

# Trans-National Education System for Students from the Mekong Region Thai Universities

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## ABSTRACT

*The aim of this research is to study issues of the trans-national education system of students from the Mekong region who are enrolled at Thai universities. Qualitative research was conducted to collect data from Bachelor's degree students who are studying at Thai universities. The research instruments were in the form of a questionnaire, which consisted of multiple choice and open-ended questions, based on the review of related literature on Trans-nationalism. The results demonstrated that students from the Mekong region who study at Thai universities use different sponsor to their study. Some students were granted a scholarship while others were self-supporting. However, all of them had the same aspiration: to apply the knowledge acquired in Thailand to benefit their country and the people around them after graduation. The problems faced by the students were related to language, culture, and food. Most of the students from Mekong region had to adjust themselves to the culture and the society they were living in. After their graduation, the students from the Mekong region expressed their concerned issues to the educational administrators in the Thai universities. The concerned issues are: international curriculums, student exchange programs and teaching materials should be more up-to-date and beneficial to the students.*

**Keywords:** *Transnationalism, Students, Mekong Region Thai universities.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Across many parts of the world, we are witnessing a huge influx of immigrants, imaginations and materials are passing across territories (Duangwised, 2018). When ASEAN Economic Community was formed in 2015, the 795,000 km sq. in the Mekong region was dedicated to transglobalization opening five countries. The Mekong region is comprised of biodiversity and cultural diversity. It is close to China, which is rapidly expanding its economic influence worldwide. The Mekong region is changing accordingly due to the higher demands in materials and power as well as the expansion of new markets from China. The Mekong region consists of the following five countries: Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, and two provinces from China, Yunnan and Guangxi. After the socialism era of China, we could easily notice the political changes that happened in Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, and Myanmar. The government opened their respective country to foreign to outer investment. Hence, the rapid changes in the Mekong region is due to the strong economies and globalization. The integration of Mekong sub-region has led to the rapid flow of people, goods, capitals, and cultures across the nation (Santhasombat, 2012).

Thailand has an advantage over this because it is located in the middle of these neighboring countries, Laos, Myanmar, Cambodia, Malaysia, and Vietnam. During the stage of forming ASEAN Economic Community, Thailand had begun to develop its tertiary education. Now, there are 107 tertiary education institutions in Thailand that host many foreign students (Santipob, 2015). Higher education management has expanded worldwide. Now many countries tend to apply transnational education system in order to attract more foreign students around the globe to study at their educational institutions. Therefore, this leads to more income that can be used to develop the country's economy. Thai government has always aimed to promote Thailand as an educational center among its neighboring countries, especially under the educational development plan of 15 years (1990-2005), the 7<sup>th</sup> educational development plan and the 8<sup>th</sup> educational development plan. Thus, the standards of an international education center have also been established.

The 9<sup>th</sup> higher education development plan (2002-2006) plays an importance role. In fact, the Thai government has invested a lot of effort in international education, because of its desire to 'globalize' and

encourage free trade policies. According to the agreement of the World Trade Organization, the educational service was one of the first services in the free trade since in 2006. As a result, the international education business has become competitive, as it competitive could bring more income to the country (Wattanasiri, 2010).

Therefore, many foreign students from Mekong region have come to study in Thailand. The number of Chinese students has been increasing every year because the Chinese economy has also been growing rapidly since 1978. This is mainly due to Four Modernization policy and Special Economic Zone, which were implemented to attract foreign investment. Overall, this has led to a better quality of life among Chinese people. Modern Chinese families tend to have only one child; therefore, they could provide the best education for their child and are more likely to send their child to the best educational institution. Consequently, the demand for educational institutions in China has grown rapidly while the number of educational institutions are insufficient to serve the needs of the students and parents. The statistics of university admission in China shows that the number of Chinese students who do not pass the admission test is very high and is in fact, on the rise every year. For this reason, they tend to apply to study tertiary level abroad. One of the most popular countries that they prefer to go to is the United States of America.

Despite this, Chinese students are also highly interested to study in ASEAN countries because there are several major courses taught in English medium. Additionally, the students feel more comfortable in ASEAN countries, as there are less cultural differences, and the education fees in these countries are comparatively low. Hence, many like to study in Singapore, Malaysia, and Thailand. There are also a number of students from neighbouring countries such as Cambodia, Myanmar, Vietnam and Laos, who are studying in Thailand, as these countries are in close proximity. The languages and cultures are quite similar too. There are also many cooperation projects from the Thai government or ASEAN governments that offer financial aid to these students.

