

SOCIAL NETWORK OF THAI STUDENT-LABOURERS IN AUSTRALIA

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Abstract

Labour migration is one of the major issues of this century. Nowadays around 192 million people work outside their country of birth, about three percent of the world's population. This rapidly increasing phenomenon is examined in a large number of studies on migration. However, most of these studies focus on experiences and practicalities of migrants at the place of destination. In this study, I provide insight into the other issue of the migration study by investigating the background and relationship in the social network of specific Thai migrant labourer in the name of "Thai-Aus" who are studying and working in Australia. I aim to contribute to the understanding of the social network composition of Thai Migrant Labourers in Australia and to analyse relationships within this network. Data were collected via in-depth interviews as well as by participatory and non-participatory observations with 18 key informants as Thai labourers-"Thai-Aus" who are working in Sydney, Australia. Data analysis was contents analysis by the program of ATLAS.ti and social network analysis by the program of Ucinet and Netdraw. The results of the study indicated that social network of "Thai-Aus" was informal. The process of social network construction started with personal relationships and common experiences. The characteristics of the relationship in network as multi-relations on common goal, base on benefit exchange, cooperation and competition relation, and the duration of relationship was based on personal relations.

Keyword: Thai-Aus, Social Network, Migrant Labour Network, Working Abroad of Thai Labourers, Thailand

1. INTRODUCTION

Thai labourers' migration to work in foreign countries is a phenomenon that took place over three decades ago. Nevertheless, labourers still continuously migrate to foreign countries today. This is reflected by the number of labourers overseas including job seekers who have been registered to work abroad according to the Ministry of Labour's regulations. The number amounts to hundreds of thousands each year (Chamaratana et.al, 2010; Ayuwat and Chamaratana, 2013). Legal migration of Thai labourers to work abroad is categorized into 5 patterns, namely, employment companies send the labourers, the Department of Employment send the labourers, job seekers contact the work place themselves, employers in Thailand take their employees to work abroad, and employers in Thailand take their employees to work as apprentice abroad (Thailand Overseas Employment Administration, 2015).

However, migration innovations occur and are concealed in different actions in the present migration process of Thai labourers. For instance, Thais get married with foreigners to acquire the rights to move with their spouses, some Thais go to work through the work and travel agencies, or the former Thai labourers'

migration have been modified such as Thai students' working part-time. The last example has become a gap for the business of taking middle-class and educated people to work abroad. This includes new labourers who desire to seek new experiences overseas and work in developed countries where high education institutions exist in a great number. Their stay is legal owing to their studentship in an institution. They also have the right to work part-time before they finally mingle with the system until they become full-time workers.

Such cases happen among Thai students in Australia until the term Thai-Aus labourers emerged. Thai-Aus labourers are Thai student labourers in Australia who used the channel of education to go to Australia through the process of academic institution locating. Then they started to work part-time at low-end categories such as cleaning, back-yard services (dish washing and kitchen cleaning). Many chose to stop studying and work full-time in order to save money for paying back the charge to the broker or agency that sent them there. It is obvious that these cases are illegal. These labourers will not be covered by any welfare or protected under any legal labour protection. It may also lead to problems for themselves. The scope of the Ministry of Labour's protection of overseas labourers will not apply in such cases (Thailand Overseas Employment Administration, 2015) because of their visa status as "student" as opposed to "migrating labourer".

However, when considering the phenomenon discussed above, I found that the Thai-Aus labourers have come up with a strategy to eliminate the problems there. They utilize the social network among Thai people in Australia, especially Thai friends who chat online or Cyber space to support and assist each other (Chanarnupap, 2013). Thus, if we are able to understand their social network, we should be able to understand the roles, relationships, and influences of the social network on their work for happy living of Thai students working abroad. Another body of knowledge would be obtained that could be proposed as a policy to efficiently and legally assist and protect Thai students in the future.

By significant of problem above, this research was aimed at studying the social network of Thai-Aus labourers in the aspect of the roles of social network members, benefit exchange or transactional contact, directional flow, and frequency and duration of relationships.

