

# Determinants of Choices of Destination of Cambodian Unskilled Labor Migrants

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## 1. Introduction

Cambodia has experienced a rapid increase of migration both within and across border during the past two decades due to poverty and agricultural problems that have been playing major roles in pushing people to search for jobs in the city or other countries of better development. However, until this last decade can we see this concern listed as a priority to the public despite rising tensions since 1999. Since then, some few constructive studies have been done; but they focused mainly on remittances and poverty reduction in response to the state's interest then (Chan, 2009; Tong, 2011). While we also agree that remittances can be used to improve rural population living standard and contribute to economic development, other factors also determine to what extent this potential is realized. Under some unfavorable conditions, remittances hardly succeed its anticipated purpose. In the long-term perspective, labor migration in Cambodia may cause more troubles, given these three-folded reasons.

Firstly, 1<sup>st</sup> demographic dividend in Cambodia is reaching its end in approximately 3 decades (Mason, 2005). As a sending country, Cambodia loses this favorable period to maximize its economic growth, and once migrant workers return home after entering old age, they will turn into financial burden rather than bonus to the society (Wongboonsin, 2004). Moreover, if the 1<sup>st</sup> dividend is not strong enough, triggering the 2<sup>nd</sup> dividend remains almost impossible to achieve (Mason & Lee, 2006). Secondly, Cambodia can be expected to experience a slow growth of the stock of the young population, who will later turn into human capital to contribute to the labor market once they reach their working age. This situation can be expected to shorten and minimize the 1<sup>st</sup> dividend, as human capital in term of quality productivity is believed to be the key in successfully capturing full dividend (Wongboonsin & Kinnas, 2005). Temporary residency of their parents in a host country can serve as hindrance against children's school attendance on a regular basis. Some of them may have to leave school early in their hometown to be on the move along with their parents.

Thirdly, so far the Cambodian legislative regime relevant to regulate outflow migrants has still shown insufficient capacity to handle situation while some legal frameworks are inconsistent making remittance itself least reliable and easily collided by depression such as the economic crises in 1997 and 2008, which led to decreasing demand for migrant workers. In addition, remittance can also be depreciated by currency devaluation when host countries desire to increase their exports or face financial collapse. With current migration management, ramifications of international economic slump could only be worse for Cambodia then and now. As a result, it is essential for Cambodia to mitigate labor migration rate to capitalize on the 1<sup>st</sup> dividend while also paving the way for the 2<sup>nd</sup> dividend before the country turns into an aging society. This paper aims to investigate the demographic characteristic factors that contribute to the decision on the choices of destination of Cambodian unskilled labor migrants from the perspective of demographers and enhance the understanding of the environmental aspect and vital roles of social network that significantly lead to the final conclusion as well as develop South-South migration literature in general Cambodian context in particular.

## 2. Literature Review

Migration is selective, and it does not happen randomly. The degree of selectivity is determined largely by demographic characteristics namely age, gender, level of education, marital status, and region of residence (Massey et al., 2010; Ravenstein, 1885, 1889). In the human capital version, Sjaastad (1962) advocates that migration is highly associated with age and gender, but migrant also considers the cost of migration before moving. These migration costs include the out-of-pocket cost such as airfare and cost of foregone earning or known as the “*opportunity cost*” – the money migrants are supposed to earn from the time they spend on travelling and looking for a job at the destination (ibid). In migration decision-making process, these factors will influence predominantly the choices of destination of migrant, who will choose a place where he believes his characteristics fit. Borjas (1989) refers this as individual utility maximization, which means migrants would search for the “*best country*” to try to maximize their economic benefit.