Data of students who came from Mekong region to study in Thai universities between 2009 and 2013

Country	Year A.D. (Number of students)				
	Year 2009	Year 2010	Year 2011	Year 2012	Year 2013
China	8,993	9,329	8,444	6,965	6,663
Laos	1,254	1,311	1,344	833	1,372
Myanmar	1,205	1,310	1,481	1,198	1,610
Vietnam	1,141	1,100	1,290	980	1,083
Cambodia	1,009	944	955	502	1,018

(Thailand Office of Higher Education Commission, 2013)

### Transnationalism

Since 1980s, western scholars have been widely interested in transnationalism, globalization and diaspora. Nina Glick Schiller (cited in Sanakam, 2004) who was one of the most well-known scholars in transnationalism, believed that globalization and transnationalism are the process of flowing capital, concepts, and cultural materials across the state-nations. However, globalization and transnationalism are relatively different. Globalization is the flow of people at *global* level while transnationalism is referred to the flow across *state-nations* of non-state actors. Schiller defined transnationalism as the process of migrating across the border to create and maintain social, economics, and politics, as well as the way the people connect to society. This process is known as the transnational social field, which indicates that immigrants are creating a transnational social field across geographic borders, cultures and politics. However, Faist (cited in Sanakam, 2004) used the term “transnational social space” rather than “transnational social field.” Faist defined it as the stable relationships between individuals, networks, and organizations across the borders of several countries.

Transnational social space can be categorized based on the intensity of the relationship across the borders in both formal and informal institutions, and has three categories. The first one is the transnational social space of relatives. This space encompasses close relationships of people within their families across the borders. This relationship occurs as a result of

immigrants sending money back to their families and relatives living in their homeland. This is done so that their families can invest money in their local communities.

The second transnational social space is the space of exchanging. This refers to the mechanism of exchanging goods, people, information and news across the state-nation. A clear example of this case is the transnational social space, created by Chinese businessmen who have two different lifestyles. In other words, these businessmen have their 'business' life in one country and their personal life in another country. This may be for the benefit of their children's education, or to escape to being a political refugee. Due to this reason, they often move across the borders frequently.

The last type of transitional social space is transnational communities which refers to the intense relationship between communities. The most common level is the community level, which connects two communities across borders. An example would be the community border between the United States of America and Mexico, or the borders between the Jewish, Armenian and African communities. The relationships and activities that bond people together can be in the form of economics, politics, and/or socio-cultural (Sanakam, 2004).

In addition to transnational social space, Vertovec (2001) wrote about transnationalism and identity. He explained that transnationalism refers to the relationships and the connection of people or institutions around the country-state. The connection between the countries or across the border nowadays is related to labor across the nations and ethnic groups. For this reason, the networks of the ethnic groups are founded on the acknowledgement that they are originally from the same origin, culture and language. The networks then exchange resources with one another, as well as participate in various social, cultural and political activities. At the same time, certain immigrant groups have their personal or group identity as they live in more than one society. In the migration and transnationalism field, researchers have accepted labour across borders as a form of transnationalism as the people and institutions are connected via communication and transnation of (labour) money across the border. Most researches about migration is focused on how immigrants have adjusted themselves to their new environments.

Nowadays, there are many methods of transnationalism. One reason that provokes transnationalism on an intensive scale, is the rapid development of technology, transportation and communication. The characteristics of transnationalism have been developed for centuries due to economic and political circumstances. In Caglar's (cited in Vertovec, 2001) article about transnationalism, transnationalism is the new representative that allows us to see the boundary and the intensity of the flow of individuals, goods, information and symbols that are caused by the international labor reallocation. The process of future migration will be more efficient due to a more advanced method of communication and transportation. The permission to allow labour across the border can benefit both sides of the borders. In addition to this, transnationalism will affect migrants and their families in terms of culture and politics.

There are many factors that affect the economy of a country because of immigrant communities. One of the most important issues is the currency that the migrants send to their families and communities. The country that the immigrants moved to, has to pay as much as 60 billion USD (cite in Vertovec, 2001) each year to the immigrants. Furthermore, the economy of the developing countries relies on this group of people because the money invested in their countries equates to almost the same amount of money earned from imported products or tourism. The transnational labourers do not only send money to support their families but also to support themselves in terms of their own education, skills and local development.

