

Migration of nurses

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Nicola Yeates (2004) asserts that the validity of global care chain analysis while suggesting that its contemporary application to migrant domestic care workers such as nurses must be enlarged in order to fully realize the potential of the analysis. In essence, the author suggests that “ the migration of nurses such as those in Irish territories during the 19th and 20th centuries illustrates the need to revise the global care chain analysis” commonly used in order to “ protect the welfare of nurses migrating from across the globe” (p. 80).

In her article, Yeates believes that the migration trends of nurses during the 19th and 20th centuries in the Irish context is representative of the condition of nurses coming from different parts of the world. The migration trend, she believes, is the direct result of the “ changes in the life expectancies and the population sizes” of various countries, most notably in the United Kingdom and the United States of America (p. 85). Another trend is that those countries have also experienced an inadequate workforce of nurses that will cater to the needs of ageing patients in hospitals and hospices.

Due to these changes in the healthcare needs of people in different countries and the high wages and other incentives offered to nurses migrating and working in those countries, Yeates believes that the current global care chain analysis that upholds the concept of personal links of people across the globe in terms of paid or unpaid work of caring needs certain revisions in order to further include the current situations dealt with by migrating nurses. I believe that Yeates’ argument is compelling for the reason that the migration trends among nurses have become a fact of life.

Contemporary nurses coming from poor countries or from countries where nursing jobs are inadequate tend to migrate to countries that offer an attractive compensation package and actually have job vacancies whether in hospitals or other healthcare institutions. The previous analysis of the trends in nurse migration as well as the migration of other care providers such as the earlier version of the global care chain analysis does indeed require certain revisions.

One revision that Yeates offers is the idea that the current situations faced by migrant nurses should be included in the analysis. I agree with the proposition of Yeates, and for good reasons. For one, migrant nurses coming from poor countries leave their families behind under the custody of their relatives or other people who are either paid or unpaid for their “care” work. The same is true for migrant nurses who—while coming from better-off families in first-world countries—go to other countries in order to work.

It is important that the case of migrant nurses be given sufficient attention by carefully researching into the current trends in nurse migration. The body of research that can be derived from the in-depth study of the trends and conditions faced by migrant nurses can help promote their welfare in the long run. As far as the proposal of Yeates is concerned, it is also important to widen the coverage of the current global care chain analysis through scholarly analysis so that the contemporary needs of migrant nurses can be identified.

The identification of the contemporary needs of migrant nurses can help in better understanding the situations faced by these nurses and addressing

actual problems that are yet to be known. Since the current global care chain analysis does not explicitly involve modern migrant nurses, it is therefore highly relevant that the case of migrant nurses be included. Moreover, the identification of the needs of migrant nurses derived from the body of research can serve as a guide for legislators in different countries to create the necessary policies that can help uplift the welfare of these nurses.

The proposal of Yeates to expand the coverage of the global care chain analysis can provide the substantial scholarly background needed to identify and to establish certain regulations in countries that seek nurses from other countries. In doing so, the difficulties experienced by migrant nurses coming from Irish territories during the 19th and 20th centuries as mentioned in the research of Yeates as well as contemporary nurses from other nations can be alleviated or avoided. The most significant contribution of the proposal of Yeates once it is put into practice is that it can help prevent negative consequences on the part of migrant nurses.

For instance, it can help prevent unsatisfactory working conditions as well as insufficient wages which can adversely affect not only the nurses but also the families that they have left behind in their home countries. Abuses in the form of being overworked and underpaid can also be prevented once government policies are put in place. To a large extent, the arguments of Yeates in her article is an insightful study into the conditions of contemporary migrant workers analyzed in comparison with the conditions faced by Irish nurses migrating to other countries at an earlier time.

It provides the general image of modern nurses working abroad—the image of a migrant worker who sought greener pastures in a foreign land despite the fact that they have to leave their families, especially their children, under the custody of their relatives or other people. It is only important that the conditions of these nurses should be carefully looked into at least from a theoretical and contemporary perspective because it helps the larger public understand the situations faced by migrant nurses and the difficulties that they have to endure.