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# **A CRITICAL READING OF FILIPINO TRANSNATIONALISM IN DUBAI**

### **Abstract:**

Everyday conditions of economic hardship and social exclusion produce strong feelings of isolation from city space for low-level construction/service workers in Dubai. On the other hand, the professional upper-middle classes seem to transcend their expatriate/outsider (migrant) position as they embrace advantages of fully integrating with consumer spaces of the city and their participation in broader civic life. In-between these two polar migrant experiences with integration, is situated a third one, which has not been elaborated in detail in the literature: The conditions of young Asian migrants who are university/college graduates and who have strong international communicational skills. This paper draws upon a research that was conducted in 2011 on young migrants (between ages 20-30) from Philippines with such qualities who are working in the shopping malls of Dubai as sales personnel. Within the framework of the research, I conducted 30 in-depth interviews that last 60 minutes each on average. The main quest of this paper is to understand the factors that define the nature of Filipino transnationalism in Dubai. The socio-economic differences among these young Filipino migrants not only define their perception of the city and possibilities of integration with Dubai's social space but also define the nature of their transnational relations back with Philippines.

### **Keywords:**

Transnationalism. Filipino migrants, Dubai, migration policy, socio-spatial integration.