

Indonesian Workers Migration in Kuala Lumpur (Case Study of Building Construction Workforce)

Randi¹, Heni Ismiati²

¹ Student of Master Sociology, Faculty of Social and Political Science, Universitas Padjadjaran, Bandung,

² Student of Master Sociology, Faculty of Social and Political Science, Universitas Padjadjaran, Bandung,

Email: heni.ismiati16102014@gmail.com, randy.iboe@gmail.com, one of the Awardee Affirmation LPDP.

Abstract: *International workers migration has drawn international attention. The researcher's main attention is the immigrants from Indonesia in Kuala Lumpur. The number of immigrant to Kuala Lumpur is increasing as the consequence of elevating demand of workers in Malaysia. Based on the data of BNP2TKI, the officially recorded Indonesian workers departures to Malaysia in 2016 are 22.559 persons who are placed in both formal and informal sectors. With that condition, along with the high demand of worker problems also came to both countries: Indonesia and Malaysia. This work describes how the rational choice by Indonesian Workers in carrying out migration to Kuala Lumpur. Regarding, there are a lot of people are migrating to Kuala Lumpur. As previously happened, Indonesian workers in Malaysia is full of troubles such as violence and illegal workers so rationally, the problems become the rational question of the researcher. The researcher involves qualitative approach to explain that. The required data in the study is the objective condition. The data source from the field is primary and secondary data. The data presentation of the data is in descriptive qualitative.*

Keywords: *rational, migration, workers, request, and problems.*

1. Introduction

International workforce migrations drags attention of the international people in the last two decades because of the numerous countries are affected by the international migration and want to increase the benefit retrieved for the workforce as well as manage the workforce migration rate better (IOM, 2010). According to the ministry of Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration of the Republic of Indonesia, in 2006, there are 2.7 million people in Indonesia work overseas both legally or illegally which occupy around 2.8 % of the whole workforce in Indonesia. Most of the Indonesian workers come from several areas in Indonesia where the women dominate the percentage because they work in informal sector or domestic field (as a housemaid) or service. The spread of Indonesian workforce is mainly in South East Asia, East Asia, and Middle East or countries who have bilateral relationship with Indonesia such as Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong (SAR), Taiwan, People's Republic of China, Kuwait, and United Arab Emirates. The workforce migration has economic contribution for the origin country and destination countries where the manpower may increase the number of workforce in the destination country and help the development of the origin country through money transferring. Economic, social and political significance is intended to empowering the weak and less effort in the context of the country (Nuridin, 2015). Based on the report of The World Bank, in November 2009, the official revenue to developing countries reached the value of US\$ 338 billion during 2008. This is accounted as the investment from the foreign countries World Bank (2009). There are a lot of reasons for the Indonesian workers to go working overseas. According to (IOM 2009), some of the reasons are elevating their own and their family's economic status. The lack of job vacancy in Indonesia put migration as the most desirable solution to solve the poverty for them and their family. Although some of those workers succeed to elevate their quality of live, there are also some of them who

returned home with problems from the destination countries like rape, domestic violation, until human trafficking. The reason to improve family's economy as a specific pressure for the Indonesian worker candidates. No wonder, they spend their spare time in the destination country to transfer money to their families and friends in Indonesia. In 2008, the money transfer to Indonesia reached the value of US\$ 6.6 billion according to the Bank Indonesia (2008). Most of the spending of the transferred money is allocated for daily needs, buy or build houses, children's or relative's education, and buying things to consume (IOM, 2010).

With that the remittances, development of origin countries happens. Malaysia is a country with a high number of Indonesian labor requests. Based on the IOM 2010, there are 1.214.000 labors is recorded working in Malaysia who are separated in various sectors such as plantation, housemaid, construction laborers, labor of manufacturers/industries, service and farming. With the high number of work force need, Malaysia depends on them to develop their industrialization and development. There are three reasons why Indonesian work force is desirable for Malaysia. *First*, the general demography and the economical imbalance between Indonesia and Malaysia. *Second*, the working network of the agents of Indonesian workers which is now institutional. *Third*, linguistic, cultural, and historical relationship between the two countries make the partnership easier (IOM, 2010). Those three points influences critically the number of Indonesian workers in Kuala Lumpur. As with the existence of the labor agents, so the migration rate is increasing. Moreover, the private agents make it even bigger increasing. No wonder, there are frequent case of illegal workers. Illegal workers cause many problems in the destination country. Those illegal workers are vulnerable to be the victim of human trafficking.