2. RESEARCH CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Conceptual Framework

In order to understand social network relationships of Thai-Aus labourers, it was necessary to apply an appropriate concept, i.e., the social network concept, which has an assumption that the social network consists of persons or actors who are related with one another according to the roles or functions of each individual or partners. Each person does not take only one role but many in the daily life. The relation among people in the social network may follow the Exchange Theory because a person does not only act according to his role, expected social function or according to the transferred standard; but relation among individuals also depends on perception and decision for exchange between the pair (Boissevain, 1974; Ritzer, 1992; Wasserman and Faust, 1999; Kilduff and Tsai, 2003; De Jong, 2008).

It can be said that the social network concept focuses on the presence of social relation web among individuals which extends and covers all of the society. The analysis of social network in terms of sociology, on the contrary, focuses on social relation among individuals in the social network, to see if and how this influences the behaviours expressed to others. The patterns and characteristics of the social network must be used to explain an individual's behaviours. In this respect, Wasserman and Faust (1999) applied the concept of Boissevain (1974) to develop the framework for studying and analyzing the social network by dividing into 4 issues (Ritzer, 1992; Wasserman and Faust, 1999) as follows:

The first issue: The roles of social network members were considered. They are the factors behind multiplicity of relations, which can be explained by the Role Theory. A social network consists of individuals who have relationships with one another according to their roles or functions. Each person does not have only one role but many roles to act each day. Therefore, two persons can have relationships both in one role or many roles, which can be referred to as Uniplex or Single-Relation and Multiplex or Multi-Relation, respectively. The role of each case will have the norms or expectation as the lead for behaviours acted towards one another.

The second issue: The basis of relationships in the social network was considered. This usually was hidden in the Exchange Theory. It was believed that social relation among individuals in the social network is based on the Benefit Exchange or Transactional Contact. An individual does not act his role or does according to

the norm being transferred to him, but the relation also depends on perception and decision to exchange between the related pair in terms of materials such as money and things, of the mind such as assistance that brings about indebtedness to be returned in the future, or personal admiration and respect. The person would decide what to select, what behavior, what to exchange with the other through consideration of appropriateness and satisfaction obtained from the exchange.

The third issue: The directional flow was the factor causing social relation which could have equal and unequal characteristics since social relationship among individuals on the exchange basis can result in cooperative and competitive relationship and bring about balance reciprocity as well as negative reciprocity. Here, it means obtaining benefits from each other both equally and unequally with one party obtaining more than the other.

The final issue: The frequency and duration of relationship was the factor leading to quality of relation, especially the attachment and influence on one another in terms of behaviors. In other words, when a person is frequently related to the other and the duration of relation is long, then the relation between the two will influence and establish the behaviors between each other owing to a lot of attachments. However, frequency of relation is not only sufficient to predict the influence of personal relation or individual relation. There must be the factors of time and roles of relation, too.

From the four analyses, we developed the research conceptual framework as shown in Figure 1.

