CONTEMPORARY MIGRATION BETWEEN MALAYSIA AND AUSTRALIA: TRANSNATIONAL AND SETTLEMENT EXPERIENCES

Christina Ken Yin Yeo

M.B.A., Edinburgh Business School
B.S.C.S. (Hons.), Universiti Putra Malaysia

Department of Geography, Environment and Population
School of Social Sciences
Faculty of Arts
The University of Adelaide

Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
June 2016
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES ............................................................................................................... vii  
LIST OF FIGURES ............................................................................................................. ix  
ABSTRACT .......................................................................................................................... xii  
DECLARATION .................................................................................................................... xiii  
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ...................................................................................................... xiv  
ABBREVIATIONS ................................................................................................................ xv  

Chapter 1: Introduction ....................................................................................................... 1  
1.1 Background to study ..................................................................................................... 1  
1.2 Research questions ....................................................................................................... 2  
1.3 Research objectives ....................................................................................................... 3  
1.4 Conceptualising migration, diaspora and transnationalism ........................................ 4  
1.5 Contextualising migration in Asia ................................................................................ 8  
  1.5.1 Migration: The Malaysian context ......................................................................... 10  
  1.5.2 Migration: The Australian context ...................................................................... 15  
1.6 Rationale for the study ................................................................................................. 17  
1.7 Research methods ....................................................................................................... 17  
1.8 Organisation of the thesis .......................................................................................... 19  

Chapter 2: Theoretical framework .................................................................................... 21  
2.1 Introduction .................................................................................................................. 21  
2.2 Evolution of migration theoretical perspectives ........................................................ 22  
2.3 Transnationalism: What about it? .............................................................................. 26  
  2.3.1 Being interconnected, being transnational ............................................................ 28  
2.4 Redefining diaspora ..................................................................................................... 31  
  2.4.1 The concept of diaspora ....................................................................................... 31  
  2.4.2 Diaspora and networks ......................................................................................... 33  
  2.4.3 Engaging diaspora ............................................................................................... 35  
2.5 Conceptual framework for research .......................................................................... 38  
2.6 Conclusion .................................................................................................................. 42  

Chapter 3: Research methodology .................................................................................... 43  
3.1 Introduction .................................................................................................................. 43  
3.2 Mixed-methods ........................................................................................................... 43  
3.3 Primary and secondary data ....................................................................................... 46  
3.4 Operationalising the research .................................................................................... 47
3.4.1 Stage 1: Secondary data collection and analysis ........................................... 49
3.4.2 Stage 2: Quantitative primary data collection ............................................. 49
3.4.3 Stage 3 Qualitative primary data collection .................................................. 50
3.5 Sampling methods ................................................................................................. 50
  3.5.1 Non-probabilistic sampling on the Internet .................................................. 51
  3.5.2 Respondent criteria ......................................................................................... 51
3.6 Pilot study .............................................................................................................. 52
3.7 Instrumentation ..................................................................................................... 53
  3.7.1 Constructing the online questionnaire ......................................................... 53
  3.7.2 Web-based survey ......................................................................................... 57
  3.7.3 Survey distribution: Leveraging social media .............................................. 60
3.8 Social media platforms used ................................................................................. 61
  3.8.1 Facebook ..................................................................................................... 61
  3.8.2 LinkedIn and Twitter .................................................................................... 62
  3.8.3 Effectiveness of survey distribution method .............................................. 63
3.9 Interviews with respondents and key informants ............................................. 64
  3.9.1 Interview guide ............................................................................................ 65
  3.9.2 Interview sample .......................................................................................... 65
  3.9.3 Interviewing Australians in Malaysia ......................................................... 66
  3.9.4 Interviewing Malaysians in Australia .......................................................... 67
  3.9.5 Interviewing key informants ........................................................................ 68
3.10 The demographic characteristics of respondents ........................................... 69
3.11 Conclusion ........................................................................................................... 73

