey conducted by Household Workers of Alberta, no in-depth research has been conducted on caregivers in Alberta and none specifically on caregivers from the Philippines.

This thesis explores the perceptions and experiences of Immigrant Filipino Caregivers in Edmonton. The data were collected through in-depth qualitative interviews with nine women who have come to Canada as live-in caregivers and are now permanent residents of Canada.

The study looks at the factors which impact on the ability of the Filipino caregiver to participate and succeed in Canadian society. These factors are examined in four main contexts: the caregivers' work, the process of ethno-cultural identity, education and the state.

The findings show that several factors play a role in their ability to integrate and succeed in Canadian society. These include: the labour, class and status characteristics of domestic work; community involvement; previous cross-cultural experience; family and community ties in the Philippines; ethnocultural discrimination; lack of accessibility to educational institutions and state agencies; and the effects of policies and regulations governing the Live-in Caregiver Programme.

Domestic Workers' Blues

We're the women
you see in the park
blond children laughing
in our arms
We're the women
you see in the park
We're the Third World
in your living room

70 hours a week
just work and sleep
no time off
what's a holiday?
Scrub and shine
washing floors all the time
Slaves had chains
we get the key
can let ourselves in & out
we're still not free

We're the women
you see in the park
We're the Third World
in your living room

"Polish that brass!"
"Make that bed!"
"Iron those dresses!"
"Bake more bread!"
"Deodorize the bowl!"
"Buff the marble!"

Minimum wage?
Overtime pay? Ha!
Dream away girl
another 12 hour day
We're the women
you see in the park
We're the Third World
in your living room

Gotta live with the boss
on call night and day
no right to complain
it's the "Canadian way"

We're the women
you see in the park
blond children laughing
in our arms
We're the women
you see in the park
We're the Third World
in your living room

Love your kids
but miss our own
so far away
send them love
send them money
send them a future
from the land
of milk and honey

Now shoulder those mops
Aim those brooms!
We're Filipina heroes
cleaning foreign rooms

"Excuse me ma'am,
Can I have my pay?
I know you forgot again
What can I say?"

For justice, for dignity
we've got each other
Filipina sister,
daughter, mother

We're the women
you see in the park
laughing, talking,
organising
We're the women
you see in the park
We're the Third World
-rising-
in your living room

N. Nawrocki, in IDERA, (1991)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Of course my thanks go to the participants for their support in this study and their courage to voice their experiences.

I wish to express my thanks to my supervisor, Dr. Toh Swee-Hin for his guidance and suggestions, and my committee members; Dr. Marilyn Assheton-Smith and Dr. Olenka Bilash for their comments.

A special thank you to Rich, for his help, encouragement, and patience, especially during the last few months of this thesis.

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CHAPTER 1

THE STUDY: BACKGROUND AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction

Immigrants have played a substantial role in shaping Canada as a nation. Except for the Native Indians and the Inuit, Canada is made up of immigrants or descendants from different lands. Immigrants in the 1600, 1700 and 1800's were predominantly French and British. In 1881, immigrants from Britain and France made up 90% of the Canadian population, and people of predominantly German origin made up 7%. With the opening of the Prairies and the events leading up to the First World War, the percentage of immigrants originating from eastern and southern Europe increased (Driedger, 1987:88). After the 1960's the number of Asian, African and South American immigrants increased.

Among the newcomers that have been arriving in Canada since the late 1800's, are domestic helpers. These workers (now called "live-in caregivers") have been predominately women. The first domestic workers were recruited from Britain. Later, after the 1950's, Caribbeans were recruited and by 1986, the largest number of domestic workers were coming from the Philippines. Presently, the live-in caregivers are required to live and work (caring for children, the elderly or the disabled) in private homes for at least two years under a temporary employment authorization. After two years they may apply for permanent resident status but to be considered, they must demonstrate their ability to adapt to Canadian living, prove financial responsibility as well as show an aptitude for learning.

I first became aware of the circumstances of migrant domestic servants when I lived in Kuwait in the late 1980's. The

frequent ill-treatment and exploitation of these workers, who were mostly Filipino and Indian, concerned me. I became interested in knowing more about the migration and nature of the work of these women. Also, I have been involved in an organisation called LINGAP (Learning For Interdependence and Global Awareness of the Philippines) which promotes understanding between Canadians, Filipino-Canadians and Filipino overseas workers through activities such as: on-going lecture series on education and development issues, youth and parent workshops and environmental awareness events for school age children. Through my involvement in this organisation, I met and established links with Filipino women who have been/are live-in caregivers in Canada. I was interested and surprised to learn that these women, who were highly educated and held professional backgrounds in the Philippines before coming to Canada were now employed as caregivers and facing various problems related to this position. I was curious to know more about the processes, problems and issues facing live-in caregiver migrants in the industrialized country of Canada. A particular field of interest to me has been the lives and circumstances of women, particularly in the context of Southern countries who are experiencing difficulties through marginalisation and oppression world wide. Learning about these co-members of LINGAP who are from the south and who are now working in a Northern context encouraged me to pursue this study.

There has been very little scholarly research done on live-in caregivers in Canada (although see: Arnopoulos, 1981; Arat-Koc, 1992; Ng, 1993) and except for a survey conducted by Household Workers Association of Alberta (Devins, 1992) none has been done in Alberta. This gap indicates the importance of initiating exploratory research of caregivers in the context of Canadian multiculturalism.

This research attempts to name the structured quality of experience, the processes and social relations of the participants. It looks at the circumstances and conditions of the Filipino live-in caregiver in Edmonton, and examines the factors that influence their ability to integrate into Canadian society.

The government's nomenclature of the live-in caregiver programme has changed over the years from the Foreign Domestic Workers Programme to the Foreign Domestic Movement to the present name - the Live-in Caregiver Programme. "Live-in caregiver", "domestic worker", "domestic servant", "nanny" and "maid" are terms used intermittently throughout the literature and in this study to refer to the women who are employed in the live-in caregiver programme.

In the following section I will present the conceptual and theoretical framework which grounds this study. In the final section I will present the statement of the research problem.

Conceptual Framework

The Canadian ethnic "mosaic", better likened to a kaleidoscope, is in a continuous process of evolution influenced by immigration policies. The waves of incoming immigrants to Canada resulted in many serious issues in Canadian society. These issues included a general abuse of basic human rights through discrimination, racism and sexism.

Here are some examples from Canada's history. The "Great White Wall" (Price, 1974) was erected against Asian immigrants between 1836 and 1888 in Canada. Starting in 1885, the Chinese had to pay a head tax of $50.00 which increased to $500.00 in 1903. Other Orientals had the tax imposed on them as well, whilst the British were given assistance for passage

to Canada (Palmer, 1975).

In 1895 Japanese-Canadians were disenfranchised in British Columbia. In 1908 Japanese immigration were restricted to a maximum of 400 male labourers and domestic servants. During World War II under the War Measures Act, Japanese Canadians were treated as "enemy aliens" (Sunahara, 1981:52). In February, 1942, the Canadian Federal Cabinet ordered the expulsion of people of Japanese origin residing within one hundred miles of the Pacific Ocean. Over 21,000 Japanese Canadians were uprooted from their homes, and excluded from the west coast for seven years. Some were sent to (road or P.O.W.) camps, some were interned at "Interior Housing Projects", some were sent to work on sugar beet farms and 4,000 were deported or exiled to Japan after the war (Cleroux, 1986).

In the 1890's, hundreds of thousands of immigrants arrived during the Clifford Sifton (minister of the interior) period. This was met with sentiments such as the following;

> "What Sifton means by...ignoring the British as desirable immigrants, preferring to minister with the power behind him and the funds at his disposal to the importing of a mass of human ignorance, filth and immorality is only known to his immediate friends..." (From the Calgary Herald, 1899 cited in Palmer, 1975:44).

Discrimination was one result of the 1906 Immigration Act which gave powers to immigration authorities to use at their discretion against non-white immigrants (Li & Bolaria, 1983). By 1910, public sentiment was very anti-immigrant and any group of people that 'could not be assimilated' were excluded. The 1919 Immigration Act gave the government the power to restrict entire groups of people form immigrating to Canada when it felt it necessary. The Immigration Act of 1919 stated that those that are prohibited entry into Canada include:

> ..idiots, imbeciles, feeble-minded persons, epileptics, insane persons, ..person afflicted with tuberculosis, with any loathsome disease,...immigrants who are dumb, blind, or otherwise physically defective..., persons convicted of crime..., Prostitutes and women and girls coming to Canada for any immoral purpose...Persons over the age of fifteen, who cannot read the English or French language... (Palmer, 1975:51).

In 1923, the Canadian Immigration policy developed a list of favourable immigrants, defined by order-in-council 183. "Non-whites were barred from coming into Canada through various pieces of legislation" (Li & Bolaria, 1983). This was justified by proclaiming that some groups are not able to adapt to the climate, language or culture.

In 1929, Lloyd, one of the founders of Lloydminster, Saskatchewan, declared that those groups that could not be assimilated would threaten white Anglo-Saxon Protestant supremacy.

> In Canada the 'melting pot' theory has failed as far as it has been tried...If this theory is persisted in, it will produce what has been produced in the United States, a series of hyphenated Canadians who will demoralize our British institutions...(Lloyd, 1929 cited in Palmer, 1975:55).

In 1930, the Immigration Act, section 38, prohibited any Asiatic race from entering Canada (Li & Bolaria, 1984). After World War II, a large number of immigrants arrived in Canada. The Federal Government policy in 1947 although encouraging immigration to increase the population still ensured selectivity of certain groups. MacKenzie-King stated:

> ...I am sure that the people of Canada do not wish, as a result of mass immigration, to make a fundamental alteration in the character of our population. Large-scale immigration from the Orient would change the fundamental composition of the Canadian population (McKenzie-King, 1947 cited in Rao, Richmond & Zubrzycki, 1984:16).

The Chinese Immigration Act was eventually repealed and

relaxed, although the number of Chinese immigrants remained very small.

The Immigration Act of 1953, was reminiscent of the 1919 Act. It stated clearly who would be prohibited; "...nationalities, ...ethnic groups who have peculiar habits, customs, modes of life or methods of holding property.. [and those with the] probable inability to become readily assimilated..." (Immigration Act, 1953).

The very discriminatory "Preferential Categories" were spelled out and applied in 1956 and remained in effect until 1962. They stated:

> Preferential status is given to those from France and United States. Second...to immigrants from western European countries if they had certain approved economic qualifications. Persons, from other countries, no matter how well qualified they were economically, could not enter Canada unless sponsored by a close relative... (Preferential Categories, 1956 - 785, cited in Palmer, 1975).

In 1962, the last of the restrictive biases on geographical basis was removed. In 1967, the relatives-sponsorship clause was also eliminated. The shift away from the assimilative doctrine was underway.

In 1973, a federal study was done on Immigration and population. This study led the publication of the "Green Paper" in 1975 which reviewed immigration and advised Canadians to make it known what kind of country they wanted before the formulation of a new legislation. "[The Green Paper] expressed concerns about the Nation's capacity to absorb large numbers of people with 'novel and distinctive features'" (Barrett, 1987). Gordon (1978) criticises the Green Paper declaring that it was a racist document that would limit non-white immigrants.

Ninety percent of the committee's recommendations in the Green

Paper were incorporated into the new Immigration Bill (C.24) in 1977. Some of the features include;

> a) to support the attainment of demographic goals...
> b) to enrich and strengthen the cultural and social fabric of Canada...
> c) to facilitate the reunion in Canada of Canadian citizens...with relatives from abroad;
> d) to encourage and facilitate the adaptation of persons who have been granted permission as permanent residence...
> e) to facilitate visitors into Canada ...
> f) to ensure any person who seeks admission to Canada...meet standards of admission that do not discriminate on the grounds of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion or sex; ...et cetera (Part 1, Section 3).

The list of "prohibited classes" as per the 1919 Immigration Act, dropped the "idiots and imbeciles, morons and epileptics" from its list and the exclusions for health reasons was limited to those diseases that threaten the safety of the public (Driedger, 1978).

Other important features of this legislation were: the government has some power over where the immigrants will be encouraged to settle, immigration in Canada is a joint responsibility of the provincial and the federal governments, and the "points system" was brought into practice. The point system was a competition for points which were awarded according to the person's skills, age, language and education. Applicants (excluding assisted relatives and entrepreneurs) must earn fifty points out of a possible one hundred before they can be issued immigrant visas. In addition, applicants must meet mandatory requirements regarding job experience and occupational demands. A temporary measure was put into effect in May, 1982 which declared that applicants must have a validated job offer before their application for immigration can be considered (Minister John Roberts, 1983).

The population of Canada has become more and more ethnically diverse. By the 1980's two out of three immigrants came from

Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean, and Latin, Central, and South America. Fewer people of the present population report French and British as their ethnic origin. In 1986, in every territory and province west of Ontario, the majority of the population had origins other than British or French (Canada, 1991:31).

The following table illustrates how the wave of immigration changed with immigration policies. Only after 1973, did the composition of immigrants include those from countries "of colour".

Ten Leading Source Countries of Immigration to Canada

Rank	1951	1960	1968	1973	1977	1979
1	Britain	Italy	Britain	Britain	Britain	Vietnam
2	Germany	Britain	U.S.	U.S.	U.S.	Britain
3	Italy	U.S.	Italy	Hong Kong	Hong Kong	U.S.
4	Holland	Germany	Germany	Portugal	Jamaica	Hong Kong
5	Poland	Holland	Hong Kong	Jamaica	Phillipines	India
6	France	Portugal	France	India	India	Laos
7	U.S.	Greece	Austria	Phillipines	Lebanon	Phillipines
8	Belgium	France	Greece	Greece	Portugal	Portugal
9	Yugoslavia	Poland	Portugal	Italy	Italy	Jamaica
10	Denmark	Austria	Yugoslavia	Trinidad	Guyana	Guyana

Muszynski & Reitz (1982)

Multiculturalism

Canada takes pride in her culturally pluralistic or multicultural society and in her official multicultural policy which supports the pluralistic ideal and encourages and maintains ethnic differences.

In 1971, the Canadian government announced the first multicultural policy. Its aim was to help minority groups preserve and share their language and culture and remove cultural barriers they faced.

In 1982, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms was introduced and guaranteed equal rights. In 1988, the Canadian

Multicultural Act stated;

> The Government of Canada recognizes the diversity of Canadians...as a fundamental character of Canadian society and is committed to a policy of multiculturalism designed to preserve and enhance the multicultural heritage of Canadians in the economic, cultural and political life of Canada.(Canada, 1988:6).

The multicultural policy was presented to create equality of ethnic groups by instilling pride in one's culture and ethnicity and by ensuring that others recognize it as praiseworthy, yet public opinion and behaviour toward immigrants still largely remain unchanged.

The Reid Report (1993) shows that significant public concern exists that Canada is taking in too many immigrants. One half of the population believe that the immigration gate is open too wide. A large number also expressed their concern that immigrants are taking away jobs from those that are Canadian-born.

One in four feel that non-whites threaten to ruin the foundations of Canadian society and that it is best that non-whites not push themselves where they are not wanted. One in five agree that multiculturalism is not a good thing about Canada. One in four believe that it would be best to endorse an immigration policy that would recruit more whites rather than non-whites. Furthermore, three in ten Canadians say they are angered when they see new immigrants on television demanding equal rights for citizenship. Four in ten would consider limiting the influence that these new immigrants have over the future of this country (Reid Report, 1993).

Although the multicultural policy has been criticised for not addressing the unequal distribution of wealth and power, and putting too much emphasis on the songs, dances and foods of cultures, it has been praised for encouraging the preservation and enhancement of multicultures represented in Canada. It

has also influenced the politicization of ethnic groups.

The number of immigrants to be admitted into Canada is still in accordance with the social and economic needs. The 1993, Immigration Act and Regulations highlights as the first principal; "the Act links the immigration movement to Canada's population and labour market needs" (Canada, 1993:3). The Minister of Employment and Immigration in 1983, concluded, "...our immigration law works in the interest of Canada - to tie the number and distribution of immigrants more closely to national and regional population goals and labour market needs..." (Roberts, 1983). Canada has demonstrated its willingness to accept immigrants when there is a need for them to support our economy, yet immigrants are met with equal disdain when there is a depression or recession. It is still possible to hand-pick immigrants, the need for cheap labour is still the driving force behind immigration policy and a quick view of present reality will illustrate how non-whites, are still generally at the bottom of the socio-economic scale. Both racist and sexist ideology have been built into the design of Canada's immigration laws. The relations of race, gender and class continue to operate in contemporary Canadian society.

Ethnicity and Identity

For the purpose of this thesis I will be speaking of ethnicity rather than race as a relation of identity. Ethnicity and race are not interchangeable constructions, yet they are both politically and socially constructed. Race is based more upon biological hereditary traits whereas a general consensus accepts that ethnicity is more than this. Race may still be a factor in determining ethnicity but Hughes (1982) reminds us that there is no such thing as a pure race, i.e. those who fit absolutely into the Negriod, Caucasoid or Mongoloid types of races. Furthermore he warns, it is ..."erroneous [to connect] physical attributes with behavioural and other cultural

traits" (1982:3).

Isajiw (1980:20) concludes that ethnicity can be defined in this way;

> a group or category of persons who have common ancestral origin and the same cultural traits, who have a sense of peoplehood and *gemeinschaft* type of relations, who are of immigrant background and have either minority or majority status within a larger society.

This definition, however, fails to include the indigenous populations of colonized countries.
He adds;

> Ethnicity refers to an involuntary group of people who share the same culture or to descendants of such people who identify themselves and/or are identified by others as belonging to the same involuntary group (24).

According to McKay (1982) an ethnic group is concisely defined as; a collectivity of people who meaningfully interact on the basis of a similar ethnic trait(s) which they share. An ethnic trait is a symbolic elements such as physical continuity, language, religious affiliation, nationality, pheno-typical features, or some combination of these which epitomizes the cultural and social distinctiveness of "peoplehood".

Ethnicity is a matter of ideology asserts Max Weber (Goldstein, 1980:18). It is a social construct based on unequal relations (Rex, 1983). Ng (1993:51) states that ethnicity arose in the historical Canadian context in the struggles for dominance and control between Britain and France. It has been and continues to be used by the dominant group as a way of organising the subordinate groups into inferior class positions. Dominant groups maintain their hegemonic control over certain "inferior" ethnic groups based on social, behavioural, and physical differences.
Li (1988) informs us that when social groups based on race, class, gender or other features are systematically associated

with differential reward and privilege, inequality becomes an institutionalized feature of society. Over time, stratification of ethnic groups is solidified into a permanent class system. These inequalities are perpetuated not only by the institutions and social structures and the oppressors but by the oppressed themselves who have been socialized to behave in ways which maintain complicity with the status quo. Their behaviours, values and attitudes are seen as normalized.

Despres (1975:201) has found that a number of case studies reveal that poly-ethnic or plural societies generally combine ethnic and social class stratifications in their overall social systems. Particularly a capitalist system (Li,1988) bases inequalities on class, ethnic and racial divisions to produce further fractions. The racial and ethnic hierarchy also serves the purpose of reducing the cost of labour production, and facilitates social control of wage labour. In this way, race and ethnicity provide a rationale for using otherwise irrational attributes to fractionalize social classes (Bolaria & Li,1985).

In The Vertical Mosaic, Porter (1965:73) states that "[i]mmigration and ethnic affiliation (or membership to a cultural group) have been important factors in the formation of social classes in Canada". Lautard & Loree (1984) restate "the relationship between ethnicity and occupation remains a durable feature of Canadian society" (Lautard & Loree, 1984:342). However, Darroch (1979:22) warns "...in Canada as a whole it is an exaggeration of any available data to suggest that ethnic affiliations can be counted as a primary factor sustaining structures of class and status..."
Li (1988) maintains that ethnicity is only one factor which attributes to variations in income but it cannot be said that social class is determined by ethnicity. Porter's thesis is based on his perception that ethnicity is static. His assertion that maintenance of culture "...could lead to a

permanent ethnic stratification and thus is likely to interfere with the political goal of individual equality" (Porter, 1980:328) is in effect supporting universalism, where all people shed their ethnic skins and adopt a universal sameness.

The accentuation and disclaiming of one's ethnicity may be done in pursuit of political and economic goals. Van den Berghe (1976:243) alerts us to the fact that, "objectively trivial differences can be seized upon as the basis of profound social cleavage and savage conflicts". However, depending on where one stands on the ethnic hierarchy (a hierarchy formed economically, politically and ideologically) one may or may not have the choice to freely associate with certain ethnic groups. "...ethnic groups sometimes had identities imposed on them to restrict their mobility and to facilitate their exploitation and oppression" (Rex, 1986: 71).

Gender is another political ideological construct to produce further inequities in society based on the ideology of one gender superior to another. The Abella report (1984) supports that both gender and ethnicity are factors which determine class position. It concludes that:

> ... from all men of all the ethnic groups, the groups with the lower income are Hindu, Chinese, Central and South American and Blacks. Among the women lowest income corresponds to native Indian women followed by women from Central and South America (Romero-Cachinero, 1987:20).

Furthermore, Boyd et al (1985) conclude that the occupational standing of immigrant women "further emphasizes the importance of birthplace and sex as factors underlying the Canadian mosaic" (Boyd et al, 1985: 441). Therefore, we must acknowledge that gender is a relation which cannot be separated from the relations of ethnicity and class.

Ethnic identity is a social phenomenon, dynamic and processual. The definition of ethnicity is still evolving.

Pryor et al (1992:229) expound that ethnicity has taken on new meaning in countries "of historically high European immigration, mixed and multiple ethnicities" like Australia, Britain, the United States and Canada. To better understand ethnic identity, Greenhill (1992) suggests that studies should focus not on the actual content of an ethnic category such as language or practice, but on how group members' perceptions of the meaning of competing discourses that they encounter become material for the construction of ethnicity.

Ethnic identity is not a static identity. Anderson & Frideres (1981) make the point that ethnicity and an individual's personal feeling of her/his ethnicity are very complex and involve many group boundaries. Each individual can occupy different segments in society concurrently and each can vary and may change membership over time. Douglass and Lyman (1976:217-18) describe this state of flux in this way: "...the ethnic man [sic] lives out his life drama adopting and dropping the masks of identity as ability, opportunity, and luck permit." Deshen (1974:283) asserts that there are different kinds of ethnicities (e.g. marital ethnicity, political ethnicity, cultural ethnicity) which can "operate, or be more prominent, in different situations, individually and times simultaneously."

Women as Migrants

In spite of the federal government's acknowledgement that "Canada is a nation of immigrants", immigrant women's participation in building and supporting this country has not received due recognition. On the contrary, immigrant women face extraordinary difficulties and discrimination in all areas of their lives and the immigration policies in Canada do little to alleviate the problems women face. In fact, immigration policies may actually exacerbate immigrant women's burdens.

As obvious as gender is in affecting a person's experiences, it has been frequently omitted in studies, research documents and government discussions about immigrants in Canada. The Canadian government has tended to look at immigration as being a male activity. Often the immigrant has been presented as androgenous or perhaps female immigrants are addressed as appendages of male immigrants (for example, Three Years In Canada, a study of economic and social adaptation of immigrants by the Employment and Immigration, 1974 which led to the new Immigration Act of 1977 confined itself mostly to male heads of households. Labour market experiences of immigrant women were not considered). The framework must be enlarged to include gender in the discussion of immigration. Men's experiences are seen as universal and exhaustive. Women's have been added on.

Feminist perspectives and studies on women have not had any impact on the Canadian political economy and society (Marony, 1987). What we have to realize is that "gender" is not just another word for "women", but an essential structure in our society.

Such research and studies carried out on immigration for instance has led to rough assumptions and a partial, one-dimensional knowledge base of the texture of immigrant women's lives. By reading the research available to us how can *Immigrant women* be described? To many it conjures images of poor, humble, non-English speaking women, struggling with life and doing their best for their large families. We are presented with this limited one-dimensional distorted image of immigrant women due to four reasons:

1. The omission of women's histories which include immigrant women. Often they are only included after they entered the workforce;
2. No connections are made between the home and the workplace

(domestic and private spheres). "Women usually have been subsumed under 'family' with little consideration of their distinctive roles within or outside their home" (Gabaccia, 1992:8);

3. There is a lack of research of women's perceptions of their world.

4. And because "much of social history compartmentalizes life, relegating sex and gender to the institution of the family rather than viewing them as basic aspects of social organization creating hierarchies of difference in society" (Scott, 1988:6, 10, 16-17).

Patriarchal dominance and values shape research and federal policies which affect women's lives. There is limited feminist research of immigrant women. Historians and researchers fail to question their materials that might place gender roles in more meaningful context. The separation of the categories of gender, ethnic groups, and immigrants into sterile entities has resulted in incomplete, fragmented research and documentation of those people, some of whom are contained in the lowest segment of the social/racial/economic hierarchy. Lather (1986:68) states that the overt goal of feminist research is "to correct both the invisibility and the distortion of female experience in ways relevant to ending women's unequal social position". Callaway (1981:460) adds that this entails the substantive task of making gender a fundamental category for our understanding of the social order, "to see the world from women's place in it". And even in the category of "women" we must avoid "the presumption that all women's experience is universal and exhaustive" (Gabbacci,1992) because it is not. In discussions of "immigrant women" there may be some similarities, but Boyd (1984) reminds us that immigrant women vary among themselves with respect to their language ability as well as with their education and social origins. The systematic oppression of women on grounds of gender affect all of us and although we

share a common oppression, patriarchal oppression, it is not experienced in the same way by all women. Systematic racial, political, economic, sexual and psychological oppression affects us in specific ways.

