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# Working and Living conditions of Chinese migrants in Mauritius

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**Abstract** - Chinese migrants are well known for being courageous, patient, hardworking and change competent. Their 'work culture' is well recognised in Mauritius. They come to Mauritius with the intent of working hard and saving money for their families back home. They make the least amount of complaints and adapt very quickly to changing conditions of work. Through their contributions during the last three decades in various sectors of the economy, more particularly in the Export Processing Zone (EPZ), it can be safely assumed that they have helped much towards the development of the country. The main objectives of this paper are to: (i) take stock of the working and living conditions of the Chinese expatriates and (ii) examine the extent to which they are satisfied with their work. For the purpose of this study, 50 Chinese workers have been interviewed. One of the main findings of this study is that the majority of Chinese migrants are often exploited in various ways by their employers. Quite a large number of the respondents argued that they were victims of discrimination in the country. One main recommendation would be to review the conditions of contract workers regarding their safety and security. The host country should take the responsibility of ensuring that new policies devised are translated into effective actions for the benefit of the expatriates.

**Keywords** : *Chinese migrants, work culture, living conditions, working conditions and discrimination.*

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# Working and Living conditions of Chinese migrants in Mauritius

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**Abstract** - Chinese migrants are well known for being courageous, patient, hardworking and change competent. Their 'work culture' is well recognised in Mauritius. They come to Mauritius with the intent of working hard and saving money for their families back home. They make the least amount of complaints and adapt very quickly to changing conditions of work. Through their contributions during the last three decades in various sectors of the economy, more particularly in the Export Processing Zone (EPZ), it can be safely assumed that they have helped much towards the development of the country. The main objectives of this paper are to: (i) take stock of the working and living conditions of the Chinese expatriates and (ii) examine the extent to which they are satisfied with their work. For the purpose of this study, 50 Chinese workers have been interviewed. One of the main findings of this study is that the majority of Chinese migrants are often exploited in various ways by their employers. Quite a large number of the respondents argued that they were victims of discrimination in the country. One main recommendation would be to review the conditions of contract workers regarding their safety and security. The host country should take the responsibility of ensuring that new policies devised are translated into effective actions for the benefit of the expatriates.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Mauritius has made much progress and development since its independence in 1968. The rate of economic growth has varied between 2 to 5 percent on an average during the past three decades. Successive governments have often called upon the population to join hands and work hard for the sake of economic development. The positive response from the population has been beneficial for the country. The standard of living of the people has been improved considerably and it is quite high compared to the other nations in the African region. The transformation of the country from a mono-crop based agricultural sector in the 1960s to a modern information, communication and technologically based society, passing through the industrial and service ages, is seen as an achievement by the population. For this reason, in particular, the island is regarded as the paradise of the Indian Ocean. Above all, Mauritius is a true multi-ethnic society where each group has its own culture and tradition and where everyone works and lives in peace and harmony.

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Although people from different communities have contributed much for the sake of socio-economic development, no one denies the enormous contribution made by foreign expatriates during the last three decades. Since 1970s, after the implantation of the Export Processing Zones (EPZ), the country has encouraged and invited both foreign capital and labour. At its infant stage of development, Mauritius relied on its local labour, particularly the reserved pool of labour, that is, women. Regarding capital for investment and skilled managerial expertise, the society had recourse to the Asian and European countries. Given that Mauritius had a guaranteed market for its exports due to the Lomé conventions and the GAAT, the country easily got foreign direct investment to develop its manufacturing sector.

The industrial sector took off in late 1980s and the Mauritius was enjoying full employment level. At the same time, the country was able to move and invest massively in the services sector. Mauritius started facing a shortage of cheap and skilled labour workforce. Given high level of competition, both locally and internationally, investors wanted to reduce their operating cost and consequently, they had recourse to cheap and low skilled foreign expatriates with the approval of the state. Chinese, Indians, Malagasies and Bangladeshis, amongst others, were recruited on contract basis. Foreign workers were mostly employed in the EPZ sector initially. As from 2000, expatriates are seen working in nearly all sectors of the economy.