Chapter 4: The Malaysia – Australia migration system ........................................... 74
4.1 The global migration scenario ............................................................................. 74
4.2 Contemporary movement between Malaysia and Australia ............................ 76
  4.2.1 Key features of the Malaysia – Australia migration system ......................... 77
4.3 The Malaysian diaspora in Australia ................................................................. 80
  4.3.1 Age and gender ............................................................................................. 81
  4.3.2 Ancestry ...................................................................................................... 82
  4.3.3 Educational qualification .............................................................................. 83
  4.3.4 Occupation and income .............................................................................. 84
  4.3.5 Geographic distribution ............................................................................... 86
  4.3.6 Permanent movement .................................................................................. 87
  4.3.7 Temporary movement .................................................................................. 92
4.4  Policy considerations ................................................................. 95
  4.4.1  Bilateral and multilateral arrangements ........................................ 95
  4.4.2  Skilled migration and international education ................................. 96
  4.4.3  National talent policy and programme ........................................ 98
  4.4.4  Migrants settlement and integration ............................................ 100
4.5  Conclusion .................................................................................. 101

Chapter 5:  Mobility decisions .................................................................. 103
  5.1  Introduction .................................................................................. 103
  5.2  The decision-making process ......................................................... 103
  5.3  Motivations differ across the profile of respondents ......................... 105
    5.3.1  Gender and migration .............................................................. 106
    5.3.2  The influence of age on migration decision ............................... 108
    5.3.3  Educational attainment and migration ...................................... 111
    5.3.4  The influence of ethnicity on the migration decision .................. 112
  5.4  Influence of pre-move contacts on the migration decision ................. 115
  5.5  Lived elsewhere: Who and why? ................................................... 119
    5.5.1  Select economic characteristics and transnational mobility ........... 120
    5.5.2  Reasons for living in multiple countries .................................... 122
  5.6  Main characteristics of respondents’ migration to Australia ............... 124
  5.7  Intentions to return ...................................................................... 127
    5.7.1  Motivation for return ................................................................ 129
    5.7.2  Effects of length of stay on return decision and reason .............. 132
    5.7.3  Future plans to return ............................................................. 133
  5.8  Not returning: Why and what needs to happen? ............................... 134
    5.8.1  Reasons for not intending to return .......................................... 135
    5.8.2  Incentives to return ............................................................... 137
    5.8.3  Influence of ancestry background on incentives to attract returnees ... 139
  5.9  Conclusion .................................................................................. 140

Chapter 6:  Settlement experiences and linkages with Malaysia .................. 142
  6.1  Introduction .................................................................................. 142
  6.2  Identification with Malaysia ........................................................... 143
    6.2.1  Time lived in Australia and affiliation with Malaysia as ‘home’ ...... 144
    6.2.2  Multiple identifications ............................................................ 145
  6.3  Transnational networks ................................................................. 147
    6.3.1  Short visits to Malaysia ........................................................... 148
6.3.2 Return visits and return intentions ................................................................. 152
6.3.3 Maintaining contacts ..................................................................................... 155
6.4 Government diaspora-related initiatives in Malaysia ........................................ 159
6.5 Intra-networks ................................................................................................... 160
6.6 Overseas presence benefits to Malaysia ............................................................ 161
6.7 Assets and investments ..................................................................................... 163
   6.7.1 Assets ownership .......................................................................................... 163
   6.7.2 Effects of return intention on assets ownership ........................................... 165
6.8 Migration outcomes ........................................................................................... 166
   6.8.1 Labour force status ..................................................................................... 166
   6.8.2 Occupational mobility ................................................................................ 169
6.9 Effect of length of stay on economic status ....................................................... 172
6.10 Conclusion ......................................................................................................... 174