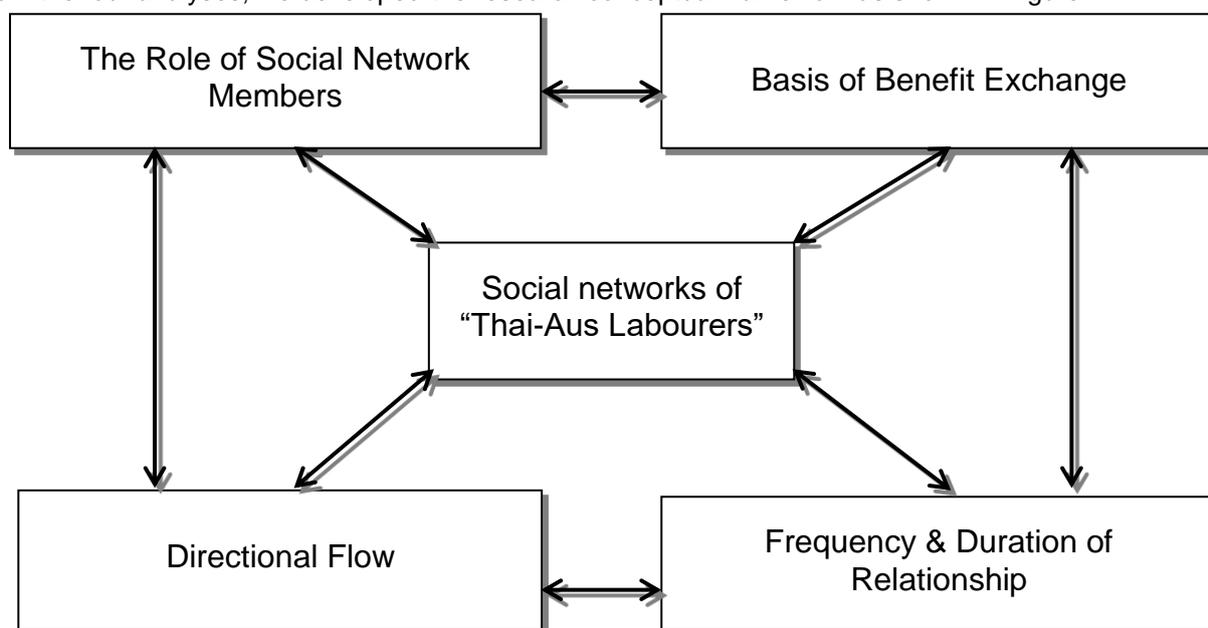


Figure 1 Research Conceptual Framework

2.2 Research Methodology

The qualitative research method was used to study the social network of Thai student labourers in Australia, with the analysis unit at the individual level. The data was collected by means of the in-depth interview with 18 key informants who were Thai-Aus labourers working in Sydney, Australia, where a lot of Thai-Aus labourers work. The selection of these informants was by the Snowball Technique.

Data collection was performed by the researcher. Prior to the interview, the target group was contacted through online communication such as We Chat and Skype. Coordination was done through the Facebook, an online social network, to make request for data collection from Thai-Aus labourers and the appointment for the interview was made. At the beginning of data collection or the interview, the researcher introduced himself to each key informant and explained the research objectives including the results to be obtained to make the informant understand and know the purpose of the research. Confidentiality of the information obtained from the interview was promised, and the researcher informed the informant that the data would be used for the research study only. Then general conversation was conducted for familiarizing oneself with the interviewee so that uneasiness would be eliminated. The researcher did not haste to reach the in-depth questions, but allowed the question-answer part to be natural. The reaction of each informant was observed

through facial expression and sound (the case of interview through We Chat and Skype) and wording (the case of interview through Facebook). The researcher tried to build rapport and familiarity until being certain of the conditions before asking to interview. The interview then began following the basis of the research explained above. The interview was smoothly conducted without being too formal and was in the form of conversation since natural conversation would add to more information. The accuracy of information was then checked. The expression, posture, and revelation of emotion of the interviewee, which were not expressed by words, were observed (Chai Potisita, 2004).

After each interview, the researcher asked for the names of the informant's friends who were also Thai-Aus labourers and could be one of the next major informants.

The Data Source Triangulation technique was applied to test the validity and reliability of the qualitative data, by interviewing informants of multiple and distributed sources and types of jobs of Thai-Aus labourers around the city of Sydney. Validity was tested many times on the data collection day. The data was rechecked by using the same question but at different times by modifying the questions during the interview and supposing an event that has not occurred. This elicited a lot of attitudes from the major informants. Rechecking of data which could be related among the informants and checking daily field records prevented discrepancies. Conclusion was achieved in the form of induction, the content of which was checked by experts until it was certain that the obtained data was valid and reliable (Creswell and Clark, 2007; Somsak Srisantisuk, 2007).