As stated above more migrant groups are coming from the South to work in the North. Ng (1982:250) describes these migrant women as the "muted shadows"; "the silent partners in our society and the women's movement". Ng suggests that since immigrant women are doubly exploited, "it would seem natural for immigrant women to embrace feminism and for women from the women's movement to seek out their doubly exploited sisters" (252). Yet, few ties are made.

Immigrant women, generally have such heavy initial responsibilities for maintaining the family unit as well as contributing to the family income that they are often the last to have an opportunity to learn about Canadian society, learn English and find out about where or what feminist meetings are about. When they do attend meetings, newcomers may be apprehensive and uncertain. The meetings may be stressful and intimidating. There may be a lack of information due to a limited social sphere. Feminism threatens traditional values of many cultures. The immigrant woman may feel fear of reprisals for political activism as they may be insecure in their immigration status and worry about deportation.

Women are divided by race, class privilege and other prejudice. Migrant women, women of colour and women of lower classes have been disappointed in the past to find that the women's movement had little interest in their plight or of the problems they faced. To them the women's movement was one which they regarded with suspicion, doubt and disillusionment.

Hooks (1981) states that racism is a barrier between women joining in solidarity. It blocks women of colour and white

privileged women from finding mutual feminist goals. Hooks believes that feminism is undermined by narcissism, greed, and individual opportunism. The feminist movement has been used by some women to their personal opportunistic ends. Some women have sought and presently do seek to console their greed by finding a niche within the patriarchal structure, accepting rather than challenging the structure that has perpetuated inequalities between men and women. Hooks (1981:191) avows:

> "a feminist ideology that mouths radical rhetoric about resistance and revolution while actively seeking to establish itself within the capitalist patriarchal system is essentially corrupt."

To say that "all women have more in common than do members of the same class is false" (Huggins in Gunew, 1991:7). Upper-class women preserve their capitalist interests and privileges from forms of discrimination, oppression and exploitation of other women.

Historically, women of colour have been the white women's menial household help. In this context the servant was subject to and controlled by the whims and suspicions of the white "lady of the house". Black and brown women have performed menial, dirty and dangerous tasks under the scrutiny of white women "superiors". Some white women, generally then and now hold a race and class advantage over women of colour framed within the context of the capitalist service economy. However, though white women may have power over some brown and black women household labourers, the ultimate power is still held by the white male in the patriarchal structure of society.

In the past, due to their economic vulnerability many black women in the West would not be considered to be "ladies" or one of the "weaker sex". They were relegated to the domestic ghetto where they did boring, arduous, repetitive housework receiving poor wages, little respect and long hours. Historically and cross-culturally the pattern persists; it is

the darker-skinned domestic serving the lighter-skinned mistress (Cohen, 1988). The present live-in caregiver-employer relationship in Canada is a portrayal of the racially divided servant-mistress representation of the past.

To many domestic workers domestic work is likened to "second slavery" (Caraway, 1991:100) or "modern slavery" (Brown women, Blond Babies, 1992). As she was in the past, the domestic helper is presently isolated and exploited. She may have difficulty in maintaining self-dignity and self-esteem while working and living in a private home and possibly being subjected to sexual assault or rape from male employers.

The Live-in Caregivers Programme (formally called the Foreign Domestic Workers Programme).

For many years women have been brought to Canada to work as domestics. During the "Nation Building Years" (Roberts, 1990:110) 1880 to 1920 women reformers of the ruling class in England and the new colony worked to bring single women from Britain, particularly from the British Isles to work as domestics (Ng in McCarthy, 1992:55). According to Mackenzie (1986) the first recruitment experiment to bring women from the South was in 1911 when 70 women from Guadeloupe were brought to Quebec. In 1955 the Domestic Workers scheme recruited Caribbean women. The women were subjected to very thorough screening procedures. These included extensive medical tests; "x-rays, tests for tropical disease and extensive gynaecological examinations, testing for syphilis" (Mackenzie, 1986: 14) both in their home countries and in Canada.

At present, a large numbers of domestics or live-in caregivers are Filipino. "Domestic workers mostly come from either the Philippines or the Caribbean, and virtually all are women" (Canada, 1992). By 1986, the largest number of domestic workers were coming from the Philippines. Devins (1992) states

that in 1992 they represented over 25% of the foreign domestic workers in Canada. And Pierson & Cohen (1995:72) state that today 70% of live-in caregivers are Filipino. According to CIIR (Catholic Institute for International Relations) (1987) the Philippines is the number one exporter of overseas workers (not only domestic help, but also nurses, seafarers, and doctors). Overseas workers contribute more foreign exchange to the Philippine economy than traditional exports of sugar, minerals and wood products.

An estimated four million Filipinos are working around the world (Globe and Mail, August 29, 1995). People have become the Philippines' most profitable export. Migrant workers send $2 billion back to the Philippines every year (Brown Women, Blond Babies, 1992; Globe and Mail, 1995). The migrants who leave the Philippines are the most active and productive people. The majority (80%) of those who go abroad are between the ages of 25 and 44 years. They are well educated, 80% have high school education (CIIR, 1987).

Many Filipino women have found employment as domestic workers. In fact, the Philippines has been dubbed the number one producer of domestic help (Philippines Free Press, 1994). The director of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, (POEA) Government Placement Branch in the Philippines, Carmelita M. Dimzon states "Domestic help are not considered regular workers and therefore the labour laws and codes do not apply to them as labourers in the countries where they work..." (Philippines Free Press, 1994). This is true in Canada. In Canada a special programme of Employment and Immigration exists to bring the Filipino domestic helpers to this country. Unlike the majority of Filipinos, domestics are not considered immigrants since they work on temporary visas.

In the past, domestics were given permanent resident status upon arrival. But since the 1973 employment authorization

programme more domestics have entered Canada as temporary workers (Canada, 1988). The Temporary Employment Visa introduced in 1973 allowed domestics to work in Canada for up to 3 years but after those 3 years the workers had to return to their country of origin. This temporary status perpetuated poor work conditions and neglected the protection of rights of the domestic worker. The 1981 Task Force Report on the Domestic Workers on Employment Authorizations made this statement:

> ... the employment authorization device serves to maintain the supply of domestics by restricting their mobility. As presently administered, however, it also serves to inhibit the type of improvement in wages and working conditions which might ultimately attract Canadians to these jobs and reduce the need for foreign workers (Canada, 1981 Task Force).

The International Coalition to End Domestics Exploitation (INTERCEDE) lobbied for a more rigorous assessment of the Foreign Domestic Programme.

The federal programme of 1981 called the Foreign Domestic Movement (FDM) brought changes for the domestic worker. These changes in the policies governing the domestic workers has improved their situations immeasurably **in theory**. According to the Guidelines and Procedures-Foreign Domestic Movement (1981) domestic workers who have been in Canada for two years may be given the opportunity to gain permanent resident status when their employment authorization is up for renewal. However, there are difficulties arising from this. It is an Immigration Officer who (subjectively) decides on whether the domestic worker has an "aptitude for learning" (by "upgrading" her education), is able to "adapt to Canadian living" by proving "financial security" (by saving money) and whether she has "personal suitability" before the domestic worker is granted a permanent visa.

The Review of the Situation of Women In Canada, 1992 explain

these criteria have proved very difficult to fulfil "given a high degree of social isolation and a 45 to 60 hour work week" (deWolfe, 1992:5). And although the policy states that the domestic worker must have free time during the week and that the employer must contribute towards the cost of training during the time of study, many employers do not follow through with these agreements. It was also noted that "[s]pecifically, low wages may make it difficult for them to demonstrate financial independence, or inadequate opportunity for training may have prevented them from up-grading their skills" (Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, 1988:44).

In her book, silenced, Silvera (1986) tells the stories of ten women from the West Indies working as domestics in Toronto, Ontario on temporary work visas. The stories reveal the frustration of never having enough money and the humiliation of being a legal slave. They tell of working overtime for no money, of sharing rooms with a baby or family pet, or fighting off advances of sexual harassment and in one woman's case, rape. Silvera expounds that the Foreign Domestic Movement of 1981 guarantees a steady supply of domestic workers while maintaining the number of immigrant women from the developing countries.

Arnopoulos, (1979) reiterates the dire situation of domestics and of the ineffective government redress to protect the workers.

> Where a domestic complains to her employer about the workload, she is often threatened with deportation if she files an official complaint. Many foreign women who do not know the customs here believe their employers and as a result will not go to an Immigration Centre to seek help (Arnopoulos, 1979: 28).

The government has responded to these complaints by proposing that there be admission requirements placed on foreign domestic workers. They are required to have Grade 12 education and six months of training. Yet the consequence of these new

restrictions do not result in better conditions, in fact it ensures that many women from the Philippines, the Caribbean and other developing countries are no longer eligible to come to Canada as domestics. The result of this new requirement meant that fewer women were applying either because they could not find courses or had no chance to finish school. It was as Ng states, "particularly discriminatory toward women from the Philippines and the Caribbean as formal ('caregiver') training was not available and that coupled with the lack of recognition of training from 'third world' countries meant that non-white, non-European women were disadvantaged in the process" (Ng in McCarthy, 1993:56). As well as this there were, according to Fely Villasin, co-ordinator of INTERCEDE, several "unscrupulous operators in the Philippines" who exploited potential Filipino domestic workers by setting up bogus training programmes and charging women hundreds of dollars to take them (The Globe & Mail, March, 1993).

As of March 16, 1993 this much criticised immigration regulation requiring foreign domestic workers to have six months training was lifted. They are however, still required to have grade twelve equivalent and twelve months experience.

The Philippines has attempted to make changes in the trade of domestic workers to ensure safer conditions, yet these changes have been vigorously opposed by the recruitment agencies. The United Nations state that the International Labour Organisation has done little to improve the situation. They say that without initiatives from Asian governments, "it is difficult to write a code of employment to cover maids" (The Guardian, March 27, 1995). Yet, the plight of migrant "maids"/ domestic servants in Asian countries has brought to light recently with the controversial March, 1995 hanging of Flor Contemplacion, a Filipino caregiver working in Singapore, who was convicted of murder. Another case which was widely publicised was that of Sarah Balabagan, a 15 year old

Filipino, whose family paid $300 to an "agency" to get her employed illegally in Abu Dhabi as a domestic servant. In June, 1995 she was convicted of murdering her employer who had allegedly raped her (she had, in fact, received compensation for crimes of "illicit sex" committed against her) and was sentenced to seven years in jail (Edmonton Journal, June 27, 1995). However, her recent appeal against this conviction was not only rejected but the jail sentence was converted to a death sentence (Globe and Mail, September 18, 1995).

In her analysis of foreign domestic workers in Alberta, Devins (1992) highlights problems in the FDM programme. Some of the issues she brings to light stem from the lack of enforcement of terms and conditions, resulting in the domestic worker's loss of protection of rights and enjoyment of benefits such as inadequate living conditions, inability to receive unemployment insurance (UI) when unable to work, thereby risking deportation even though domestic workers do pay into the UIC. The domestic worker at present works under a letter of agreement not by a contract so that neither the employer or employee have an immediate recourse on violation of the agreement. And she notes that since live-in caregivers are not included in the Alberta Labour Standards Code, their rights to a minimum wage and overtime pay may be violated.

The live-in requirements of the domestic worker programme is unique to all other work situations. Few employees could imagine living with their employers where they have limited privacy, and where they are always accessible to the needs of their employers. Domestic help advocators suggest the live-in requirement of domestic workers should be deleted since that is the context in which abuses occur.

Arat-Koc (in Satzewich,1992:232) summarizes the implications of the non-immigrant status of the live-in caregiver as follows;

> "foreign domestic workers are denied some of the basic freedoms other workers, at least at a formal level, enjoy in modern society: the freedoms to choose and change occupations, to change employers, to have one's own place to live, and to enjoy a personal life outside work and away from the direct control and supervision of one's employer."

With more women in the industrialized countries working outside the home there is a continued need for women from the South to fill traditional homemaker duties which are often unrecognised as "work" and poorly paid. The liberation of white middle-class women in the North contexts is achieved by and at the expense of women from the developing countries.

However, the migration of women to Canada is usually seen not as the filling of a demand but rather as a form of charity - a way of *allowing* women from developing countries into Canada and giving them the privilege of a job (Arat-Koc, in Satzewich, 1992). This attitude is reflected in the regulations governing the live-in caregivers programme and consequently the quality of life for the live-in caregiver both during and if she obtains permanent resident status after the contract.

Statement of the problem

This study, due to the limited scope, will focus only on one national group of caregivers - Filipino women. The situation for immigrant women from the Philippines who have come to Canada as live-in caregivers is unique in many aspects. Their special relations as immigrants, as women and as women of colour define how they participate in Canadian society.

The research problem examined in this study is therefore -

What are the primary factors which impact on immigrant Filipino caregivers' ability to participate and succeed in Canadian society?

The following questions, highlighted under four themes will illuminate various facets of the problem:

Identity:

1. In what ways does their ethno-cultural self-identity influence the adaptation process?

Education:

2. What are the ways in which the educational experiences of Filipino-Canadian women, whether former, present and future experiences, are related to their participation in Canadian society?
3. What are their aspirations and attitudes toward their vocational and educational futures?

Work:

4. In what ways are government policies and regulations which govern the live-in caregiver programme restricting and limiting caregivers from fully participating in Canadian society?
5. How do they feel about the direction their lives have taken since the completion of their live-in caregiver contract?

State Agencies:

6. What are their perceptions and relationships with state agencies in Canada? (i.e. how do they perceive their knowledge of, access to, and support from government and non-government agencies?)

Conclusion

A universal feature of the domestic scene is the racial division of labour. Historically and cross-culturally the pattern persists; it is the darker-skinned domestic serving the lighter-skinned mistress (Cohen, 1988). As mentioned in the introduction the main source from which Canada draws its live-in domestic workers has been and continues to be the

Third world or countries of the South.
The caregiver-employer relationship is a portrayal of the racially divided servant-mistress representation of the past. It reflects the North/South, industrialized/unindustrialized, First/Third worlds' relationship based on the unequal distribution of wealth and power. This economic gap continues for many immigrant women after they have moved out of the domestic employment sphere.

There is a need for hearing the voices of the women who are a special group who come into Canada under special circumstances and live and work under unique conditions. By the nature of their gender, migration status, work, place of origin, level of education, (domestic workers are required to have high school education and two years at college to be eligible for acceptance into the Live-In Caregivers programme: deWolff, 1992:5) many issues must come to light. Many points for consideration arise in the political, economic, social, and education fields of inquiry.

This chapter has provided the background and conceptual framework which encompasses the research question(s). The following chapter will explain the research methodology.

CHAPTER 2
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter will present the research methodology employed in this study. I will also be introducing the participants by highlighting the length of time they have been in Canada, their experience working overseas before coming to Canada, their level of education before they came to Canada, the education they have attained since arriving in Canada, their present employment, their age and marital status.

Terminology

The term "landed immigrant" has been replaced by the official term "permanent resident". However, the phrase landed immigrant is still commonly used and is more readily understood and used by the participants. These two terms will be used interchangeably in the thesis.

The contract under which the participants entered Canada is officially termed the "Foreign Domestic Movement Live-in Caregivers programme" and the occupational title given the women who are employed in the programme is "live-in caregiver". Nevertheless, the participants frequently use the name "nanny", "domestic worker" or "elders' companion" when referring to their occupation. Let it be understood that all three terminologies used in the thesis are referring to the same government programme of immigration.

Qualitative design

For this study, a qualitative, or ethnographic research approach was employed. Ethnographic research methods allow for the discovery and exploration of meaning systems that are used by people to organise their behaviours and interpret their experiences (Spradley, 1979, Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Connelly and Clandinin (1990:2) state that narrative inquiry,

a form of qualitative research, is the study of how humans experience the world. Narrative inquiry has become more popular among feminist researchers (Armitage, 1983; Personal Narratives Group, 1989: Richardson, 1990: Smith, 1993). Women's personal narratives are helpful in understanding androcentric hegemony and "illuminating several aspects of gender relations" (Personal Narratives Group, 1989:5-6) by "exploring and generating new insights of women's experiences of themselves in their world" (Stivers, 1993:411). In this study, the narrative design is most suitable as it allows the respondents to add to and delve deeper into certain areas where they feel they have a lot to contribute or indeed into areas which the researcher has failed to take into consideration. The narratives allow for more personal perspectives and reveal more information about their personal experiences and relationships in their own unique and special circumstances.

Data Collection Methods

The primary research method employed in this study was in-depth interviewing. Complementary data was gathered through analysis of relevant documents. The interview is the most appropriate method to use for the purpose of obtaining data in the realm of values, attitudes and social perceptions (Skager & Weinberg, 1971). Guba & Lincoln (1981) suggest that the unstructured interview is preferred when the researcher is pursuing some subject indepth, to uncover some intent or explanation as held by the respondent, when the idea is to ascribe meaning to some event or circumstance. Personal perspectives, feelings and suggestions are best explained through descriptive language. Therefore, for this research I used individual interviews.

Spradley (1979) suggests a combination of formal, informal and casual interviews to balance accuracy and candour. The interviews were semi-structured and exploratory. The

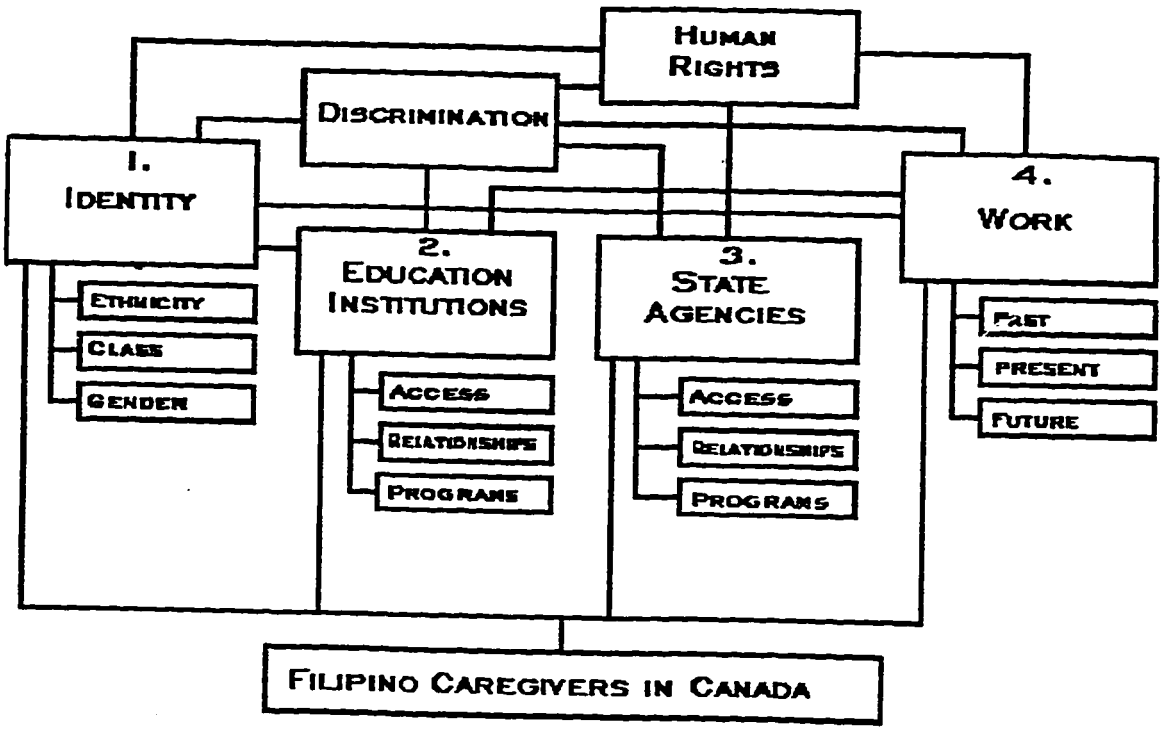
questions were as open-ended as possible to encourage sharing of opinions, beliefs and attitudes. The open-ended questions raised the issue but did not structure the respondents' replies. I was able to illicite free responses (i.e. free of implied, firm boundaries) and spontaneous talk in a amicable conversation (i.e. as opposed to a formal question and answer session). Spradley (1979) suggests that it is possible to interview people without their awareness, merely carrying on friendly conversations while introducing a few questions.

I had prepared an interview guide - a diagram of the contexts to be discussed (see diagram next page). These contexts are inextricably linked together around Filipino Caregivers in Canada. The four themes are:

1. **Identity**: the participants' identity, gender, ethnicity, and class;
2. **Education**: the participants' relationships, access to the institutions and the programmes offered;
3. **State Agencies**: programmes, the participants' access to the agencies and relationships to the agencies;
4. **work**: past experience, present employment and future aspirations for employment;

Discrimination is also linked with the four contexts while **Human Rights** is linked to Identity, State Agencies, Work and experiences of discrimination.

During the interviews I was flexible enough to make alterations when, if and as necessary. Guba & Lincoln (1981) advise that questions should be phrased to fit the respondents' own unique characteristics or status and the interviewer can follow those leads which are profitable. The diagram reminded and allowed me to focus on the specific themes and issues which I needed to pursue, whilst allowing the respondent to speak freely about each area as it pertains to their own lives and in a non-structured, non-sequential order.


HUMAN RIGHTS
DISCRIMINATION
1. IDENTITY
ETHNICITY
CLASS
GENDER
2. EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS
ACCESS
RELATIONSHIPS
PROGRAMS
3. STATE AGENCIES
ACCESS
RELATIONSHIPS
PROGRAMS
4. WORK
PAST
PRESENT
FUTURE
FILIPINO CAREGIVERS IN CANADA

To review and retain information it was necessary to audio tape-record the interviews. I felt that attempting to record everything said might be distracting to the participant and could detract from the conversation and make the interview too formal and perhaps intimidating. I received permission from the participants to record conversations and assured them I would tape only if their consent was given. All consented. During the interviews I also took occasional notes. The participants were assured that their identities would be left anonymous in the thesis. They were asked to chose a pseudonym if they wished. Some did and for the others I gave them a pseudonym.

It is imperative to separate the researcher's observations, comments and personal responses and the participants' responses "to prevent compromising the data with researcher bias or ethnocentrism (Werner & Schoepfle, 1987). Therefore, I took informal reflective field notes, after each meeting which included descriptions of the physical setting, non-verbal cues and notes of my own personal responses.

The Interviews

The interviews were conducted between September and December, 1994. Each interview took approximately one and a half hours although as the interviews were flexible and the meeting places (in the women's homes, at a restaurant, at a friend's office and at my home) were for the most part relaxed and comfortable the interviews went on considerably longer than anticipated (up to five hours). In almost all of the interviews we chatted over tea and refreshments either in the evening or afternoon. The interviewees all agreed to have the interviews taped on audio-cassette. The tape was turned off for breaks for tea, and for any discussions they did not wish to be recorded.

Ethical concerns

The purpose of my study was explained to prospective participants both over the telephone (initially) and in person. They received a letter outlining the research project. After their reading of the letter, I explained and highlighted certain points and asked if there were questions. The participants were assured that they may withdraw their involvement at any time, at which point I would not use any information obtained from them.

I asked them to sign a document of agreement to participate in the project. The document includes information about; 1. the purpose of the research, 2. the benefits envisaged, 3. any inconveniences, i.e. the time it will take for the interviews, 4. the tasks to be performed, 5. rights of the participant, i.e. that they may withdraw from the interviews and study if they want to, 6. the name of the University for whom this thesis will be submitted and my name.

All of the taped interviews were transcribed and kept in my home along with the tapes. All transcriptions and field notes have been treated with confidentiality. The tapes, transcriptions and notes were destroyed after the completion of the study.

Selection of Participants

The population of interest is Immigrant Filipino women having lived in Canada at least 3 years and having initially arrived in Canada as a "Live-in caregiver" and currently residing in Edmonton.

The participants were purposely selected to meet these criteria. Through association with a Filipino organisation I established that there would be sufficient range of participants experience to make this a viable in-depth study. Within this organisation I made my first contacts. By the

"snow-ball" approach (Bogdan & Bicklen, 192:66), recommendations and suggestions from the first few participants and a through a well-known figure in the Filipino community in Edmonton, I was able to contact (initially by telephone) and meet potential participants. Those who expressed a keen interest in the research were selected.

The Participants

All of the women were born in the Philippines. Three are Canadian citizens and the rest are "landed immigrants". The ages of the women range from 29 years to 51 years. All were single when they arrived in Canada, one has since married. None of the participants have children. All have high school and college education from the Philippines. Seven are degree holders, one studied midwifery and the other attended college but did not complete her degree. They have been in Canada from 3.5 years to 13 years.

All of the interviewees had lived and worked as caregivers in another part of the world before coming to Canada, seven in Hong Kong and the other two in Italy.

The Filipino immigrant women interviewed for this thesis have generously shared many personal experiences with me - some spoke for many hours in one meeting. Many similar themes came through in their stories yet each woman is situated in a unique social, economic, political location. The following presents a brief biodata on each of the nine participants. Appendix 4 illustrates the biodata in chart form.

Elaine

Elaine is a 45 year old who has been in Canada three and a half years. She is currently unemployed. Before coming to Canada she worked in Hong Kong for two years. Elaine's highest level of education is a University degree in Secretarial in the Philippines. She had not been nor is she

presently enrolled in tertiary educational programmes in Canada or in Edmonton.

Ann

For the past five years Ann has lived in Canada working as a nanny for three years and then as a cashier at a bakery where she is currently employed. Ann has a B.Sc.Ed (Bachelor of Science in Education), and had been a Secondary school teacher in a high school in the Philippines for nine years. She has completed one course at the University level since coming to Canada. Before coming to Edmonton Ann worked three years as a nanny in Hong Kong and then three months as a nanny in the Northwest Territories.