Chapter 7: Australians in Malaysia ............................................................................ 176
7.1 Introduction .......................................................................................................... 176
7.2 An overview of the respondents’ characteristics ............................................... 176
7.3 Main reasons for moving to Malaysia .................................................................. 181
   7.3.1 Influence of pre-move contacts on migration decision: Type and
        importance ........................................................................................................... 184
   7.3.2 Sources that prompted move...................................................................... 185
7.4 Lived elsewhere: Who and why? ...................................................................... 186
7.5 Intentions to return .............................................................................................. 188
   7.5.1 Motivation for return .................................................................................. 191
   7.5.2 Future plans to return ................................................................................ 193
7.6 Not returning: Why and what needs to happen? ............................................... 194
   7.6.1 Incentives to return .................................................................................... 195
7.7 Settlement experiences and links with Australia ............................................... 196
   7.7.1 Identification with Australia ....................................................................... 196
   7.7.2 Visits to Australia ...................................................................................... 199
   7.7.3 Maintaining contacts ................................................................................ 202
   7.7.4 Affiliations with professional organisations in Australia ......................... 206
7.8 Intra-networks .................................................................................................... 207
7.9 Overseas presence .............................................................................................. 209
7.10 Ownership of assets ........................................................................................ 211
7.11 Migration outcomes ........................................................................................ 213
# Chapter 8: Implications and Conclusions

8.1 Introduction ........................................................................................................... 218

8.2 Summary and synthesis of major findings ......................................................... 219

8.2.1 The trends, patterns and determinants of transnational mobility between Malaysia and Australia ................................................................. 219

8.2.2 Demographic and socio-economic characteristics of migrants .......... 222

8.2.3 Dynamics of transnational ties and communication ................................ 224

8.2.4 Diaspora engagement .................................................................................... 227

8.3 Migration outcomes and implications ............................................................... 228

8.3.1 Labour force participation ........................................................................... 228

8.3.2 Effect of length of stay on economic situation .......................................... 230

8.4 Implications for theory ...................................................................................... 230

8.5 Implications for policy ....................................................................................... 232

8.5.1 An emigration policy? ............................................................................... 232

8.5.2 Engaging diaspora ....................................................................................... 234

8.6 Implications for future research ....................................................................... 235

8.7 Conclusion ............................................................................................................. 236