Analyses and computation of research data began by checking the daily obtained data in order to see if any points were missing and needed to be added. Following this, the data was categorized according to the studied topics. Then each topic or category was analyzed and compared with other data so that conclusion could be drawn. The in-depth data was physically organized by means of transcribing the sound records and editing the field note data. Next, the data was printed on the computer using the Microsoft Word programme and assigned to the ATLAS.ti programme with line numbers. Quotations were selected and coded before categorizing and networking prior to content analysis for distinguishing, interpreting, comparing, finding relations and patterns of the phenomena in order to draw conclusion and induction (Somsak Srisantisuk, 2007) of those points related to backgrounds, work characteristics, and social networks of Thai-Aus labourers.

In addition, the researcher applied the Social Network Analysis (SNA) in analyzing the relationships under the social networks of Thai-Aus labourers. This was achieved by the UCINet programme which is appropriate for analyzing large social networks. A model of a virtual social network could be created through the programme code. Moreover, the data could be transferred to the Netdraw programme to draw the network model (De Nooy, Batagelj, and Mrvar, 2005). Data analyses began from pairing the relationships among all Thai-Aus labourers before using the programme order to demonstrate the relation results. Finally the outcome in the form of social network model was illustrated by the Netdraw programme.

In order to conform to the frame of reference of research ethics, the names of Thai-Aus labourers and locations were pseudonyms.

3. WHO IS “THAI-AUS” LABOURERS?

From the interview with the 18 Thai-Aus labourers who were student labourers working in Sydney, I found that the 10 males and 8 females were from 24 to 37 years of age. Ten came from the Northeast, 6 from the Central and 2 from the North. They still held their visa status as students in the vocational training and general English courses. Five were still studying English whereas 13 were studying towards a Diploma of Business and Diploma of Tourism. Their studies were like a 'mystic symbol' protecting them as a 'student'. In reality, they only studied for 2 to 3 days a week and the studies were not very serious. As far as their educational backgrounds are concerned, I found most of the Thai-Aus labourers completed their bachelor's degree from a university in Thailand in different fields such as education, management science, community development, agriculture. Only two finished the high vocational education in business administration (accounting). Most of the group travelled to Australia through the education service agencies followed by networks such as relatives and friends. The expense in this respect amounted to between 100,000 – 300,000 baht. Those who travelled through the education service agencies, in particular, paid for the service to obtain visa and admission from the language school or college at the rate higher than 200,000 baht.

4. SOCIAL NETWORK CONSTRUCTION OF “THAI-AUS” LABOURERS

From the interview with the 18 Thai-Aus labourers, four steps were found in their social network constructing process; Personal Relationship and Common Experiences, Exchange Interactions, Coordination of Benefits,

and Expansion of Social Networks.

Step 1 Personal Relationship and Common Experiences

Social network forming started from personal relation or acquaintance since they were in Thailand. In general, the labourers used to be friends or study in the same institution in Thailand. The second case was kinship. Only 3 cases knew each other in Australia. Social relation grew in Australia from contact through online social network such as Facebook, which brought them to join in small-circle social activities, especially individual social activities like short trips or meals, merit making at the Thai temple in Sydney. These activities developed with time until a network was formed in order to exchange information concerning employment, advice on living abroad, and personal resources. For those who had known each other before, the relationship already grew at a certain level. When joining into a social network, it was a loose network based on personal relation and common experience. Most Thai-Aus labourers stated that they formed a network in order to maintain personal relation, especially needs for friends to consult in terms of overseas problems, living, and adjustment, which were admitted by many to be very difficult. They revealed that at the beginning they had a lot of problems because they missed their home and were not able to communicate effectively with local people. Therefore, Thai friends were very important.

At the beginning of social network forming of Thai-Aus labourers, only 3-4 members initiated the network with one person acting as the broker or the centre of the network and coordinated other members via social activities. Some also used job activities as part of relation knitting. Both types of activities could be operated separately or in parallel without taking any clear pattern or formality.