In the recent years, destination of Cambodian unskilled labors has become very precise, as 50% of total Cambodian migration concentrates solely within the boundary of the capital while the second most popular flow is internationally bound and accounted up to 30% of all migrants. Thailand; moreover, remains the principal host country for Cambodian outflow and is responsible for 81.5% of all labor migration abroad (MoP, 2012). Similar to the rest of the world, Cambodian migrants tend to be young population from 15 – 34 years old, and internal migrants are more likely to be females than males, but cross-border movers are overwhelming by male (ibid). In addition, same study also reveals that low educated people are more likely going to choose outflow migration instead of rural-urban but detailed explanation was not given leaving the question to be further discussed because although migration is selective, there are many other factors that contribute to the decision including the meso level and even the obstacle, which individual will take into account before he makes up his mind. Lee (1966) argues that because of the different demographic background, migrants do not respond the same way to push-pull factors in each host, and they also have disparate method to overcome obstacle that stay as a barrier between area of origin and area of destination. Furthermore, Fafchamps and Shilpi (2013) provide evidence to prove that choosing between migration destinations is not essentially driven by economic differentials but other factors including relationship proximity. Therefore, it leaves without doubt that migrants will opt for a country or a certain area where there are many other migrants who share the same language and ethnic background. The larger size of community of the receiving area, the higher possibility potential migrants will move there (Spörlein, 2015). Additionally, in agrarian countries, the tendency of migration is more likely to come from household decision instead of individual due to crop failure in some unfortunate years. This disaster eventually leads to insufficient budget for household to finance a new sowing project, so family starts to diversify sources of income to minimize the risk of deterioration in economic situation by forcing one or more family members to migrate in order to provide a backup (Castles, 2004; Stark & Bloom, 1985; Stark & Taylor, 1991). Another kind of network in migration is the connection at the destination. It is more than just a chain migration, but a tie that connects migrants and non-migrants within and between the area of origin and the host country and increases the likelihood of the flow of movement (Massey et al., 1993). Migration network proximity can also be divided into two types, strong and weak tie, which influence the probability of migration decision at different degree due to the level of mutual trust (Samers, 2010). In Cambodia, 85% of rural-urban migrants received encouragement for migrating from their family at home but were not facilitated by network at the receiving area, and many migrants come to Phnom Penh alone without any connection to help them find shelter or jobs (MoP, 2012).

### **3. Methodology**

The selection of sites and employment sectors was based on a combination of statistical data (MoP, 2012; OFWA, 2014) and reports of the most prominent destination for Cambodian labor migrants in previous studies (Lim, 2007; Phann, 2014; Wongboonsin & Chimmamee, 2009). Rural-urban migrants in Cambodia congregate only in the capital which is also the industrial hub for those who show interest in seeking job in the most popular low-skilled sectors of garment and construction. However, migrants in Thailand working in different sectors tend to cluster in different provinces. To select site in Thailand, we utilized convenience sampling technique and chose Bangkok Metropolitan Area for construction industry and Rayong and Chonburi provinces for the fishery sector, in which recognized as the top employment sectors Cambodian migrants were engaging. Additionally, while there has been no elucidated emphasis on how many qualitative interviews should be adhered to for a robust study, a modest size was deliberately predetermined without an attempt to guarantee the representativeness of entire population, as the study is rather designed to explore and explain phenomenon. In total, 80 unskilled labor migrants consisted of 20 samples per each group were decided.

Data was gathered using purposive sampling, and subjects, who were suitable to be recruited, were selectively chosen, but it was also susceptible to subjectivity. Collection took 3 months to complete beginning from June 1<sup>st</sup> until September 2<sup>nd</sup> 2015, and participants were invited for in-depth interviews with semi-structured questionnaires. To be eligible for inclusion, first, migrant must be legal breadwinners and have worked at least one year as construction, garment, or fishery worker in Phnom Penh or Thailand. This requirement was set in order to purposefully get migrants that could provide clearer picture of nature of their work and to see if they were feeling satisfied with their current setting or inclined to opt for alternative places. Second, migrants had to be age 15 and above and have migrated to the destination after the year 2000 otherwise the reason of migration could only be civil war or mass eviction policy during the Pol Pot's regime. However, recent migrants were preferred. It is also important to note that all the interviews were conducted in Khmer, native language of Cambodian; thus, first transcription of the information was documented in the native language then translated into English and coded. For the final data analysis, we employed Qualitative Content Analysis to interpret data since it is well-suited to report common problems and explore crucial and sensitive issues in an area where not much is known. This technique involves in quantifying the data and scrutinizing frequency of codes to find its significant meaning and visualize the results in a descriptive manner.