## APPENDICES

References .................................................................................................................. 268
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1 Global international migrant stock, 1980-2013 (in millions) ......................... 4
Table 2.1 Migration theories across disciplines .......................................................... 26
Table 2.2 Types of transnational social spaces ............................................................. 30
Table 3.1 Table collection methods ............................................................................. 48
Table 3.2 Grouping variables by research themes ......................................................... 55
Table 3.3 Participation of respondents in expatriate organisations in Malaysia and Australia ................................................................. 63
Table 3.4 Respondents participation in Australian organisations/clubs in Malaysia ... 63
Table 3.5 Respondents participation in Malaysian organisations/clubs in Australia .. 64
Table 3.6 Interview sample from MADS 2014 respondents ........................................... 66
Table 3.7 Key informants’ interview .............................................................................. 69
Table 3.8 Visa category of the respondents .................................................................. 71
Table 3.9 Living arrangements of the respondents ......................................................... 72
Table 4.1 Australia: Composition of Malaysia-born temporary visa category ........ 80
Table 4.2 Australia: Malaysia-born by geographic distribution, 2011 ......................... 86
Table 5.1 Reasons given by male and female respondents for emigration to Australia (multiple responses, percentage indicating ‘yes’ to a list of specified reasons) .... 107
Table 5.2 Reasons given by respondents for emigration by education qualification (multiple responses, percentage indicating ‘yes’ to a list of specified reasons) .... 111
Table 5.3 Sources that prompted male and female respondents move to Australia (multiple responses, percentage indicating ‘yes’ to a list of specified reasons) .... 118
Table 5.4 Respondents who have lived in other countries by ethnic group ............ 120
Table 5.5 Mobility of respondents by education, occupation and income ............... 121
Table 5.6 Reasons for living in other countries by male and female respondents (multiple responses, percentage indicating ‘yes’ to a list of specified reasons) .... 122
Table 5.7 Classification of respondents by visa ............................................................. 126
Table 5.8 Intentions of male and female respondents to return to Malaysia to live .. 127
Table 5.9 Intention of respondents to return to Malaysia by age ............................... 128
Table 5.10 Intentions of respondents to return to Malaysia by ancestry ...................... 128
Table 5.11 Reasons given by male and female respondents who intend to return to Malaysia (multiple responses, percentage indicating ‘yes’ to a list of specified reasons) .......................................................... 130
Table 5.12 Reasons for returning to Malaysia by length of stay in Australia (multiple responses, percentage indicating ‘yes’ to a list of specified reasons) .................. 133
Table 5.13 Respondents who intend to return by planned time to return .................. 134
Table 5.14 Reasons given by male and female respondents for not returning to Malaysia (multiple responses, percentage indicating ‘yes’ to a list of specified reasons) .................................................................................. 136
Table 5.15 Events or incentives required to attract male and females respondents to return to Malaysia ............................................................................................................ 138
Table 5.16 Incentives for respondents to return to Malaysia by age group .............. 139
Table 6.1 Response given by male and female respondents to ‘still call Malaysia home’ ................................................................................................................................. 143
Table 6.2 Response given by respondents to ‘still call Malaysia home’ by ethnicity 144
Table 6.3 Reasons for visits to Malaysia by gender (multiple responses, percentage indicating ‘yes’ to a list of specified reasons) .......................................................... 149
Table 6.4 Other reasons for visits to Malaysia .......................................................... 149
Table 6.5 Visits to Malaysia in 2013 and intention to return ................................... 153
Table 6.6 REP communication channel by age (multiple responses, percentage indicating ‘yes’ to a list of specified reasons) .......................................................... 160
Table 6.7 Participation in Malaysian-based organisations in Australia ...................... 161
Table 6.8 How overseas presence benefits Malaysia (multiple responses, percentage indicating ‘yes’ to a list of specified reasons) .................................................. 162
Table 6.9 Assets owned in Australia and Malaysia (multiple responses, percentage indicating ‘yes’ to a list of specified reasons) .................................................. 163
Table 6.10 Assets ownership in Australia and Malaysia by ethnicities (multiple responses, percentage indicating ‘yes’ to a list of specified reasons) .................. 164
Table 6.11 Employment sectors of male and female respondents ............................. 169
Table 6.12 Differences of male and female respondents’ main occupation ................. 170
Table 6.13 Differences of male and female respondents’ main occupation before moving to Australia ........................................................................................................ 171
Table 6.14 Male and female respondents’ household financial situation change by length of stay ............................................................................................................. 173
Table 7.1 Reasons given by male and female respondents for emigration (multiple responses, percentage indicating ‘yes’ to a list of specified reasons) ........... 181
Table 7.2 Top six reasons for move to Malaysia by previous location (multiple responses, percentage indicating ‘yes’ to a list of specified reasons) ............... 182
Table 7.3 Sources that prompted male and female respondents’ move to Malaysia (multiple responses, percentage indicating ‘yes’ to a list of specified reasons) ...... 185
Table 7.4 Reasons for living in other countries by male and female respondents (multiple responses, percentage indicating ‘yes’ to a list of specified reasons) ...... 187
Table 7.5 Intention of respondents to return to Australia to live by citizenship of spouse ....................................................................................................................... 190
Table 7.6 Frequency of visit(s) in 2013 by male and female respondents .................... 200
Table 7.7 Intentions to return to live in Australia and frequency of visits by respondents .................................................................................................................. 201
Table 7.8 Average length of stay on visits to Australia .............................................. 201
Table 7.9 Rate of participation in Australian-based organisations in Malaysia by length of stay ............................................................................................................. 208
Table 7.10 Participation in Australian-based organisations in Malaysia .................... 209
Table 7.11 Benefits of overseas presence to Australia (multiple responses, percentage indicating ‘yes’ to a list of specified reasons) .................................................. 210
Table 7.12 Assets owned by the respondents in Malaysia, Australia and other countries Australia (multiple responses, percentage indicating ‘yes’ to a list of specified reasons) .......................................................... 212
Table 7.13 Change in household financial status since moving to Malaysia of male and female respondents .................................................................................... 213
Table 7.14 Change in household financial status since moving to Malaysia by age group .................................................................................................................. 214
Table 7.15 Current employment status of male and female respondents who were employed full-time before moving to Malaysia .................................................................. 215
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1 International migration by country of destination, 2013 ......................... 6
Figure 1.2 Foreign workers in Malaysia by source countries, 2000-2013 ................. 11