Nancy

Nancy is 32 years old. She has been in Canada for just over three years. Nancy has a B.Sc.Ed and nine units in the Masters programme from a university in the Philippines. She has been a secondary school teacher in the Philippines for three years. She is currently working as a nanny. She had been working in Hong Kong before coming to Canada.

Beth

Beth's highest level of education is second year midwifery course. Since coming to Canada she had been enrolled in educational programmes in Edmonton. She took typing 20, English 30, and English as a Second Language (ESL) at Alberta College. Beth has been in Canada for nearly eight years. She is a Canadian citizen. Before coming to Canada Beth had worked in Hong Kong for two years. Since coming to Canada she had worked as a nanny in three homes, as a sales clerk in a convenience store and at a charitable organization and as a VIP at a hotel. At 40 years old, Beth now works as a dietician assistant at a senior's rest home.

Cez

Cez at 29 years is the youngest participant. She has been in Canada a little over three years. Before coming to Edmonton she had worked as a nanny in Hong Kong for two years and then in Sherwood Park for ten months. Cez's highest level of education is a four year college course in management in accountancy. In Edmonton she took ESL, level two heritage language instruction, and English 33 at Alberta College.

Lucy

Lucy is a Business Administration Graduate from university in the Philippines. She had not been and is not presently enrolled in tertiary educational programmes in Canada or in Edmonton. Before coming to Canada Lucy worked in Italy as a domestic worker - "an old lady companion". Lucy is 52 years old. She has been in Canada for twelve years. She is a Canadian citizen. Since coming to Canada, Lucy has worked in fast foods restaurants and a department store. She is presently a cook and cashier at a pub.

Ruth

Ruth finished commercial science in the Philippines and has a Food management certificate. In Edmonton she had been enrolled in various educational programmes (she took Food Management again, and Medical Terminology from the Edmonton Board Of Health).

Ruth has been in Canada for thirteen years and is a Canadian citizen. She had been working in Italy as a nanny before coming to Canada. She is 45 years old. She is presently a foods manager at a restaurant/pub.

Mary

Mary graduated from a four year University programme in Bachelor of Science in the Philippines. She had been enrolled in educational programmes in Edmonton. She took ESL, typing I at AVC (Alberta Vocational College) and Red Cross First Aid

for children. Before coming to Canada Mary had been working as a nanny in Hong Kong.
For the six years that she has been in Canada, Mary has worked as a nanny, a housekeeper and a cashier. She is currently unemployed. After coming to Canada Mary married a Canadian man.

Nicole
Nicole is a 46 year old who came to Canada four years ago. Before coming to Canada she worked as a nanny in Hong Kong for four years and after arriving in Alberta she worked in a town South of Edmonton in two different homes over two years and then two years in Edmonton as a nanny. However, after being in Canada for only four months Nicole was diagnosed with inoperable cancer. She received radiation treatment and her cancer has since gone into remission. She was declared medically inadmissible when she applied for landed immigrant status. Nicole was given first an invitation to leave the country voluntarily and then a deportation order. She was eventually awarded permanent status. Nicole is currently employed as a nanny.

Nicole's highest level of education is one term in the Bachelor of Science programme and 1 term in secretarial studies from a university in the Philippines. She has not been nor is she presently enrolled in tertiary educational programmes in Canada or in Edmonton.

Data analysis
The analysis of the data refers to the "systematic examination of something to determine its parts among parts, and their relationship to the whole" (Spradley, 1979:92). After each interview was complete, and as soon as was possible I transcribed the audio tapes onto my computer using a transcribing machine. Then I immersed myself in the data, reviewing the transcripts and occasionally going back to the

audio tapes, searching for common patterns, recurring themes and categories of meaning. As themes emerged I put parts of the narratives into different files in the computer. Often the themes overlapped and I was required to make further investigations into the overlapping themes and look for connections. As the narratives were interpreted, I looked for similarities and differences. If there were any differences that existed, I explored the reasons why they existed.

Validity checks

A narrative research design compels the researcher to recognize that what the respondents offer is the truth from their own perspective. Therefore, it is not possible to employ a form of triangulation. What is required for a validity check is what Guba & Lincoln (1981:110) believe are "the backbone of satisfying the truth-value criterion"; the member check. *Member checks* are when the researcher requests the participants to recycle the analysis of the data and make changes, refinements, additions or removals. Lather (1991:67) suggests "recycled descriptions, emerging analysis and conclusions through a subsample of respondents" is required. For this reason and where possible, I went back to the participants on certain issues or themes which were omitted or where elaborations were necessary.

Conclusion

This chapter has described the methodology employed in addressing the research question as suggested by Skager & Weinberg, (1971), Spradley (1979), Lincoln & Guba (1985) and Connelly and Clandinin (1990). The background of each participants were given. This included; the length of time they have been in Canada, their experience working overseas before coming to Canada, their education before and after they came to Canada, their present employment, their age and marital status. The interview diagram and its four contexts and two sub-contexts were also explained.

The following chapter will present the narratives of the participants related with their survival as caregivers in Canada.

CHAPTER 3

SURVIVING AS CAREGIVERS

Introduction

This chapter will present the narratives of the participants and their work as caregivers related to the rules and regulations which govern their lives in Canada, their relationships with their employer-family as well as the wider social circle within which they are a part. Among the latter are other caregivers in Edmonton, related and worker associations and organisations, friends and peers. However, to begin with it is necessary to examine the participants' motivations for coming to Canada as caregivers.

1. Motivations:

All of the participants in this study have worked in another country as domestic workers before coming to Canada. Of the nine participants in this study, seven of them had lived and worked in Hong Kong. The other two had lived and worked in Italy. All of them came directly from these countries to Canada.

Elaine states that she came to Canada:

> *...because before I was in Hong Kong in 1987 and Hong Kong is changing. They pay you more there, but the main reason I came here is because you cannot be nanny forever. Here you can study and do whatever you want. Its so hard to stay there only as a nanny. And you have to send something for the family [in the Philippines]. And people at home think we are just picking money here.*

Ann explains why she came from Hong Kong to Canada:

> Ann: [Leaving Hong Kong] *probably for me... what a nanny earns in Hong Kong and a teacher at home in the Philippines there is a big difference. After, since I love to work and I didn't really want to go back home to the Philippines and since there was an opening here so I thought OK, I would try it, it was the only way. I thought I would be making more money here and you cannot stay in Hong Kong for long time.*

SB: Do you think you did the right thing?

Ann: *I don't know. Sometimes if you consider your pride, I can decide not to go back there. That's the only thing. I am hiding from something.*

Nancy: *I came from Hong Kong. I was a nanny there. I came here because I thought the opportunity would be better even though the money is less in Canada, but in there [Hong Kong] you can stay only as a Nanny because it is not open for immigrants. There is no future but money is better.*
It [Canada] is so far from home and I was feeling tense but there was opportunity for future and job. Most of those who go there [to Hong Kong] are degree holders. If you practice your profession in the Philippines, you don't get that much.

Beth's reason for working as a nanny overseas was to assist her brother back in the Philippines.

I went to Hong Kong. I went by myself. I felt that I was helping my brother go through school. He finished in nautical engineering. Now he works for Philippines Airlines. He has a good job. He is married and has a family.

For Cez, coming to Canada, becoming a landed immigrant allows her to move on to the United States.

Cez: *... I plan to move to the States. I think its easier to get the job there. Because here even you are a degree holder* [getting a job is difficult].

SB: So, you thought you would go to the states eventually?

Cez: *Maybe, I am not planning to settle down here. That's why I am not buying anything. Like my friends. They have things, their own apartment, appliances a car, and I am still living with my employer. They say, "Oh, you are already have landed, you are going to get your own apartment".*

She adds that the salary relative to the Philippines is considerably higher in Canada and therefore buying power is much stronger.

Cez: [the main difference between working in Canada and in the Philippines is] *salary wise. Because, like the nurse, Makati medical hospital is one of the good, good hospitals in the Philippines where only the rich can go, and the nurse is only paid 4000 to 5000 pesos, only $250 to $300*

Canadian. And they are professionals. And me I am housekeeper, I am earning when you convert into pesos, its 16,000 or 18,000 it depends you can earn 20,000 it depends if you work part time as well. See, the difference is three times higher. If you work in the Philippines you cannot afford to buy those signatures [brands], those clothes, shoes, bags, that's why I like to work in Hong Kong. I can afford to buy oh, Chanel, Pierre Cartier, yeah and then watches, yeah, Gucci, because I am earning three times higher! And no taxes.

She compares her job as "nanny" in Hong Kong to Canada and concludes;

Cez: *In Canada times are easier and we have opportunity to study. In Hong Kong you can't. There is no future. And I am the bread winner. I send money to my family. I am helping my family. Even they are all married, my nieces and nephews, oh God. "Give me Guess watches! Give me bags! Give me..." like this. And they want all the signatures; Pierre Cardin, Yves St. Laurent, Gucci, Bennetton. Because when I was in Hong Kong I gave them good things. That's why. And in the Philippines if you are single, they are not ashamed to ask you for these things.*

SB: Oh, its because you are single?

Cez: *Mmm. I always send money. $500 - $600 Canadian a month.*

SB: You can do that?

Cez: *Yeah. That's why I have no savings. But I love to help them. My sister, she married but she lives with my Mum. And her husband does too. Mum is always feeding them.*

Nicole also cites the differences between Hong Kong and Canada as the main reasons for why she has come to Canada.

Nicole: *In Hong Kong you just come to work as a nanny or housekeeper and you can't upgrade or change your status. And when your contract is finished and you can't find another employer then you have to go back* [to the Philippines].

Lucy states that she did not actually, choose this [coming to Canada]. Her friend, who was already here, assisted her in coming to Canada as a nanny.

Lucy: *If I am not lucky coming here at this time I am*

going home, I am not coming back to Italy where I was working.

SB: Do you think you made the right choice?

Lucy: *Well, yes, right choice.*

Ruth says that she came to Canada "for personal reasons".

Ruth: *I had cousins that came over in the sixties. To Canada. They have better opportunities, especially with jobs. I was eight years old when they, my Dad's first cousins immigrated to Canada.*

She adds that the opportunity was suggested to her by a friend and since she knew some family members were happily settled here her decision to come was confirmed.

In summary, the participants' motivations for coming to Canada and taking employment as domestic workers are portrayed as economic, (i.e. the economic benefits are seen as greater in Canada than in the Philippines) so as to provide financial assistance to those back home in the Philippines, educational (having opportunities to further their studies in Canada) and having the option of becoming landed immigrants in Canada.

The combination of the push factors in the Philippines (i.e. low-wages) and the pull factors in Canada (i.e. attractive alternatives to their economic situation, and the special agreement between the countries of Canada and the Philippines which encourage Filipino women to come as live-in caregivers for Canadian families cannot be seen as non-influential in her decision as well) and the structural causes and effects which weigh on the Filipino woman's decision to migrate to Canada. For example, the individual woman's '*choice*' to immigrate to Canada is embedded in the historical, political and social framework within which her decisions are made. Many families see their daughter/sister/aunt/niece as a strategic possibility for improved living conditions for them in the Philippines while there seems to be a corresponding high level of obligation shown by the participants to contribute to the

material improvement of their families.

2. Gaining Entry

As mentioned in Chapter 1 the selection criteria encompasses; level of education, English language proficiency, work experience and marital status. "Domestic workers are brought into Canada on single status" (Samy, 1990: 9), and even if they are married their visas recognise them only as single. Devins (1992) found that some of the nannies in Edmonton had reported withholding information at the time of applying for the job.

> There appears to be compliance from domestics to meet the expectations which private agencies feel are desirable. Rumours and distortions have included concealing the number of children, not disclosing all formal qualifications, or not revealing their accurate age. (Devins, 1992: 10).

There is an initial application made to the department of immigration in Canada which is approximately $250.00 (U.S.) which is usually paid from outside Canada, i.e. Hong Kong or Singapore (Devins, 1992). Also, if the woman is applying through an agency, she must pay the agency's fees as well as her airfare.

Half of the participants came to Canada through an agency. The agencies do not require licences to operate nor are there any standards for which they must comply. The women who came through an agency state that the process of gaining entry was not difficult for them.

Cez explains how easy it was for her to come to Canada;

> Cez: *... I am lucky. Actually I feel fortunate. I was just studying then. I was just curious when I heard about it [the job]. I went to the interview. There were 260 people. Most of the women came from the province. And then only 60 had passed [the interview stage] and I lived in Manila and I just lied to them and said I was from the province because I can speak English that's what they look*

for. The agency proprietor was amazed and then they send my video in Hong Kong and then in April I am hired already. I wait only two months. And its urgent. After my final exam. And then after [my] two year contract and I started to apply to Canada. In August my job offer came, and then in October the application and then the medical, its easy... After two years wait we get our open visa [permanent resident status]. Some Filipino nanny wait one or two months, but after one week I get my open visa. I am lucky. No problem. Then the immigration have the new rules again that new coming immigrants have to undergo medical. I didn't. I am lucky. My friend is here four years and still not a landed immigrant, and she had to have a medical.

3. Orientation and Arrival

Most of the women stated their appreciation for the agency's welcome at the airport and assistance for the initial week;

Ann: *Knowing you have a place to go right away makes arrival less worrying.*

SB: Did you know anyone when you arrived here?

Elaine: *No. Only the agency. They help me. They pick me up in the airport. Then after that I have one week to stay and rest. Because they say the jet-lag. And the time change is 15 hours. It is already tomorrow there.*

Yet, many felt the orientation process was not sufficient. They state that the role of the agency was to meet them at the airport, provide them with a place to stay to "rest and get over jet-lag" for one week, but after that, there is little or no contact.

Beth states no amount of preparation could possibly prepare a newcomer adequately, especially for the cold temperatures and the isolation.

Beth: *I came to Sherwood Park. I had no idea what it would be like. We were just thrilled to be able to come to Canada... Well, I came [to Edmonton] and the agency picked me up at the airport and I spent one week just recovering and then I was taken to the place I was to work. It was away from the city past Sherwood Park. There we were so far from everything. If you shout from the door no one would hear you. I was so scared being so far from everything.*

The other half of the participants came directly, without use of an agency. They came with the help of a friend or a sister who was already working as a nanny and made recommendations to an employer.

> Ruth: *Well, OK, I had a friend. I met her in Vatican City in Europe. I am with her for few months and I know she is going to Canada. And I ask her, actually [to] take my data with her, and she did. I had this little picture. And she took it to Edmonton with my personal data. Then she left in May. In October I had this person from Leduc, Alberta asking me to come to Canada. They were the family who sponsored me to come to Canada. In three months I was in Edmonton. Just through writing letters. From Rome. They arranged the airfare.*

> Lucy: *My friend came over here and I am close to her. She kind of lonely, so she help me* [come to Canada].

Those that came to Canada because they already knew someone living here had a better initial experience than those who came through an agency. Nancy says that having her sister here made gaining entry possible as well as easier. Those that were coming to friends or relative found an established circle of friendship and support.

4. Caregivers Work

The caregivers have been/are employed to work either as an elderly companion or as a child minder with housekeeping duties. The caregivers' work varied/ies for each woman. The number of children in their care ranged from one to five and their ages ranged from infants to fourteen years. Some of the caregivers' duties include[d] tending to children; washing, dressing, feeding and entertaining the children in their care, getting them ready for school, supervising homework, making lunches and packing school bags: doing housekeeping duties; for example vacuuming, dusting, washing dishes: tending pets; including such tasks as feeding, walking dogs or cleaning out bird cages: preparing meals, gardening, grocery shopping, accompanying their elderly employers to appointments.

In Alberta the live-in caregiver receives $975 gross a month, but with costs of room and board deducted, taxes, and contributions to Unemployment Insurance, Health care insurance and pension their net salary is usually $540 per month.

For these participants the number of hours worked per day varied from ten to twelve. The number of days varied from five to six. The Canada Employment Centre Kit (Canada, 1988) states that "[t]he employer must be reasonable regarding the hours of work per day and certainly one or two days off per week should be allowed". However, in Beth's situation she was far from the city and had no access to public transportation so it was difficult to get away from her employer's residence. This problem was compounded by the spacing of the days she was given off.

> Beth: *Even if I could get there* [Edmonton] *before I was sick my off days were Monday and Friday so they were not even together.*

(i). Sick leave

One would assume that in sickness the care-giver would receive time off from work but the realities are such that even when sick the women felt obliged to work as they were being paid and they were did not want to let their employers down as they were relied on so heavily.

> Cez: *Even I am sick, I try to be happy and work even I am not. Especially when I get an accident. I had the accident on December 26 and I work January 2. Even I have stitches. She didn't tell me to have time [off]. I forced myself to work because the kids...*
>
> SB: What if you really couldn't work?
>
> Cez: *I force myself. I pretend that I am not sick. In my case I pretend, "I am fine" so she doesn't [get angry].I take the bus to the doctor. Its only my problem. Maybe its because I am absent minded. After the accident. You know. Maybe she notice that. Because when she get home, the livingroom is not yet done. I work slow because my back hurts. I get migraines. I vomit, even I take medication. Its because my muscles here* [indicates neck and shoulders] *the doctor said. She's nice, my employer but when that happen, maybe...she has a problem too. I*

understand.

A "fringe benefit" (Canada, 1981: 63) of the live-in caregiver's job in Alberta is the payment of half the premiums for health insurance by the employer and reimbursement of return portion of prescription costs. But as Nicole states it is not reinforced:

> Nicole: *... I know some nanny friends, their employer is paying the health care, my employer doesn't. It depends on the employer. Its in the contract but my employer didn't do this...*

Beth tells of her employer's failure to pay her Alberta health insurance, the lack of access to medical treatment due to her isolated position and of her feeling responsible for finding someone else to fill her place until her health improved.

> Beth: *But, after 3 weeks* [of starting the job] *I got sick. The doctor said it was a delirious sickness. I didn't want to be sick but she [employer] was not happy with me. I was so weak I could not work. The employer had not got any medical insurance for me. It was not arranged but I was told it was. Fortunately, I phoned my friend and she came to see me. She said she would work for me because I couldn't. And she was living in Slave Lake, a long way for her to come but she did. The woman [employer] gave permission for my friend to come, but one day she sent my friend away. And they left me there all day from morning to night. I was so alone and weak. And I thought for sure I would die there. I prayed and dreamed for my Mom. Every day I dreamed of her. She died 5 years before I left the Philippines. This sickness let me have delirious things, you know like I would say things without having any control. I had a fever and I was so sick I couldn't eat anything. When she came home she would bring me a big bottle of water and some tylenol. That's it. When my friend called but my employer would not give me the message. She said [to them] I had moved out and didn't know where I was. Finally, my friend [a Filipino nanny] and her employer came and got me and took me away from there in the day time when my employer wasn't at home. My friend's employer is a doctor, [and she] said she would give me [medical] treatment for free. And I didn't have any salary. I stayed there in Slave Lake for two months until I was better. But, that was the most terrible thing in my whole life.*

In many Canadian provinces, domestics are not covered by

minimum wage legislation. When they are, there is no ceiling placed on the amount an employer can deduct for room and board. In addition, domestics are not paid for time worked beyond the eight hour day. Domestics also are not covered by Workers Compensation, and the contracts domestics sign with their employers is rarely, if ever, enforced by government officials (McGowan, 1982:7).

(ii). Rules and regulations of the live-in caregiver programme

The participants expressed the tribulations and trials they experience(d) as live-in caregivers due to the rules and regulations of the caregivers contract.

1. The live-in requirement

Many of the hardships arose from the direct affect of the regulations under which the live-in caregiver had to live and work. As discussed in chapter two the primary concern of the care-givers programme outlined in the literature (i.e. Arac-Krot, 1992; Devins, 1993) was the regulation that requires these women to live in the residence of their employers. Many stated directly how the live-in requirement affected them in various ways, from inconveniences (i.e. loss of privacy, lack of choice in food) to serious situations (isolation and hunger).

Cez outlines some of the general difficulties involved in this requirement and the seriousness of breaking this regulation.

> Cez: *You are not allowed to live with your friends. You have to stay two years with your employer before you get open visa. [And] you have to pay $300 month for food.*
>
> SB: What if you don't like the food?
>
> Cez: *Ah, that is the problem. You would have to buy your own. My friends do. In the contract you have to have a room, furnished with everything, because you are paying. They deduct it from your salary even, you didn't consume*

your $300. [1] *In a week you can't stay at a friend's place, only on weekends. The employer might not call immigration* [if you stay out on week days]. *It depends on the employer. My friend, is still in the care-givers programme. Her and her employer made a compromise she could stay to her friends and they won't let the immigration to know about it. But she get a mistake to the employer and the employer told the immigration...*

SB: That she was living outside?

Cez: *Yeah, you know what I mean? If things don't work out?*

SB: Did they still take her $300 still?

Cez: *Well, just $150 deducted. The case is not solved yet.*

SB: What is the most serious thing that could happen to her?

Cez: *She could be sent back. Because it says in the contract that they have to stay there for 2 years. No live out. No. The contract was broken. Deported.*

The days that the live-in caregiver is given off will often prove difficult as this requires or at least it is desirable to go outside the employers' dwelling and stay with friends. Often this requires a few caregivers getting together to rent an apartment for use on weekends or whatever days they have off.

Cez: *We get $540 net a month. So you have two days off a week, right? It takes money.*

2. Accommodation

Many of the participants felt that the living arrangements were problematic and that the vagueness of their contracts left many points open to interpretation. Their concerns are understandable. The live-in caregivers are not included under the labour laws of Canada, nor under the Albertan provincial labour laws.

SB: Does it say in the contract what kind of room you

---

[1] The Canadian Employment Centre Kit confirms Cez's statement; "the employer may charge up to $300.00 per month for room and board and the employer must provide a furnished private room..." (Canada, 1988:1-2)

should have, and a list of things you should have like a bed, desk, chair...?

Cez: *Yeah, but some don't do it anyway!*

SB: Who can the caregiver complain to if they don't do it? [Cez shrugs her shoulders]

Lack of privacy is a recurring theme in the interviews. In most cases the live-in caregiver's room was accessible by everyone living in the house. Nicole illustrates her discomfort in some of the aspects of her living arrangements;

Nicole: *The house is like a mansion. My friends said, Wow! I have the basement family room. There are no servant quarters. So, they gave it to me with my own big bathroom. Its really nice. So when my friend picked up my stuff to come with her to live on weekends, she said why are you moving? This is so nice! You can do what you want here. You can jump in your room. If you want to cook something, your Filipino food you don't worry if your employer can smell it. You know our cooking habits are different. There is a kitchen there but I don't use it. I am nervous. There is a door that connects the room to the kitchen.*

SB: You don't feel comfortable using it? Do you have a lock to the door to your room?

Nicole: *No, that's one thing. There is no lock. They think I am not home and I am sleeping and they open my door and I am scared! And they have their bible study groups and one of the visitors open my door and I am afraid. I didn't really mention it to anybody. But it always happens. I want to put my own lock, like my friends do put on their own lock but [the door frame] is so nice I don't want to destroy it.*

3. Changing employers

Some of the women tell of their unhappiness in their position and explain some of the reasons why they stay. One such reason is explained by Beth. During Beth's second contract the situation was unbearable yet she felt she had to finish her time.

SB: Did you want to leave?

Beth: *Yes, but I wanted to finish my year because you have to do 2 years of nanny before you can apply for open visa.*

And if you make too many...if you break contract they might think there is something wrong with you. The immigration officers don't know how it really is and all they see is "Oh she has broken her contract", you know?

4. The Release letter

When the caregiver changes jobs, she must first obtain a release letter from her present employer.

Beth: *I call that the "isolated place". The thing is before I left I got a letter my employer signed. I wrote it out saying that she was releasing me because I couldn't work. Even though I was sick I was still thinking, all the time thinking about this. Then I went to immigration (when I got better) and they said I did the right thing. They got me another job just near here.*

5. Fees

As well as this the caregiver must pay a standard fee to change employers.

The imposed fee that the caregiver must pay each time she changes employers is seen as unfair. Nicole and Cez explain;

Nicole: *If you can't stand it you can leave. But we are the ones who pay, if we feel we cannot stay. Its not the employers' expense.*

Cez: *You must pay $125 first,* [and] *after* [if you change employers] *you have to pay another $125. That's the worst. If you don't like the employer and you are looking for another employer, you have to pay again.*

The fee subjects women who have a low income to particular hardship and may contribute to her reluctance to change employers soon after her new position. And as mentioned in Chapter 1, the caregiver cannot change jobs without government approval. If she loses or quits her job - for whatever reason - and fails to find another job within a very short period of time, she can be deported. For this reason many feel obliged to accept whatever is imposed on them (McGowan, 1982).

Many of the participants expressed their desire to follow the rules as carefully as possible for fear of breaking the law and possibly being deported. The threat of deportation is a powerful influence of the lives of the caregiver.

McGowan (1982) states that many immigrant women have a fear of complaining because of the 1978 immigration act which states that an immigrant can be deported because of suspected subversive activities. "Subversive" is not detailed and as a result many immigrants fear that their employer will take revenge on them for making a formal complaint.

(iii). Relationship with employers

The participants who have experienced forms of abuse name it as verbal abuse.

1. Abuse

Cez: *There's lots of verbal and physical* [abuse]. *Oh, yeah.. Oh, lots. And we have to just bow. It happen in my case. After my accident, I am very upset, depressed, like that and I can't concentrate on my work, my employer get mad at me. She said, separate your personal* [life]. *My neck hurts, and I am depressed but I am forced to work. And she said something, oh....*

SB: really mean?

Cez: *Yeah.*

SB: That must have upset you.