### **4. Research Findings and Discussion**

#### **Demographic Selectivity**

Regarding of labor migration selectivity, it refers to both characteristics of migrant and the employment itself because not only migrants will select job that fit their attributes, but job also selects migrants via their characteristics. Incidentally, tables and figure below do not purport to represent the whole population, but they rather provide visual insight of characteristics of the interviewees that associated with their choices of destination. Altogether, there were 51 male and 29 female samples for both type of flows.

Characteristics	Overall (N=80)	Garment Industry in Phnom Penh (N=20)	Construction Industry in Phnom Penh (N=20)	Construction Industry in Thailand (N=20)	Fishery Industry in Thailand (N=20)
<b>Gender</b>					
Male	63.8	10	85	60	100
Female	36.2	90	15	40	-
<b>Age at First Migration</b>					
<15	7.5	5	10	10	5
15 - 19	35.0	65	30	20	25
20 - 24	31.3	10	20	45	50
25 - 29	11.2	10	20	10	5
30 - 34	7.5	10	10	5	5
35 - 39	5.0	-	10	5	5
40+	2.5	-	-	5	5
<b>Marital Status Pre-Migration Experience</b>					
Single	72.5	75	65	65	85
Married	26.3	20	35	35	15
Divorced/Separated	1.2	5	-	-	-
<b>Level of Education</b>					
No Education	13.7	-	25	20	10
Primary School	52.5	40	50	60	60
Secondary School	23.8	45	15	10	25
High School	7.5	10	5	10	5
Tertiary Education	2.5	5	5	-	-
<b>Region of Residence</b>					
Banteay Meanchey	12.5	-	-	50	-
Kampong Cham	17.5	10	15	20	25
Kampong Chhnang	5.0	10	-	-	10
Kampong Speu	2.5	5	5	-	-
Kampong Thom	3.8	10	5	-	-
Kandal	5.0	15	-	-	5
Prey Veng	22.5	10	35	5	40
Pursat	5.0	10	-	10	-
Siem Reap	1.2	-	-	5	-
Svay Rieng	3.8	15	-	-	-
Takeo	10.0	5	20	-	15
Battambang	2.5	-	5	5	-
Kampot	5.0	10	5	5	-
Preah Sihanouk	3.7	-	10	-	5

[Table 1: Percentage Distribution of Migrant Worker by Demographic Characteristics and Work Sector]

Table 1 indicates the percentage distribution of migrant workers by their characteristics and work sectors. Overall, it seems that there is a gender segregation in the unskilled employments, but several number of the opposite sex dominating the sector are also found except in the fishery of which selectivity is based on a

nautical superstition shared by both Khmers and Thais that forbids female crews on board or their presence would anger *Manimekhala*, goddess of lightning and the sea, who will conjure up violent weather. Empirically, construction industry in Cambodia and Thailand is open for both gender especially the latter where number of male and female workers seems to be balance despite the nature of work (OFWA, 2016), but in western literatures, it is found otherwise and female sample is normally omitted from the study due to the rare number (Arndt et al., 2005; Claessen et al., 2010; Riise et al., 1995).

On average, Cambodian migrants are usually young single adult with primary education and age between 15 – 24 years old when they first migrate especially female who generally migrates at the earlier age than male but mainly opt for internal migration. Relatively, international migrants are often younger than internal migrants, but this is not surprising considering the fact that migrants always think about their net return of migration, so they tend to move early to enjoy benefit longer. Age indeed has a negative relationship with distance of migration, and enticement to move also diminishes with age. This notion is based on the fact that younger Cambodian migrants prefer to go to work in South Korea whereas older migrants often refuse to move there because they think it is very costly, and they will not be able to take much advantage from their movement. It is also consistent with MoP (2012) which points out that Cambodian young single women have higher propensity to migrate than young men and migrate internally to find employment more frequently than men do but are less likely to migrate to another country. Nevertheless, it is to remind that first migration is not necessary to be the destination where interview was conducted, but migration must be for working purpose.