Step 2 Exchange Interactions

Later, there began to be exchange of interactions among the sub-networks of Thai-Aus labourers with 3-4 members. Usually, they exchanged information and resources for living in Australia, such as where to buy cheap food, Thai grocery stores and employment information of each member. Some worked at the same place. Some persuaded a friend to substitute a labourer who quitted to another job. Some assisted others in their studies. Since their status was still "student" in Australia, they had to attend class 2-3 days a week and had to take tests. Therefore, studying was still important in order to maintain the status and visa and hence they would be able to work part-time. Therefore, these Thai-Aus labourers regularly helped each other in tutoring for the examinations.

During this step, the role of 'broker' of each small network who helped coordinate other members through social activities, work activities, and learning activities became intense. In terms of work, Thai-Aus broker started to acquire a role in job seeking for network members and giving consultation in overseas living. These brokers acted as the 'leader' of the network, but still were equal in other status. As regards learning, it depends on the capabilities of a member in the network who was able to explain or 'teach the friends. However, some assisted by exchanging learning resources such as lending language practice CD or introducing websites that assist in learning.

Step 3 Coordination of Benefits

Generally speaking, Thai-Aus labourers usually joined together in a sub-network group. Some case, after getting acquainted, asked a friend to come and stay in the same apartment. We could find 5 to 8 persons living in the same apartment unit. They did this for economic reason, for the rental was very high when compared to baht currency. Living together meant there were social activities and the relation became closely knitted. Some persuaded friends to work together. In some network with many members, negotiation for a job became easier. For instance, a cleaning job usually relies on temporary labour such as Thai-Aus labourers. The wage was on an hourly basis, and there was no need for employers to take responsibility over social welfare. Therefore, Thai-Aus labourers usually received calls for labour. If a network was capable to submit sufficient labour as a team, the employer found it more convenient for not having to contact many groups. This was the background of team working to 'be employed' case by case and added earnings to the regular job of each person.

During this step, the sub-network 'broker's' role to coordinate members through social activities and job activities became intense. Important activities found in some sub-network included 'job taking' as discussed earlier. The Thai-Aus labourer broker coordinated directly with the employer, making his or her role as the network leader become prominent. However, Thai-Aus broker still maintained his or her status as a member in the group, not as an important centre of the network. In this respect, the broker used acceptance from other network members to judge his or her group status. This is in accordance with Thai practices in which a person does not normally express himself as being superior than others. This respect people who 'act'

rather than 'talk'. Therefore, Thai-Aus borkers were usually respected as the network representatives from the members.

Step 4 Expansion of Social Networks

The final step of social network forming of Thai-Aus labourers was the horizontal extension of the network. Such extension was done through personal relation of Thai-Aus labourers with introduction from network brokers. For example, we can quote the case of "Phan", "Thep", "Chay", Klauy", and "Dech", Thai-Aus labourers and brokers of sub-networks. The five of them were close ever since the beginning when they came to "study and work" in Australia and had been here for 3-5 years. They all know well what to do in overseas living. The connection to a member of the friend's sub-network was simple. "Phan", an important broker, knew "Oil" via introduction by "Dech", a Thai-Aus broker. "Leng", another Thai-Aus labourer knew "Klauy", a Thai-Aus broker through "Chay", another Thai-Aus broker. These two examples were network forming through the brokers of sub-networks. There often was exchange of interactions hidden in relation knitting such as exchange of job information, exchange of jobs, and personal assistance, etc.

In this step, the roles of 'brokers' of the networks were clear as the connector to broaden the social network. This is referred to as the knitting of networks through the "broker" process, which finally leads to personal "acquaintance".

However, even though the social network of Thai-Aus labourers expanded from sub-networks with 3-5 members through their brokers until the networks became large, the strength of the network which relied on the ties among Thai-Aus labourers could not be considered high because the ties were based on 'acquaintance' only. Therefore, the image of the large network was only a loose network.

The in-depth interview of the 18 Thai-Aus labourers revealed the knitting of various types of relations which formed into social networks. The model showing the relation of social network could be drawn based on the knitting arising from interactions among the labourers as shown in Figure 1.