The main objectives of this paper, amongst others, are to

- take stock of the working conditions of the Chinese expatriates
- account for the living conditions of migrants and
- examine the extent to which Chinese workers are satisfied with their work.

The first part of this paper will explain the rationale of carrying out the study. Moreover, an overview of the composition of the foreign expatriates in Mauritius since 1990s will be given. A brief literature on their working and living conditions will follow. In the second part, the methodology will be explained and the outcome of the survey will be analysed and discussed. Finally, a conclusion and few recommendations based on the paper will be stated.

## II. RATIONALE BEHIND THIS STUDY

China's commitment to increase its trade with Africa to total \$100bn by 2010 is expected to boost up socio-economic growth and development in the African continent. Its growing involvement in the region, particularly in Mauritius, through its Tianli Project (now called Jin Fei) worth Rs20 billion investments over the coming five years for development purposes has been well received by the Mauritian government in 2007 when the Prime Minister, Dr Navin Ramgoolam, signed the investment agreement with the Tianli group for the setting up of an economic cooperation zone. The project, which has started as early as 2010, is expected to create approximately 4000 jobs and generate export revenue of about Rs 200 million annually. Chinese businesses will bring their manpower to work on the site. Therefore, we expect many more Chinese workers in the future. Consequently, it is of utmost importance to take stock of the present working and living conditions of Chinese workers with a view to review and reinforce strategies to accommodate and treat the Chinese

expatriates with more indulgence and understanding.

## III. OVERVIEW OF EXPATRIATES IN MAURITIUS

The Republic of Mauritius is made up of four main 'ethnic groups' namely: Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Chinese. None of the latter has a homogenous population. People from the different communities get along well at the workplace and in the society. They share many common values like educational achievement, democracy and hardwork for the sake of socio-economic development. In a very subtle manner, as from the late 1980s, the population has given its approval to the state to import foreign workers to compensate for the lack of cheap labour in the different sectors of the economy, more particularly in the EPZ. Migrants, mostly from the Asian continent, came to work on contract. The table below gives an indication of the number of work permit delivered to expatriates employed in large establishments in Mauritius from 1990 to 2008.

Foreign Workers employed in large establishments March 1990-March 2008

Year	Manufacturing			Construction			Other			Total		
	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes
1990	300	300	600	200	0	200	200	0	200	700	300	1,000
1992	550	650	1,200	2,000	0	2,000	800	100	900	3,350	750	4,100
1994	1,300	3,050	4,350	3,000	0	3,000	875	50	925	5,175	3,100	8,275
1996	2,091	4,024	6,115	1,400	0	1,400	675	25	700	4,166	4,049	8,215
1998	2,941	6,292	9,233	350	0	350	383	76	459	3,674	6,368	10,042
2000	4,342	9,506	13,848	299	1	300	351	75	426	4,992	9,582	14,574
2002	5,448	10,527	15,975	324	9	333	644	78	722	6,416	10,614	17,030
2004	6,364	9,211	15,575	1,405	6	1,411	899	177	1,076	8,668	9,394	18,062
2006	6,515	7,989	14,504	708	8	716	838	221	1,059	8,061	8,218	16,279
2008	11,128	8,684	19,812	1,566	5	1,571	1,132	301	1,433	13,826	8,990	22,816

Source : 2008 Central Statistical Office (CSO) - Survey of Employment and Earnings in Large Establishments

From the table above, we find that expatriates are mostly employed in the Manufacturing sector, more particularly in textiles and food processing. Throughout the different years it is found that out of the total number of expatriates, the majority was employed in the manufacturing sector. People working in the construction sector are mainly masons welders and painters whereas the 'other' sector comprises workers in hotels, restaurants, and the services.

workers are from the Asian continent followed by people from African region. Chinese and Indians are the largest groups of expatriates as shown in the table below.