Figure 1.3 Composition of foreign workers in Malaysia by sectors .......................... 12
Figure 1.4 Top destination countries for Malaysia-born migrants, 2013 ................. 14
Figure 1.5 Top destination countries for Australia-born migrants, 2013 .................. 16
Figure 2.1 Theories of migration ............................................................................. 23
Figure 2.2 Characteristics of contemporary movement under the migration systems theory ............................................................................................................. 25
Figure 2.3 Transnational Approaches: Transnationalisation, transnational social space and transnationality ............................................................ 29
Figure 2.4 Conceptual framework for understanding factors in migration decision-making process ......................................................................................... 39
Figure 3.1 Mixed-methods approach .................................................................. 45
Figure 3.2 A framework of data and variables to collect .................................. 47
Figure 3.3 Internet users (per 100) for Australia, Malaysia and the world ........ 59
Figure 3.4 Age-sex structure of the Malaysian respondents in Australia .......... 70
Figure 3.5 Annual income (estimated in A$) of male and female respondents .... 72
Figure 4.1 Trends in international migrants in developed and developing regions, 1990-2013 ................................................................................. 75
Figure 4.2 International migrants by major area, 1990-2013 ................................ 75
Figure 4.3 A model of the Malaysia – Australia migration system .................... 78
Figure 4.4 Australia: Malaysia-born migrants by visa category, 2008-09 to 2013-14 79
Figure 4.5 Australia: Growth of Malaysia-born population, 1947-2011 ........... 81
Figure 4.6 Age-sex structure of Malaysia-born population, 2006-2011 ............ 82
Figure 4.7 Ancestry of Malaysia-born persons in 1986, 2006 and 2011 ............ 83
Figure 4.8 Australia: Level of qualification of Malaysia-born and Australian total population, 2011 ................................................................................. 84
Figure 4.9 Australia: Malaysian-born by occupation, 2010 .............................. 85
Figure 4.10 Australia: Malaysia-born settler arrivals and permanent departures, 1993-94 to 2013-14 ........................................................................ 88
Figure 4.11 Permanent departures to Malaysia by birthplace, 1991 to 2009 ....... 89
Figure 4.12 Australia: Permanent departures to Malaysia by occupation, 2004-05 to 2013-14 ......................................................................................... 90
Figure 4.13 Australia: Age-sex composition of permanent departures to Malaysia, 1993-94 to 2013-14 ........................................... 91
Figure 4.14 Australia: Short-term arrivals/departures to/from Malaysia, 1993-94 to 2013-14 ......................................................... 93
Figure 4.15 Short-term arrivals/departures from/to Malaysia by reasons, 2013-14 .... 94
Figure 5.1 Migration drivers and processes .......................................................... 105
Figure 5.2 Reasons given by respondents by age on arrival (multiple responses, percentage indicating ‘yes’ to a list of specified reasons) ......................... 109
Figure 5.3 Top five reasons for respondents’ emigration by ethnicity (multiple responses, percentage indicating ‘yes’ to a list of specified reasons) .......... 113
Figure 5.4 Male and female respondents with pre-move contacts by professional and non-professional employment ................................................................. 116
Figure 5.5 Pre-move contacts of respondents by age on arrival .................. 117
Figure 5.6 Respondents who have lived in other countries by age group ........... 119
Figure 5.7 Respondents’ reasons for living in other countries by age (multiple responses, percentage indicating ‘yes’ to a list of specified reasons) .................. 124
Figure 5.8 Top five reasons for emigration by visa category (multiple responses, percentage indicating ‘yes’ to a list of specified reasons) .................. 125
Figure 5.9 Reasons given by respondents who intend to return to Malaysia by age group (multiple responses, percentage indicating ‘yes’ to a list of specified reasons) ................................................................. 131
Figure 5.10 Reasons of respondents for not intending to return to Malaysia by age (multiple responses, percentage indicating ‘yes’ to a list of specified reasons) ...... 137
Figure 5.11 Proposed events or incentives to return by Chinese and other ancestry 140
Figure 6.1 Response given by respondents to ‘still call Malaysia home’ by years lived in Australia ............................................................................................................. 144
Figure 6.2 Response given by respondents to ‘still call Malaysia home’ by years lived in Australia by age ..... 145
Figure 6.3 Respondents’ identification with countries .................................. 146
Figure 6.4 Transnational network flows ...................................................... 147
Figure 6.5 Reasons for visits to Malaysia by duration .................................... 150
Figure 6.6 Reasons for visits to Malaysia by frequency of visits .................. 151
Figure 6.7 Return visits facilitate return migration ..................................... 152
Figure 6.8 Number of visits to Malaysia and years since arrival ................. 154
Figure 6.9 Types of linkages with Malaysia by male and female respondents .... 156
Figure 6.10 Methods and frequency of networking with social contacts in Malaysia .................................................................................................................... 157
Figure 6.11 Methods and frequency of networking with professional contacts in Malaysia .................................................................................................................. 158
Figure 6.12 Home and property ownership by intention to return .................. 165
Figure 6.13 Employment status of male and female respondents ................. 167
Figure 6.14 Respondents labour force status change by length of stay in Australia 172
Figure 6.15 Respondents household financial status change by age ............. 174
Figure 7.1 Age and sex structure of respondents moving from Australia to Malaysia .......................................................................................................................... 177
Figure 7.2 Types of immigration passes held by male and female respondents .... 178
Figure 7.3 Length of stay in Malaysia of male and female respondents ........... 180
Figure 7.4 Male and female respondents who had pre-move contacts in Malaysia . 184
Figure 7.5 Intentions of male and female respondents to return to Australia to live. 189
Figure 7.6 Return intentions of respondents by length of stay in Malaysia ....... 190
Figure 7.7 Top 5 reasons given by male and female respondents who intend to return to Australia to live (multiple responses, percentage indicating ‘yes’ to a list of specified reasons) ......................................................... 191
Figure 7.8 Top 5 reasons for returning by when planned time to return .......... 193
Figure 7.9 Response given by male and female respondents to ‘still call Australia home’ ................................................................................................................... 197
Figure 7.10 Response given by respondents to ‘still call Australia home’ by years in Malaysia .................................................................................................................. 198
Figure 7.11 Respondents' identification with countries................................. 199
Figure 7.12 Reasons for visits to Australia (multiple responses, percentage indicating ‘yes’ to a list of specified reasons)................................................................. 202
Figure 7.13 Types of linkages with Australia by male and female respondents in Malaysia (multiple responses, percentage indicating ‘yes’ to a list of specified reasons) .......................................................................................................................... 203
Figure 7.14 Methods and frequency of networking with social contacts in Australia ........................................................................................................................................ 204
Figure 7.15 Methods and frequency of networking with professional contacts in Australia........................................................................................................................................ 206
Figure 7.16 Respondents financial status change by length of stay in Malaysia...... 214
ABSTRACT