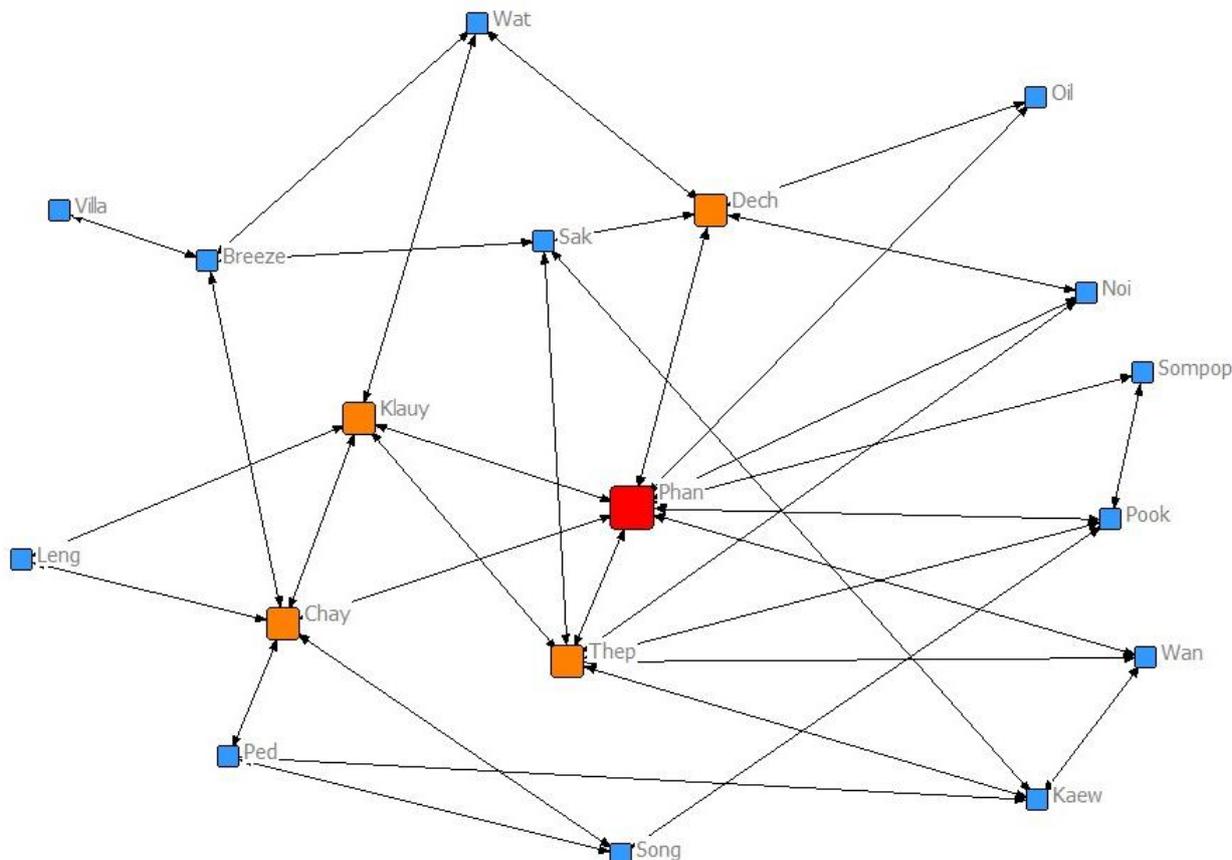


Figure 1 Model of Relationships of Thai-Aus Labourer Informants

From Figure 1, we can see that the social network of Thai-Aus labourers completely links internally. "Phan", a Thai-Aus labourer with experience in entering Australia three times is the center of the network. When we consider relation pairs, I found 9 persons related to "Phan", showing the greatest density of relation in this social network. Also, half of the Thai-Aus labourers related to "Phan" interact with the center persons of sub-networks with 5-7 other interacting persons. There are the sub-networks of "Thep", "Chay", "Klauy", and "Dech. It should be noted that in each sub-network, most do not relate to each other, except the pair of "Chay" and "Klauy".