## IV. COMPONENTS OF FOREIGN EXPATRIATES

During the last decades, Mauritius has welcome comparatively large number of Migrants workers on contract basis. Foreign expatriates are made up of people from all over the world. However, most foreign

## Number of valid work permits by country of origin &amp; sex

## MARCH 2006

## MARCH 2009

Country of origin	Male	Female	Both sexes		Male	Female	Both sexes
Bangladesh	1006	846	1852		4739	2284	7023
China	2197	6498	8695		3096	5480	8576
India	8723	350	9073		9633	230	9863
Madagascar	465	218	683		844	349	1193
Sri Lanka	286	1415	1701		556	2585	3141
Others*	1852	494	2346		1101	350	1451
<b>Total</b>	<b>14529</b>	<b>9821</b>	<b>24350</b>		<b>19969</b>	<b>11278</b>	<b>31247</b>

Sources : Ministry of Labour, IR and Employment, Monthly Statistics.

Others\* include 76 and 69 Countries in March 2006 and March 2009 respectively.

The table above gives a clear view of foreign workers to whom work permits were given by the Mauritian authority. It can be found that mostly Asian people are recruited principally because their cost of labour is cheap. The large numbers of migrants are Indians and Chinese workers followed by Bangladeshis, Sri Lankans and Malagasies.

Each and every day the Ministry of Labour (MOL), Industrial Relations and Employment deals with issue of new work permits and renewal of existing ones on demand. For the month of March 2009, 650 new work permits were issued out of which 412 related to the Manufacturing sector. From the 650 new work permits issued, 382 were allocated to Indian workers, 178 to Chinese and 48 to Sri Lankan workers. On the other hand, 1284 work permits renewed for the month of March 2009, out of which 994 were for the Manufacturing sector. The majority of the work permits renewed were for Indian, Chinese and Bangladeshi workers, with 414, 383 and 303 permits respectively. (Ministry of Labour, IR and Employment, March 2009).

The total number of valid work permits issued at the end of March 2009 was 31,247 comprising 19,485 new work permits and 11,762 renewals. It should be noted that the total number of valid work permits issued do not necessarily tally with the actual number of foreign migrants in the Island because it happens that some people do not come to work here after receiving official work documents. On the other hand, few migrants do not go back after the expiry of their work permit. They stay and work illegally in the country.

## V. CHINESE MIGRANTS IN MAURITIUS

Chinese migrants in this paper refer to all the people of Chinese origin who have come to work in Mauritius since the implantation of the Export processing zone (EPZ) in early 1970s. At the initial stage mostly Chinese businessmen from Hong Kong and Taiwan came to invest in the EPZ sector. They brought with them not only the capital but also experienced skilled labour with experience in textiles and garments. Mauritius offered panoply of facilities, ranging from infrastructures to fiscal incentives like 10 years tax

holidays, to investors at that time. Besides, the country had a reserve army of cheap labour, mainly unemployed women, to work in the new sector. By late 1980s and early 1990s, gradually most of the foreign investors, including the Chinese, started to cease their operation as the 10 year tax holidays was lapsing and also because of growing increase in labour cost in the country. Mauritius was no more competitive for them and many investors moved to other parts of the African region like Madagascar where cheap labour was available in abundance.

Mauritius had to rely on its local investors, who had gained much experience and expertise in the EPZ domain. The then Government took a series of monetary and fiscal measures to help sustain the sector. Mauritius was enjoying a comparatively higher socio-economic growth during that period and the country began to diversify its economy by expanding the service sector. Given that the society was experiencing high labour cost and available unemployed Mauritians were reluctant to work for low wages, the country had no other alternative than to resort to cheap foreign workers, particularly from the Asian continent. Consequently, many Chinese migrants started to come. At first, mostly female Chinese workers turned up. Male Chinese workers came only recently. Nearly all female migrants worked in the manufacturing sector, particularly in textiles and garment factories, and some were employed in food processing businesses with a few working in hotels and restaurants. Although the majority of male workers is found in the manufacturing sector yet quite a large number is employed in the construction sector. Few of them are employed in the service sector, particularly in hotels, restaurants, transportation and storage departments.