It is; moreover, important to note that region of residence is the permanent residence of migrants before their movement. The top 3 provinces where participants both internal and international migrants come from are Prey Veng, Kampong Cham, and Banteay Meanchey, respectively. This study finds internal flow from Kampong Cham, Takeo, and Prey Veng are in line with those identified in MoP (2012) and Cambodian census 2008 in terms of the top sending provinces of internal migrants. Banteay Meanchey; furthermore, shares the border with Thailand. Thus, the distance is comparatively shorter to travel from there to Eastern Thailand than to Phnom Penh. This serves as an explanation why participants from this province opt for a cross-border migration rather than heading to the capital. However, even if distance from Prey Veng and Kampong Cham to the border is quite far, distance factor seems to not affect the volume of the flow of international migration from those regions. This is based on the notion that those three sending areas share approximately the same percentage of migrants moving to work across the border mainly due to its high density of population, and it is common to see some people move out from heavily populated areas with low chance of employment considering the factual density of 6 establishments with 237 population per square kilometer in Prey Veng, and 5.5 establishments with 179 people in Kampong Cham (NIS, 2014).

	No (N=6)	Yes (N=15)	Overall (N=21)
<b>By Gender</b>			
Female	33.3	66.7	<b>57.1</b>
Male	66.7	33.3	<b>42.9</b>
<b>By Work Sector</b>			
Garment industry in Phnom Penh	33.3	13.3	<b>19.1</b>
Construction industry in Phnom Penh	33.3	33.3	<b>33.3</b>
Construction industry in Thailand	-	46.7	<b>33.3</b>
Fishery industry in Thailand	33.4	6.7	<b>14.3</b>

[Table 2: Percentage Distribution of Married Participants Migrated with Spouse]

The result of Table 2 is the percentage distribution of married participants migrated with spouse. Total number of sample is 80, but those who were single or divorced before their first migration were dropped out leaving only 21. In general, it is very precise that male migrant is very much likely than female to move to work at the destination leaving their spouse behind, but they may or may not live at the host area alone by definition. Remarkably, construction worker in Thailand both male and female moved collectively with their spouse to work, but this value is contributed mostly by female migrants since most of them were already married before their first migration, which makes sense because migration in search for construction employment particularly outflow is not that suitable for lone single young lady. It was known before that female migrants only intended to migrate as a dependent specifically in the traditional societies like those in Africa and Asia where women's status is not recognized, and their job is to be at home taking care of children and other family members (Kofman, 1999; Todaro & Smith, 2015; Weeks, 2012). However patently, Cambodian female migrants who move with their spouse, are also seeking economic opportunity rather than just tied movers.

### Social Connection in Cambodian Migration Context

Labor migration is not merely a relocation of labor force determined by push-pull model in term of economic benefit, and it is more complicated than it looks when environmental factor involved, but role of social network is not similar from one case to another since migrants also value attributes of each place differently and react in disparate manners. Nevertheless, it is instructive to note that social network in migration context consists of two types, network at the area of origin and network at the area of destination which influence individual in different behavior. In term of social network at the area of origin, we focus on the notion of family influence, which here refers to the direct motivation of family members upon individual at their first migration decision to current destination. However, sometimes household also discourages its members to move or does nothing at all and let migrants themselves reach a decision.