While the previous study which can be related to this study in a research conducted by (Mei, 2016) entitled Indonesian Labor Migrants in Malaysia: A Study from China. In that study, there are complex factors cause the migration of Indonesian Labor to Malaysia which is the better information and transportation infrastructure. Those are the main factors which influence the stream and pattern of migration from Indonesia to Malaysia. Then, Mei added that there are several Indonesian Labors who migrate without legal administration process because of the costly of administration procedure itself to migrate (including the payment for the agents in Indonesia and Malaysia). In Malaysia, the bureaucracy procedure and migration policy is limited.

Then, the research conducted by (Rizal, 2014) entitled Indonesian Labor Overseas Migration using Cost Benefit Analysis (A Study in Malang District). This study comes to the result that the conclusion of computation result Cost Benefit Analysis from 15 Indonesian Labors returnee which is in general fulfill the minimum requirement to be prioritized. Taiwan is in the first priority in the calculation, while Saudi Arabia is in the lowest position. The highest result of BCS and prioritized put Singapore as the number one while Saudi Arabia remains the lowest. The result of interview turns that there are a lot of Indonesian Labors are in troubles such as lack of pocket money in the departure time, the problem of Indonesia Manpower Services Companies which cut the salary too much, got less conducive work place in the destination country, and they return back home with no much of money or deception with travel mask. Besides, there are also some who made to get proper salary and remittance fund.

Indonesian labor migrations so interesting to analyze especially the workers who work in building construction sector. The number of construction workers according to (IOM, 2010) is 220.000 Indonesian workers or 18.1% from the whole workers. What is interesting for the writer is that the reason why construction workers desire to work overseas with risk as construction workers. The happening in Indonesia is that Indonesia is developing everywhere and a lot of construction workers is required like in Jakarta and Palembang in which the project of LRT is under construction or the other big cities which is developing. Those places require numerous construction workers who are the expert of it. In that number, the Indonesian workers migration in construction site is so interesting to study. What are the factors influence to work in Kuala Lumpur, is it about the high value of salary, or living comfort in Kuala Lumpur. Those are still in the writer's question which is elaborated within this paper.

2. Discussion

2.1. Migration

In conducting a migration, there is of course a decision to change or a willing to bring betterment one of living aspects such as economy, social, education, and sort of things. So, people migrate for various reasons. This sociology approach examines from the other perspective about migration regarding the width of social dimension and the possible impact which is caused whether it is positive or negative. There is also possibilities of the happening of several social, economic, and cultural change. This is overcome for the origin area or the destination area of migration and the other aspects (Mantra, 2000). According to (Lee, 1966) in the origin and the destination there are positive factors (+) such as beneficial factors to live in like the establishment of schools, work opportunity, or good climate. There are also negative factors (-) or factors give negative value in a particular area so the residents want to move from that very place because unfulfilled needs and neutral factor (0). According to Lee, there are four factors influencing migration:

1. Individual factor
2. Factors in the place of origin
3. Factors in the destination
4. Obstruction in the place of origin and destination

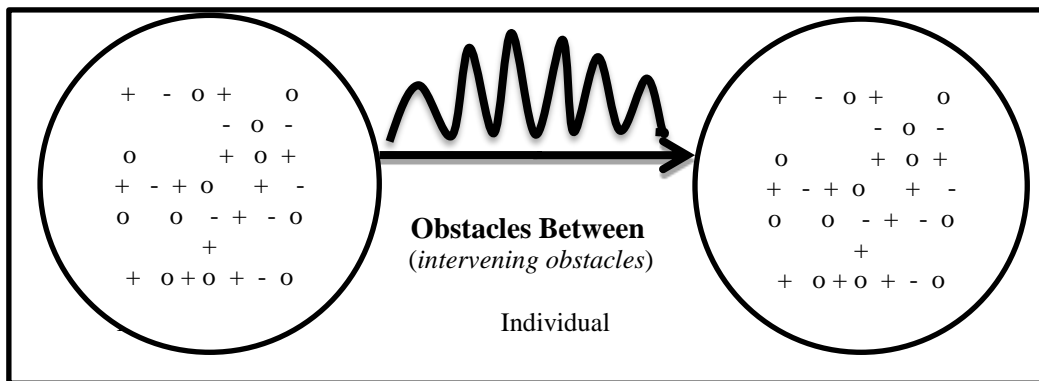


Fig. 1. Factors in the Place of Origin on the Destination and the Obstruction between them
Resource: Lee, 1966