## VI. CONTRACT, WORK PERMIT AND RESIDENCE PERMIT

In the 1990s, the government of Mauritian and the Republic of China signed an agreement regarding the recruitment of Chinese workers. Only the authorized recruiting companies can facilitate movement of



Chinese migrants to Mauritius. Thus, there is a better control over immigration.

Businesses willing to import foreign labour have to follow a number of procedures. The Ministry of Labour, Industrial relations and Employment acts as a facilitator. Before applying for foreign workers, prospective employers should provide evidence that such labour is not available in the country. Work permits are issued by the government authority only when the provisions governing the application procedures are met. Foreign workers are normally granted work permits for a maximum of four years and any further renewal of such permit would entail certain conditions such as a worker would be required to swear an affidavit to the effect that he or she would not apply for Mauritian citizenship. Chinese expatriates normally get a work permit for two years with the possibility of renewal. The employer normally completes all the necessary procedures and formalities for obtaining the entry visa, work and residence permit for the employee and bears all the costs such as application fees, insurance cover and deposits, and the return air ticket cost.

The conditions of employment and living are clearly stipulated in the contract of employment which is duly agreed upon and signed by both the employer and employee. The conditions of the contract should be in line with laws, rules and regulations governing employment in the country. The Ministry vets all the contracts before giving approval.

After getting the work permits, migrant workers, through their potential employers, should apply for the necessary residence permit and also submit a complete medical certificate to the migrant section of the Occupational Health Unit of the Ministry, prior to their arrival, to get a provisional health clearance. Both work and resident permit are needed to be presented at the immigration office for foreign workers to get clearance to stay and work. On arrival, the medical examination is repeated in a government medical institution and the result sent to the migrant unit which issues a final health clearance if everything is in order.

## VII. RIGHTS OF MIGRANTS

Expatriates are human beings who leave their countries in search of work in foreign countries. They usually make lots of sacrifice with the hope of getting a job and earn decent amount of salaries. Besides, they help host countries in improving, achieving and sustaining socio-economic development. Patrick A. Taran, Senior Migration Officer at the International Labour Organisation (ILO), argues that there is a growing body of knowledge that demonstrates that migrants make large contributions to economic and social development in both their host and home countries. Therefore, there is a need for protecting the rights of migrants as migration benefits both sending and receiving countries. In Mauritius, the contract of

employment for foreign workers clearly stipulates all the necessary information concerning the expatriates' rights, conditions of work, accommodation and remuneration amongst others. The contract is in line with the existing labour law which is itself based to a large extent on the principles of the ILO labour conventions. Whatever be the domain in which the foreign workers are employed, the contents of the contract are to large extent the same with some slight differences in conditions of work.

Mauritius has ratified the ILO conventions and is committed to protect the rights and interests of all workers including migrant employees. The ILO is a UN agency which has a constitutional mandate to protect migrant workers, and this mandate has been re-affirmed by the 1944 Declaration of Philadelphia and the 1998 ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. Since its inception in 1919, ILO has pioneered international Conventions to guide labour migration policies and programmes for the protection of migrant worker.

Mauritius has adopted the good practices in relation to labour migration and has spared no efforts to develop migration policies and programmes to maximize benefits of labour migration and minimize its negative consequences. However, still some further improvements need to be done regarding living and working conditions of migrants.

## VIII. ILO PROMOTING THE DECLARATION ON FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES AND RIGHTS AT WORK

In 1998 the International Labour Conference adopted the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up. The Declaration is a pledge by all member states to respect, promote and realize in good faith the principles and rights relating to freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining and the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation amongst others. In Mauritius, however migrant workers have always been discouraged to form a trade union or to join the existing ones. In 2006, some workers from China and India who had either tried to form a trade union or to protest against bad working conditions were deported.