<b>Household Reaction</b>	<b>Overall (N=80)</b>	<b>Garment Industry in Phnom Penh (N=20)</b>	<b>Construction Industry in Phnom Penh (N=20)</b>	<b>Construction Industry in Thailand (N=20)</b>	<b>Fishery Industry in Thailand (N=20)</b>
Encourage Migrants	<b>6.3</b>	15	5	5	-
Forbid Migrants	<b>42.5</b>	60	35	25	50
Neither of them	<b>51.2</b>	25	60	70	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

[Table 3: Percentage Distribution of Migrant Worker by Household Reaction to Their First Migration]

Table 3 illustrates the percentage distribution of migrant workers by their family reaction to their first migration to the destination. Visually, garment sector has the highest value of 15% of those who get motivated by family to migrate compare to only 5% of construction industry similarly shared by both flow and 0% of fishery sector. In contrast, overall, 42.5% of respondent's family even tried to forbid them from migrating, for many thought it would be difficult and dangerous for migrants to stay away from home when they have no or least experience in migration while some did not want young migrants to leave their formal education. However, migrants decided to do so because they wanted to go and work to ensure their

continuous survival. This implicitly stresses the importance of migration acting as a tool to survive life-and-dead situation rather than an alternative mean to alleviate agricultural calamity, so like it or not, for them, labor movement is regrettably unavoidable.

*“No, I wanted to come here myself. If I stayed at home, I would have been jobless. I couldn’t find any job there, so I had to come to Phnom Penh to work at the construction site to earn some money. My wife dissuaded me to come here, but I told her that if I didn’t come to work in Phnom Penh, what would become of our children? What did we eat? How did we pay our daily expenses?”*

Case 04, 29 years old male construction worker in Phnom Penh from Prey Veng province.

Fundamentally, parents in Cambodian labor migration context both rural-urban and cross-border are found not to generally encourage individual first migration although some studies on the influence of household in migration decision have proven otherwise particularly in Asian countries where it is believed that family often influences its members and sometimes even pairs them to a destination to diversify source of income to prevent financial deterioration due to agricultural menace (Castles, 2004; Stark & Bloom, 1985; Stark & Taylor, 1991). Nonetheless, Cambodia might be one of the exceptions taking into account the fact that many other studies about Cambodian unskilled labor migration to Phnom Penh and Thailand also share similar notion that it is uncommon to see household encourages individual movement (ILO. & ARCM., 2013; Jampaklay & Kittisuksathit, 2009; Maltoni, 2010; Wongboonsin & Chimmamee, 2009).

This diverging result might be explained by a reason. They did not mention if it was individual first migration or not, but they anticipated that family had somehow known already about the cost and return of its member’s migration (Stark & Bloom, 1985:174; Stark & Taylor, 1991:1177, Castles, 2004:859). However, in Cambodian, rural families do not normally encourage individual to migrate for the first time mainly because they have vague or no information regarding of expected net return leaving them scared of risks of migration especially the journey through porous border or human trafficking hence feel uncertain if it is good to migrate until they ultimately receive remittances and information concerning the host region from their migrating member. Consequently, it can be assumed that only after sufficient information is provided to parents, will individual migratory motivation be probably produced by household. This finding is proven by other researches, which assert that mass media does not pay any contribution in disseminating information necessary for migrants while parents usually feel reluctant to let young adult children especially girl to migrate to work (Lim, 2007; Hing & Lun, 2011). A vivid example to support this notion is provided by an international migrant in one of whose many times re-migration experiences to Thailand, was encouraged by his mother, but it was not necessary to be his first migration. Consequently, if question is left without indication whether or not it is his first time migration, the answer is likely to be yes.

**“Int:** *Did she [his mother] encourage you to come when you first migrated to work in Thailand?*  
**Res:** *No, she didn’t. But after seeing me earned a lot of money from working in Thailand and remitted to her, she always encouraged me to come.”*

Case 76, 24 years old male construction worker in Pathum Thani province, Thailand from Banteay Meanchey province.

In comparison, this finding is also contrasting to MoP (2012) result. In addition, there is also another noteworthy contradiction on the contact at the destination. MoP (2012) claims that 50.9% of total migrants did not know anyone in Phnom Penh before moving and only 25% received help in finding job from their network, yet almost all participants in this study acknowledged that they actually decided to move there

instead of elsewhere because they knew a connection in the capital and expected this contact to provide them support to ease their difficulties in finding employment. As chain migration normally amplifies the probability of getting a job and reduce many difficulties and much migration related cost, it makes clear that those who move without a network will definitely find labor migration more difficult. Thus, it is incomprehensible that a household without job related information and contact at the destination would encourage individual to wander in search for a job in Phnom Penh aimlessly.