The phenomenon of people, materials, thoughts or cultures moving across the border are often mentioned in two characteristics (cite in Ratthanopkork, 2003). The first one is the migration of people, materials, thoughts, or cultures between the borders that are physically connected. For example, the cultural exchanges between the border of Thailand-Laos, the migration of labourers between Thailand-Malaysia borders, and the exchange of thoughts regarding the environment between Mekong region countries. This kind of phenomenon tends to be classed as "transborder issues."

The second kind of migration is where they are not physically connected. This seems to shorten the distance between two countries. The cultural border is not an obstacle of migration. Moreover, Ratthanopkork

(2003) emphasized the creation of national and ethnic group identities. He proposed the study of transnationalism around the world and put forward the idea that the world is the foundation of the social and economic system. Social system in which people migrate to other areas may lead to the relationship among the migrant groups of people, and resulted in the feeling of unity. At the same time, when the social system starts to grow, the economic system is also growing. This will help us to understand the definition of the new form of migration around the world. It will also help us to understand the strategies that individuals use to adjust themselves to the new environment. It also creates the analytical framework that will help us understand the experience of transnational labours as transnational labour is seen as creating culture. It also allows us to analyze the places and the societies the migrants are living in. We can also observe the experience of transnational labours. Finally, it allows us to create a new concept in social science - in social and cultural aspects (Nina Glick Schiller, Linda Basch and Cristina Blanc-Szanton, 1992).

Therefore, “How the transnational space was affected in their daily lives” means that the migrant workers are treated unfairly. They do not receive the right in the countries they have migrated to. They are sometimes taken advantage of, especially in terms of unfair wages, which is the main problems of these migrant workers. Despite the fact that they are treated unfairly, a lot of migrant workers move to other countries with the hope for the better life compared with the lives in their own countries in which they may have to face with the problems of poverty or political problems. As the study by Vanessa Ruget and Burul Usmanalieva (2011) has shown, migrants from Middle Asian countries (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) left their countries because of the poverty and unemployment problems. Once they had the jobs in destination countries, they would transfer the money back to their families, which can ease their countries’ economy and relieve societal stress. Another study which reveals the same aspect of migrant workers is from Amporn Jirattikorn (2015), whose study investigated Shan migrant public spheres in Chiang Mai. The study aimed to understand migrant public sphere which was created as a result from transnational migrations. As migrant workers needed to adjust themselves to the new environment, migrant public sphere was created within the destination country (which is Thailand in this study).

This study is different from the two aforementioned studies in that it aims to investigate migrant students who migrate to Thailand for their further education in tertiary level. These migrant students hope to obtain knowledge through education and use it to create the opportunity for work, and increase their financial status. By studying abroad, the job opportunity is increased, and these migrant students will be more accepted to work in their home countries if they have obtained the degree abroad. The job opportunity in Thailand is also increased for them because they can speak both Thai and local languages, and possess knowledge in various fields. It is easier for them to find jobs in Thailand if they come to study here. The study is similar to the work by Anin Puttichot (2010) who studied lives and experiences of Lao students through transnational migration in Thailand. This study reflected the lives of migrant students who aimed to seek benefits or received opportunities from Thai society under the new capital system. They hoped to use their knowledge to build up their success and have higher their standard of living.

The researcher viewed these two forms (migrant workers and migrant students) of transnational migration different. Migrant workers may be discriminated or may have limited access in terms of seeking help from government organizations while migrant students may easily receive assistance from related organizations involved with the universities. They are not discriminated, and are treated nicely. They also receive more job opportunities from their own countries and the destination countries.

When transnational migration is mentioned, most aspects involved with migrant workers. However, we cannot deny that there are more and more migrant students who migrate to other countries to obtain knowledge for their future job opportunities, or for living the better lives. The flow of migrations are not only involved with the population, but also means the flow of intercultural and thoughts. They may apply the culture from destination countries to their countries of origin. Although migrant students may come from different countries of origin, they can create strong relationship and feel the sense of unity when they meet in the destination country. At the same time, they may create connections within their own groups or between groups of migrant students. This reflects the flow of migrant population, thoughts, culture, and other aspects of transnational migration between the two countries.



## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study aimed at investigating migrant students from Mekong region coming to study in Thai universities. Qualitative research method was employed and the approaches used include case study, in-depth interview, review related literature, and observation.

The population in this study were students from Mekong region who graduated from Thai universities 3-5 years ago. There were total of 20 students from 5 different countries.