The 2008 International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) report was critical for Mauritius. It was stated that trade unionists get difficulties to convince foreign workers to join unions as they were not able to approach them because they did not really get access to the factories where migrants worked.

## IX. EMPLOYMENT AND INCOMES

Decent work means productive work in which rights are protected, which generates an adequate income, with adequate social protection. However, Chinese migrants tend to be concentrated in the lower-status and lower-paid jobs. Patrick A. Taran rightly

observes that 'migrant labour often fills the 3-D jobs, dirty, dangerous and degrading'. Most of Chinese women work in the EPZ sector as machinists and the majority of men work in the construction sector as masons, plumbers and electricians. Therefore, the goals of decent living standards, social and economic development and personal fulfillment remain illusory for these expatriates. Foreign employees in the EPZ suffer dismal working conditions according to Ackbarally N (2008). Even the National Economic and Social Council (NESC) 2008 points out the unequal treatment given to foreign workers compared to their Mauritian counterparts. According to the NESC report the working conditions of migrants are inferior to what they were promised by their recruitment agencies. Besides, mostly all face the glass ceiling phenomenon. They barely have any chance of getting a promotion.

On the other hand, many times it has been reported that they have not received their salaries on time. When the Chinese workers who have worked for very long hours of overtime protest for late payment, they are threatened to face deportation. It is a well known fact that Chinese workers in EPZ earn very low amount of salary, which varies from 120 to 150 dollars per month. Many believe that this is the reason for them to go for longer hours of overtime to survive and save a little bit to be sent back home. However, the Director of Mauritius Export Association, representing EPZ employers, argues that migrants are informed about their rights and conditions of work well before taking employment (Acbarally, N 2008). Based on this explanation, expatriates should not complain because they knew the contents of their contract which are written in the language they understand. Nevertheless, it is a fact that most expatriates are lured by the recruiting agencies with the complicity of exploitative employers.

## X. ACCOMODATION AND LIVING CONDITIONS

Migrants normally get difficulties to adapt in the host countries at early stage of their migration. The Chinese migrants face more difficulties than Indians to integrate the society. The main problem is the language barrier. There is the communication problem between nationals and the Chinese workers. It is mainly through non verbal communication that the many Chinese express their views both at the workplace and in the society. This language barrier prevents them to socialize with others and therefore integrate the society according to the 2008 NESC report.

The living conditions of Chinese migrants have been subject to many criticisms. It is sometimes an eyesore to find out the degradable conditions of the dormitories in which they are accommodated. Chinese expatriates live in a rather very poor condition. Three to four people share a room which is very small. The sanitation system is in a deplorable situation. In the EPZ sector no one is allowed to visit the dormitories of the

expatriates. It is a known fact that foreign workers live in bad conditions there and four to five people live packed in one small room. They rarely complain about their inhumane living conditions for fear of being deported. In 2007, the Compagnie Mauricienne de Textile (CMT), a big factory which employs many Chinese expatriates, caused 177 foreigners to be deported when the latter manifested illegally about the lack of running water, the insufficient number of toilets and poor accommodation, among other complaints (Acbarally, N. 2008). However, the Mauritian authority, particularly inspectorates of the Migrants Units, is prompt to act whenever cases of poor living and working conditions are reported. But unfortunately, foreign workers rarely make official complaints.