Besides that, information related to employment that potential migrants receive usually derives from their relatives or friends, the current migrants who actually know to what extent migration is beneficial. The central position of social network at the destination is important to explain the complex perpetuation of migration flow into Phnom Penh or Thailand. In Cambodia, international labor movement has begun to become popular approximately two decades ago, and those who migrated to work in Thailand at that time, got information from Cambodian brokers that went household by household recruiting prospective migrants from rural area to work for Thai employers using their successful migration experience and uplifting economic status. Role of these brokers and their systematic business are vital to Cambodian international migrants since it determines the result and simplicity of illegal border crossing which is the only way making migration process more affordable by the poor.

*“The villager, who asked me to come and work in Thailand with him, contacted that broker for me. He then gave me phone number of that broker who lived in Poi Pet but came to pick me up at my home in Prey Veng. After I successfully crossed the border into Thailand, I stayed alone at his home for 3 nights.”*

Case 48, 27 years old male construction worker in Bangkok, Thailand from Prey Veng province.

When a few people migrated and came back with better economic position, they attracted more people to follow them when they re-migrated especially those who were in closer relationship with these migrants. These movers have ultimately established a very broad network like in Rayong province, Thailand to share information or concerns on job availability as well as living environment. As a result, presently it is more feasible that potential migrants are recruited to work in Thailand via current migrants, who appear to be their trusted proximate connection. But these prospective movers have no choice of employment, and they will accept the first job their network can promise to secure. Also, they will not be offered many options to choose who they would like to work for if they have limited number of connection. Therefore, bigger network will certainly allow migrants to access to more available employments.

**Int:** *How did you get a job here [at the current construction site in Thailand]?*

**Res:** *I had an uncle working at this site. After I got his phone number, I phoned him and asked him about the job, and he told me that his boss was a good guy and never cheated on workers, so I asked him to ask his boss to allow me to work too.”*

Case 60, 28 years old female construction worker in Pathum Thani province, Thailand from Kampong Cham province.

*“My sister told me that the basic salary was 45\$. The next day I arrived in Phnom Penh, I went to work in the factory with her. My team leader was also people from my village.”*

Case 12, 25 years old female garment worker in Phnom Penh from Kampong Chhnang province.

The exposition of idea of having a job guaranteed upon their arrival starts from migrants trying to avoid long

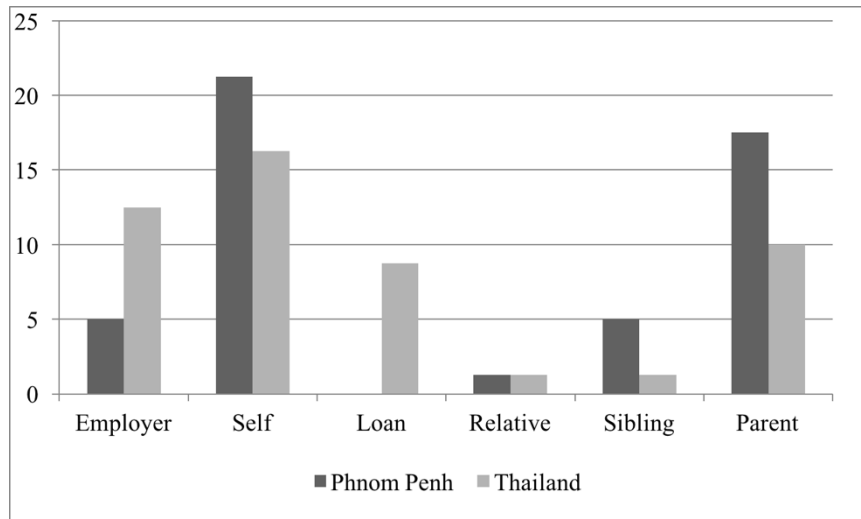


period of unemployment due to the high opportunity cost, so almost all samples commence to work on the very next day after they arrive at the destination. The value of opportunity costs varied from one migrant to another. It is considered more or less important depends assumingly on their financial status. The notion is based on the fact that there are already those who could afford such cost and travel to work in South Korea and a much larger number of people who wasted a lot of time and money attempted to migrate there but failed, yet there are still mass population trying annually. Hence, to superior migrants, this cost might be less momentous than expected high benefit from working in South Korea, and they are more willing to take risk of loss whereas this must be more important to poorer migrants.