2.2. Building Construction Labor Migration

The presence of immigrants in Malaysia Indonesia has long been the existence and often raises in the bilateral relations. Issues as immigrants or as Indonesia labor working in Malaysia, has become a very important issue in Indonesia-Malaysia relations (Maksum, 2015). The migration process has been downloading so the answers Indonesia labor because there are wide differences the difference concerns the economic factors, social and community environments (Rizal, 2015). As a nation which send workforce annually to various destinations overseas, Indonesia is considered as a country with high mobility of its people. One of the examples is the number of Indonesia Manpower Services Company which send Indonesian Labor overseas is keep improving because migrating housemaid is a profitable export commodity. According to the Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration of the Republic of Indonesia, up to May 2002, the number of Indonesia Manpower Services Company reaches the number of 421 companies. In Hong Kong, the number of agents dealing with the administration of female workers-housemaid at least as much as 7.318, while in Singapore is only around 160 agents. Beside the official Indonesia Manpower Companies, allegedly, there are dozens of such illegal companies to facilitate Indonesian housemaids to work in Hong Kong and Saudi Arabia. Besides, the number of recruitment agent for Malaysia outnumbers that statistic. As the numerous illegal agents, this may influence the number of Indonesian workers spread in all over Kuala Lumpur. Uniquely, the construction workers system differs from that. The enrollment process tend to be legal and administratively good. Even, sometimes, it is under a bilateral cooperation of Indonesian government and the workers recipient countries in program such as G to G, Japan, and Korea. These programs provides the Indonesian workers opportunity to work overseas under surveillance of Indonesian government from the departure until the arrival in Indonesia. Sometimes, the workforce agent do not

give basic knowledge how will the condition of the housemaid workplace situation before they leave Indonesia. No wonder, many of the housemaids from Indonesia experience culture shock. In fact, the condition of those Indonesian housemaids is so much different from what they have in Indonesia. Apartments in Singapore and the exclusivity of housing in Saudi Arabia requires those workers to adjust themselves to the working situations. Moreover, they got no proper information beforehand. Those workers may also experience the difficulties in the local language and the absence of days-off. The availability of weekly holiday in Hong Kong makes most of Indonesian female workers-housemaids find it easier to adjust themselves to the condition of the houses they are working in which is more in form of apartment rooms in tall buildings (Krisnawaty, 2003). In this case, the problem is identical to the Indonesian workers who work in building construction. They should have received training before heading to the destination country so they will make expert workers in their field.

Migrant workers (MW) from Indonesia working in numerous countries in 2015 is 272.720 in total. From that total number, the number of male MWs is 107.470 workers and the rest 165.250 are female. There were 4.894 problems, 275 of them is detected which involves 5 male MWs and 270 female MWs. From that data, the number of accumulated remittance received by the Indonesian government is quite massive. Male workers tend to work in formal sector like building construction, contractor, and big companies in Kuala Lumpur. As for the list of the number of Indonesia's labor are scattered in various countries can be seen in the following table: Resource: BNP2TKI, 2016, modified In Saudi Arabia, the office hour of the MWs as housemaids is far exceeding 8 hours a day. Cases handled by the NGOs in Indonesia indicates that their working hours is more than 12 hours a day on average. Even in fasting month, the "office hour" is extended until around 18 to 20 hours a day. Unfortunately, it is all written on the contract prepared by the Indonesia Manpower Services Company and The Department of Manpower and Transmigration of the Republic of Indonesia. The contract stated that the duration to take a break is at least 8 hours a day, so as it is read conversely that their working hours can be 16 hours a day. The salary of the MW as housemaids varies from a country to the others. In Hong Kong, the salary of MW as housemaids according to the official policy of immigration-ship is HKD 3.670 a month (around IDR 4.000.000 depending on the currency fluctuation). In Saudi Arabia, they are paid SR 600 (around IDR 1.400.000,00 depending on the currency fluctuation). In Malaysia, they are paid RM 300-400 (around IDR 680.000,00-900.000,00 depending on the currency fluctuation). While in Singapore, they are paid SD 330 (around IDR 1.500.000 depending on the currency fluctuation).