Cez: *Oh, yeah. I cried. She saw me cry. She said, "Don't...this is only under the table... Don't tell anyone we got an argument." I am treated only as an employee. Because she belongs to a high class family. Even since I work there, we don't eat together. I eat in my room. She's nice, but...sometimes, you know... And she told me... my problem at work, I don't want you to get involved. Separate your personal problem from your work. I am not close to her. With the other families I ate with them. I was lucky.*

In her first nanny position, Beth endured disrespectful behaviour from her employer which affected her ability to work.

Beth: *She was a single Mom, a widow. She had lost her husband. She was very upset from that. I worried that she would go crazy. I was sympathetic to her. But, during the first three weeks she would start vacuuming the floor above my room, I slept in the basement, at 2 in the morning. I could not sleep. I had to work from 9 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. and I could not work well when I was awake until*

2 a.m.. I even made sure the room was clean before I went to bed. I would tell her, "I just cleaned, you don't need to tonight" but she did anyway. I had to finally tell her that I couldn't work well without my sleep and she stopped doing that.

Beth's second position started with good relations with her employers, but this gradually deteriorated;

Beth: *They said they would treat me like one of the family. At first it was kind of like that, they were nice but near the end of the contract they acted like they hated me. They shouted. They shouted at each other but me, I never say anything to anyone. But it was not good for me.*

This live-in caregiver contract of Beth's came with other difficulties arising from lack of access to food.

Beth: *They locked the refrigerator whenever they went to work and left me a can of tomato soup and crackers. Yeah, but that's OK for me, you know I was getting paid. At supper time they would cook a big meal but I would be by that time in my room and they never offered me supper. I was hungry. I lost so much weight. Then I was only 98 pounds. Now I am 120 pounds.*

2. Support

Nicole's cancer diagnoses and consequent treatment put her in a real dilemma. After only four months on the job she had to stop working. Nicole felt she had nowhere to go and was without an income. Live-in caregivers must pay into UIC (Unemployment Insurance) and CPP(Canada Pension Plan), yet they almost never receive these services. Although in theory they are eligible for UIC, in practice they are required to find new employment or leave the country before the waiting period is up, so they never receive benefits (Womens' Secretariat of Alberta, 1984:35). Fortunately, her employer helped her by providing her with a place to live even though she could not work.

Nicole: *I was diagnosed with that cancer on Oct. 24. And my employer does not want me to quit my job. She is still waiting. Even when I had my treatment she allowed me to stay with her. But, I feel like its unfair to her because I could not do the exact job I am doing because I am looking after a baby and [lifting] the vacuum, I can*

hardly do it. Like I would [vacuum] everyday, so I talked to her and said, "You had better get a new nanny." But she did not send me out of her house. She didn't let me to get out of my room. Because room and board you know is deducted from our salaries, she didn't let me when I am not working anymore. She just let me stay in my room. "Its not fair on your new nanny", I said. No, her sewing room she made a new room and let her new nanny stay there.

SB: How long did you stay there?

Nicole: *Until April when I found a new job. I finish my treatment in March and in April I got a new job.*

When asked what she would have done if her employer wasn't as kind as she was, Nicole responded, "I don't know. I don't know. God gave me everything, all the blessings, you know."

Ann states that her employers at her live-in caregiver job made her welcome and secure and the knowledge that she always had a home and job with them.

(iv). Relationships with children in their care

The participants generally related well with the children in their care. The parents often reinforced the authority of the caregiver by reminding the children that the nanny is in charge when the parents are away. Most participants tell of the children's good behaviour and their willingness to help with chores.

Nancy: *The children are told to treat me well because [I] am just like them, the parents. There is no problem. They do their chores and they get paid. They are five. They are from eight to twelve* [years].

Nicole: *I am with a family of seven. The children are from ages one year old to 14 years old. When I went to the interview I said this will be hard, but the children are very well disciplined.*
They make their beds in the mornings, they put their dishes in the dishwasher when they finish eating, even they wipe up spills from the table.

Beth: *I looked after four kids. They were one year apart each, it was like looking after quadruplets. And the woman was pregnant with another one.*

Two of the participants mentioned their difficulty in the

children's lack of manners and show of respect toward adults, themselves included, which they feel is a cultural difference.

Nancy explains that a younger person should address an older person in a respectful way, as is done in the Philippines. This means they cannot call an adult by their first name. Ann found this difficult to accept in the house where she worked:

> Ann: *Even the children call their father by the first name. They just laugh, but for me its not right.*

5. Personal and Social Issues

In their narratives most of the participants revealed a range of personal and social issues and problems arising from their decision to be caregivers in Canada. These include loneliness and culture shock.

(i). Culture Shock

> Ann: *Its really hard especially when you go home, or when people from here go back you have that homesick feeling but after some time you just recover, because if you think about it too much.. its hard enough... you have to cover it up, make some joke about it otherwise,... Especially when you are alone. You have friends, but its not the same.*

> Nicole: *I am not perfect. Like yesterday, I am feeling very down and I want to be very strong and I know that [God] is the strength. But some days my physical body makes me, ah... I want to be strong. Sometimes when I open it* [the whole story] *like now when we are talking but I can't please all people. My friends might not understand me so I try keep it to myself. I cry at night and talk to God. But I feel better if I [can] open like that.*

> Elaine: *I already used to be away from my parents. Its the thing that I have to go away to help them. It is hard, but you just have to be strong and make sacrifices for them. That's the main reason that helps me. You have to think of them.*

Beth's story of her first contract was unique in the sample of participants. Her experience was of a very serious nature and spells out the repercussions of a combination of the detrimental affects of culture shock, isolation, sickness and

working for an unstable single parent.

Beth took sick and was unable to work. During a serious stage of her illness when she was unable to get out of bed, she was left on her own during the daytime and her employer told her friends who called that she had gone back to the Philippines. She felt completely cut off from everything. She felt isolated, afraid and helplessness.

> Beth: *I was so afraid in that first nanny job and being away from the city, no taxi would come there if I called, there were no buses from there and no one living nearby, no way to get a drive to the city.*

6. Support and Solidarity

(i). Friends, relatives and citizens

During Nicole's chemotherapy treatment which was everyday for a week, once a month, she stayed at the hostel near the hospital and a bus run by volunteers took her to the Cross Cancer institute.
Nicole was impressed by the people in her community who ensured that she received a lift there and back regularly.

(ii). Non-government Organisations

There are a large number of community based, grass-roots associations which offer assistance to newcomers in Canada. Some of these organisations have ethnic or religious affiliations. There are a growing number of organisations which assist immigrant women in general and those in the domestic realm specifically.

Historically, domestic workers in Canada have recognised the need to organise themselves. Organisations have lobbied together to pressure for changes in state policies for over 20 years. For example, in 1958, in Ontario a Caribbean group of domestic workers got together to form the first support group and around 1981 the lobbying efforts of domestic workers,

particularly the Filipino domestic workers made the LRDS [Labour Rights for Domestic Servants] "really come to life" (Carty & Brand, 1987:44). The Filipino membership offered a different perspective to the domestic servants from Scandinavia and Britain who typically went back to their countries of origin. INTERCEDE [International Coalition to End Domestic Exploitation] has acted as a "watch dog" to make sure that policies are fair and equitable.

In Edmonton there are organisations which focus on the concerns and needs of immigrant women, including: Changing Together, Catholic Social Services (CSS), Edmonton Immigrant Services Association (EISA) and the Mennonite Centre. The live-in caregivers of Edmonton have been active in their self-directed community based organisations which have been set up to try and address political, social and economic concerns of nannies. The Filipino live-in caregivers are associated with organisations which are members of INTERCEDE, for example: Alberta Domestic Workers Association (ADWA), Household Workers Association of Alberta and International Homemakers Association.

> Nancy: *I belong to Filipino groups, NAHLA (Northern Alberta Heritage Language Association), LINGAP (Learning For Interdependence and Global Awareness of the Philippines), FANA (Filipino Nurses Association in Alberta), Toast Masters, and Catholic St. Joseph's Basilica. I volunteer with CSS (Catholic Social Services) every Wednesday. I just want all of my vacant time periods just to be filled with something, helpful.*
>
> Beth: *I am involved in the Nanny organization and religious organization.*
>
> Elaine: *I belong to ADWA (Alberta Domestic Workers Association) and CICS, Filipino organisations.*

However, despite their role as representative caregiver associations, the groups like ADWA and IHA (International Homemakers Association) to which the Filipino caregivers belong, have generally emphasized leisure and recreation activities more than political empowerment and advocacy roles.

Many immigrant women are unaware of their rights and of the regulations that apply to them. Due to the lack of information, discriminatory practices continue to restrict the lives of caregivers. While these organisations can act as an information sharing centre where members may be informed of immigration laws, employment regulations, provincial labour laws, provincial and federal human rights codes and municipal regulations, there is little evidence that they are organized to assertively challenge inequities and discrimination.

Of the nine participants in this study, five have been or are active in a Filipino or nanny organisation and seven are involved in religious organisations.

Nicole, who was dealing with many difficulties due to her health and the deportation order, states that she received support from many sources. She was supported both emotionally and financially by the members and leader of the Homemakers Association of Alberta and by the wider community who campaigned, solicited financial assistance and public support through political action and publicity via the media and the staging of various community events.

Nicole's case demonstrates how community support and solidarity can make a difference in one person's situation.

SB: So, who gave you the most support when you were fighting against the deportation order? Groups, friends...?

Nicole: *It was a mix but it was one person first [friend], then the second, then all the organizations who asked people to sign a petition. There were 900 signatures... Filipino, Canadian, Chinese, Indian, and they supported me. They signed. We sent it to Ottawa but they turned it down. Many people wrote letters, the people of Wetaskewin, the church members, the pastors, they really support me. The government spent a lot of stamps for this!*

(iii). Canadian Human Rights Commission

Nicole: *I approached Human Rights. They spoke to immigration and at the time I had no lawyer.They couldn't*

do anything. They were powerless. They advised me to get a lawyer.

(iv). Politicians

Nicole: [a Member of Parliament] *helped me a lot, and* [a Member of the Legislative Assembly] *in this riding. My employer knew him and he called me many times. They sent letters to Ottawa. But they were ignored.*
Lola [a politician] hire me when I am out of a job... She knew I am looking for an employer. She didn't need a nanny. There wasn't much to do, just gardening and sewing... So she help me. She was the one who put all my situation together with picture and story. She organised a press conference at the Mennonite Centre, Changing Together.... Even the politicians she invited... She contacted a big Filipino organisation in Ontario. They even phoned me! I just said thank you. They are very proud of me. They said they were happy I was fighting for it.

Friends and members of organisations and the community at large have provided the participants support to help deal with everything from loneliness to resisting discrimination or discriminatory laws. All but one of the participants stated they had someone to whom they could rely on in times of need.

7. Dealing with State agencies

The participants' experiences with state agencies such as Canada Department of Immigration offices and the city police have ranged from positive, pleasant encounters to negative, painful experiences.

Both Cez and Nicole told of agreeable interactions with police. For example, there were times when police officers had come to their defense when strangers made racist remarks toward them.

Many of the participants felt intimidated by the department of immigration. Their nervousness in speaking with officials, the importance of the formal interviews, along with the authoritarian attitudes of the immigration officials created distressful situations for the participants, but generally they felt that there were no serious problems.

Beth explains her feelings when attending her interviews:

Beth: *I was so nervous. I was shaking to death because they might ask you something that you do not know or have not experienced.... They had to do an investigation because I gave them two addresses in the Philippines.... The immigration officer was a nice woman, but it was hard to get status here.*

Lucy: [In the past] *you had to have three assessments. If you failed the interview you could not become an immigrant. It is different now. Now it is easier for nannies... I did not find any problems.*

Elaine: *The immigration people were nice to me. I hear that sometimes it is terrible. For me, I don't find any problem.*

Ruth is content with the way the immigration office works and defends their ways.

Ruth: *Actually, its maybe my childhood personality. I never had problems with them. Its maybe because of the way I approach people. Most of the [immigration] officers that assessed me, they were really impressed. The officer said "how about if we sign this for you to be an immigrant, what are you going to do?" And I said, "Well, no problem. I'll like it lots!" I said I'll go out there and look for a job. He said, "What job are you going to do?" I said, "I don't mind waitering" I says, " and bus girl or whatever". "Oh, well, congratulations!" he says. No problem, yeah. Its the type of personality.*

SB: Yeah, I'm sure that has a lot to do with it, but sometimes it doesn't matter how nice one can be sometimes. The person in power can be difficult no matter how nice the other person is.

Ruth: *I think, but... yeah. You just have to follow the rules. Have you been to the immigration office?*

SB: No.

Ruth: *The thing is they have their rules. You just have to follow the rules. You have to understand what is in the paper there. You have to fill it up and give it to them. Don't make a mistakes. If you make mistakes then you have to go back again. And there is always a line up. [Because], if you work in the office, this person didn't follow the rules and didn't fill out the form properly. Of course even myself, I would be mad to be way out there again. But because you have to read carefully. And everything, then there's no problem, right? See, that's the thing. Understanding is very important.*

In Ann's experience the rudeness of the immigration official when answering Ann's question, caused Ann to delay her application for permanent resident status for six months.

Nicole's experience was a unique one not only compared to the participants in this research but in the legal history of Canada. Even though Nicole's case was unique, many questions are raised as to how her case was handled and the events that surrounded the progress of the case from beginning (when she made the application) to end (when she received permanent resident status).

Before Nicole's permanent resident status was awarded, she was discouraged from going home because she was waiting for the final approval by immigration to say she was officially a permanent resident.

> Nicole: *I got a court order, but, they need to give me a final approval from the immigration to stamp on my passport to complete my landed immigrant status. They don't want to give it. I said how come that they won't give it? I said to my lawyer. You already got the court order I said. They said [Nicole], they can't accept that they are losers. They are just giving you a hard time but they can't deny it anymore, so don't worry. I said no I am not worry, but I want to go* [tears come to her eyes] *my mother is not well* [she cries] *and I want to see her while she is still alive. My mother is really suffering. She is in really bad shape. She had a stroke paralyse her half body but for last 2 years she getting worse. [Nicole] I can't tell you what to do, but my opinion is this, you can't go home. I can't give you assurance that you will not have a problem coming back even we have a court order. And so, I didn't go and then* [starts to cry] *my mother died. I feel so bad because I look after myself first because of my immigration problem, if I go without thinking about landed immigrant status, I can still see my Mom* [cries hard as she speaks]. *When my mother died I phoned my lawyer and said, I really have to go. She said, OK, I will do my best. She make a telex to the immigration saying that my mother died and I really needed to go, so they didn't give me my landed immigrant, but they allowed me,...they gave me a paper.*

When Nicole was diagnosed with cancer she was denied the right to permanent resident status. The letter from Canada

Immigration centre states:

> Due to your breast cancer, it has been determined that your permanent admission to Canada would cause or might reasonably be expected to cause, excessive demands on health or social services... In line with the fairness principle, we would like to provide you with the opportunity to leave Canada voluntarily on or before the date of expiry of this document...failure to do so will result in enforcement action taken against you... a deportation order can be issued.

The document affected her emotionally and physically. She was told often that she was a burden on society by immigrant officials.

> Nicole: *I don't think that they knew how those words affected me, I'm a burden, I'm a burden, I'm a burden they keep saying. I'm a burden* [cries as she speaks].

The regular medical examinations she had done at the Cross Cancer Institute were rejected even though the doctors knew more about her case than anyone else in the medical field. She was required to pay fees and undergo another series of medical examinations by a medical doctor designated by Canada Immigration.

> Nicole: *The lawyer said the judge wants me to have another medical. I said I will not do another medical, because when I informed immigration I have breast cancer I am having a yearly check up to say I have a clean bill of health, but they won't accept the Cross cancer medical report. So immigration asked me to do another check up with their own medical doctor. So I went and paid $100 and they are not satisfied. There is nothing there but when I asked the doctor he said sorry I cannot give you the results. This result is given directly to health care... they will inform immigration and it will take 6 months. They just took blood tests, like that, but at cross cancer they did mammogram, heart...its complete. And they [immigration] won't accept it. In April I did this and in November they ask me to do another medical. I asked can I do this at the cross cancer? It was my request so they let me do it but then they wouldn't accept it anyway. They said your doctor is missing something. It was all there. Just something about my eye. I had to have my eye inspected at my own practitioner and then they still ask me to do another medical again with their own doctor again! So I went through it. Then when I went to the doctor the third time with their doctor I am shaking already. He noticed my situation. He said, don't worry.*

It will affect your body. He said there is nothing wrong with you, there is no cancer. I shouldn't tell it to you because I will submit it to health and welfare.

SB: So, then it went through OK?

Nicole: *No! They said that in their opinion we have to refuse your application because the cancer will be back in 5 years. My cancer is likely to occur again.*

The Cross Cancer progress report (1993:2) stated:

> The patient has done well for a considerable time period already, which considerably improves her outlook.... Another thought that deserves consideration is that were [Nicole] to develop recurrent disease with distant metastases no curative treatment could be offered to her and her survival would not be very long, that is she would not be likely to cause a great deal of health care costs.

She felt that the immigration officers behaved in a deceitful way. When she refused to leave the country right away they suggested she go back to the Philippines "for a vacation". Afterwhich she would not be allowed back into Canada.

Nicole: *The words are nice but underneath they are so mean. Like when this officer said so nicely, "[Nicole], why don't you take a holiday this September?" What do you think? Its nice? If you are not alert you will think she is nice. But she has something behind those words and I knew it,* [tears well up in her eyes] *I just said I have no money I can't go.*

Nicole was directly discouraged by the immigration centre in Edmonton from hiring a lawyer or appealing the deportation order.

Nicole: *I cancelled the service of the immigration consultant and I hired a lawyer. I told them* [at the immigration office] *I think I need a lawyer. They said, "No you don't." But lots of people telling me I need a lawyer. One thing I learned that anything legal you have to have a lawyer or they will keep saying you have no rights, you have no rights. When she* [immigration officer] *learned I changed my mind and that I was going to appeal the order to leave she said on the phone, "you have no right to appeal!!" They knew I had no relatives. They thought I would.. give up and go away. That's why you really need a lawyer. Friends can advise you but they* [can only do so much].

Nicole's case reinforces the feeling that the medical

restrictions put on those applying for permanent resident status with sicknesses with the potential for overburdening the health and social service system is "... unduly restrictive in its application, causing many to be refused admission" (Canada, 1985: 61). Fortunately, after seventeen months of fighting in the courts, the Federal Court awarded Nicole permanent resident status owing to the existence of humanitarian or compassionate considerations pursuant to section 114 (2) of the Immigration Act. Nicole states that the emotional support and financial assistance (to pay for legal fees) from friends, NGO's and the public at large along with her determination and faith in God helped her to win her case.

Conclusion

These Filipino women come to Canada to take jobs under conditions which no Canadian would accept. The price the caregivers pay economically, psychologically, emotionally, politically and socially are high. This chapter has addressed the main problems faced in their lives as caregivers as well as the difficulties faced in the wider society. Many of their quandaries were related to restrictive government rules and regulations such as: the live-in requirement, the accommodation provided, relationships with employers, lack of protection under federal and provincial labour laws, unfair taxation (i.e. they pay into unemployment insurance yet are not able to claim it), the ambiguities of the conditions of the contract signed between the employer and caregiver, and the lack of official reinforcement of the standards outlined in the contract.

State agencies were mostly perceived as being helpful, although the department of immigration's personal relations have been discerned as being harsh and unaccommodating at times. One case in particular reinforces the parliamentary committee on equality rights recommendation, that the medical

standards for admission for permanent resident status should be relaxed and made more flexible (Canada, 1986: 27).

The participants' willingness to participate in organisations and associations and the support and assistance these associations provide, help the participants to deal with some of their problems and therefore helps them in their integration into Canadian society.

The next chapter will examine the process of becoming a Canadian after the compulsory two years as a caregiver.

CHAPTER 4
PARTICIPATION IN CANADIAN SOCIETY

Introduction

The process of becoming a Canadian does not begin the day a newcomer receives landed immigrant status nor when one officially becomes a Canadian citizen. The process is a long, on-going one which begins when the participants arrive at their designated Canadian homes for work. From then on the live-in caregiver becomes acquainted with "Canadian ways". In some ways the experience of a live-in caregiver is unique to the experiences of other newcomers in that she is instantly immersed into a Canadian household and her immediate basic needs for food, shelter, employment and income are met. After settling in, the caregiver becomes actively involved in social, political, economic, and cultural dimensions of Canadian life through her work and through interacting with other cultural groups and institutions of Canadian society. This process of becoming Canadian continues after she is given an open working visa, while waiting for her immigration application to be processed and after gaining permanent resident status. This chapter will seek to understand the issues of identity, in ethnocultral terms as well as class and gender dimensions.

1. Ethnocultural identity

(i). Explaining identity

When asked about their identity most women identified themselves with their country of origin (the Philippines), their language (often Tagalog), their "Asian" features (i.e. skin colour and eye shape) and how others have responded to these identifiers.

Elaine: *People ask all the time where I am from. I say Philippines. I identify myself as Filipino.*

Anna: *I always identify myself as Filipino.*

Cez: *I am a Filipino. I am proud to be a Filipino.*

Lucy: *I speak Italian fluently, a little Spanish. And English. And Tagalog. Oh, no. Oh, I will never forget my own language from home. With my friends we talk Tagalog. We don't have to forget* [our] *own language* [when we become Canadian citizens].

Anna: *Everybody knows I am Filipino. Even waiting for the bus a guy said, "I know you are Filipino." I said, "I agree, I can't deny it." Of course my eyes are not Chinese like some Filipinas. But my complexion is* [like a Filipino].

Nancy: *Maybe when people look at me they assume I am Chinese, even if they are Filipinos... They say, "Oh, I thought you were Chinese that's why we, ah are not talking to you or we didn't smile", or "we thought you were Chinese. You look like Chinese" like that. "Oh no, I am PURE Filipino!", then there were also few incidences when they [say], "You are Japanese, or Korean or Malaysian. Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Malaysian.*

SB: These are Canadian people who say this? Mostly Caucasians?

Nancy: *Some Filipinos, some Chinese and some whites. But for me it is very obvious I am Filipino, but maybe its because my eyes they are a little bit like Chinese.*

SB: Do people assume you came from the Philippines as soon as they see you?

Ruth: *Most ask first, but people know I am Filipino, especially in Edmonton. Because of the way I look. But, I think the people like "cultured" people, the well travelled people they know. They should know.*

The two participants who are Canadian citizens do not feel that citizenship alters their identity. They are still "Filipino" but identify themselves as "Filipinos with Canadian citizenship" (Ruth).

Lucy: *Actually, my identity is Filipino. Of course, I am a Filipino. But I am also Canadian because I live in here. Right away people know I am Filipino, that I am an Asian. Then they ask, "Are you a Canadian citizen?" That's the question always. Always asking that. Not, "from where are you?", "Are you Canadian citizen?", "Oh, yes."*

SB: So, you've been here 12 years and you still call yourself Filipino?

Lucy: *12 years yes. Because I am a Filipino. I am brown colour. See?*

A few of the participants who do not have Canadian citizenship feel that they can identify themselves as Filipino until they get their Canadian citizenship.

> SB: What do you say when people ask you about your identity?
>
> Nicole: *I say I am Filipino because I am not a Canadian citizen yet.*

Some participants feel that it is important to maintain their cultural beliefs and values even when living away from the Philippines to avoid losing their entire Filipino identity. Ruth acknowledges that one's identity can merge with another when one moves to another country. For her, the adoption of a "Filipino-Canadian" identity is natural and proper.

> Ruth: *When I took the oath, I knew I am not losing my Filipino* [identity]. *Actually I am adapting another* [identity] *which, in my understanding is like a Philippine-Canadian* [identity]... [makes a "phhtt" sound as puts two fists together].

Mary, Cez, Ann and Nancy state with disappointment that they feel there are many Filipino-Canadians who have deliberately tried to assimilate in Canada by "pretending to be unable to speak Tagalog" or speak it with an over-emphasized "Canadian accent", not attending church as regularly as they would in the Philippines, adopting Canadian casualness in dressing and in social interactions, and parents not enforcing traditional customs of interacting with strangers and adults in their children. These participants feel that especially those Filipino-Canadians who are parents are pressured by their children to change their attitudes and behaviours and have tried too hard to become Canadian and not hard enough to be Filipino-Canadian.

(ii). Class identity

Many of the participants feel that their status as a live-in caregiver is "low down" (Elaine) in Canada but in the Philippines they are considered "somebody" (Cez) to "bring home the treasures" (Ann).

Nancy: *In Canada you are really down there but when you go back to your country you are honoured,...*
Nannies have a lot of money. My colleagues there, when I go home I have more money than them. And, it doesn't really bother me because what is wrong with being a nanny? You stay at home taking care of the kids. I don't look at myself as degraded or something. I love working with kids and if you get a good family....

Cez compares her present economic status to the middle class in the Philippines.

Cez: *In Canada, I can go wherever I want. I can travel. I could never [do that] in Hong Kong or in the Philippines because I need lots of money. Here, I can own a car. I can't in the Philippines unless I was a high up manager or from middle class family or from rich people. In Canada I can live by myself and manage.*

Cez feels that her status as a caregiver is lowly which is reinforced by her present employer's attitude toward Cez;

Cez: *I am treated only as an employee. Because she belongs to a higher class family....*

Although she is "looked down at" by Filipinos and Canadians in Canada, her status at home is elevated. She explains:

Cez: *... when you get to Canada or States, they* [Filipinos back home] *like you. Its a big deal. They think you are somebody. Even compared to those degree holders in the Philippines. It is different. They treat you different. You are really somebody.*
I am a maid here in Canada, but we have maid in the Philippines. My family has 2 maids. If I went to the Philippines, oh, [they ask me] "Cez, what [would you like for] your breakfast?". Like that. They wash the clothes, by hands, no washing machine. They live with us. They are 20 years old. Its cheap. We only pay them 600 pesos. That's $40 a month. Free board & housing.