Australia hosts a large contingent of overseas Malaysians which has evolved from a number of waves of migration, particularly in recent years. The contemporary migration relationship between the two countries is complex involving movement in both directions, along with the transnational linkages which have generated wide research and policy interest, but little studied in the Malaysia – Australia context.

This study provides a deeper understanding of why Malaysians move to Australia, how well they settle in, and how they maintain links with Malaysia. It adopts a mixed-methods approach using quantitative and qualitative analysis drawing on data collected in an online survey of 1033 Malaysians living in Australia, and 30 interviews with survey respondents and key informants. The findings show that there are three categories of migrants: 1) student; 2) economically active age group; and 3) retirees. The first group is characterised by young, predominantly Malay students, whereas the second is mainly made up of Chinese holding skilled visas. The third group was dominated by females, predominantly Chinese and aged over 50 years. These migrants play a distinct role in their host country, and represent potential resources for their home country too. They are highly skilled, visit their home country frequently for business and leisure, and many retain a strong sense of connection and identification with the countries they move between. The return intentions vary significantly between the Malays and the other ethnic groups, with many intending to stay in Australia. The Malays were very positive about their overseas presence being beneficial to Malaysia, were more likely to return, and over a-quarter own a home and property there. The Chinese were more likely to stay and settle permanently in Australia.