In the distribution of Indonesian workers in the sector of building construction, the Indonesian government is in bilateral cooperation with the Malaysian government, in other words *Ditjen Bina Konstruksi* and Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB) Malaysia, where a training of trainer (TOT) was undertaken in 2015. The improvement of quality until the instructor, and accreditation assessment of Indonesia by Malaysia, basic competence adjustment, standard training and certificate issued by both countries, and training plus certification test in Indonesia. So, the joint certificate is made of *Lembaga Pengembang Jasa Konstruksi* (Construction Services Development Institution/LPJK)-CIDB in 2017 until 2019 (www.kompas.com, 2015). While the objectives of LPJK is strong, reliable, and high competence business structure which may produce outstanding construction work outcomes. The orderly execution of construction work guarantees equality the service customer and provider in the sense of rights and obligations.

TABLE I. Data of Migrant Workers In 2013-2015

The province of	2013		2014		2015	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Aceh	593	317	540	411	233	553
North Sumatra	2,812	10,487	2,580	12,202	1,649	10,405
West Sumatra	652	987	519	708	139	650
Riau Islands	1,338	202	950	273	486	318
Riau	552	165	642	226	331	229
Jambi	439	495	425	410	199	329
South Sumatra	795	1867	630	1,328	438	970
Bengkulu	206	128	236	83	215	79
Lampung	5,518	12,457	5,843	12,657	4,854	11,255

BANGKA	90	26	37	12	18	4
Bantam	5,124	8,120	3,835	5,885	1,726	2,537
DKI Jakarta	12,658	1,590	6,510	1,051	755	457
West Java	34,375	95,510	27,591	77,888	12,728	50,348
Central Java	46,464	59,507	37,318	55,272	17,007	40,070
The Special Region of Yogyakarta	2,609	2,358	1,963	1,845	754	1,102
East Java	37,015	56,828	28,724	49,582	16,895	31,417
Bali	12,177	2,440	5,692	2,024	3,221	1,648
West Nusa Tenggara	50,103	13,335	48,125	1,344	42,100	9,643
East Nusa Tenggara	2,509	2,799	2,209	3,306	1,172	2,135
Central Kalimantan	38	22	39	30	14	10
South Kalimantan	456	432	285	426	96	326
East Kalimantan	671	45	382	67	151	28
South Sulawesi	7,885	2,503	5,385	2,112	1,675	673
South East Sulawesi	497	192	326	97	89	46
Central Sulawesi	154	912	167	729	72	515
North Sulawesi	1,155	388	819	257	203	226
West Sulawesi	343	199	312	138	86	46
Gorontalo	23	6	19	18	2	2
Maluku	27	54	260	52	67	11
North Maluku	43	13	119	2	84	2
Papua	98	12	40	8	6	2
West Papua	48	6	42	5	5	1
The Total	227,467	274,402	182,182	230,448	107,470	165,250

This may also increase the orderliness affectivity of administration of society's role in construction service (www.lpj.net , 2012). Consequently, the employed workers do possess the tested skill or ability. Because the factors abilities or skills (language, job) owned by migrant workers who owned is not adequate, the depart of Institution factors did not do supervision and Safeguards against BM, is less an affirmation in place of TKI Placement employer, such Cases Budiayah Bint Hadi Sukarto Harno, switching one employer To Another Employer. The first experience of migrant workers abroad. Then the existence of the gap is caused by internal factors like labor education Indonesia low where graduates of elementary junior high school, 33% 39% 25% high school, the ability to master the language of the destination country labor migrants who lack adequate so as not to overwhelm or communication problems are interwoven with the employer. With regard to enhancing the well-being and creates the Skill ability have TKI, eliminating the gap against the placement of Migrant Workers male and female to the destination country, create a system with considering waging 6 things, namely (1) the workload including the number of family members who served; (2) expertise; (3) hours of work; (4) work areas; (5) living together or separate employers; (6) work experience. The Government of Malaysia has made rules about labor contract of the building subject to *the Employment Act 1955*, the rules certainly handle large corporations participating companies were Malaysia. However, the Government of Indonesia does not loose surveillance against Indonesia labor on the part of the construction of the building, this is because the rules are sometimes just as a formality only. As the case experienced by Ngateman former construction worker origins of Blitar that goes through an agent from Malang, Dusun Dawung RT 02 RW.. 04, Tepas, subdistrict of Kesamben Village, Blitar District, on March 2, 2013 and Telo, a former construction worker in Malaysia, hamlet of Bumirejo RT. 03 RW. 15 the village Kebobang, district Wonosari, Malang, January 27, 2013. Interview by (Sihombing, 2013), in which the occurrence of a different Ministry of labor between Indonesia which has a document with a work force that does not have sufficient documents, differences in service when the accident occurred, where it is a top priority for labor that has moderate labor documents that do not have the documents sought in the treatment, sometimes other friends helped fellow labor Indonesia. Indonesia labor goals But dating to Malaysia as a building

construction labor is to get more salary from the country of origin, as revealed by (Todaro, 1969) that someone decided to migrate is depending of the value he can when in the migration destination.