## XI. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

To get a better insight of the living and working conditions of Chinese expatriates, field work was carried out. Some questions were prepared to get information on the profiles of the respondents, their reasons for coming to work in Mauritius, the extent to which they are satisfied with the work they do, what are their feeling about life in Mauritius, what do they have to say on their living arrangement made for them, how far they have been able to integrate the society, what are their views on the society and how the host population view them, amongst others. It was not an easy task to interview the Chinese. The majority, not to say all, do neither speak and nor understand English. Those renewed contract workers understand and speak Creole a little bit. At first the potential respondents were approached at caudan waterfront with a questionnaire. On seeing that their answers were noted, most of them either stopped straight away or gradually stopped giving their views and opinions. Their behaviour was not understood at the initial stage. It could be they did not appreciate their answers to be noted down or feared that their answers would be revealed to their employers. Consequently, there was the necessity to change the tool used and consequently informal conversation in English and creoles were used and questions were posed in a very subtle manner. This worked with most of the respondents. The latter were approached mainly at the Caudan Waterfront shopping centre, Phoenix Jumbo supermarket, Ebene and Quartier Militaire construction sites. Chinese are normally found in groups wherever they go. In some groups, the views of nearly all members were received. At the Quartier Militaire construction site, few respondents could speak English well and at phoenix supermaket, some respondents could understand and answer in creole.

Most of the respondents were between 20 and 50 years of age and they have came mainly from Shanghai City, Guangzhou, Zhejiang, Shandong and Jiang Su. The majority of the 26 female respondents at shopping centers were on their second contract term. Most of them could respond in Creole and they were

employed in the textiles with the exception of two who work in the food processing factory. At the construction site most of them came here only at the beginning of the year and all the 24 interviews were males working there as mostly masons, electricians, plumbers, painters, supervisors and engineers. The two engineers could speak very good English and they were very helpful to me as two of them acted as interpreters translating the questions asked and answers given by others.

When asked about their work and work environment, the majority of respondents in the textiles were generally satisfied with the work they do. But they argued that they were being exploited most of times and that they were not well treated by management. For most of them it is the immediate Mauritian supervisors who were the ones to harass them often. Regarding their salaries, surprisingly, all of them were very satisfied but they would be happy to get some more money. As far as their long hours of overtime were concerned, they advocated that they were here to work and earn the more they could. 'In my home country, I was working for peanuts', said one Chinese girl. Another one said that she has left her three years son to come here as she could not get a job in the home country. The latter added sadly that "I have to come to work whether I'm satisfied or not does not matter provided I get enough money to cater for my family and my son."

Those respondents who have renewed their contracts seem to be more satisfied with their work environment. One of them argued that in Mauritius the conditions of work were satisfactory and this was why she, like her other friends, had renewed their contracts. She proudly said, "Here I get many types of paid leaves and there are many public holidays where I get double pay when I work overtime." One respondent said, "The Mauritian machinists are lazy and jealous when we accept working overtime." She added, "We get problems at work mostly because of the Mauritian colleagues and they don't like us."

At the construction sites, the majority of workers seemed to be less satisfied with their work and the working conditions. They do not always get the protective tools and equipment on time. They are scared about their health and safety. One said that when he came here in March, he fell sick for ten days. He did not work and had no money to send to his family. During the first year, contract workers do not get any paid leave. Regarding their salaries and overtime they are also happy with the amount of money but would like to get more. The two Chinese supervisors, on the other hand, were not satisfied with their pay packets. They said they were qualified people and should earn more. They were doing the work because they had no choice but would leave them as soon as they would secure better paid jobs. For them the conditions of work were fair.

When asked about their living conditions, answers received differed considerably. The majority of them were not satisfied with their accommodation. They said that they were lured by the authorities responsible

for devising the contract. "In our home country we had better hygienic living conditions" one of them argued. At the construction sites, the male respondents said that they were living in small room. "There is no space left to sit comfortably", one respondents said. The toilets and bathrooms are in a very deplorable situation. They confirmed that four to five people live in small unhygienic rooms. "When one friend is ill it becomes even more difficult for us to sleep at night," said one. On the other hand, most of the female respondents have already got used to the living conditions and for them the accommodation was not a problem. One said that sharing rooms for them was something positive as they felt more secure. However, they would have liked to get better living conditions.