A smaller survey of 134 Australians in Malaysia provide an interesting insight into factors contributing to patterns of movement between Australia and Malaysia. Most were in the economically active age groups, on work contracts, and also most likely to return to Australia. Through a better understanding of these migrants, their migration decisions and potential contribution to Malaysia, it is possible to examine the reciprocal migration flows between Australia and Malaysia.
DECLARATION

I certify that this work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. In addition, I certify that no part of this work will, in the future, be used in submission for any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution without the prior approval of the University of Adelaide and where applicable, any partner institution responsible for the joint-award of this degree.

I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being made available for loan and photocopying, subject to the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968.

I also give permission for the digital version of my thesis to be made available on the web, via the University’s digital research repository, the Library catalogue and also through web search engines, unless permission has been granted by the University to restrict access for a period of time.

Christina Ken Yin Yeo
June 2016
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To the Almighty God, for His divine intervention from the very beginning.

This journey would not have been without the support of many. I owe my gratitude to all who have made this dissertation possible.

My deepest gratitude to my late supervisor Professor Graeme Hugo who believed in me when I was not. I am truly grateful to Dr Dianne Rudd for her careful attention to details, insightful comments, constructive criticisms, and countless revisions of this manuscript. Thanks also to Dr Jungho Suh who provided advice on thesis writing. I would like to acknowledge Margaret Young for her contribution in data assistance.

I am indebted to all my survey respondents, and the individuals who were willing to share their personal thoughts and experiences during the interviews in Malaysia and Australia. I am also grateful to all the relevant expatriate organisations, universities, government departments, and social media groups which have helped distribute the survey, and provided invaluable information as well as suggestions in making this research a success.

Many thanks to my colleagues in the Geography, Environment and Population Department for their sharing and support. I am also thankful to have superb library research assistance and Information Technology support throughout the candidature. Special appreciation to Ali of the Adelaide Graduate Centre for her kind understanding.

Most importantly, none of this would have been possible without the constant source of love, prayers, and support of my dearest family and friends. I have also been blessed to have mentors who motivate, inspire and challenge me.

Finally, my heartfelt appreciation to all Malaysians, who have sponsored this PhD scholarship, which was awarded through the Public Service Department, Government of Malaysia.

"It always seems impossible until it's done." - Nelson Mandela
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AANZFTA</td>
<td>ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABS</td>
<td>Australian Bureau of Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACCA</td>
<td>Association of Chartered Certified Accountants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advance</td>
<td>Advance – Australia’s Global Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADB</td>
<td>Asian Development Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AiM</td>
<td>Australians in Malaysia (Australian diaspora survey)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMBC</td>
<td>Australia Malaysia Business Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APEC</td>
<td>Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASEAN</td>
<td>Association of Southeast Asian Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATO</td>
<td>Australian Taxation Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUD</td>
<td>Australian Dollar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BGP</td>
<td>Brain Gain Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBU</td>
<td>Complete Built Up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CISA</td>
<td>Certified Information System Auditor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CISM</td>
<td>Certified Information Security Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CKD</td>
<td>Complete Knocked Down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPA</td>
<td>Certified Public Accountant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIFD</td>
<td>Department for International Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIBP</td>
<td>Department of Immigration and Border Protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOS</td>
<td>Department of Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPU</td>
<td>Economic Planning Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAQ</td>
<td>Frequently Asked Question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FDI</td>
<td>Foreign Direct Investment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GFMD</td>
<td>Global Forum on Migration and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HTA</td>
<td>Hometown Associations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and Communication Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IOM</td>
<td>International Organisation for Migration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT</td>
<td>Information Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITU</td>
<td>International Telecommunication Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPSS</td>
<td>Statistical Package for the Social Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TalentCorp</td>
<td>Talent Corporation Malaysia Berhad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TPP</td>
<td>Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>