*“I have to study [Korean language] for 3 months, meaning I will have no income for 3 months. If I work in Thailand for 3 months, I can probably remit about 20,000 [570\$] to 30,000 Baht [855\$] to my family.”*

Case 80, 31 years old male construction worker in Bangkok, Thailand from Banteay Meanchey Province.

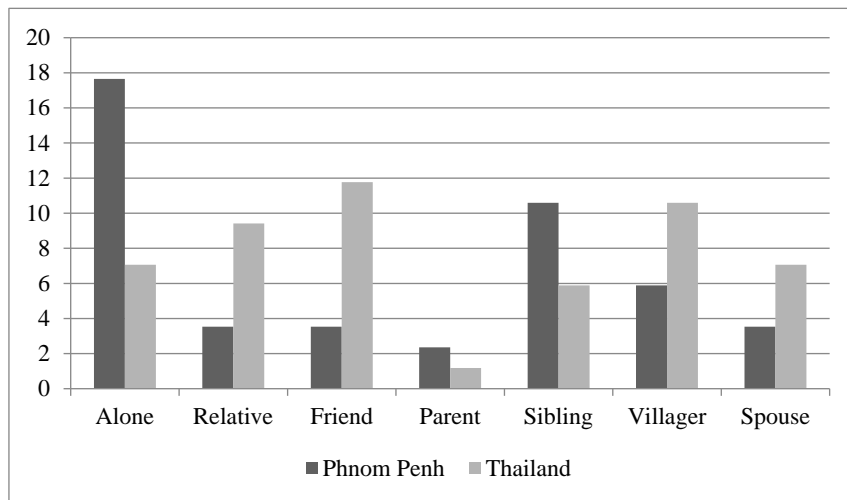
South Korea parenthetically, is a destination where most Cambodian unskilled migrant labors currently consider as the best choice because so far there has been no report of migrant workers being abused or exploited, and the payroll is very high. Nevertheless, it is only feasible to move to work there by agency services, in which quota number of workers to be sent is strictly regulated by both governments of Cambodia and South Korea, and passing a Korean language proficiency test is a requirement but does not guarantee a possible job. In addition, travelling cost including the airfare and application process is expensive and various depending on the organization that provides this service, but it is usually in the range between 2,000\$ to 3,000\$, and this upfront fee is not allowed to work off through salary deduction. It is; moreover, costly and time consuming to study Korean language, which makes the total cost for the legal status to work a main barriers of migration while illegal migration is almost impossible since undocumented migrants cannot be smuggled undetectably taking into consideration the geographical condition between Cambodia and Korea. Regarding of migration cost, the price of moving from rural area to Phnom Penh is not a major problem to migrants because the travelling expense only ranges from 5\$ to 10\$, but outflow migrants have to pay a lump sum price varying from 43\$ to 100\$ for a single journey depending on how comfortable of transportation migrants want making out-of-pocket cost also one of the major obstacles to migration to Thailand; and only those who can actually afford such a cost would be able to migrate. The implication of the notion is that the further the distance to migrate the more financially superior a migrant is. Despite that, not everyone could fully fund his or her own movement. Graph below imparts detail of migrant’s sources of financial support.