In addition, the social networks of Thai-Aus labourers were one-mode networks, which measured the level of the pair of actors, or between actors of pair to pair (Wasserman and Faust, 1999) both in the large networks or sub-networks. Another important characteristic was the connected network with coverage over all of the large social network (Wasserman and Faust, 1999), with the Thai-Aus labourer broker as the link between sub-networks.

However, the Thai-Aus labourer broker who was the link between sub-networks was not the cut point of the social network, which, if missing, the sub-networks would not be made disconnected (Wasserman and Faust, 1999). For example, in the case of a sub-network with "Thep" as the broker who linked to another sub-network. If "Thep" was missing, there would still be other members who had relation and link. This shows there were various links covering members of the network who were able to link within the network without having to depend on any particular Thai-Aus labourer. This reflects the strength knitted by the social network of Thai-Aus labourers. Exception was for the case of "Sompop", the only network member with a risk to be cut off if there was no centre like "Phan". The reason behind this was that "Sompop" just arrived to study and work in Australia 2-3 months ago and had no chance as yet to build relationship with other members.

4. RELATIONSHIPS IN "THAI-AUS" NETWORK

When analyzing the relationship within the social network framework of Wasserman & Faust (1999) in four issues I found the following details:

Roles of Social Network Members

The roles taken by the members of both the large social network and sub-networks of Thai-Aus labourers were categorized as the Bi-Relation Roles with the foundation on the network knitting and roles in social activities and job activities. The intensity of roles became clear in sub-networks with a Thai-Aus broker at the centre who acted as the representative in coordinating a job with employers in Sydney. The broker also assisted other Thai-Aus labourers in personal matters as well as work. These brokers behaved themselves like other members, and did not act outstandingly. This complies with Thai practices in general – Thai people do not like to be superior than the others, but appreciate people who "act instead of talk". Thus, the Thai-Aus brokers were well accepted and respected as the network representatives from members. Besides, Thai-Aus brokers allowed members to perform their roles to the fullest extent in social and work activities, for example, having other Thai-Aus members lead in social activities of the group, or giving the role in helping other members of the large network which was connected from another sub-network. Such practices of Thai-Aus brokers resulted in respect and friendship in the network.

Relationship Foundation Based on the Exchange Theory

The roles of Thai-Aus labourers, especially in accessibility to employment sources through a personal network, led to a working network. Although most Thai-Aus labourers stated that network forming was based on personal relationship, when we considered it in depth, there was the inherent benefit rational. In order to obtain access to another job besides what one applied through the agency, it was necessary to coordinate with Thai student friend or other Thai-Aus labourers. Therefore, Thai-Aus labourers must attempt to know others, maintain the relationship, and build a social network for their employment. It became necessary to exchange benefits which could be in the form of information, for example, information related to vacant position, joining in group employment, which could be hidden in activities, coordination in doing a job, exchanging jobs. Benefits could also be in the form of money, entertainment activities, or things. This correlates to the assumption of the Exchange Theory, which says that an action between persons is done based on response, considered from reward and punishment or satisfaction and dissatisfaction. The exchange interaction could be considered from the greatest satisfaction (profit) after an action (investment). The action or return from another person brings much satisfaction to the agent (Ritzer, 1992; Chamaratana et.al, 2010). In other words, Thai-Aus labourers joined into networks to maintain personal relation and provide benefits to Thai-Aus friends with expectation of benefits in return from the Thai-Aus labourer friends and achieve the aim of employment.