Cez refers to Canada and the United States as "higher" countries, or countries with power and status. By being in these countries she receives a bit of that status from those at home. With that status she feels she is "really somebody".

Cez: *They know that Canada and the U.S. are "higher countries". In Canada, its funny, I am here in Canada. They [the family] said, "Oh, she is in Canada" like that. Then I went to the U.S., and wow! Its a big issue. Its a big deal. "Wow, you can go to the States now!" They don't know that we can go to the States anytime. Because*

America, the States, it is very... in the Philippines, you know... because they know it is a very powerful country. They like Americans. During Marcos regime, a lot of people went to the States. When you are in the States you are treated very well by other Filipinos when you go back. Because it is so difficult to get there [to the States]. [the American immigration] *are very strict. They ask what are you going to do there? And it is expensive to tour there. When I went, "Oh! [Cez] went to Disney Land!" Everyone was talking. Its a big issue!*

Cez explains that her boyfriend's family in the Philippines did not like her until she came to Canada and gained "higher status".

Cez: *His* [my boyfriend's] *mother doesn't like me before because we are poor. But, now, because I am here they like me. Because if you are in the Philippines you cannot afford to go to Canada or the States, but now when you get to Canada or States, they like you. Its a big deal. They think you are somebody. Even compared to those degree holders in the Philippines. It is different. They treat you different. You are really somebody.*

SB: So, your friends in the Philippines they really think you are quite amazing?

Cez: *Yeah, yeah. That's right! Oh yeah!*

(iii). Gender

Cez feels alienated from the Filipino culture, particularly in the province where she is from. Her views of Filipino attitudes, especially regarding women and dating are contrary to the views of her family. She rejects her old way of life and takes pride in her independence - what she calls her "Canadian way". She explains the consequences of her behaviour from her family;

Cez: *Like me. Sometimes, I act very independent and even I didn't do it* [anything bad]... *My Mom, said, "Oh you get all the Canadian ways" I changed too much. Even the way of dressing. If you are wearing shorts, they say, "Pspspsssss" [whispering], and even long earrings,... and then I smoke, I do. And you know in the Philippines if you smoke you are like a prostitute, in a bar, like that, social[ly] its very different. If you are a girl and smoke they say you are cheap.*

SB: What about if you are married and smoke?

Cez: *Oh, they will say the husband he cannot control his wife. But, in Manila, it is more civilized. They already know what is going on. Like if you were in the Province. Oh, you cannot wear shorts. Or if you blouse is like this...*

SB: Oh, too low?

Cez: *Mmm. They misinterpret you. Like me. Oh, I smoke. Sometimes I drink. Oh. They think already I am bad girl.*

SB: What about if you went back there to live, would you have a problem trying to adjust again?

Cez: *Oh yeah. My brother doesn't let me to smoke. I get spank on my face. Wow! I saw stars. My older brother told me, "Even you are bread winner, you can't do that. You can't do what you want to do". Like now, because my boyfriend is in the states and I saw them [my family] and I [went to see him] again in December. My family say, "Wow!". They kick me, "Don't you go there. You'll sleep with him!" My main reason is not to see my boyfriend anyway. I want to see Disney world... I sleep at my boyfriend's but not with him. I sleep with his mother. But the news in the Philippines is that I sleep with my boyfriend. I don't know how they think that. They guess, because this is America, you know. They keep calling me..."Oh! [Cez]!" Like that. A big issue. Oh, yeah, they [my family] always teasing me, "Wow, you are already Canadian". And then I speak sometime, when I am talking on the phone because I say 'Holy, holy'. You know. Canadian expression, like "gosh". Even when I write to Mom, I write English. Sometimes. All my family read English. They don't care which language. But they always teasing, "Oh you are Canadianized".*

Nicole also mentions the difference in what is acceptable for a woman to wear in the Philippines compared to what they can wear in Canada.

Nicole: *I can't dress the way I want in the Philippines. Like here I can wear tights but at home it is very conservative. In the house I might wear shorts because its hot but if I was going out they would say, " Oh she has living abroad," and they would say, "she is trying to make herself young." You can wear it but they would talk and give you funny look.*

The differences between male and female roles and the woman's choice of career is another main difference cited by all of the participants. Particularly, "in marriage situation there is a big, big difference" (Lucy).

Nancy: *...in courtship, the women are the ones who are special. But then once they are married ah, she must treat the husband. It is so different.I think there is a big difference in so many things. Like for married women and many things. Its all integrated in traditions. Family ties in the Philippines are very strong.*

Many participants declare that the man is the "bread- winner" in the family. He brings home the money and "the woman when she gets married, she is receiving the salary from the husband" (Nicole). Nancy explains further:

Nancy: *In marriage usually the man pays for everything.*

SB: Even if the woman is working?

Nancy: *Ah, usually the man gives more. Otherwise if he can't really afford it then it is half and half of the expenses.*

Cez: *You have to stay in the house and work only with the house and kids. And the guy is always, like, powerful, more powerful.*

Nicole, however, states that it is preferable for the woman to receive the money from her husband than to the "Canadian way":

Nicole:*...the woman is receiving the salary from the husband and she is in charge for everything. And I saw here in Canada its different and I don't think, its nice to be like that. To have their own money.*

She attributes the difference to "its because here there is divorce [in Canada and] in the Philippines there is no divorce but there is separation."

Beth explains further how the inability to divorce can affect the gender roles:

Beth: *There is no divorce in the Philippines. People can separate but not divorce. The roles are more traditional. Usually the man doesn't let his wife work, but some do. It depends on the couple.*

Nicole believes that girls should be treated differently than boys. She explains:

Nicole: *I know that for girls, there is [a possibility she could have a] baby. So there is more protection [required by her parents]. Like when I was younger my mother said I want you to be home at 5:00 pm.*

Ann: *...if [I married a] Canadian, I would say, you have to do the [housework]. For a Filipino, probably, I would say we have to disregard those traditions. Should be 50, 50 [%]. And if I am working then we should both do the* [housework].

SB: And if you were back in the Philippines?

Ann: *Probably, if we are both working, unless I am not working then I would be willing to do everything.*

SB: What would your family, neighbours say?

Ann: *Probably if my husband complained, then probably there would be a word from them.*

Many participants explained that there is a distinct difference between jobs which can be done by men or women. Ann speaks of these differences when comparing Canada and the Philippines and explains how these differences are embedded in culture.

Ann: *I notice that it is true that the man is usually the man and the woman does the household chores and the woman is the one who looks after the family. Here the man does dishes....There are certain works that are only done by men not by women. Like painting. When I came here I saw for the first time a woman painting the house. That work is never done by women in the Philippines. Never. That is a masculine work.*

SB: Who decides and how do you know whether it is masculine or not? And where do you draw the line?

Ann: *Its just part of the culture. We know it right away. We just know. We are brought up like that...*

Elaine believes that gender roles are reinforced through laws.

Elaine: *Here [in Canada],[a woman] can do whatever [she] wants. Just like in Hong Kong the women can drive the taxi cab and work in construction. In the Philippines you cannot do that. There is a law against that. Women can be a police officer. An army lady that's OK. But those others, that is men only.*

Religion holds a big part in the way in which men and women behave. As Beth and Nicole stated above, the inability to divorce influences the roles of men and women in the family. The traditional jobs men and women perform are steeped in tradition linked with the influence of the church.

(iv). The Role of the church

The church plays a large role in the lives of the participants. All of the participants are Christian and all but one are Roman Catholic. All but one of the women discussed religion during the course of their interviews. Those who did, declared that they are deeply rooted in the Catholic church when they lived in the Philippines, and that the church is still an important part of their lives in Canada.

These eight participants state that they are or had been influenced in many ways by the church and that religion was a regular part of their lives growing up, at home and at school. Most of them attended Catholic schools as children and two of them taught in Catholic schools as adults.

Mary attended a convent school as a child. She explains that when she was eight years old she was noticed by the nuns in her school in her home town for having excellent marks, so she was taken to another town by members of the church and was told she could study there for free. However, they made her do housekeeping duties for two years, without pay or education. She "was only used" by the church. Although this had been a negative experience with the church, Mary's faith in the Catholic religion has not wavered.

Since Nicole came to Canada she has found a new relationship with God which she feels is true religion unlike her former Catholic way of life in the Philippines. Nicole explains how her feelings about religion have changed.

> Nicole: *My background is Catholic. It is not really a religion its a relationship with God. It happened here. ... but I was raised Catholic I will die a Catholic I said, its final I will keep up my religion. And the Catholic priest in Wetaskwin and Edmonton supported me spiritually and financially. But, I went to the church and one day my friend invited me to their church and I was confused already. I accepted the Lord. It is not really the religion. If you really give yourself to God then it*

doesn't matter about the religion. It is the relationship with God.

She is concerned about the way her family believes now.

Nicole: *They are the ones who are still in the dark ages. They need to know Jesus Christ. They need to have a personal relationship with Christ. They all have these images hanging on the wall but they don't think about them.*

For the participants the Catholic church has been a source of comfort, a familiar way of life which aided them in coping with the strangeness of life in a new land and the challenges it presents. The church is also a place for them to meet fellow Filipinos as well as others who share similar beliefs.

Some participants do regular volunteer work in the church such as assisting elderly members of the congregation take communion, sometimes passing the collection plate, and like Ann and Elaine, teach bible studies to Junior High School students during church services. Along with other Filipino women their support roles are very important for the church to function smoothly. Because the church requires these support roles, live-in caregivers are encouraged to reproduce their nurturing and care-giving functions for the congregation in the church.

Before Beth tells of her unhappy experience as a nanny in Edmonton she talks about her faith:

Beth: *First thing I should tell you is that I am a religious person. I am strong Catholic. It is only because of this that I survived. Now, I look at it I thank God for His testing me, and sparing me.*

Nicole expressed her faith in prayers to get her through both her sickness due to cancer treatment and through her battle in the courts to remain in Canada.

Nicole: *And prayers really help.I went to the bible study and when they introduced me at the meeting the Brother (priest) said, "Oh! You are the one we have been praying for? I have prayed for you in Manitoba! " And I know in Hong Kong people were praying for me too because my friend*

was there at that time. They set up a chain of prayers and prayers really work!

In many instances Nicole has "put her life in the hands of God" and chastises herself when she does not "listen" to Him or to the "agents" through which He is working.

Nicole: *One of my friends, the boyfriend of my friend, he said, "There is a scripture that says fight the good fight. God wants you to stay." God told him that I could stay. There were lots of people who encourage me...[but] he's the one...[whose words gave me the most encouragement]. Because here I almost give up and this friend says fight the good fight. That really hits me. At first, I refused the money fund raising idea... I still have a doubt to God's provision to us.... And when I am going to the lawyer's place, I said, God, I need money. I need a lawyer but I need money. I passed the lottery stand and I said, "God, I need money. Please let me win and I will pay the lawyer and give the rest away." I know that I didn't realize at the time its really silly at the time. I am praying and I buy it.* [cries as she speaks]... *So after I bought the Ticket I read in the paper and saw that I did not win. It was like God hit me. I am giving you these good people to help you. You are stubborn. Here I am. It makes me cry, it makes me cry. I said, its my pride, its my pride. Its not good. Pride is from the devil. I have to humble myself. If God is using these people to help me, why am I refusing them? So, I called [my friend]. "Come now", she said and she started advertising and calling people. That friend who said fight the good fight he gave me $500, the most of all. I have learned many things. But I am still learning.*

Nicole tearfully expresses her fears that a breast lump found last week might be a recurrence of cancer. However, she thinks that she will refuse further biopsy on the lump that will determine whether it is cancer or not. "I am thinking I will leave it in God's hands".

Ruth felt that the church provided her with an opportunity to get together with her friends yet it also restricted her socially.

Ruth: [In Italy], *I only go to church, that's all and whenever I go with friends, its church, church, church. You know?*

The influence of the Catholic church is a strong one in the lives of the participants Beth, Nicole and Ruth. In many ways

the church and their Christian faith has represented a friend and protector which has offered guidance and allowed them to endure hardships.

As further analysis will suggest, the role of the church in the lives of the Filipino caregiver pose issues of institutional power which may be marginalizing and unjust for the women. It impels them to act in certain ways in certain circumstances. For example, in the above exemplars, the women endured "God's test" beyond what is acceptable to their personal rights or safe to their well being. For some of the participants the Catholic faith is a way of life, an integral part of their identity. For others it is merely a tradition to be accepted and carried on.

2. Relationships in Canada

(i) Relationships with Canadians

Social integration requires a process of mutual adjustments and resolutions of problems and issues. All of the participants felt they have gained an understanding of Canadian culture through their interactions with Canadians at the personal and business levels. Yet, they also demonstrate some of the difficulties of accurately perceiving, understanding, and effectively communicating with others in Canadian society. All participants mentioned that Canadians are much more "casual" than Filipinos, both in their behaviours and in their dress. These differences influence the establishment of friendships between Canadians and the participants. Close friendships exist mostly with those who have been in Canada a long time and who work directly and daily with adult Canadians.

> Nancy: *I have a few Canadian friends... I involve myself with so many people. Their race is not important. It doesn't matter... I relate myself with them.*

> Ruth: *My closest friends are Canadian and Filipino. I made friends with all nationalities. Whoever. Especially because I run this [restaurant/pub] business.*

Adjusting to differences in the way people (older and younger

friends and strangers) interact in Canada compared to the Philippines has been trying for the participants and sometimes overwhelming to them. The participants felt that Canadians tend to be more informal in their social intercourse with both friends and strangers alike. The participants felt that formalities in addressing people, instilled in them at early age is part of their tradition and an expression of their homeland. To give it up is like losing a piece of their identity.

> Beth: *In Canada people say, "Hi, how are you?" to people they don't even know. If you say that in Manila, people would think "she is crazy!" or something. They are nice in the Philippines but they don't do like that, "Hi" to strangers. Dealing with people is different. I didn't want to face the world [in Canada]. I have changed very much. I have Canadian ways now.*

> Nancy: *Our language even have respect. In our language we always call an older person a different way. There is an address, a sign of respect you use with someone older, even if he is outside the family unless they are way younger than you. You know [when to use this address] by the age or profession. If you don't know than there is a general address "Ho" and "Toe". It is hard for us to call people by the first name. Like, "Hi, Sue". Like, when you come from the country and then come here right away than it is... oh boy, like a different world. We would feel really, really bad not addressing, giving respect like that when you are used to it.*

> Ann: *Now, the younger generations here in Canada.. they even call the teachers by the first name. That's probably the problem. Kids don't have respect. Even my [Filipino-Canadian] friend's kids call their father by his first name.*

> Nancy: *It is really so different. The first time I went to attend the students' programme [in Edmonton] where the students were to perform, the students were so wild, so disorganized, so, high you know like that. Even to the teacher, just like there is no gap. And they are just little kids! Oh, in the Philippines, when you see them, they [get] slapped, like that.*

(ii). Family and Community Ties

What is often missed and cherished by the participants is the close family ties and the sense of community in the Philippines.

Nancy: *And it is so very different here. Because even in this [apartment] building alone, you don't know everybody. Even right at across your room its possible you don't know him. In the Philippines for the whole village you know each other, like that. And even if there is a wedding, all those from that village and from the other village and from... are coming. So there is no way you can compare like this its entirely different. You just adapt to the situation.*

All of the participants expressed that "the main difference between Canada and the Philippines is the family ties" (Beth). There is greater participation and mutual support by all members of the family in Filipino home life. Family homelife is highly valued by all participants.

Lucy: *In the Philippines, the family is very important. Very close family ties. Almost all Filipinos are the same. They look after the kids...they support the kids for their studies. You know if you are single you can live with your parents forever. Not here, eh? Here, you know when you are 18 you are kicked out already. So that's the only difference. As long as you are not married. Well, when you are married, sometimes, you know, you are still asking for help.*

Cez: *Usually, if you are single you stay with your family, your Mom. Like my brother he is single, he lives with my Mom. Even if you are old. If your Mom died, your other family would look after you. They would never send you to an orphanage.*

Beth: *And single women can live at home with their parents or the brother will look after her. And the old people, we look after them. They are never to worry about their old age because that is what they do. They stay with a son or daughter. Between them they are taken care of.*

Nicole adds that although the close support of family is good, there are also disadvantages:

Nicole: *Like here when you get older the son or daughter cannot look after their mom they send them to the nursing home. In the Philippines maybe its happening with the rich people but we want to look after our mother. In some ways I think its not really good because its too much like protection and ah, because even they get married and they cannot stand by themselves, here the parents [are] helping them and how can they learn to stand by themselves? So, there is a disadvantage too.*

(iii). Relationships with Filipino-Canadians.

Companionship with other Filipinos has been identified by many of the participants as an important factor in their adaptation to Canada. Many have Filipino friends in Edmonton whom they have met in personal and social interactions, such as Filipino organizations, and at work. Ann states that most of her friends are Filipino, while Nancy and Ruth were comfortable with people from all nationalities. Some women narrate their feelings about their relationships with Filipinos within Canada.

> Cez: *There is a lot of discrimination between Filipinos here in Canada, in Edmonton. A lot of Filipino-Canadians degrade nannies. They look down at us. They say, "Oh. You are a nanny? Oh." Like that and don't smile anymore. I say, "So what? I am a nanny. I make a living. I am a hard honest worker." Some deny their (original) nationality. They deny they can speak Tagalog. They change their accent in English and in Tagalog. Instead of saying "wal-ah" they say "wall-a". And their kids say to their parents, "Be more Canadian. Speak English!".*

> Nancy: *Maybe when people look at me they assume I am Chinese, even if they are Filipinos. If I don't smile at them they don't..., they think I am ah, you know when I smile at them, they say, "Oh you are Filipino?" I say, "Yeah!" They say, "Oh, I thought you were Chinese that's why we are not talking to you or we didn't smile."*

> Cez: *I am not happy. I had the car accident. You know. And it is hard to make friends. When it comes to choosing a friend because I learn my lesson. Some people are only using you. Filipinos.*

Ruth, Nicole and Cez comment on regional differences in the Philippines which affect the way Filipinos relate to each other in Canada. Ruth explains these differences:

> Ruth: *It depends on which region that Filipino comes from. see, you are talking to a Filipino who is very Westernized. That is me. Because I come from a very centralized part of the Philippines which is very close to the city of Manila. If you are talking to a Filipino who came from up North or South, that is a different thing. You see? ... You probably met Filipinos who do not speak English very well.*

(iv). Love and Marriage

All but one of the participants are unmarried. The women spoke of their single status. Some expressed their hopes of finding a Filipino partner. Cez discusses some of the difficulties in finding a Filipino partner in both Canada and the Philippines:

> Cez: *My family would like me to marry a Filipino. Same culture. But they don't like [the ex-boyfriend's] family because they are rich. All my friends are married. Hmm. I don't know when I get married. I broke up with my boyfriend last April. The Filipino boys in Edmonton, I don't trust them. And they, you know... they just lying, maybe they are already married. You have to go back in the Philippines and find someone. But maybe your family will think, "Oh, he is just using her because she is an immigrant. He is just after your status." And its true too. I don't trust men in the Philippines or Canada. And I am a little bit conservative. I don't want to get involved in or live with a guy out of wedlock. And my boyfriend told me, "you will find someone there." I told him, "No way, because they are not only contented with hold hands or kissing". Right? They want everything. They want... they are not contented... you know what I mean?*

Nancy also commented on the small numbers of eligible Filipino men:

> Nancy: *Mostly those men who come here are already married because they are sponsored by their wives already here. There are a few but they marry young.Maybe, well like for me,... maybe for some, they left their boyfriends at home. Like for me I don't have a boyfriend when I left, I had when I was in Hong Kong, but I lost him.... Oh my God!*

Ruth's experience is similar. When she came to Canada, she left her Filipino fiance behind;

> Ruth: *...I went through a lot of sacrifices, especially in my love life. Because to a woman at my age now..., to be honest I am engaged to a man that is far away from me. He is Filipino. But he is not in Canada. I met him in between 1970 and 1978.*

Three of the participants stated that marriage to a non-Filipino is a possibility.

> Ann: *Well, to find a boyfriend, go to the Philippines. And there are agencies, first they write each other. And then he goes there. Then he comes back here and he sponsors her.*
>
> SB: A Canadian man does this you mean?

Ann: *Yes, and Filipino woman. I think for those who are really looking, maybe anyone will do, but 'until death do us part', well at least for us... I don't know. If God would give me a man from Africa or from somewhere else in the world and he is meant for me and I am for him, then....*

Elaine is dating a Canadian man and neither she nor her family are concerned that they are of different nationalities.

However, Mary (the only participant married) and her Canadian husband feel that culture differences can make marriage between a Filipino and a Canadian very difficult. Nearly all of their arguments come from a lack of understanding the others' culture. For example, one of the ways the husband jokes with people is to insult them and then they insult him back. He believes this is understood by his Canadian friends. Mary objects to this kind of "joking".

Mary adds that many Filipino women believe that white skinned people are better than brown people and therefore prefer to marry Canadian men. She states that many Filipino women feel that it is more attractive and "better" to be lighter in colour. For this reason, she states, they try not to get "too brown" and they like themselves "better" in the springtime.

(v). "Caught between two cultures"

The adaptation process involves a cultural adjustment which has been conceptualized as a psych-social process focusing on the attitudinal and emotional adjustment (Martin, 1984). The cultural adjustment experienced in Canada has resulted in a feeling of "being caught between two cultures and trying to be two different people" (Ruth). Ruth explains how difficult it is adapting to a new culture.

Ruth: *In Europe I felt caught* [between two cultures], *in Canada, no.*

SB: You immediately integrated into the Canadian culture?

Ruth: *I don't know. I am both Westernized and Filipino.*

In Europe I kept my own culture but I couldn't take their culture.

SB: Why was that?

Ruth: *Its because I had so many... I'm very unstable. Your mind is very unstable, you can't do... its limited, right? Yeah. I only go to church, that's all and whenever I go with friends, its church, church, church. You know?*

She believes she has changed imperceptively. She has adopted many new behaviours, attitudes and beliefs into her personality since coming to Canada.

Ruth: *You know where I learned this with the hands? Europe. In Philippines they don't use this ... [hand] actions. They won't understand me. "What are you doing? She's getting crazy now".*
[Since coming to Canada] *I became more sociable. But as a woman I am still, inside me I am still reserved, conservative. Even at a party I don't get wild.*

Trying to maintain a distinctive Filipino personality with Filipino ways is difficult. Yet, to return to the Philippines and be noticed as someone different with Canadian ways is not desirable for many of the participants. Ruth tries to maintain two cultural ways, but who is the real Ruth?

Ruth: *The real me. Filipino. Yes.*

SB: Yeah? So that comes more natural to you than Canadian?

Ruth: *Yes. Yes. Ah, actually...see this is me. When I go back home I don't act like Canadian. I don't do this [moving her hands], like actions. I just do as I did the same before.*

SB: How do you remember what you did before?

Ruth: *I just have to remember. I need to remember what I did years before. Maybe they notice in a way. In a lot of ways. But, ah I try as much as I can remember my old style.*

SB: Why is that?

Ruth: *I don't want to be different. And I don't want them to think that I am different because I adapted the other ways. No. Here I do it... See, this is the saying "when in Rome do as the Romans do".*

Lucy believes she is no different in Canada than she is when in the Philippines. She has not changed since immigrating to Canada. For this reason she feels there are no problems with "getting back into Filipino life".

> Lucy: *I didn't find any difficulty. Because the way I am in the Philippines, I am also in here.*

Mary also believes she has not become "Canadian" in her behaviours. She says there are no differences in the way she would act here and in the Philippines and that her role as a woman is the same for her in Canada as it is in the Philippines. She believes that she is still humble and unchanged due to her convent up-bringing. She adds:

> Mary: *When I go to the Philippines I dress down. I would never wear this* [indicating her new sports top and jeans] *because of personal safety. People will assume I have lots of money and will want to rob me and because I don't want people thinking I have changed and that I am rich. I am just like them, still. When I go home I work in the fields along side them. I do the same work, the chores, everything... I am no different than them. When I go back it is no big deal. I have not changed. I am still the same.*

Ruth and Mary want to avoid creating a gap between themselves and their families by appearing or acting differently. They also want to appear "Filipino" for personal safety on the streets in the Philippines.

3. Integration

(i). Adapting

Ruth explains that adapting to another culture depends on how much experience one has had living away from home, how much experience one has had with Western lifestyle, how much interaction one has had with people in general, which part of the Philippines one comes from, what one's English language ability is like, what one's personality is like and one's level of self-esteem. She illuminates why she found her adaptation process less difficult than she imagines it is for other immigrants;

Ruth: *For me, no* [problem adapting]. *Maybe for other people. Because for me, see, I say I am very proud of myself, because my communication is very good. And I think you will notice it. And because I am a very friendly person. Even back home in the Philippines I am exposed to people from all around the world. Even back home I am a very independent person. When I was at university degree back home in the Philippines...maybe its because of my personality. I am a very extrovert personality... actually, I started on my own, living away from my family since I was in High School. That is very unusual for a Filipino. But I didn't care, because like I said I have a strong personality.*
See, in the Philippines we have many different cultures too. It depends on which region that Filipino comes from. See, you are talking to a Filipino who is very Westernized.

Both Cez and Elaine feel that proficiency in English is the most important ability for a newcomer to have in order to adapt to this society. Cez adds that "a little luck" also aids in the adjustment process. She explains that luck provided her with a pleasant immigration officer, made the bureaucratic procedures for landed immigrant status go smoothly and may help her find friends.

Nicole states that the friendliness of the employer makes all the difference in one's happiness and ultimately in one's willingness and swiftness to adapt.