Regarding their views on Mauritius and its people, their perception is nearly similar. The majority of the respondents views Mauritius as one of the most beautiful places to live in the world. It seems to be their 'El Dorado'. They like the different nightlife at the casinos and disco clubs at Caudan and Grand-Baie. One lady respondent said, "The nightlife at Grand-Baie is really great, we were there last Saturday night and came back home on the following morning." They all seem happy to stay and work in the country. However, when they were asked how well they have been received by the population, most of them argued that Mauritians are not welcoming at all to them. One respondent said, "At the workplace we can manage but in the society we are treated in a very bad way." From their answers on their views of the Mauritians perception on Chinese expatriates, it can be easily deduced that they are nearly all of the view that Mauritians do not always like them. They stated that many times bus drivers do not stop when they are at the bus-stop. One lady respondent argued, "Often when we enter the public transport, the bus conductors show rude behavior towards them." A group of male respondents stated that they were refused entrance at a disco club last month. "The Mauritian gatemen denied us entrance saying that the club was full but when other people came after us they were allowed to go in" responded one. They voiced their grievances but had to leave the place when the bouncers arrived. Most of them stated that they were constantly victims of discrimination be it at the food court or at the shops. "Mauritians do not like to mingle with us," said one lady who is here since the last four years. "We know we are strangers but the treatment and public services provided to us should be just because we pay for them," argued one Chinese worker.

The survey justifies part of the literature on the conditions of living and working of the expatriates. Although Chinese workers feel exploited and have poor living conditions yet they seem to be very satisfied of having a job and a relatively decent amount of pay packets. It is also found that migrants are vulnerable. They cannot voice their grievances properly for fear of reprisals and consequently repatriations. Given that many of them have families to look after back home,



they prefer to be exploited and preserve their employment. On the other hand, if expatriates in the textiles are renewing their contracts this means that in one way or the other they are satisfied with the conditions of work like enjoying paid leaves for sickness, vacation, casual and above all bonuses.

What is disturbing is the way they think Mauritians view them. For Chinese migrants to integrate the society, Mauritians have to accept the fact that migrants made, are making and will make considerable amount of contribution for economic growth. Therefore, there should be a change in the mind set as Mauritius will continue relying on cheap foreign labour. Expatriates should be given a warm welcome as they contribute towards economic development. There should be campaigns to sensitise the host population to change their attitudes towards foreign workers. Besides, stakeholders, particularly the capitalist employers, should review their strategies to improve the living conditions of the expatriates. The contents of the contract should be put into practice. The authority, particularly the Ministry of Labour inspectorates, should make more surprise checks to take stock of the working conditions of foreign employees and redress any form of exploitation. On the other hand, the New Employment Rights Act which makes provision for migrants rights to join trade unions should be put into practice more rigorously by encouraging and facilitating trade unions to take on board foreign workers.

## XII. CONCLUDING REMARKS

It is a fact that expatriates contribute to the socio-economic development of both the receiving and home countries. In this paper, we have examined the working and living conditions of Chinese migrant workers and the extent to which the latter are satisfied with their work. With information from the government authorities, like the CSO, MOL, and other secondary data, we have given an expose of migrants, particularly foreign Chinese workers, in Mauritius.

The fieldwork has helped to get an insight view of the actual situation of Chinese migrants to better understand their perception on work, accommodation and the host society. The principal observations have been that there exist exploitation of migrants at work and their accommodation is not proper. Furthermore, Chinese workers feel being discriminated in the society. Nevertheless, it has been found that Chinese expatriates are satisfied with their pay packets and they keep a positive image of the country.

Given that migration is likely to continue in the future, there seems to be a necessity for the all stakeholders, particularly government and employers, to revisit their strategies regarding the contract of employment in relation to the working and living conditions of expatriates with a view to improve them and make provision for the effective social integration of the migrants in the host society.

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