

“I Feel All My Skill is Lost in This Long Waiting” Temporary Foreign Nurses in Nova Scotia

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Key objective: to understand how labour and migration policies shape the experiences of temporary foreign nurses.

- What are the migratory pathways of these nurses?
- What kind of workplace experiences do these nurses have?

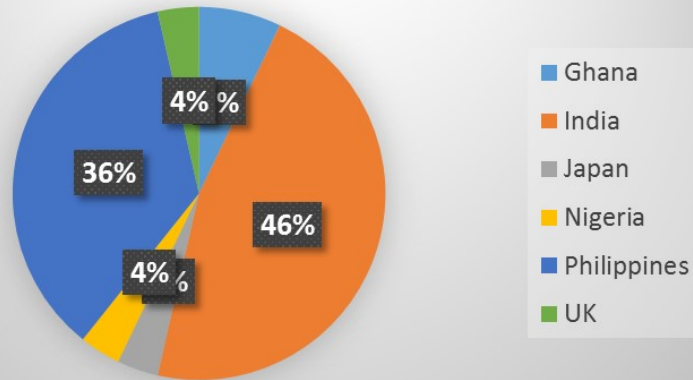
In this presentation, I explore these pathways as it is conceptualized by the nurses: *a Risk-Taking Project*

Contextual Factors Affecting Nurse Movement

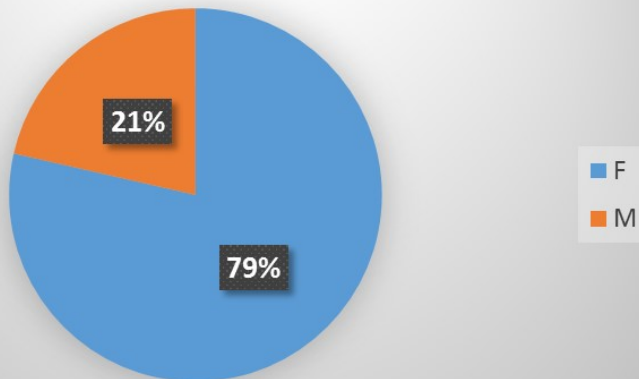
Global	National- Canada	Provincial- Nova Scotia
Global restructuring of labour and capital -> movement of “cheap” labour from countries in the global south to the north (Wolf, 1982)	Healthcare restructuring at federal level -> devaluation and casualization of nursing labour (Grinspun, 2003)	Nova Scotia demographics: aging; prevalence of chronic disease; population decline; and youth outmigration -> labour demand for nurses (Nourpanah et al, forthcoming)
Global inequality, the “value” of nursing is less in the global south than in the north (Yeates, 2009)	Nurse outmigration from Canada and labour shortages- both current and expected to increase (McGillis Hall et al, 2013).	Nova Scotia immigration strategy (PNP regime)
	Difficulty in credential recognition for foreign-trained nurses (Blythe et al, 2009)	Nova Scotia licensure for nurses
	Changing immigration policies- temporary movements vs. permanent migration.	

My Sample: Total 29 Interviews

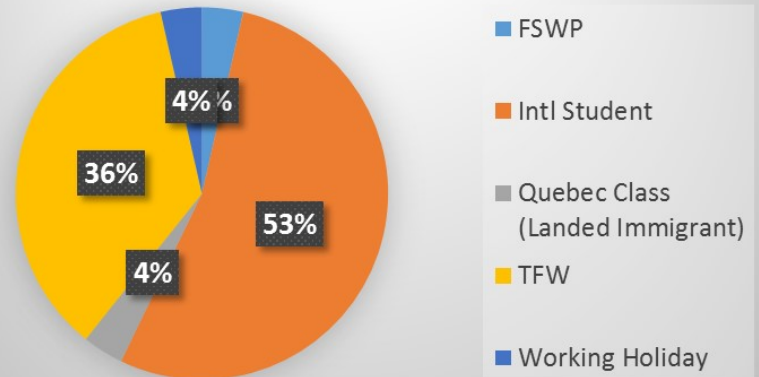
Country of Origin



Male/Female



Migration Stream



Entrants through the International Student and the Temporary Foreign Workers Program obtain temporary work permits (either closed or open, depending on the circumstance) in order to be able to work legally here in Canada.

“LET’S GIVE THIS A SHOT”: THE RISKY MIGRATION PROJECT

“Who has not experienced that awkward feeling which surfaces the moment one enters an aircraft? The unease that troubles the traveller when passing through the carrier door?... now, *should I stay or should I go?*” (Bærenholdt and Simonsen, 2004, p. 28, emphasis the authors’).

“I just took a chance and came here”

The migration project is characterized risk-taking exercise. It is a test of individual capabilities, resources, and skills in an arena fraught with changing policies which seem arbitrary at best, unfair and discriminatory at worst.

Knowledge/education, mobility and competitiveness, is not enough to guarantee victory in this “risky” arena: a good amount of luck is also required at every step.

“A bit of a gamble”

To have chance, luck and accident play such a key role in some of the most decisive moments of one’s life, moments that one has worked for tirelessly over several years, often with personal and familial sacrifice, comes at a high cost.

The nurses experience stress and anxiety due to the uncertain, chancy nature of their migration project.

No matter how hard they work and how resourceful they are on an individual basis, ultimately their success at this project lies with factors beyond their control.

Concluding Thoughts

- Risk, luck and the associated anxiety may be present at different stages of the migration project (before, during, or even after);
- Different reactions to the riskiness and chance. Depends on individual positionality and aspirations.
- “Value plus plus”: , employers are quick to notice the “additional” skills and capabilities of their foreign-trained employees, and take advantage of them, as far as possible within the limits of legalities