Lucy feels that one's adjustment to a new country and culture is an effect of a combination of these factors: knowing the language, having a friend already living there, having an opportunity to meet other Filipinos and being able to attend church regularly.

Three stages of integration are identified as: settlement, integration and participation (Canada, 1984). It is at the final stage where many newcomers experience denial of opportunity to their full participation in Canadian society. Of the various obstacles they face, discrimination was commonly sited by the participants.

(ii). Discrimination

Most of the participants mentioned their experiences with discrimination in one form or another. One participant, Mary said that she never noticed discrimination directed toward her. However, her husband overheard her statement and shouted from the other room, "She is too humble to notice it. Whenever she is away from me they treat her differently in the stores, but when they see me they snap to it".
Discrimination has been experienced mainly in the form of verbal racial comments. However, it is sometimes difficult to discern what is rudeness or poor service and what is discrimination.

Cez explains that the misperceptions some Canadians hold about people's ethnicity are based on colour. Visible minorities are always seen as foreign in Canada even if they have been in Canada for many years or their family has been here for many generations.

> Cez: *You know if you are white, even you are Ukrainian or German... still you are not Canadian. But like us, we are oriental and even you saw us on the street you know we are not Canadian because you can see it in our face.*

a. Discrimination at the caregiver's workplace

As mentioned in the chapter 3, under "relationships with employers", some participants spoke of the power relations between them as caregivers and their employers. The large economic and social gaps between them and their employers were often cited as the basis for discriminatory behaviour. Nicole, Beth and Cez explain that their bowing, nodding, smiling and trying to ignore domestic arguments were necessary to demonstrate what they believed their employers wanted from them, basically humility and obedience. However, they felt that by behaving in this way, they were in effect widening the gaps between them.

Some forms of discrimination involved excluding the caregiver from family activities such as eating evening meals together

or watching television together, and from decision making such as making suggestions for grocery shopping and accommodation arrangements, i.e. arranging furniture in their own living-quarters.

b. Discrimination at the workplace

Many of the employed participants are working in low paid service occupations. These women speak about the attitudes that their customers, co-workers and the general public have of them and the discriminatory behaviours they demonstrate toward them.

> Beth: *When I was working at [a store] a man came to return some merchandise but did not have a receipt. I told him he needed a receipt. But, he started yelling at me, "You stranger! You foreigner!" I was calm and told him I am not the manager, I only work here. The manager was there and he told that man he can't say that to me. It is discrimination. Then the manager asked me to come and we talked because I was just shaking. After that I quit.*
>
> Ruth: *Yeah. [I experienced] a little [discrimination]. Here, here at the [restaurant] from some of them [the customers]. Not all them. Its the way they act.*
>
> SB: What do you do in those cases?
>
> Ruth: *Just ignore it. You don't have to say anything. Just ignore it. Its usually verbal or actions. But you see, as soon as they get to know me then there is no more problem.*
>
> SB: Have you experienced discrimination?
>
> Lucy: *Oh yeah. Lots of discrimination You can feel it. Even foreigners like us discriminate us too. You have to fight it. Its not actually them saying anything. You can see how they act. Anyway... I don't mind it because we are the same in here. We are all immigrants. What they feel, those native ones? What they feel is also what we feel. Because sometimes they are discriminated by white people like that? Same here. We don't mind. We all came here, we are all immigrants. See? Even whites, same feelings. He's white. Same feeling. Human rights... Everything is fair. I feel protected.*

c. Discrimination in public places

For many of the participants, discrimination from strangers

was generally in the form of derogatory comments based on their ethnicity and because they "look like immigrants". Most incidences took place on the streets, in shops and in Cez's case at the scene of an accident. All but one of the participants have suffered from discrimination in public places in many contexts, there is further discussion of discrimination in specific contexts to follow. Ann, Cez, Lucy and Beth said that the comments usually involve the stranger telling them to go back to their own country.

> Cez: *When I was in an accident, my friend in panic said, "Call 911!" And she thought the lady who hit us called 911, but she didn't, she called her Dad. And then the Dad came and he said, "You morons! You go back to your country!".*

> Cez: *In my first time in Canada. I am waiting for a bus downtown. A native person ask me for 25 cents. One week in Canada, you know? He's asking me for a quarter. My friend said, "Don't give it. They gonna buy alcohol." Then he said bad words. Oh, I am scared. And then he chase me! I am shaking! Then a white man came and said, "Don't do that to that lady". They fight! And then we run! Because he wants to hit me. He is drunk. "Oh, go back to your country!" That's my bad experience. I am still new here and that happen.*

> Nicole: *Well, I don't know if its being a nanny or what. Its the way they look at you. Its kind of... like when you are looking for something in a shop and they are not helpful or approachable. I don't know if its because I am a nanny or because I am Filipino or because I am a Filipino nanny. I notice that* [their reactions] *so I just say Okay, and I just look on my own. When I approach people to ask for help or something, I just try to be nice.*

d. Discrimination based on English spoken with an accent

Members of visible minority groups or those who have immigrated with English as a second language may be discriminated against because their language is accented differently or unusual. Their competence may be questioned and they may be judged by their voice quality, tone, expression, speed or pitch.

All interviewees have English as a second language with

varying degrees of fluency and strength of accent, yet all of them are able to communicate competently.

> Ann: *On Saturday when we have a [white] Canadian student helping us, some customers say when I ask them what they would like, they say, "No, I'll wait for that girl there who can understand me." I felt like saying, "Alright can I help the next person who can understand me?" but no I just smile and take the next number.*
>
> Beth: *For me English is a second language but I can speak it. I took ESL but people who want to put you down would say, "I don't understand you. I don't know what you are saying".*
>
> Ann: *Well, I got an order on the phone and she said, "I want a dozen muffins but I want it put in bags, 6 and 6." But the person who packed the order put them in a box. The husband picked it up. Then the wife called back and said, she was so mad, "You people should take ESL courses! You should understand people because you are working in Canada!" Oh, so I feel bad. But I have to tell the manager.*

e. Discrimination based on occupation

Beth has been put down for the position she holds, both as a nanny and in her present position as dietician assistant.

> Beth: *At my present job [as dietician assistant] I feel discrimination. The supervisor, I don't understand what she feels. Like she hates me. I don't like trouble. I don't say anything about it. She wants me to get lost. She is always saying, "what are you working here for? This is a job that is temporary. This is not long term work." I am here because I want to work not to argue. I am not so proud that I won't work for short time. I like to work in here.*
>
> Beth: *When I worked with the third employer as nanny I took the two little girls to the store. They wanted popsicles. When they had their popsicles we were ready to go and they were blocking the door when a man came in. I said to him, "Oh, sorry". I apologized nicely. He shouted, "Nannnnie!" I said to him, "So, what? I am a nanny. Anyway these girls are Canadian."*

Other participants state that some people in the Filipino-Canadian community look at caregivers with contempt. Cez

states they often "look down on" and depreciate caregivers giving them an inferior image in the Filipino-Canadian community.

f. Racism and assault

Except for one other incident of a threat of violence (Cez) Ann was the only participant who was physically assaulted, although not seriously harmed.

Anna: *I was walking. I missed the bus so I was walking. I was carrying a handbag. The handles [on the hand bag] were very long. It was after school hours. This boy here, maybe he was 16, it [this incident] was done intentionally because the handles are not that low [low enough for the boy to do what he did]. He came up and was holding it [the handles of the bag] with the handle of the bike. He really meant it. I don't know how he got so close to me. I said, "what are you doing?" He told me, "I did it on purpose so you would fall down". I said, "How dare you say that?" [His] girlfriend said, "Sorry" but I wanted him to say sorry to me. I looked at them so mad. She said, "what more do want? I said sorry." Then the boyfriend said, "Well, you are lucky you are in Canada!" I'm lucky? And how come I am here in Canada? I said, "you didn't give me anything!" I thought to myself, "I came here through my own efforts". Later I talked to a friend about it. He said, probably, he had a bad experience or maybe a father or a mother lost a job and said it was an immigrant's fault. It didn't make me afraid that much, he was just a boy. But why? Even the following day, I whenever,... Oh my God....I can't believe that somebody would be worse than him...*

SB: Are you nervous about walking home now?

Ann: *Well, sometimes. I have to watch. Or I said I'd rather wait for the next bus. Because surely he could do it, knock me down. If I allowed myself to be carried, I would have fallen because he was rushing on his bike.*

g. Racism in institutions

For Ruth's experience was especially painful for her as it involved a priest in Edmonton where she attended church and where she worked in the church's centre.

Ruth: *Actually I had a very bad experience. I won't say a name, but see I am a very Catholic person, OK? And it happened to me. It was my first job aside from being a nanny. First job. I used to work at [the church] centre, food services, right? It was Sunday. We had a*

smorgasbord. I had 30, 50 people lined up. It was so depressing. Because I think I am a very fair woman. I treat everyone as equal, no matter what you are; boss, or whoever, for me, we are all sons and daughters of God. This person, a priest, I ask him what kind of bread he wants for his sandwich and he...[pauses].... he said in front of all those people,..... [after long pause, in a loud, raspy voice] "WHITE! I hate, I HATE brown. Its the colour of the poor farmers!" At that time I was very new in Canada still. I had just got my Canadian immigrant [status], I was so upset. I quit the job. At that time racism was going on at that place. The same time I did, the whole group, not only the Filipinos that work there, they quit the same time I did. I guess it was going on and on. And you know what I did? I didn't go to that church. You know it is so upsetting. Its so upsetting. Its like a trauma, right? After a year or two I didn't go to that church. Well, being a religious person and I am also a liberal minded person and a human-spirited person, I changed. I said, Why would I ah, bother myself with that? He's only human being. I can always forgive and forget. After two years I went back. It was the same priest. I did communion and everything. Its fine. So, my pain went away. Its gone. It took time.

h. Discrimination at the Department of Employment and Immigration

As mentioned in chapter 3, in the section, "Dealing with State Agencies" many participants stated that they generally had no problem with this department. However, Ann and Nicole, in particular felt strongly about the discrimination they suffered.

Ann: *Oh, my goodness. It was the worse thing that ever happen. I went there [to immigration] and I said I wanted to apply [for permanent resident status] and she said, "How long you stay in Canada?" I said nearly two years. But, I said, "Good morning" first. She gave me the paper and said I couldn't apply. I said that my immigration officer said I could apply in January, 1994. She said, "If you don't believe me take this paper and read it for yourself so you wouldn't miss nothing!" Without arguing I took that paper. I thought, what did I say or do that made her mad at me? Was it just a bad day? I just sat there on the main floor and just thought. Of course, you need to do everything in order that she would be pleased but she wasn't.*

i. Immigration at the airport

Nicole: *...then coming back [to Canada] I got a problem I*

don't want to be negative but I know immigration people will give you a hard time. I got a hard time in Vancouver. They said, "what is your case?" I said, "I got breast cancer but I'm healed I got a court order to say I can come back into Canada." He ignored me. He left then. I said, "I can show you the court order." Because I have a copy of the court order the original is with my lawyer but she gave me a certified copy. I showed him that. I had to stand out until they call [me] to the window. I thought it would go easily because I had all those papers. And I'm really afraid from the officer. I just close my eyes and prayed, "make this officer polite, because you know, God that you let me to stay, you healed me everything" [she pauses as the tears run down her cheeks]. *And praise God.*

j. Dealing with discrimination

Some of the participants reacted to discrimination in a passive way. That is, their reaction to discrimination was directed inward more than outward, as in Beth's account of the incident in the store:

Beth: *When they had their popsicles we were ready to go and they were blocking the door when a man came in. I said to him, "Oh, sorry". I apologized nicely. He shouted, "Nannnnie!" I said to him, "So, what? I am a nanny. Anyway these girls are Canadian."*

In this incident Beth felt it important to let the man know that the girls were Canadians. Perhaps appealing to him to accept that even though she was non-Canadian the girls have as much rights to be there in the shop as he did and more right than she did.

Ruth's advise for dealing with discrimination is, "Just ignore it. You don't have to say anything. Just ignore it." Her own way of dealing with the incident at the church was eventually to "forgive and forget" as is prescribed by Christian teachings. She expresses her belief that the way institutions and individuals react toward you is a result of your personality's foibles or strengths. She advises that you have to deal with people in a friendly polite manner to receive what you need. If this fails (i.e. at immigration office) she suggests that perhaps it is your failure to

complete the immigration application forms correctly. This belief that others' reactions to you is your responsibility alone is reflective of the principle of self-blame.

Nancy explains that in her opinion it is in the Filipino's nature not to respond in a confrontational manner even when their rights are been stepped on.

> Nancy: *Ah, about those, about Human Rights, our nature like for Filipinos, our general nature if we are being abused we just keep quiet but when the time comes that we can do something, then we just say, "I am very sorry I cannot work with you anymore" and then we just leave and look for another job.*
>
> SB: So you never come out and say, "I hate what you did" or...?
>
> Nancy: *Generally, no. Well, there are those who have been here for a long time who have been Canadianized who can say right to your face, "Oh I don't like what you are doing in that job" you see but generally Filipinos just don't say a thing. But once they are able to go they just say "Sorry". There are also a disadvantage with that because it wouldn't help the employer to change. Because he or she will never be aware that she is abusing even in small matters but it adds up to big things. For me there are very little abuses but ah, just little ones and I just erase them with good ones.*
>
> SB: Will you forget those eventually?
>
> Nancy: *No.*

Beth would agree with Nancy's statement that it is the nature of the Filipino to be non-confrontational. In her first live-in job in Sherwood Park, Beth became very ill and was mistreated by her employer. When she had recovered her health at her friend's place two months later, she called her employer to get her release letter signed and she was asked by her employer to return to her job. Beth states that she politely explained to the employer that she was sorry she could not come back to work, but did not tell her employer how afraid, upset and angry she was nor did complain to officials about her mistreatment. She explains Filipinos generally

handle situations of conflict by somehow taking the blame upon themselves, apologizing for it and "just giv[ing] an excuse not to go back to the job."

The discrimination experienced by these women in Canada is not new to many of them. Nicole tells of her experiences in Hong Kong as a caregiver.

> Nicole: *In Hong Kong, they treat nannies like slaves and that is my experience. I can't stand it anymore I said, with the food, my treatment, my letters, my own letters they would hold it. You know its my only happiness to see a letter to receive a letter from my family. She [employer] is keeping it. I got lots of pains.*

Although Nicole has been faced with many negative experiences her will to change things has become stronger. She wants to voice these terrible incidences so that others will learn about what goes on and then perhaps things will change for live-in caregivers like herself.

> Nicole: *I want to voice it out about the way immigration treat me and others, because otherwise it will happen and happen and happen. It is not me only. I am also observing I have self-pity when I am there at immigration I observe. And even though they try to be nice they don't mean it.*

Furthermore, not every participant has responded to discrimination in a passive way. Lucy's advice is, "You have to fight it."

> Lucy: *I don't discriminate. [I associate with] everybody, the Native, the Canadian, the Spanish... everybody. Because I know we are all the same family. So, if they like us we like them. If they doesn't like us, too bad. Yeah, that's fair.*

Lucy does not feel like she is facing discrimination alone. She believes that many are experiencing similar oppression and the unity she feels in this helps her to deal with discrimination and helps her to empathizes with others of all colours and ethnic backgrounds.

> Lucy: *I don't mind it [discrimination] because we are the same in here [Canada]. We are all immigrants. What they feel is also what we feel. We don't mind. We all came here, we are all immigrants. Even whites, same feelings.*

4. Positive Experiences

The experiences of the participants have not all been negative. Some recollect very positive, cooperative, and supportive experiences in the Canadian community. Nicole spoke of the support and friendship she received from Canadians and Filipinos alike during her fight with cancer:

> Nicole: *I have experienced all the warmth of the Canadian people and the Filipinos. Especially in the small town where I was first working....I really want to make a book... Its not just the trials I experienced but how people connected. They don't know me but they are willing to help.*

5. Education and Mobility

All of the participants discussed their job prospects and experiences since completing their two years as domestic workers and becoming landed immigrants. Many expressed their frustrations in job searching and in the type of job they've had to settle with for the present. Of the nine participants three have remained in the live-in caregiver occupation, four have moved into other jobs, and two are unemployed. This section will demonstrate the reasons for their frustrations and their restrictions to occupational mobility.

The adaptation process is not an easy one. Although many of the participants found the live-in requirement difficult many also found the transition from a live-in caregiver to an independent self-sufficient worker trying and stressful. In the position of caregiver, accommodation is provided, bills are paid and going out, using public transportation, etc. was not necessary to do frequently. When the woman decides to move out of the live-in caregiver occupation she is suddenly thrust into a situation which requires her to employ skills she has not had to draw on for the last two years or so. She must look for accommodation, purchase furniture, make enquiring telephone calls, set up and prepare for job interviews, and if she was caring for children for the past

two years she may now have to speak more often to adults, acquire new clothing and she must take a job as soon as she can to pay for her new life style. In many ways the dependence that the live-in caregiver has toward her employer makes her reluctant to move away from the domestic occupation. Cez finds it easier to stay at her job as caregiver than to move into a different occupation:

> Cez: *I am still doing that* [working as a domestic]. *I like to work with them. I look after two dogs and one child. I do light housekeeping. Compared to if you work outside in the fast foods, oh much easier.... If I want to go work outside I can go.... But she pays me well.*

Ann describes her diffidence to job search and her reliance on the nanny job she had.

> SB: How was it finding a job?

> Ann: *Actually, I had a hard time. Its probably because I was used to staying at home. I remember she said, "Oh, you really love to be a nanny." My employer said, "If you cannot find a job, you could stay where I am and look after the kids." So for me, I wasn't really [worried] because there was already a job. Finally, someone said there was an opening...*

The new job often requires standing for many hours (i.e. cashier or cook) and is strenuous, routine, unsafe and stressful work. It is usually structured in such a way that the worker has little or no control over decision making or working conditions. Often taking that first step into the world of work outside the home can be both daunting and physically exhausting.

> Ann: *The first time starting at the Bakery, that was hard for me. As a nanny you can sit down, you can read. There at the bakery you have to be all the time working, working, working, and then we also have other volunteer works, [in my case] Heritage language. The class started at 6:00 [pm]. I finish work at quarter to six and I have to catch a bus. After work, day after day I come home and I just sit here! Oh, I'm really tired. I am used to it [working] but with a break at least. I stayed in the home for two years.*

The challenges the ex-live-in caregiver faces in this transition are not unlike that a homemaker experiences when getting back into the work force after staying at home for several years. However, the caregiver is given additional challenges as she is still unfamiliar with Canadian ways, her English may not be sufficiently fluent and she is a visible minority.

In the case of the participants who moved out of the caregiver occupation all have taken low paying manual labour jobs which leave them with little energy, time or money to update their education qualifications or improve their English. They feel they are caught in a vicious cycle which has proven difficult to get out of. When they speak of job possibilities it is often in fast foods or as a cashier.

> Elaine: *I came as a caregiver. I am not working now.I applied to places in the malls,.. Wendy's, Macdonalds, everything I can think of. They say they will call me back, but until now I haven't heard anything.*
>
> Nicole: *I want to change my job but I don't have a degree and at my age, you know I am not shy to tell you that I am 46. Its old already. So I'm thinking I have a knowledge in sewing so I'm thinking I can do alterations and I love cooking. I don't know. Most of the immigrants say that it is not hard to work as a nanny or housekeeper than to go work in a hotel because of the hours. I won't stay as a nanny for a long time. I would [like to] stay as a nanny and do some part time.*

The Canadian Task Force on Mental Issues Affecting Immigrants and Refugees (Canada,1988) alert us to the;...ever-present danger that in evaluating academic qualifications, professional societies may be moved to protect the interests of their current membership more than by the need to ensure parity. The result is that many migrants experience down grading of their credentials.

This is the case for all participants. Except for Nicole who did not complete her two years of college studies, all the women hold a degree or certificate from a college or

University in the Philippines.

> Newly arrived Filipino immigrants face two particular problems when they seek work in Canada. They are required to have 'Canadian experience' and their educational and professional qualifications in the Philippines are not recognized in Canada (CIIR, 1987:52).

Canadian professional institutions do not accept Filipino qualifications as equivalent to Canadian qualifications, and as a result many Filipino professionals have had to take employment in semi-skilled, manual jobs or in unrelated fields. At the same time they are considered to be over-qualified for office positions.

That the Philippine education is down-graded at the Elementary and High School level is rationalised by the fact that Secondary schooling in the Philippines is two years shorter than Canadian schooling.

> Nancy: *Like I've been, [my friend] and I; she has been teaching for nine years in Catholic schools and I taught for three years and in that three years, I was just thinking, don't know if I could survive. When you are thinking of opportunity it is better to leave your professional job and go to take a menial job in Hong Kong or here.*

Foreign trained workers **must acquire** Canadian qualifications since those earned elsewhere are not "recognized". In most cases employers take the path of the least resistance. They recruit workers with a recognizable Canadian qualification over someone with qualifications from another country (Canada 1993). Lim (1993) observed that immigrant women educated outside of Canada earned less (approximately $4300 less) than those educated in Canada.

> Cez: *...even if you are a degree holder you cannot get a job. Look at these friends* [also nannies, living in Edmonton] *they all have degrees.*
>
> SB: That's frustrating. Do you feel frustrated too?
>
> Cez: *MmHmm. But we can't use our education. We have to go back to grade 12 and our memory is you know* [not as good as it was].

Ann: *The main problem is that Canada doesn't recognize my B.Sc. And the other problem is financial, especially now.When I first started [working at the bakery] I said I will continue working and I will use that [money] to finish my education and now with cuts and my room-mate moved out so I can't afford... My future, my plans, I don't know. As long as I have a job.*

SB: Do you feel that your work experience in Canada has corresponded to your qualifications.?

Elaine: *No, but there is no choice.*

SB: Are you presently employed?

Elaine: *No. I am doing nothing. In the Philippines, you study as a secretary, but in here you have to study it again because it is not the same. That is the procedure. It is not the same. You have to study.*

SB: Will you do that?

Elaine: *I am thinking I will study, maybe hotel or restaurant management or like that. But it costs about $4200. It depends on the courses you take.*

Ann: *I wanted to finish my education. But, now with what is happening. For instance, if I go for education there is no guarantee you can get a job. The other night, we were talking and we said, "What is the point if you go through and end up going back to the same work as you are!" If for personal-development its (good) the only thing but if you are financially unstable its not practical at all.*

SB: Did your degree help you get this job?

Lucy: *No, there is no relation. This is just luck. Because even, you know, I am graduate with this course* [Business Administration]. *This degree is not valid in [Canada]. It is not valid because you have to upgrade. You have to go to school again in order to use it in here.*

SB: And you didn't want to do that?

Lucy: *I didn't want to do that. It costs money! And I am already working. Yeah, that's too much.*

SB: When you first came to Canada, did you want to upgrade?

Lucy: *Yeah, I thought about it, but I found it was too expensive and I am only by myself, so how can I go to school full time? I don't like to go to school at night. And it is too expensive! But this is luck that I work*

this way.

An important considerations for each of the participants which affect their ability to take educational courses in Canada is their obligation to send their savings to family in the Philippines. By financially assisting their families their savings are so limited that paying tuition or educational fees for either full or part-time study is difficult or impossible. Also, taking courses may require taking time off from work which usually means a loss of pay, something they cannot afford to do.

Berezan (1993) found that another barrier is the financial cost to gaining membership into a professional association. Applications, translations, professional accrediting examinations, language testing, study materials, classes or travel expenses and membership fees all must be taken into account.

The Task Force on the Recognition Of Foreign Qualifications (Alberta, 1992:2) states:

> We found the most serious problem facing people with foreign qualifications in both the regulated and unregulated sector of the labour market, was in obtaining a fair, thorough and credible assessment of their qualifications.

Furthermore, the report of the special committee on visible minorities in Canadian society: Equality Now! (Canada, 1984:40-41) states that foreign credential evaluation (which is "predominately a provincial responsibility. assisted by professional associations and other licensing bodies") is "haphazard, arbitrary and inequitable" and the "artificial restrictions posed by certain licensing practices present entry barriers to various skilled trades, professions and apprenticeships".

This summary supports the research findings of the participants' experiences:

> Some of the barriers foreign trained workers (both men and women) face in securing employment are: the lack of availability of information on how to become certified or licensed; an inability to perform well on paper-pencil tests due to cultural differences and/or lack of practice and skills in completing such tests; taking a formal exam is seen as a barrier by those who have been away from academic learning for a number of years; the integration of employment into the qualification, certification and licensure process; the absence of a reliable and publicly accountable system for evaluating foreign training and experience; the lack of re-training or bridging opportunities for people who have completed part of their training in another country; the validity and appropriateness of examinations and tests used in the normal certification and licensure process; the level of language proficiency required and the means used to assess such proficiency (Alberta, 1992).

(i). Formal Education

As mentioned in the participants' discussions of their reasons for coming to Canada, nearly all of them felt that a big advantage of coming to Canada was the opportunity to study. In the Live-in Caregivers programme there is a monthly fee of $20 provided by the employer for the care-giver to study. This allotment has not increased since 1981.

Also mentioned in an earlier section all the women participants speak English of varying levels and all can make themselves understood in English. However, some expressed their lack of confidence in themselves stemming from their lack of English proficiency.

> Cez: *I have problems remembering some words. I can't speak fluently like others.*

And many have experienced discrimination by Canadians due to their accents or grammar.

> Beth: *For me English is a second language and I could speak it. I took ESL but people who want to put you down would say, "I don't understand you. I don't know what you are saying".*

Due to the women's status in the live-in caregivers programme (i.e. they are working here under a temporary employment authorization) they are not entitled to English Language

classes.

