

AN ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT OF INTERNATIONAL LABOR OUT-MIGRATION ON THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS: THE CASE OF THE PHILIPPINES

Abstract

Starting in the 1970s, Filipinos have been migrating to other countries in search for jobs. It was also around this time when international labor out-migration was institutionalized as a temporary measure to address the country's unemployment problem. As a result, the number of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) have been increasing since then. In 2018, based on the latest available data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), the number of OFWs was about 2.3 million or 2.51 percent of the country's population. Considering this development, this dissertation investigates and analyzes the impact of international labor out-migration on the legislative process. This study wishes to find out the reasons why international labor out-migration becomes an important legislative agenda by linking it to the legislators' personal motivations on the assumption that they initially believe that their enhanced activities will earn them rewards like reelection, that is made possible by the extra votes of the OFWs. The findings of this research will have an important implication on the delivery of government services. More laws crafted favoring the OFWs as a way of insuring their support during elections, will create social inequality on the part of other disadvantaged sectors like the elderly, the differently-abled, the farm laborers and the urban poor because they also need the attention of the government so that their conditions could be improved. This will also shed light on the conditions of similarly-situated countries who have large number of their citizens working overseas. This paper believes that legislation is a tool to narrow the gap of social inequality among the different sectors in society.