<b>Country of origin</b>	<b>Total number (person)</b>	<b>Stay and work in Thailand</b>	<b>Stay and work in their home country</b>
Cambodia	4	2	2
Laos	4	2	2
Vietnam	4	2	2
China	4	2	2
Myanmar	4	2	2

### **Participants**

The study used purposive sampling in selecting Mekong region students who studied in Thai universities and chose to stay and work after they graduated, and also migrant students who decided to go back and work in their countries of origin after they graduated. The researcher has contacted the registration unit to ask for the migrant students' contact information. After the participants have been selected, the snowball sampling was employed. The participants were asked to suggest other friends who matched with the selection criteria.

Data collection with the migrant students who were working in Thailand were done through interview and observation, while the data collection with migrant students who worked in their countries of origin were done through online applications such as Line, Facebook, or E-mails.

## Data Analysis

Three sets of data including related literature, interview data, and observation data have been used for the data analysis. The data analysis was done in three stages; 1) specified the significance from all sources of data, 2) analyzed and interpreted the data from three sources (observation, interview, and related literature) to obtain the research result, and 3) summarized the result, discussed the result according to the framework, and gave implications from the result. Then, the data gathered from all sources would be used to explain the phenomenon, analyze the relationship, and explain the concepts for further research.

## Case Study of Students from Mekong Region Studying in Thai Universities

We conducted interviews to collect data. These few students from the Mekong region in Thai universities were selected to be the case study. These participants consisted of Panya, Tawan, Nongkan, and Zheng. Their perspective towards studying in Thai universities are as follow:

(not their real name)

### “Panya”

Panya has been granted a scholarship from Cambodia to study Bachelor’s degree at a Thai university. Panya is 25 years old. The researcher had a chance to get to know Panya from his friend. I interviewed him via online questionnaire method through Facebook because after his graduation, he returned to his country to work and develop the Phrawihan Province in Cambodia.

He had a smooth path to come and study in Thailand because his family had a good financial status. His father was a government officer while his mother owns a hardware store. Panya was selected among the five applicants to receive the scholarship. The scholarship only supported his education fee. He had to pay for his personal expenses; therefore, he still had to rely on his family. When he was granted the scholarship, he decided to study about construction technology because “*Cambodia is a*

*developing country. I wanted to study in this field so that I can become a part to developing my country.”*

From his story of coming to study in Thailand, Panya reflected that he had received the opportunity from Cambodia with the aim to send students to study abroad, which was part of the country developmental plan. Panya received scholarship from Cambodia so that he would bring back his knowledge to develop his country. He also showed that he has a sense of love of his own country. When he received the scholarship, he decided to study in the field that would benefit his country, and he can make use of his obtained knowledge to help develop his own country. Also, he decided to study in Thailand because he wanted to know about Thai culture and Bachelor’s degree in Thailand has more creditability compared to a degree from a Cambodian University. Once he arrived in Thailand, language was the first problem he faced. The food and culture were also part of the great challenges. He took time to learn about Thai culture from his Thai friends and to adjust himself to his new environment. For the food, he got used to it after staying in Thailand for a while.

After graduation, Panya told the researcher that he had the plan for his life immediately. He decided to work as a government officer and helped improve his homeland in Cambodia. Once he went back to Cambodia, there was a position available at Ministry of Rural Development which involved in roads building in Cambodia. He decided to apply for the position as he wanted to use his knowledge from the field of his study. *“When the position opened, there were 4,000 candidates and there were only 100 successful candidates. I was lucky to be one of those 100 candidates because of my chance to study in Thailand. The opportunity to study abroad has broaden my perspective and allowed me to gain the knowledge that could benefit my country”* The life after graduation from Panya revealed that his expectation was to make use of his knowledge to make progress of his life. He also had better “cost of life” when compared to other candidates because he graduated from university abroad. This helped increase his chance to get the job. Moreover, his experience studying abroad has helped widen his perspective in working. However, this was just the starting point of his working life. Panya also needed to adjust himself, and applied the knowledge he had obtained to the context of Cambodia for the great benefit of his country.

Even though he does not have much connection to Thai people or Thai language as he lives in Cambodia and uses Cambodian language and English most of the time, he can still read and write in Thai. I asked Panya what was his expectation before coming to study at Thailand, to which he replied “*I expected to gain the knowledge and experience from studying at Thailand so that I can help to develop my country.*” Panya had accomplished what he had planned. Before I ended my interview with Panya, I asked him to suggest how to improve the educational system in Thai universities and he mentioned that Thai universities should provide English programmes so that it can help foreign students to understand the content in the classroom easier and there should be more instructions in English. For the instructions, he believed that the Thai educational system is already good in both theory and practice.