> Elaine: *In here you have to study more about English so you can communicate. Before I came here I studied English and here I took ESL. I had to pay that.*

As well as this the women are not allowed to take any courses for credit (i.e. receive credit toward a diploma or degree at a college or other educational institutions) as this requires a foreign student visa or landed immigrant status.

> Nancy: *When we are nannies on this visa we are not allowed to take courses as credit but I love learning that's why I took all these courses at Grant McEwan like ball room dancing, and keyboarding.*

Scheduling time to study during the live-in caregiver programme is also problematic as the hours of work are often very demanding. Transportation to and from the work place is sometimes difficult, particularly for those living in rural or isolated areas. If they were able to arrange time to attend English language classes the usual fees for a part-time ten week course may vary from $140.00 to $160.00 plus testing fees (if the student does not have a TOEFL: Test of English as a Foreign Language score) of approximately $25.00. These prices are usually doubled for non-landed immigrant students. A landed immigrant will however be given a few more options if she applies through Employment and Immigration which may assist her with funding from Student Finance Board in studying English at Continuing Education Services with Edmonton Public Schools, Catholic social services or other immigrant organisations. However, these courses are usually offered for those who can show that English is required in their employment, (i.e. it is assumed that low-skilled jobs do not require English and therefore such employees are not allowed to take subsidised English language courses).

It is possible to take courses for credit after becoming a landed immigrant. Yet as mentioned above taking courses can be expensive. As well as this, scheduling studies even as a

part time student can be difficult.

> Ann: *Most of the courses [at University] are offered during the daytime. We were lucky that one term because it was offered from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. This term I couldn't take another course. Scheduling was the main problem.*
>
> Beth: *I thought I would study when I was nanny but had those bad experiences and when I took other jobs I was really so tired. For a while I had two part time jobs. One started at 4:00 am and ended at 10:00 am and the other started at 11:00 am until 6:00 pm. Doing shift work is complicated and then if you stop working to study - no money! Another problem is the hours of classes. They are usually in the daytime and I can't do that in the daytime when I am working.*
>
> Elaine: *... if I can take a job, I will take courses in the evenings.*
>
> Cez: *I would study at NAIT (Northern Alberta Institute of Technology) because there you can study at evenings and on weekends.*

(ii). Informal and Non-formal Education

The organisations of which many of the women are members often serve as a form of non-formal and informal education. For instance, the Toast Masters organisation offers a means of developing public speaking skills, thereby helping the participants gain confidence and broaden their knowledge base on many topics. Nancy tells of her experience at a toast masters competition in which she won against a "Canadian white man". She feels this experience has really given her confidence and changed the way she deals with people in Canadian society.

The Live-in caregiver organisations: Alberta Domestic Workers, Household Workers and International Homemakers Association, of which nearly all of the participants in this research have been/ are members state that more than personal development, financial and legal assistance are offered. The organisations provide education on legal matters, advocacy training, information sharing, opportunities for practising skills and

learning new skills (i.e. cooking techniques) through workshops or by having guest speakers who may, for example give regular updating of changes which affect live-in caregivers and immigrants in general.

Other immigrant organisations such as Changing Together, Catholic Social Services (CSS), Edmonton Immigrant Services Association (EISA), the Mennonite Centre and Changing Together provide informal educational services which many of the participants have mentioned. For example, Ann, Beth and Nancy mentioned that although they themselves have not availed themselves of the opportunities offered them at CSS to participate in informal English conversation or free English classes they are aware that these opportunities are there.

Cez, Nancy and Ann spoke of their knowledge gained from a workshop sponsored by LINGAP (Learning for Interdependence and Global Awareness of the Philippines) called SIRAC (Skills Intercultural Relationships in Canada) which they attended. Cez states that she has gained a better understanding of immigrants through this workshop and uses and explains terms in discussions, such as "visible and invisible minorities".

(iii). Future Education Goals

In discussions of their future aspirations, five participants see education as a essential goal in their immediate future. Since their Philippine qualifications are not recognized in Canada, they hope to either gain qualification in Canada for their previous job or become qualified in another career. In the following narratives, they explain some of the barriers they face in reaching their goals.

Beth: *I thought I would study when I was nanny but I had those bad experiences and when I took other jobs I was really so tired. For a while I had two part time jobs. One started at 4 am and ended at 10 am and the other started at 11 am until 6 pm. Doing shift work is complicated and then if you stop working to study - no money! Another problem is the hours of classes. They are usually in the daytime and I can't do that in the daytime*

when I am working. I was hoping to study, maybe finish my degree, but not now. I am not interested anymore.

SB: Why did your dreams change?

Beth: Because of the bad experiences I had.

Ann states that she has yet to make her dreams of up-grading her education come true:

Ann: [My goals and aspirations] *are not the same. But the problem is, it seems hard to keep them [goals and aspirations] the same.. because of the situation. At first I said I can forever be a nanny and finish that thing [education]. But something went wrong and I am forced to get out of it* [the nanny job].

SB: So, your dreams changed as a result of changes in your life, like your room-mate moving out?

Ann: [the dreams] *are still there,... if only I had the means I still would* [try to make them come true]. *Its good to have dreams even if they would never happen. I would go back to school to teach. I thought about being a teacher's aid, but it would take two years to be considered, but I started just with [one course in Faculty of] Education, it is a start. I know that even I said I won't go through and complete my two years of education in Canada I enrolled and use that somehow.*

SB: So you won't complete the two years?

Ann: *No, because I don't have the time. Probably I can always find the time for one course but it takes a long time. And then after you complete you don't know if you would get a job.*

Cez's future plans are to:

... get a good education, at least in computer... my greatest desire is to finish at least just one course... or else I plan to move to the states. I think it is easier to get the job there.

She explains why university is not an option for her:

I would be afraid to study at the University. Everyone speaks good English and are very intelligent.

Elaine's hopes are to be employed, to visit the Philippines, and to study.

I'm thinking to study secretarial maybe hotel or

restaurant management courses. I can do it at ICS [International Correspondence School]. I can do it at home. By Correspondence. My friend they finish already this kind of study. But, I can't do it yet because of time and money. [My career goals changed]. If I get the job I want, if I can take a job, I will take courses in the evenings.

Nicole's dream was to become a teacher.

I love kids. I wanted to be a teacher even though I am not an intelligent one. But I was discouraged to go to school again, after going through high school.

She would like to take this homemaker course. "Change my job and [earn] higher [wages]. Her health, however is restricting her from taking any job which requires too much moving and lifting.

Lucy, Ruth, Nancy and Mary do not foresee education programmes in their immediate future. Lucy and Ruth hope to operate their own businesses. Nancy and Mary are both looking for jobs.

Conclusion

The participants identitify themselves by their "ethnic traits", what McKay (1982) calls "cultural symbolic elements" such as their common language (Tagalog), their religious affiliation (Catholicism), their pheno-typical features (colour and facial features), their nationality (Filipino), and their regional origins. Many noted the importance of maintaining these traits when in Canada so as not to lose their Filipino identity entirely.

Their identity is related to their position in the Canadian "class" system. Many state that they have lower status in Canada than they did in the Philippines. This "low" status is reinforced by the attitudes and behaviours of Canadians and Filipino-Canadians.

To conclude this chapter it is necessary to ask the question, "How has the experience of being caregivers helped these women

to empower themselves to enhance their participation in Canadian society?"

The live-in caregivers' job provides the women with immediate securities which other newcomers may not expect when they arrive in Canada. The caregiver is provided with a home and job straightaway which alleviates much stress. Familiarity with the job, knowing what is expected and required of them also helps to reduce stress and provides confidence. The immediate exposure to a Canadian household provides them with the opportunity to understand Canadian culture first hand. Also, all participants felt that by having had experience working and living in another country before arriving in Canada, they were better able to adapt quickly and more easily to another culture.

All participants have taken initiatives to establish mechanisms for finding fulfilment in their free time. This takes the form of volunteer work and/or becoming involved in at least one organisation or association. All expressed their appreciation of the organisations and the members. The mutual support and friendship they have found through these groups enables them to achieve satisfaction in their participation in Canadian society.

All of the participants mentioned their love of children and their close family ties. They have demonstrated their nurturing, caring and empathetic personality traits and inter-personal skills. These characteristics are not only requisite for the job of caregiver, but are beneficial for interacting in Canadian society and for the type of volunteer work that they do.

Although the live-in caregiver is in a position of vulnerability - a position which is reproduced by discriminatory relations, structures of racism, sexism and

classism which frequently operate simultaneously, the participants have demonstrated that they have gained the experience and self-confidence to resist oppression.
Nicole's case, while being an example of the injustices caregivers face, shows that at least in the Canadian context, live-in caregivers are not completely at the mercy of unfair rules or that they can be mistreated without recourse. Nicole's story and the stories of the other participants illustrates how community organisation can make changes not only for them but for other immigrant women, women of colour and domestic workers.

The participants' histories and the history of domestic associations prove that live-in caregivers can take leadership and organise against oppression. Yet, their stories also illuminate the numerous inequities and problems which domestic workers are still faced with, both on the job and after completion of their compulsory two years.

Chapter 5 will draw implications and conclusions through the examination of the study under four main contexts: the context of caregivers work, state, education and identity.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The construction of identity of Filipino caregivers is influenced by multiple, often interacting factors, experiences and relationships. I have presented the data on both a micro and macro level of the lives of the caregiver sample. As illustrated in the web diagram in Chapter 2, four contextual themes have been useful in addressing the research question: What are the primary factors which impact on immigrant Filipino caregivers' ability to participate and succeed in Canadian society? Conclusions will be drawn from within these four contexts:

1. The context of caregivers' work
2. The context of the state
3. The context of Education
4. The context of Identity

These will be followed by recommendations and implications for further research.

Theme #1: The context of caregivers' work

This study supports the fact that women in the live-in caregiver job are vulnerable to threat, coercion and uncomfortable working conditions as concluded in the literature (Arnopoulos, 1979; Ng, 1981; Canada, 1981; Silvera, 1983; Alberta Women's Secretariat, 1984; Samy, 1990; Devins, 1990). Ballantyne's (1980:2) historical context within which domestic workers found themselves is somewhat similar to the experiences of caregivers today:

> In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries,... there was a social stigma attached to the job, and even women would reject it in favour of any other kind of work.... The most objectionable features of the work, were the requirements of humility, obedience and invisibility.

These "objectional features" of the work have been identified by several of the participants, as they recount their domestic work experience.

The ideal domestic worker is supposed to be silent, to be deaf to gossip and household conversation and blind to their employers' faults (Katzman, 1979:188 cited in Samy, 1990: 7). Beth tells of how her employers argued and fought in front of her while never acknowledging her presence at those times, as though she were deaf and unaffected by their words.

The difficult working conditions were direct results of the policies and regulations governing the live-in caregiver programme. Half of the participants sited the policy of living in the employers' home as a major factor in their unhappiness. This regulation causes them to feel isolated, dependent, powerless, uncomfortable and unsafe.

The concerns of domestic workers cited in Silvera's <u>silence</u> (1986) is repeated in this study. None of the participants spoke of sexual harassment, but the lack of privacy, the frustration of never having enough money, working overtime without pay, working when sick, and fear of deportation (for unknowingly breaking a rule), were frequently mentioned by most of the participants. The main concern expressed by the participants was their dissatisfaction with the inconsistencies of employers following through with the items in their agreements.

Relationships with employers' children in their care.
Nearly all of the participants said that their relationships with the children in their care were positive. The only dissatisfaction noted was in relation to what they felt was a "cultural difference". They referred to the absence of the practice of "Opo or Oho" which is the traditional Filipino expression of respect when dealing with someone older or

someone with authority.

Class identity

The work place has a very important influence on the women's sense of self, her identity and behaviours. The caregivers' work situation and location distinguishes her from other occupations and aligns her with the traditional women's "non-work" - housework and tending to children. The Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women (1988:50) found that the difficulties faced by domestic workers and by immigrant women who work in the home is related to the generally low status of work which is often associated with child care and domestic activities. In many societies domestic work has always been considered women's work. The ability to cook, clean and tend to children has become part of every woman's skills. It has been assumed that men do not have these skills and are therefore disqualified from doing domestic type work. Thus, this work when done by women has been taken for granted, deskilled and devalued (Gaskell, in Livingstone et al, 1987 speaks of clerical work in a similar way).

The participants feel that the boundary between what is acceptable work for men and women is more highly defined in the Philippines than it is in Canada. They state that in their home country, there are fewer options for women in non-traditional women's occupations. They add that in the Philippines, the homemaker role is an expected, respected and very acceptable one for women. And although this "women's work" is not recognised as "real" work in Filipino society as is the case in Canada (because it does not reap actual economic benefits i.e. cash), they feel that their families' have respect for their jobs as caregivers, especially as many of their family members believe the nanny job in a foreign country receives good economic rewards and because they have the prestige of living in a "First World" country like Canada. Ann states: "They do not know what it really like." Others

also declare that their families believe that their jobs are better than they actually are, but they do not wish to change their families' opinions. They like their families to believe this, so that their families will not worry about them, and they can enjoy the respect and pride their families have for them. Paradoxically, the women's class status increases in the eyes of those at home, inpart because of their ability to significantly enhance the financial resources of their families. Yet in Canada, their status coupled with their ethnicity results in the perception and fact that they occupy the lowest positions in society's class hierarchy. Often the women experience discrimination based on their occupation. All participants stated that most people, generally have a poor opinion of caregivers, and it has been especially disappointing to find many other Filipino-Canadians reinforcing this attitude.

In her occupation as caregiver and even after leaving this job, the participant's occupation differentiation is confirmed everyday by both Canadian-born and Filipino-born people. In the present occupations of the participants (other than caregiver); cashier, dietician assistant, waitress and cook, the divisions of power and authority are constructed and mediated at work by employers, co-workers, customers and others in the community through various means, i.e. attitudes, comments and "looks" (facial expressions and body language). The participants are regularly defending their choice of occupation to those who make derogatory remarks about their low status jobs. Even Ruth who holds a managerial position at her workplace is faced with others' assumptions that she must be in a low status job - i.e. "merely" a waitress.

The participants have an understanding of the capitalist workings of Canadian society and their place in it, i.e. that immigrant women entering the labour market "increase competition for jobs, thereby providing industries and

businesses with a relatively cheap labour pool" (Ng and Cas Gupta, 1981:83). A few express their scepticism to this capitalistic aspect. Some blame the economy and the government for the lack of opportunity. All expressed their frustration of the meritocratic Canadian society, yet many felt that they are justifiably where they are, economically and socially, due to their own deficiencies, mainly educational deficiencies, (i.e. lack of Canadian qualifications) and lack of savings. One of the ways meritocracies legitimate inequalities is by the possession of "acceptable" education credentials. This is one of the hardest justifications of inequalities to rebut.

Working conditions of present occupation

The present employment of the participants are: a dietician assistant, a kitchen manager of restaurant and pub, a cook-waitress, a cashier, three are live-in caregivers and two are unemployed. Of the participants who are presently employed, two expressed satisfaction with their jobs. All stated that they are hoping for a better job or a promotion in their present employment. The main complaints were the long hours, tiring work and low wages. Little or no benefits, the lack of respect they get and lack of opportunity for advancement were also mentioned.

Participants and the job market

The occupational mobility of participants has not been satisfying. All of those who are presently employed wish to pursue a different career (a career related to their education which they obtained from the Philippines) change jobs or advance further in their present job. The two who are unemployed state that they are anxious to take any job, at least for now. Rajagopal (1987:122) found that 56 percent of immigrant women obtain information about their jobs through friends and relatives rather than through formal channels. Many of the participants in this study support this statement. They explained that they found their jobs through informal

networks.

The participants' dissatisfaction is related to low wages and poor working conditions. All feel that considering their education and work experience, they are underemployed.

Obstacles to mobility

In summary, the participants' barriers to free movement from the occupation of caregiver to another occupation include the following:

1. their education qualifications from the Philippines are not recognised in Canada;
2. they lack Canadian qualifications;
3. they lack Canadian experience;
4. their motivation is limited, i.e. going to another job that pays a similar low wage, requires similar hours of labour, similar lack of advancement and perhaps is more physically exhausting (usually requires more standing), and does not offer the securities of a nice home in a quiet middle-class neighbourhood;
5. there is a lack of opportunities and a scarcity of jobs available;
6. low self-esteem;
7. financial responsibilities to family, which prevent full-time or part-time up-grading opportunities for required Canadian qualifications;
8. systemic discrimination;
9. lack of connections, which can open doors to a better job;
10. lack of money to pursue education for up-grading.

Theme # 2. The context of the state.

The role, accessibility and usefulness of state agencies were discussed in the interviews. The main agencies discussed were the Department of Employment and Immigration and the police. The Canadian Human Rights commission was mentioned by one participant.

The Department of Employment and Immigration was cited by a number of participants in reference to discriminatory practices and impoliteness by Nicole and Ann. Their complaints ranged from basic rudeness to outright threats, Ruth, Nancy, Beth and Lucy state they had no trouble with immigration and that their Immigration officers were nice. All of those who had changed jobs within the occupation of live-in caregiver were assisted by Employment and Immigration. There were very few problems finding another family to work with. However, once the women completed their jobs as caregivers, they did not use the unemployment office for finding another job. Their method of job searching was usually through "word of mouth" or in the classified advertisements in the newspapers.

Police

The participants, Cez and Nicole were the only participants who had any involvement with the police. Both Cez and Nicole had been in car accidents. Police arrived on the scene both times and were helpful and competent. Cez states that the officer came to her defense when the people in the other car called her names.

The Canadian Human Rights Commission was called upon by one participant. Nicole asked Human Rights for assistance when she was issued a "voluntary departure" form from the department of immigration. Human Rights were, however, unable to help her, although they did advise her to get a lawyer.

The Legal System

Seydegart & Spears (1985:47) assert that many immigrant women do not have the resources to hire lawyers or sufficient familiarity with bureaucracy or legal systems to pursue their rights. Moreover the atmosphere of the government bureaucracy and its inhabitants is often intimidating and impersonal. This sentiment was expressed by Nicole. She believes that

were it not for her friends' help she would never have been able to afford a lawyer, nor would she have been confident enough to approach one. The other participants did not experience interaction with the legal system. Some, however, noted a time where they could have done with some legal advice, (i.e. when Beth was being deprived of her rights at her first place of employment).

Theme #3: The context of Education

In this context the education of the participants both in the Philippines and in Canada will be examined. The role which the United States has played is a large one in the history of formal education in the Philippines. The Americans' attempt to democratize the Philippines began with making the English language the language of instruction.

> ... by using English as the only medium of instruction and using American textbooks written from the American viewpoint the educational process served to cripple nationalism in Filipinos, turning them instead into "brown Americans." (Day, 1974:87).

Added to this, a credential inflation was resultant. Today having a diploma is essential for a good job in the Philippines.

> Everyone began to aspire to higher education as status and professional status with the result that the Philippines has regularly produced many more degreed people than there are jobs for (Day, 1974:87).

In recent years the problem of educated unemployment and underemployment has increased (Collins & Gillespie, 1992). The inability for society to absorb the surplus of college trained people has resulted in an accumulation of white-collar unemployed and underemployed and many of the unaccommodated graduates have sought jobs in foreign lands. Among these are the participants in this study. All state that education was very important to them and to their families. Except for two,

all participants hold a university degree and of those two one has a college certificate and one attended but did not complete her university degree. Unemployment, underemployment and low salaries were two reasons sited by the participants for leaving the Philippines.

Education in Canada

A quick look at the participants' education and experience dispels the stereotype of the "third world" minority immigrant woman who is uneducated, untrained, inexperienced and unable to speak or understand English. Seydegart & Spears, (1985) state that an immigrant woman does not come to Canada as a *tabula rasa*, yet too often Canadian employers, institutions, unions, professional associations, and governments assume she is. Although the participants in this study represent a small sample, they are, nevertheless, a legitimate sample of foreign domestic workers. The level of education and training is one of the criteria which all candidates must meet before being selected to come to Canada. All of the participants have education from secondary and tertiary educational institutions, they have English language skills (the main language of instruction in the Philippines is English), they are experienced and/or have formal training in their professions.

However, the participants are often relegated to the less skilled and unskilled occupations after they complete their live-in caregiver contract. This section will examine this discrepancy.

The participants stated that the opportunity to study was a drawing card for them to come to Canada. They were anticipating that they would be able to study during their contracts as live-in caregiver. However, only a few were able to follow through with their hopes of continuing their education due to these reasons (they are listed from the most frequently mentioned to least frequently mentioned):

1. their visa status. (Caregivers are on temporary employment visas. In order to take courses for credit toward a degree or for upgrading an existing degree they must have either a student visa or landed immigrant status.);
2. lack of time off;
3. times that courses were offered;
4. lack of money (despite the $20 per month education allowance) ;
5. lack of energy after work;
6. transportation problems.

Upon completion of their contract and with landed immigrant status, their commonly cited problems were similar to those listed above. However, the order of the problems changed:

1. physical exhaustion and lack of free time;
2. times that courses were offered;
3. lack of money;
4. lack of information about up-grading and assessing previous education from the Philippines;
5. lack of motivation (no guarantee of a job after studying).

Information about educational programmes and options came from relatives or friends in informal networks. Information gleaned in this way, however is not always accurate or complete. Yet this sharing of information is important and necessary in a society where the service sector, educational institutions and government fail to reach this group of newcomers with the required knowledge. In essence, these institutions fail to address the needs of immigrant women. Many feel that the educational institutions are unhelpful, uncooperative and unaccommodating. They feel that the educational institutions and professional associations do not provide sufficient information specifically about the assessment of their Filipino education, and if it is provided it has not reached them. There is a lack of standards which acknowledge past experience and qualifications. There is a

lack of tailored retraining programmes; and a reluctance to be flexible with the times of undergraduate courses, (e.g. those who were previously teachers in the Philippines are interested in taking courses toward a Bachelor of Education in Canada, yet the courses they need are usually offered during the daytime).

Theme # 4. The context of Identity.

Migrating from area to area within a country requires considerable adjustment. Immigrating to another country creates a variety of apprehensions for the immigrant which can result in culture shock. Leaving friends, family and all that is familiar is an exciting yet anxious experience. Making external adjustments (i.e. dress, work and living conditions, etc.) are demanding enough but it is the internal psychological adjustments which require more exigency. The immigrant must try to understand a different culture where values and attitudes are different from her country of origin. The immigrant's ways of thinking and doing things are not necessarily seen as "normal" anymore. Having to think about things which used to be a matter of 'doing what comes naturally' is challenging and gives rise to tensions and irritability. As well as this the immigrant is perhaps for the first time aware of differences which set her apart from Canadian society and her sense of self changes.

> ...adapting to new social reinforcers in the host country [is] part of the adaptation process and these adaptation processes lead to a temporary disruption in the sense of self as the individual integrates the new experiences. Social reinforcement in the homecountry may now be different or now irrelevant to the individual's sense of self. These factor reduce the validation of the individual's sense of themselves and may lead to a sense of meaninglessness and anxiety (Ishiyama, 1989: 42).

This identity shock is experienced when a person sees herself in a new way for the first time. Zaharna (1989) calls this "self shock" and says it can arise from "any situation that alters the meaning for behaviour has the potential for hampering the individual's ability to maintain consistent

recognizable identities". Since coming to Canada, many of the participants are for the first time seeing themselves as Filipino, a visible minority, a live-in caregiver and later as a "landed immigrant".

One's sense of self is inclusive of ethnic self perception. Epstein (1978: 101) supports this notion of self-identity by confirming that "[i]n a polyethnic situation...the sense of self is always in some degree a product of the interaction of inner perception and outer response, of forces operating on the individual group from within and those impinging on them from without". The immigrant to North America has her ethnic consciousness awakened when she comes to a new country and experiences cultural differences and discrimination (Palmer, 1977). In some situations the sense of ethnic identity becomes stronger in a host country and may become more positive internally. It may also become negative. In Canada for instance immigrants from Britain to Canada have been and are more likely to receive a positive other-imposed identity from those in Canadian society than perhaps their own self-identification (Burnet, 1981: 28). Whereas visible minority immigrants are more likely to receive negative other-imposed identity and may have a positive self-identification.

Discrimination and immigrant women

As mentioned in Chapter 1, since the arrival of the first white settlers Canada has been and continues to be a multicultural and multiracial society. Overt racism had dictated relations, laws and policies in Canada. And although racism is not as blatant today as it was in the past, it is still powerful enough to restrict the life chances of non-white individuals either covertly, through a variety of seemingly neutral rules, regulations and procedures or through overt forms of discrimination.

> There is evidence of denial of equal opportunity to visible minorities. There is evidence of an unequal

> distribution of economic, political, and social benefits. There is evidence in public opinion polls, which show that some white Canadians have negative attitudes toward visible minorities. There is evidence of racially discriminatory mechanisms that provide differential advantage and privilege to people of different races. There is also evidence of cultural values, norms and behaviour of visible minorities which lead them to be discriminated against. At the same time values highly cherished by the majority are often considered the only acceptable ones (Canada, 1984:4).

Hoffman (1972) and Horner (1972) state that women may be more affected by the opinion of others because in many cultures women are socialized to be more dependent upon the views of others than are men (cited in Warren, 1986:20), so discrimination may, then have a bigger affect on women than men. Furthermore, many researchers of immigrant women note the "double whammy" of discrimination (being a woman and being an immigrant) which affects their self-image. This becomes a "triple whammy" when race or ethnicity is considered (Warren, 1986:20).

Nearly all of the participants have received negative other-imposed identity in the form of discrimination since coming to Canada. Discrimination is defined as the conscious act of dealing with a person or persons on the basis of prejudicial attitudes and beliefs rather than on the basis of individual merit. Thus, prejudice is a state of mind, while discrimination is an action. Racism is discrimination on the basis of racial/national/ethnic origin or colour (Canada, 1984:143-144). The participants state that discrimination has affected their lives in some way. For some, this contributed to their lowered sense of self-esteem, and reinforced their negative self-identification. For others it had a temporary affect on their positive self-identification. The participants who have been in Canada for the longest period of time, Ruth and Lucy, stated that they have come to a point where discrimination does not affect them as seriously as it had in the past. They seem reconciled with discrimination.