3. Conclusion

Be labor abroad is not a option for building construction workers, with a high degree of risk and a weak State supervision, making Indonesia labor should be trying hard to be able to survive in the country people and keep sending money to families in the area of origin. Work in the construction of buildings is a job fraught with risk, good work accident causing injury even death, but the condition does not make them better becomes a labor of building construction, but had to fight back to seek treatment. Pick and choose from in one job is a risk and should be held responsible for the risk.

4. Acknowledgements

This research was supported by Lembaga Pengelola Dana Pendidikan (LPDP) one institution of scholarship aid funder in Indonesia. LPDP is the giver of a credible scholarship. As the author's scholarship recipients thank the funder for research process, hopefully with the help given by the LPDP can give smoothness in this research. Thank for M. Fadhil Nurdin, M.A.,Ph.D as a senior Lecturer in Department of Sociology, Universitas Padjadjaran, Bandung. Because it has helped in this research, especially the discussion of Indonesia workers in Kuala Lumpur.

5. References

- [1] A. Maksum, *Politik internasional dan sumber masalah hubungan Indonesia-malaysia*, Yogyakarta : Samudra Biru, 2015, pp. 79.
- [2] *Buruh Migran Pekerja Rumah Tangga (TKW-PRT) Indonesia*. Krisnawaty, Tati, 2003. Kuala Lumpur: Komnas Perempuan (Komisi Nasional Anti Kekerasan Terhadap Perempuan Dan Solidaritas Perempuan/Caram..
- [3] *Data Penempatan dan Perlindungan Tenaga Kerja Indonesia Tahun 2015*, BNP2TKI, Jakarta: Pusat Penelitian Dan Pengembangan Informasi Badan Nasional Penempatan Dan Perlindungan Tenaga Kerja Indonesia
- [4] *Data Penempatan dan Perlindungan TKI* , BNP2TKI, 2016. Jakarta: BNP2TKI
- [5] E. S. Lee. (1966). A Theory of Migration. *Demography*, Vol. 3, No. 1., pp. 47-57. Available: <https://doi.org/10.2307/2060063>
- [6] I. B. Mantra.,*Demografi Umum*, Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2000.
- [7] International Organization Migration (IOM), *'09 Annual Report*, Jakarta: Mitrametrotama, 2009.
- [8] International Organization Migration (IOM), *Migrasi Tenaga Kerja dari Indonesia (Gambaran Umum Migrasi Tenaga Kerja Indonesia di Beberapa Negara Tujuan di Asia dan Timur Tengah*, Jakarta: International Organization for Migration, 2010.
- [9] M. F. Nurdin, et, al., *Sociology and Welfare Development*, Yogyakarta: Samudra Biru, 2015.
- [10] Mei, L. "Indonesian Labor Migrants in Malaysia: A Study from China," Thesis, Institute of China Studies University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 2016
- [11] M. Jizal and R. Ismail, " Penentu Migrasi Tanpa Izin Tenaga Kerja Indonesia Di Malaysia," In *Proc. 2015 PERKEM*, 10, (2015) 373 – 380, ISSN: 2231-962X.
- [12] Rizal, M. (2014). Migrasi Tenaga Kerja Indonesia Ke Luar Negeri Menggunakan Cost Benefit Analysis (Studi di Kabupaten Malang). *JESP*, Vol. 6, No 2.
- [13] Todaro, Michel P, *Pengembangan Ekonomi di Dunia 3. Kajian migrasi internal di negara sedang berkembang. Pusat penelitian kependudukan*, Yogyakarta: Universitas Gadjah Mada, 1992.
- [14] Y. E. P. Sihombing, "Perlindungan Hukum Atas Pemenuhan Ganti Rugi Kecelakaan Kerja Terhadap Tenaga Kerja Indonesia dari Kabupaten Malang yang Menjadi Pekerja Konstruksi Di Malaysia (Studi Pelaksanaan Pasal 77-84 Undang-Undang No.39 Tahun 2004 tentang Penempatan dan Perlindungan Tenaga Kerja Indonesia di Luar Negeri),"M.S. Skripsi (Erudite Jurnal), Dept. Law. Universitas Brawijaya, Malang, Indonesia, 2013.
- [15] www.kompas.com
- [16] www.lpj.net