### **“Tawan”**

Tawan is originally from Hué, Vietnam. He is now 25 years old and is studying Master’s Degree in Tourism Management at National Institute of Development Administration after he graduated with a Bachelor’s degree in the same field from a Thai university. I knew him from his friend and I interviewed him via online questionnaire method through Facebook. He was not awarded any scholarship; therefore, he had to rely on his family for his expenses.

His path to study a Bachelor’s degree in Thailand was smooth because his family is financially stable. His father is a government officer and his mother is a government teacher in Vietnam. Tawan decided to study Tourism Management because of many reasons. He said “*Personally I love travelling. I always wanted to study about tourism. I saw many opportunities in this industry.*” He decided to study in Thai university because of the following reasons:

1. Thailand is famous for tourism. He can use this body of knowledge to develop his country.
2. He is interested in Thai language and culture.
3. He believes Thai education system is good.

During the first few days when he arrived in Thailand, he faced a great challenge to communicate with the local people because he did not know Thai. He had to study Thai from the basics. Sometimes he used body language and English to communicate with local people. Thai food was new to him and he tried different food to see what he liked and the disliked

Tawan talked about his life after bachelor degree graduation that he had already planned to study master degree in Thailand. When he graduated his master degree, he would try to apply for the job in Thailand to gain some experiences before going back to his country. Once he graduated from Ubonratchathani Rajabhat University, he studied master degree at National Institute of Development Administration (NIDA) right away. His master degree was in the field of tourism management which was the same as his bachelor degree. Tawan said that, *“I want to work in the field that I always love, which is service industry. In the future, I want to use my knowledge to create the relationship between Thai and Vietnam. This aim has been with me since I took my first step in Thailand. Now that I graduated, I still have this aim and hope that I can make use of this experience to obtain knowledge in the future.”*

Tawan also said that, *“The reason I chose to study the field of tourism management in my bachelor degree because I knew what I love to do and I can improve myself in various aspects including constructing personality, knowledge specific to the field, and creating the relationship between the local people and foreigners. I saw the opportunity to get the job in the field that I graduated from and I can use that knowledge for my work. I can also further my study and use more sophisticated knowledge to develop my own country.”*

Tawan has been fluent in speaking, reading, and writing in Thai as he had studied in Thailand since Bachelor’s degree to Master’s degree. Apart from this, he also had many Thai best friends who were willing to help him in his Master’s degree education. This was the reason that made him bound with Thailand and its people.

The story of Tawan has shown that he set his own life goal early when he started his studies, as he furthered his Master’s degree right away after he graduated from Bachelor’s degree. The reason he decided to further his

studies in the same field was because he saw the chance of getting the job. He also decided to work in Thailand to gain some valuable experiences before going back to his country as this may increase his opportunity to work when he returns to Vietnam.

Before I ended my interview with him, I asked him to give some suggestions about the education system in Thailand. Tawan expressed his opinion that there should be more international exchange programmes in order to create a network between Thai and foreign students. For the improvement of teaching methods, Tawan believed that

1. students should be allowed to have more practice session after studying the theory session,
2. there should be more English classes and Thai students should be encouraged to talk to foreigners, and
3. innovation should be added to the teaching methods.

And for the teaching system, Tawan said that

1. international programmes and scholarships should be offered to foreign students.
2. exchange programmes should be offered to both Thai and foreign students as it could increase more chances for them to practice their skills.

### **“Nongkan”**

Nongkan is from Laos. His hometown is located at Champasak. He is 24 years old and currently studying for a Master’s degree in a Thai university, majoring in social science and development. I got to know Nongkan from his friends and I interviewed him via online questionnaire method through Facebook. He lives at Champasak now. He works as a lecturer in a Buddhist college teaching social studies, history, geography and politics. His family members are farmers.

His path to study in Thailand started when he wanted to gain more knowledge. He then decided to study for a Master's degree at a Thai university on weekends and work on weekdays. The reason why he chose Thailand Nongkan said that, *"the reason I decided to come to study in Thailand was because the cost was not too high, and it was easy to travel."* Nongkan's story has reflected the situation that universities needed to increase student enrolment as the result of population decline, which resulted in high competition in educational market. One key factor that influenced students' decision was the tuition fee and other costs. If the tuition fee and the cost of living were not very high, more students would choose to study in those universities. At the same time, the close relationship between the two nation and the similarities of the language were also the factors that influence migrant students' decisions to study in Thailand.