Their attitude is that discrimination is an inevitable part of life in Canada. It is something some of us have to live with. Beth believes that discrimination is the price we pay to live and work in Canada.

Mary is the only participant who has not been discriminated against. Although she denies experiencing discrimination, her husband expressly states that he has observed specific incidences.

A newcomer may deny experiencing discrimination as it is "tantamount in accepting a demeaned status. To acknowledge having been discriminated against is to acknowledge loss of self-esteem" (Almirol, 1985:134). Another possible explanation for a newcomer to state that she is not discriminated against when she is, could be because she may recognize discrimination when it occurs. The victim may not have had much interaction with Canadians and her social skills are not "attuned" to innuendos, jokes, snide or rude racist remarks. Discrimination may, unfortunately just be passed off as, "that must just be typical Canadian behaviour".

An examination of the history of the Philippines may help us to understand the participants' main reaction to discrimination which is often to ignore it. The historic background must be considered to understand the general characteristics of the Filipino. The Philippines has a history of colonial rule; from the Spanish in the sixteenth century to the Americans in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

A Filipino speaker at the conference on Immigrant women explains how she believes the colonial powers have influenced the way that Filipino women behave. The speaker declares that the Spanish colonizers "taught the Filipino people to be submissive, to be timid, to be subordinate, to follow their husband's wishes...to pacify the people to make them accept

the Spanish colonial rule" and then when the Americans came they taught the Filipino that "to be black or brown is not to be beautiful... to be beautiful is to copy the Americans..." and she concludes:

> So these things which prepare a woman, even for a life outside her country, and this migration is only traceable through the same roots. This kind of colonial mentality which foreign colonisers have instilled in the minds of the Filipino women (Robbotham, 1985: 133-34).

While since Independencee, a range of nationalist and/or other people's power movements have emerged to challenge dominant neo-colonial social, economic, political and cultural frameworks including a very active women's movement, there is no evidence that the caregivers have experienced empowerment through these grassroots movements. However, a few noted the awareness raising received in Canadain NGO activities, such as the Skills Intercultural Relations and Communications (SIRAC) workshops of LINGAP Institute.

The social practices which developed over time influence the Filipino's behaviour. One such practice, which the participants referred to is called "Pakikisama" which is the ability to get along with others by maintaining smooth personal relationships.

It is an important rule which many Filipinos learn early in life and practice throughout their lives.

> ... Patience is a virtue which [Filipinos] adhere to as they attempt to deal with situations of potential conflict. 'Pakikisama' functions to maintain harmony and to avoid any conflict with others (Billones & Wilson, 1987: 154).

The participants, Beth, Nancy and Nicole feel that the desire to avoid confrontation and possible conflict influences the way that they deal with discrimination. Billones & Wilson, (1987: 155) assert that Filipinos, especially older Filipinos, are unused to loud voices and aggressive behaviours from those

who are particularly younger or in higher status positions. In service positions employees are often reminded that "the customer is always right". For the sake of business, the customer must be treated with as much respect and tact as possible. Discriminatory experiences have resulted in Beth and Ruth quitting the job where the incidents occurred.

Fear of attack (verbal or physical) was another reason for not reacting actively and immediately. Both Beth and Cez tell of incidence where they were afraid of the person who shouted racist remarks at them. They wanted to escape the confrontation, the embarrassment, the noise and the humilation.

Four of the participants stated that when they were being discriminated against through verbal attacks there was someone who came to their defense. These ranged from police officers to store managers (at the place where the participant was employed) and a stranger on the street. Two felt that this was embarrassing for them, and the other two said they were relieved to have someone take their side.

Speaking out against discrimination

Nicole, Nancy and Ann say that discrimination should not be taken in silence. They feel that if nothing is said to the perpetrator than there will be no change. Ann gives an example of how she voiced her rights and demanded answers from the person who assaulted her. Nicole feels that discrimination by immigration officials must be exposed so that Canadians will know how some officials behave. She hopes that then there will be greater pressure for change in such behaviour. Nancy suggests that Filipinos must overcome their social attitude which generally restricts them from speaking out against discrimination. Lucy also suggests that there is strength in numbers. Knowing that people who experience discrimination are one of many, helps to deal with it. In

this regard it is worth noting that NGO's such as LINGAP Institute have seen the importance of educational activities which help immigrants such as the caregivers to empower themselves to challenge discrimination and racism.

Gender identity and roles

Historically, women in Philippine society have always had a special position.

> The wife was traditionally the decision maker of the family, participating in all key questions of economics as well as of social issues.... As mother she had almost total say in decisions concerning the children, including the critical issue of marriage choice (Steinberg, 1971:5).

Nicole's description of Filipino life supports this view of the women's role in society: "The woman is receiving the salary from her husband and she is in control of everything." She feels that women in the Philippines receive more respect than they do in Canadian families. The traditional roles are so deeply imbedded that they cannot be easily changed. Ann explains the importance and influence of "walang hiya" (to be shameless) which restricts the ability to make changes in the traditional roles in the Philippines. The participants explain that "walang hiya" has an impact on their lives both in the Philippines and in Canada. Some states that what they do in Canada is heard about in the Philippines.

Love and Marriage

The participants note the commonality and acceptance of Filipino women marrying white men, but not the other way around. The only married participant, Mary (who has married a non-Filipino), feels that many Filipino women marry "white" men because of the belief that white is better than brown. The acceptance of Filipino women as spouses for non-Filipino (Canadian) men is enhanced by existing social stereotypes.

> The Filipino woman, like other Asian women is thought to be non-assertive, obedient, patient and pleasantly servile. The Filipino man on the other hand, is invested

> with all sorts of unsavoury qualities; he has an unpleasant volatile temper, he is unambitious, jealous, and insecure....Filipino men, like other Asian men, are usually caricatured as puny, short-sighted weaklings, with sunken chests and projecting teeth (Almirol, 1985:147).

Half of the single participants state that they hope to marry someday. Two said they did not care what nationality their future husband might be. The other participants felt that they and their families would like them to marry only Filipino men. However, the participants declare that there is a lack of eligible Filipino men in Edmonton. The statistics of Filipino immigrants illustrates the low sex ratio of people in the 20 to 39 age bracket in Canada fifteen years ago and serves to explain the present low number of eligible Filipino men in the 35 to 50 year old category.

> The sex composition of the immigrant population has been characterized by an unusually low sex ratio. One obvious explanation of this phenomenon is the movement of a substantially large number of Filipino nurses (Chen in Ujimoto and Hirabayashi, 1980: 319).

Chen (1980) also notes that immigration in recent years shows the extremes in the age of immigrants. There have been an increasing number of very young and very old immigrants.

Cez highlights the cultural differences of the Canadian born Filipino males who are her age (30 years old). She feels that the single Canadianized-Filipino man is more aggressive and sexually demanding than the single Filipino man living in the Philippines. Ann feels that she would behave differently as a wife depending on if her husband was Canadian or Filipino, i.e. sharing work in the home.

The Role of the church

The Catholic church has had a large influence over the social and cultural systems of the Philippines.

> The Philippines is the only Christian nation in Asia. Over 90% of the population is Christian with the main religion being Roman Catholicism. The remaining ten percent is divided among the Protestant, Muslim, or Buddhist religion (Billones & Wilson, 1987:157).

Historically, the church has held a powerful influence on all aspects of Filipino life. For instance the priest has played roles of inspector of primary schools, president of health board and the board of charities, inspector of taxation, honorary president of the board of public works, and president of the prison board (Forbes, 1928). And still "many of the institutions and customs of today were either initiated or maintained by the church. Among them the attitude toward divorce and toward the limitation on the size of families, the solidarity of the family and the position of women" (Lasker, 1969: 427).

The participants who attend church regularly have noted that the roles they play are helpful, yet these roles are all menial "behind the scenes" type jobs which are not given much recognition. The more "public" roles, such as lay-reading are often taken by non-Filipinos.

In some ways the Catholic church has acted and presently acts as an oppressor of women's rights (i.e. the right to divorce, the right to practice birth control, and the right to abortion). All of the participants suggested that the inability to divorce results in women putting up with more problems in the marriage than women would in Canada and that women make more of an effort to keep the marriages together. They cite this as a "positive" thing. However, they feel that the influence of the church in maintaining separate traditional gender roles is negative.

Many participants spoke of "Bahala na" which is an attitude based on the belief that their destiny is the will of God will solve all problems.

> Most Filipinos believe that one should unquestioningly accept what life brings to them because they believe in destiny being the will of God. This fatalistic attitude helps them persevere with life's difficulties and reflects an external locus of control. The powerlessness to affect what life brings influences the Filipino attitude of

> living for today rather than planning for the future (Billones & Wilson, 1987: 153-4).

Participants, Nicole and Elaine say that their belief in Divine Providence has helped to withstand incidence of stress, and physical and emotional abuse. However, the sense of powerlessness over one's destiny discourages them from taking immediate action, or from sharing their problems with others or seeking help from others. The result may be a continuation of abuse or unacceptance of medical help (i.e. radiation treatment if breast cancer reoccurs in Nicole's case). Although Nicole confesses her belief in Divine Providence, she was willing to take control of some situations in her life. She says that this was due to the support and encouragement available to her, i.e. friends.

Family and Community ties.

All the participants expressed their beliefs that Filipinos are far more family-oriented than Canadians. Filipino families help and support one another from infancy to old age.

> ...the Filipino family and kinship network occupies the highest priority in the individual's loyalty and support, since the individual derives social status, honour, and prestige from it (Almirol, 1985:172).

Most of the participants state that they are obliged to assist those at home by sending a portion of their pay cheque to the Philippines each month.

> A high value has always been placed on striving for economic security of the family. Both husband and wife, and children when they are old enough, are expected to do whatever work and make whatever sacrifices are necessary to aid family security. (Vreeland et al, 1976:114).

The participants explained their sense of obligation as "Utang na loob", a social practice which is embedded in a moral and ethical principle which expects that a favour must be returned (Almirol, 1985:167). It provides a sense of security and is

the foundation of the kinship system amongst Filipinos (Billones & Wilson, 1987: 154). Vreeland et al (1976:114) suggest that "Utang na loob" is the most important interpersonal behaviour, which serves as a cohesive force in Philippine society. However, in recent times critical analysis have pointed out that traditional values can be interpreted and reinforced under conditions of power inequities to favour the powerful (Cawagas, 1991).

The caregiver's financial contribution has come to be depended upon by her family for basic necessities, yet demands for extra money (i.e for non-essentials), for supporting siblings and in-laws and other extended family members puts a strain on the caregiver in Canada. The role of "bread-winner" (Cez) in her family, has an impact on the caregiver's decisions. For example, it has a direct bearing on whether she will take education courses as this may require taking time off from a job and ultimately a loss in pay. It is also difficult to accumulate savings to take full or part-time study. Her decision to change jobs is also influenced by family expectations. It necessitates keeping a job as long as possible and taking another job as quickly as possible when leaving a job.

Almirol (1985:167) found that a frequent reason why his respondents extended financial and other economic support to kin members here and in the Philippines is for fear of being called "walang utang na loob" (ungrateful). Ann explains that if she did not send money home, her whole community would look down on her for being selfish "and crazy" and her family would be shamed.

Vreeland (1976:117) expounds that incorrect behaviour is felt to be not only expedient but also shameful. The following observation is reflected in the narratives of participants Ann, Cez, Beth, Elaine, Nancy and Nicole.

> Filipinos are taught as young children to behave in a way that will meet approval and appreciation within the community, because what neighbours think and say about each member of the family is important (Vreeland, 1976:117).

Her family's reliance on her influences the choice to marry. Cez mentions it is easier to send more money if you are single. Also, being a caregiver and travelling from country to country has not made it easy to sustain a long term relationship.

Finally, the obligations to send money home and their low wages makes it difficult for the domestic worker to prove her "financial security". This is one of the criteria used by immigration to evaluate the domestic worker. Usually this assessment is done by looking at the savings the woman has accumulated. This assessment does not consider these cultural differences.

Decision to apply for permanent resident status.

INTERCEDE found that older domestic workers many of whom come from the Caribbean "have chosen this work as domestics as a lifetime occupation rather than a temporary step toward something 'better'" (INTERCEDE, 1983:3). The participants in this study, however, stated that they did not intend to remain in this occupation long term. Most intend(ed) to leave when they became permanent residents. Nearly all participants had decided that they would seek permanent resident status when they came to Canada.

Their reasons were firstly, because it was possible, in contrast to Hong Kong or Italy, there are more freedoms, human rights are guaranteed, they felt at home in Canada, and because they would have the opportunity to study while they were working as domestics and eventually they could leave their job as domestic workers.

The participants' ability to integrate into Canadian society is influenced by interpersonal skills, willingness to interact with Canadians and Filipino-Canadians, support from family and friends, happiness with Canadian culture, satisfaction with job, future aspirations, feelings about Canada and about the Philippines, confidence and self-esteem. The possibility of becoming a citizen affects the feeling of security and gives them a sense of belonging.

Involvement in groups and Organisations

Involvement in groups and associations play a large role in the lives of the participants. They state that their contact with other Filipinos and Canadians through church or associations is meaningful and supportive. They feel that this involvement alleviates their feelings of isolation and dependence. Most said that the greatest value of belonging to an organisation is the way in which the associations helped them to develop self- confidence and self-esteem. Many stated that the organisations were educational and informative.

All of the participants belong to at least one organisation. The organisations that they name are mostly Filipino or have a large number of Filipino members. The Filipino community provides a support structure which helps Filipinos to cope with loneliness in the new culture, thereby easing stress during the period of adjustment of the newcomer. Often newcomers find themselves in ethnic ghettos for a long period of time, avoiding integration into Canadian society. Yet, the participants by the nature and location of their work and their willingness to become involved in Filipino-Canadian associations aid them in their integration into Canadian culture as soon as possible and dissuades them from becoming fixed into an "ethnic ghetto". However, after the live-in caregiver leaves the caregiver occupation she has much less contact with Canadians, mainly because she is no longer living in a Canadian household. More than half of the participants

state that they associate mainly with Filipinos and two who have been in Canada the longest period of time say they associate with people of many backgrounds.

Volunteer work is also important in the lives of the participants. They feel that their involvement in volunteer work was a fulfilling and meaningful way to spend time. However, the volunteer work that they initially become involved in is not entirely "voluntary". The participants know that one of the criteria used to evaluate domestic workers for eligibility for landed immigrant status is their willingness to become involved in volunteer work. This involvement demonstrates "social adaptation" (deWolff, 1992:5). This is, according to Beth, a very unfair evaluation if the caregiver is living in an isolated area where she has no transportation or opportunity to become involved in volunteer work. She feels that each caregiver should be evaluated individually, depending on her circumstances because the evaluation based on this criteria is unfair and unreasonable.

Canadian ways

The participants explain that the division is wide between Filipinos who have been living in Canada for a longer period of time and those who are recent immigrants. The gap also exists between those who have adopted Canadian ways and those who still act "like Filipinos". Cez, ironically states that she dislikes those Filipinos who are trying too hard to be Canadian in their behaviours and speech, yet she is proud of her "Canadian ways" which make her stand out in the Philippines. Ruth also feels that a Filipino-Canadian must learn to adapt her behaviours to different situations and when interacting with different groups of people, i.e. Filipinos or Canadians.

Language

Cez suggests that when Filipinos meet they usually begin to speak English, but if one starts to speak in Tagalog or another Filipino language than it would be rude to continue in English. She says that if one was to continue speaking English others will assume one is being pretentious and disrespectful. She gets irritated at Filipinos who speak Tagalog with a Canadian accent, use a lot of "slang" vocabulary or those who pretend that they are unable to speak in the Filipino language.

2. Recommendations

This study points to particular areas where changes must be made. The recommendations include those made by the participants.

Caregivers Work

The attitudes behind the Live-In Caregiver Programme must be reassessed. The work that the caregivers do is not considered a "real" occupation by Canadian immigration authorities, as it does not allow caregivers to come into Canada as Permanent Residents. Canadian immigration's evaluation of the caregivers' permanent resident status application is unfair (i.e. proving financial ability by their saving money). The assessment of their qualifications must include their Philippine experience and education.

The belief that Canada is doing caregivers a "favour" by allowing them to come and work here maintains the low status of the caregivers' work and results in many caregivers remaining in exploitive work situations. The low status of this occupation is related to the low wages and the poor working conditions. Improvements must be made in these areas so that this occupation is brought up to the standards of jobs which Canadians do.

There is no Live-in Caregivers' union. Existing organisations

to which caregivers belong, should consolidate and take a more active role in challenging the inequities and discrimination which caregivers face. This unified organisation or a newly established organisation would ensure that the specifications in the contract are being met, their rights are maintained, and that the voices of the caregivers themselves are heard by policy makers at the federal and provincial levels. The contracts which are signed between caregiver and employer must be more detailed and specific so that the interpretation of it is not left up to the employer.

Live-in Caregivers have little protection under provincial and territorial labour laws. They should be included under the Employment Standards Act, so that they will, at the very least, be guaranteed minimum wage, Workers' Compensation and either be eligible to receive Unemployment Insurance (IU) benefits, or not be required to pay into it.

Education

Educational institutions must be more flexible in the times which courses are offered and in their admission policies. Both educational institutions and professional associations must acknowledge and recognize the foreign education qualifications and experience of potential students from the Philippines and other countries. Caregivers should receive encouragement to up-grade their education. The monthly $20.00 education fee which employers must pay the caregiver does not allow for transportation or fee costs and it should be increased.

Educational institutions must make an effort to reach people such as live-in caregivers to understand their needs and provide information.

State agencies

State agencies must make an effort to understand the needs of

the live-in caregivers. The systemic racism or "institutional racism" must be addressed by training their employees to be sensitive and aware of the circumstances of the live-in caregiver and other migrants.

Organisations should continue to expand their activities to educate others of the needs, special circumstances and cultural differences of the Filipino caregiver and other Filipino workers to facilitate understanding between Canadians and Filipinos.

Concluding Remarks

By examining the data in the four contexts, many overlappings are evident. The contexts have allowed for the concerns of the participants to be emphasised. The qualitative study was the most appropriate approach for this study as it is aimed at understanding people's perceptions and experiences in their environment.

The study offers an analysis of social change and it demonstrates the complexities of the issues of gender, ethnicity and class in a wider perspective. It does not advocate simplistic solutions. For instance, the problem with the lack of acceptance of Filipino qualifications cannot be solved by simply demanding that educational institutions and professional associations wholly accept them, rather, it points to the necessity of considering the qualifications of the Philippines and other East Asian countries individually as opposed to treating them as a group. It then suggests that educational institutions be more flexible in their scheduling to allow for working people to up-grade their education.

Furthermore, the study does not present the Filipino as a "victim" in Canadian society. The participants do not see themselves as "victims". Indeed they cannot afford to see

themselves this way. Their survival depends upon the measures of control they do exercise over their lives. Nor does the study present the families who employ the live-in caregiver as exploiters. The narratives illustrates both negative and positive experiences with employers. Yet, one negative experience demonstrates the need to monitor the caregivers' working and living conditions and assess the employers' previous history with live-in caregivers.

As the policies and regulations are implemented differently in each province and territory, further qualitative research should include a comparative analysis of Filipino caregivers in different parts of Canada to highlight differences in experiences, successes and failures of the program. A comparative study of live-in caregivers of different nationalities in Canada would illuminate the processes of ethnic identity as well as the ways in which their experiences are different and similar. A comparison between Filipino Caregivers in countries other than Canada, such as in Hong Kong, countries of the Middle East, or Europe would reveal the specificities of the Canadian context.

From another perspective, a study that examines the changes in perceptions of identity and ethnicity of those Filipino caregivers who had returned to the Philippines would shed light on the processes of ethnic identity, formation and change.

This study was one step in empowering the participants to come to understand their own oppressive realities. My intent is to return the research findings to the participants and other live-in caregivers for further dialogue to self-reflect, understand, challenge the "taken-for-granted" social structures and to see potential for change in their situation. By realizing their situation is shared by others, live-in caregivers realize that their struggles are not just

individual problems but they are social problems which require political solutions (Lather, 1991:60). The hope is that by meeting together the participants, myself and others can make effective plans which will lead to political action to challenge patriarchal structures, institutional policies and practices.

From the outset, this research belonged to the participants as well as myself. It is only right that they decide how it should be used. Many of the participants' first recommendation is that we ensure that as many people as possible read and learn about the study. The participants want the wider community to become aware of their circumstances thereby resulting in more understanding of their situation and inherently increasing solidarity.

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Appendix 1

Interview Guide

I. Background Information

1. Name/pseudonym
2. Marital status
3. Place of birth
4. Date of birth
5. Address
6. Length of time in Canada
7. Length of time in Edmonton
8. How came to Canada (agency, friend, relative, other)

II. Education

9. What is your highest level of education?
10. Have you been/ are you presently enrolled in tertiary educational programmes in Canada or in Edmonton?
11. Why did you decide to continue your education?
12. What program/ course/ class are/were you enrolled in?
13. What do/did you like about the course/ programme?
14. What do/did you dislike about the programme/ course/ class?
15. In what ways do you think this programme/ course/ class helped/will help you?
16. In what way do you think this will help/helped you secure a job you feel is appropriate for you?

III. Employment

17. What kind of work experience have you had?
18. how has your work experience/ job(s) changed since arriving in Canada?
19. what are some of the things you've done to gain employment since arriving in Canada?
20. do you feel that your work experience corresponds with your qualifications?
21. are you presently working at more than one job?
22. considering your qualifications and experience, what position do you feel you could be employed at?

23. what do you feel are the barriers to your success of finding a position which you feel you could be employed?

VI. Personal

24. What is your ethnic identity?

25. What, if any, changes have you noticed in yourself since living in Canada?

26. When you return to the Philippines, do people comment on the ways that you seem changed?

27. What has been the most difficult thing about coming to Canada?

28. What has been the most difficult thing about finding employment in Canada?

29. In what way is finding employment in Canada different than finding employment in the Philippines?

30. In what way is working in Canada different than working in the Philippines?

31. What are your future plans for employment or education?

32. How have your aspirations (career goals) changed since arriving in Canada? Why have they changed?

Appendix 2

Contact letter to participants

Dear,

Warm greetings! May I introduce myself.
I am doing my Master degree in International/Intercultural Education with the Department of Education Foundations at the University of Alberta, under the supervision of Dr, Toh Swee-Hin who as you may know is the president of the LINGAP Institute. My thesis topic is The Perceptions and Experiences of Immigrant Filipino Caregivers. I am interested in finding out the views of Filipino immigrant women in Canadian society. I would greatly appreciate meeting with you therefore, to hear about your concerns and experiences.

I hope this study will help people become aware of the unique issues you, as an immigrant woman may be encounter in adapting to Canada; finding and securing employment which match your education, up-grading your education and your relations with others in this society.

Your input will be invaluable and of interest to other areas of the study of immigrant women and their role in Canadian society. A copy of the completed thesis will be available at the H.T. Coutts Education Library at the University of Alberta.
I will also prepare a summary of findings which will be distributed to participants in the study.

If you feel that you would be interested in helping me with this study, we can arrange for meeting times and places that are convenient to you.

Be assured that your name, place of work, home address, etc. will be kept anonymous. Any notes taken during the interview will be given to you and you may make any revisions you feel are necessary.
If you decide to participate in this study, I would like to assure you that you are free to withdraw at any time and any information you have given up to that point will not be included in the thesis.

My telephone number is ----------. I can be reached most evenings.
I will be calling you soon to set up a time to meet.

Many thanks for your time and interest. I am looking forward to meeting with you soon.

Sincerely,

Susan Brigham

Appendix 3

Consent to participate in the study

I, _____ have read the
(please print your first and last name)

covering letter and I am aware of the nature of the study, the purpose of the study, the benefits envisaged, the tasks to be performed, time required (approx. two hours), my rights as participant (to withdraw from the study), the name of the researcher (Susan Brigham) and the institution for whom it is to be submitted (Ed. Foundations, University of Alberta).

Signature:_____

Date:_____

Researcher's initials:_____

Appendix 4

BIODATA CHART

Participants

Names	Where employed before Canada	Years in Canada	Years as a caregiver in Canada	Came to Canada by...	Present employment
Mary	Hong Kong	5	3	agency	Homemaker / Unemployed
Ruth	Italy	13	3	friend	Cook and Manager
Lucy	Italy	12	3	friend	Cook and Waitress
Ann	Hong Kong	5	4	agency	Cashier
Nancy	Hong Kong	3.5	3.5	sister	Caregiver
Cez	Hong Kong	4	4	agency	Caregiver
Beth	Hong Kong	8	3	agency	Dietician assistant
Elaine	Hong Kong	3.5	2	agency	Unemployed
Nicole	Hong Kong	5	5	agency	Caregiver

Continued on next page.

Names	Educational Qualifications	Age	Marital status	Occupation in the Phillipines
Mary	B.Sc	34	Married	Teacher
Ruth	B.Sc, Food management certificate	44	Single	Computer factory worker
Lucy	Bs.Admin	51	Single	Various jobs
Ann	Bsc.Ed	41	Single	Teacher
Nancy	Bsc.Ed	32	Single	Teacher
Cez	Management in Accountancy	29	Single	Student
Beth	Midwife certificate	39	Single	Midwife
Elaine	Secretarial studies degree	44	Single	Teacher
Nicole	1 term Bsc.Ed, 1 term secretarial studies	45	Single	Various jobs