Directional Flow of Relationships

The exchange of benefits in the context of Thai-Aus labourers could be equal and unequal. For instance, Thai-Aus labourers might return the broker friend by swapping equal working hours, which was considered 'Balance Reciprocity'. On the other hand, a Thai-Aus labourer might pay back the broker friend who worked for him by sharing the wage based on the hours substituted. However, when the latter case helped the broker by replacing him at the job, the return was only a meal treat. When comparing the returns in this case, we can see that they were not equal and was considered 'Negative Reciprocity'. When the value of the return to the exchange pair was accepted, we see that the 'amount' in the exchange was not more important than the 'values' of the exchange. Moreover, the system of values in unequal exchange of benefits also means satisfaction in exchanging. The Thai-Aus labourer who gave willingly yielded to the directional flow of relation towards the exchange partner. This also depended on the personal ties between both exchangers and the conditions of power relation of the pair. For instance, the Thai-Aus labourer broker who was very important like "Phan" had the image of being the broker of brokers in the social network even though he behaved simply like other members. "Phan" received respect from member friends in the network. Therefore, if he wanted assistance from any member, he would receive it without having to agree on what return should be given to the exchange partner. The latter would willingly help because of personal reason and satisfaction.

Frequency and Duration of Relationship

The frequency and duration of relationship are the factors leading to the quality of relation in the form of intersected relationship. Likewise, the frequency of relationship results from intersected relationship. Ties and influences on each other in behaviours depend on the frequency of meeting and relation and the length of time of relation. The more a person has relation with another person frequently and the longer the duration of knowing, the relation between these two persons will influence the behaviours against each other more, owing to ties. However, the frequency of relation only is not enough to predict the influence of relation between persons or their behaviours (Wasserman and Faust, 1999). Similarly, in the case of Thai-Aus labourers, even though some worked in the same company or the same team, it did not mean that the two were tied together or the friend had an influence on the other's behaviours. In the opposite, one of them was close and tied to another Thai-Aus labourer who used to work together and moved away or completed his education and returned to Thailand. Therefore, it could be said that the duration of relation of Thai-Aus labourers influenced the levels of ties and behaviours more than the frequency of relation and meeting. However, some Thai-Aus labourers who had long relationship with another Thai-Aus labourer, especially the one who used to be a schoolmate, did not tie to each other much. This could be because the former had new experiences and met people in different situations, resulting in the pair role not complying with the theory.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From above, it can be concluded that the general characteristics of the social network of Thai-Au labourers could be classified into 3 types: one-mode network, connected network, and informal network. The social network forming of Thai-Aus labourers started from acquaintance from Thailand. When they migrated to live in Australia, they expanded their relation through social activities in a small circle as friends who assisted each other and shared resources together. This relationship developed and formed into a loose social network which was a sub-network with 3-5 members. Then the exchange interaction took place and finally the social network expanded by upgrading to a large network. But there was still a loose network through Thai-Aus brokers of each sub-network. The relation within the social network of Thai-Aus labourers was intersected. Even though there was a common objective, the relationship was based on exchange of benefits. Even though there was personal relation that could be seen from the outside, the directional flow of relation of Thai-Aus labourers were both in the pattern of receiving and giving of benefits between a pair of exchanging labourers. The exchange could be equal and unequal with personal reason or satisfaction in order to maintain relation among the members in the network. The duration of relation of Thai-Aus labourers depended on the most part on personal relation.

From the study, it can be seen that social networks that were formed loosely by Thai-Aus labourers and their cooperation in working informally would be difficult to manage and assist when problems arose in employment in Australia. The status of work of Thai-Aus labourers was not under the labour law since they entered Australia as 'students, not as 'migrating labourers'. However, the relationship knitted within their social network could naturally assist and support them. In addition, accessibility to employment through an academic institution by a private agency in Thailand could not be considered job finding and hence the Thai-Aus labourers could not be legally protected.

From the information above, I propose recommendations in terms of policy to the Ministry of Labour and Ministry of Foreign Affairs to strictly observe the operations of the agencies that locate academic institutions for Thai persons with a hidden purpose of job placement. These agencies also charge per head cost at the rate up to 200,000 baht, which is very high without any law to support the labourers or students. These Thai-Aus labourers are under risk. The mechanism of Thai-Aus labourers' social networks should be supported and developed until they become able to efficiently assist themselves. The networks could be strengthened by providing them knowledge related to employment abroad. Protection of Thai-Aus labourers should be developed that would be in accordance with the context of the country of destination so that these labourers would be sufficiently protected as Thai people.

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