Initially, he had a problem with transportation. His university was far from the bus station. He arrived late sometimes because he did not know the building. In order to adjust himself, he tried to make friends with Thais so that his Thai friends could pick him up from the bus station and guide him to the building.

After graduating, he planned to continue his doctoral degree in Thailand. The education fee was not too high as he did not receive any scholarship to support him. Because of his studies, he felt connected to Thai people. Nongkan said *"I have Thai friend because I study in Thailand but I do not use much Thai language. I mostly speak in Laos language. But I can write in Thai."* When asked what he expected before studying in Thai university he said he must get the degree from Thailand and return to develop his country. He also expected to be loved by his friends and teachers. Before the interview ended, he suggested that Thai education is already good but more innovative skills and instructions can be added.

### **"Zheng"**

Zheng was a student from China. He studied for a Bachelor's degree at a Thai university. He is now 30 years old. He got married to a Thai woman. He now works as a university lecturer at a Thai university. He lives with his family in Thailand. He said *"Actually, he planned to study at a Thai university and to go back to work in China like other Chinese students. I*

*wanted to go back and develop my country. However, he met his wife and decided to start his own family here so he could not go back to live in China.”*

The story of Zheng has revealed the educational advantages. When he came to study in Thailand, he has learned to use the Thai language and made use of his knowledge of the language to work in Thailand. If he wanted to go back to China and work, he could still use Thai to make a living i.e. being a tour guide or interpreter. This was the advantage of learning the language and culture while studying in Thailand. He chose to study finance because he was influenced by his family. His mother was a bank manager and his father was a government officer.

His path to study in Thailand was smooth as his family could fully support him financially. He decided to study in Thailand because his friends and family recommended him to do so. Initially, he had to learn Thai and was not used to Thai food. The education system was different from his country. He tried to adjust himself to the new country by making friends with Thais so that they could help him and give him some advice. He later got used to the food.

These days, Zheng is a lecturer at a Thai university teaching what he had studied. When asked whether he is in touch with the Thai people or use Thai in his everyday life, he immediately answered *“I certainly have a connection with Thai people because my wife is Thai and people around me are also Thai. I can speak a bit Thai but I am trying to learn and practice more.”* When asked what he expected before studying in Thailand, he said he did not know anything. *“I just wanted to go back home after graduation. The curriculums in Thailand are now better but the teachers should improve and update their teaching materials. There should be a better system to help support foreign students in Thailand”.*

## **SUMMARY**

Based on the transnational education of the students from Mekong region in Thai universities, this study has shed light on transnationalism in the domain of education. When transnationalism is mentioned, labour transnationalism is the main interest. For example, Thawin (2010) studied Foreign Labour Management Policy of Thailand: From the Hate of Foreigners (superior)



in Human Rights, which is a literature review on the policies to manage transnational labour. Thai policies are insufficient to cope with the problems, and the obstacles are not only with the complexity of the problems but also the method of solving the problems. The policy on transnational labour management should be revised because the problems can be solved more creatively by reviewing the power relations between the state, capital and labor in order to understand each other's negotiation strategies and the methods updated and be able to cope with recent problems.

For educational transnationalism, I believe that the flow of people, thoughts or culture occurs as they have to go to the destination country to seek for knowledge that can then be applied to develop their country. The flow does not only include people moving from one country to another country but also across cultures. Students tend to have the commitment to use the knowledge they have acquired to develop their country. Knowledge is tool for their progress and it can lift their quality of life. Besides, opportunity and social capital can help the students to move to Thailand smoothly. Pudtichod (2010) studied the diversity of life and path of transborder people: e.g. the experience of Laos students studying in Thailand. They aim to use the knowledge gained in Thailand to build better lives in their home country. The transnationalism path shows the life and background in social status or politics, economics, and social capital. Posadas (2013) who wrote *Transnationalism and Higher Education: Four Filipino Chicago Case Studies* stated that the migration of Filipino people to the United States of America especially to Chicago was in order to study rather than work. It was found that Filipino students in American universities wanted to work as teachers, engineers, lawyers and doctors. It demonstrated that studying abroad brought better job opportunities and acceptance in the society. It could create better life opportunities for the students and their families.

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