[Figure 1: Percentage Distribution of Participant's Source of Travelling Expense]

Figure 1 shows the percentage of participant's source of travelling expense to the current destination. Both internal and international migrants especially the older adult can finance themselves for the trip using their own capital. However, as they normally come from poor household, they do not often have cash at hand to cover their travelling cost particularly those who left for Thailand and utilized a broker's service, which they need to pay in advance. In such case, they are likely to sell valuable assets like motorbike or livestock to gather money. On condition that migrants and their parents altogether are not capable to afford upfront fee, they usually take loan from other villagers or local micro finance institute. In addition, it is also likely possible that international migrants are financed by their own prospective employer but in the form of installment; that is to say, employer bears the upfront cost of recruitment, but migrant's monthly payroll is deducted gradually as repayment for their debt until the debt is settled. However, this kind of financial assistance is only made plausible if prospective migrant is vouched by a current migrant working for that employer. It substantially helps reduce the barrier and makes movement itself more feasible for inferior financial condition migrant. Parents are generally the main reliable source of monetary aid for single young migrants, and it is even more common for those who intent to move to Phnom Penh in search for a job, but the origin of parent's financial support can possibly be a loan or property sale.

Although majority of the participants believe that their migration is a necessary mechanism to escape financial distress, they also realize that they may face many difficulties during their migration experience namely international migration because impediment to labor migration is not just the cost but also risks of migration such as human trafficking or being deceived or abandoned half way by the brokers. However, current migrant at the host area can minimize these risks, making migration itself more reliable and convenient by accompanying prospective migrants on their journey to the destination.



[Figure 2: Percentage Distribution of Participant's Companions on Their First Migration to Current Destination]

Figure 2 displays a result on the percentage distribution of participants' companions on their first migration to current destination. It should be reminded that companions of migrant could be more than one person and fits in multiple classification as seen above specifically those who accompanied outflow migrants, so they are also put in different categories unless all these companion belong to the same group. In addition, this is to clarify that companion of cross border migrants are either people that already have a job and go back to work after home visit or those that intent to go to find employment in Thailand with participants while it is not necessary for internal migrants meaning some of them just go along to deliver migrants to their destination and go back to their home village.

Migrating alone hardly ever happens to international migrants while it is very practical to their internal counterpart. External migrants often cross border along with villagers, friends, or relatives rather than siblings, as the cost is relatively more expensive than moving locally; thus, some families are perhaps not capable to finance more than one member's journey at once. In contrast, sibling plays a more important role in accompanying internal migrants. In addition, parents; in general circumstance, do not accompany any type of migrants especially international migration unless they have also intended to work at the destination. Apart from what is shown in this figure, women generally do not migrate alone, but if they do, they are just internal migrants whereas international female migrants normally migrate with their husband rather than anyone else.

## 5. Conclusion

People decide to migrate to a place where they believe opportunities exist for them to maximize their utilities, so in order to move, they have to know clearly how much they can benefit from such a migration. However, unskilled labor migrants in Cambodia have very limited sources of information regarding of working and living conditions at the destination, and they can only utilize information that derives from their social network such as family, friends, or villagers who are working at the destination rather than modern technology due to the lack of knowledge to access to it and local development such as internet connection and mass media. On the other hand, without social connection, there will be a dearth of information, which turns out to be a major drawback in deterring possible migration destination because it will lead to uncertainty of benefit; thus, migrants are exposed to higher form of menaces. Additionally, because potential migrants react differently to the attributes of each destination based on what information available to them,

decision of movement becomes predominantly a result of social connectivity concerning the relationship proximity and subsequent interaction between current and potential migrants. That is to say, migrants are more likely to choose the best place that they have existing connections with rather than disconnected host. On top of that, migrants are more likely to believe information from those who have higher level of mutual trust with them. Therefore in general perspective, information from closer relationship network will influence migration decision in higher degree. Besides providing rich information making migration very fruitful, current migrant also secures an employment position for potential migrants. In international migration context, they play a very crucial part in making migration process more affordable and reliable to future migrants by introducing them to brokers whose role is very important in determining the result of illegal border crossing. Additionally, stimulation of mobility is usually passed to prospective migrants from current migrants who actually know to what extent migration is beneficial rather than from household in the area of origin with no information regarding of destination, but parents are main source of financial support making the travelling cost more affordable to young labor migrants.

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