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Master's Thesis of International Studies

**Indonesian Labor Migrant Adaptation
To The Korean Employer Treatment**

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Abstract

Indonesian Labor Migrant Adaptation to The Korean Employer Treatment

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A qualitative study in examining how Indonesian labor migrants adapt to their employer treatment. The goal of this research was to find out what elements impact their decision to stay in the country for an extended period of time (no less than five years). Interestingly, instead of trying to pursue a better relationship with their employer, Indonesian labor migrant try to adapt with the working and living condition by keeping their family or their close one nearby.

The decision to stay and adapt to their work and employer is based on different motivation. This motivation, although responds by some respondents due to the force of the family economy condition, some other respondents reveal the motivation to stay was because they feel they already fit in with the work rhythm and the employer. The more they migrated, the more adaptable they were. Despite the difficulties, the social network maintained close ties and was seen as a reliable source of assistance.

Keyword: labor, migrant, adaptation, Korean employer

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Confirmation Sheet

Agreement on Original Contents Provisions

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Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1. Study Background

Before going further, it is important to know about the two countries focused on this study and the history behind why these two countries have chosen as the focus of this writing. Indonesia as the origin country of the labor migrant worker and South Korea as the destination country where the Indonesian labor migrants work.

1.1.1. Indonesia

Spring as a third world country, Indonesia declared its independence on August 17, 1945. Only two days after Japanese Emperor Hirohito announced the surrender of Imperial Japan in World War II, which at the time had control of East Indie territory (known as Indonesia now). Indonesia lays in the Southeast Asia region, exactly in the crossing spot between the continent of Asia and the continent of Australia, the Pacific Ocean and Indian ocean as well.

Indonesia is an archipelago country. In the year 2019, Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS)-Statistics Office of Indonesia release data mentioned the total number of Indonesia's island is 16.056 islands.^① Not all those islands inhabited. Per last available data from the office of the Civil Registry Service (under the direction of the Ministry of Internal Affair), in the first semester of year 2021, Indonesia population reach 272.229.372 people. Total male population is 137.521.557 people

^① This number reduced from the previous data (data of year 2016) released by the same office, BPS. Previously total island was 17.540Data obtained online from World Bank's official website www.data.worldbank.org on October 25th, 2021

and total female is 134.707.815 people.^② With nearly balance composition between male and female, Indonesia positioned after China, India, and The United States as the most populous country in the world.

Figure 1.1.

Map of Indonesia. World Atlas, 2021



Source: www.worldatlas.com

Among the mentioned number of populations, about 47.586.943 people or approximately 56,1 % from the total population were concentrated in Java Island, one of the five big Islands in Indonesia. After looking information in figure 1.1, we can imagine how dense Java Island with only 6,74% of Indonesia's total area but occupied by more than 130 million people. What story hidden behind this density is the reason why all the interviewees met in this research all were Java Island's origin, although there's no previous plan on that subject.

^② Released in the official website of Civil Registry Service Office website <http://www.dukcapil.kemendagri.go.id/berita/baca/809/distribusi-penduduk-indonesia-per-juni-2021-jabar-terbanyak-kaltara-paling-sedikit> and presented as presentation material of Directorate General of Indonesia's Civil Registry Service Office in front of Law Graduate School's students, University of Tanjung Pura, West Kalimantan, Indonesia.

Table 1.1.

Total area of provinces in Java Island (2019)

The Province in Java Island	Total Area (km²)	Percent of the total area
DKI Jakarta	664,01	0,03
Jawa Barat	35 377,76	1,85
Jawa Tengah	32 800,69	1,71
DI Yogyakarta	3 133,15	0,16
Jawa Timur	47 803,49	2,49
Banten	9 662,92	0,50
Total	129.442,02	6,74

Source: Badan Pusat Statistik (Indonesian Statistics Office)

1.1.2. South Korea

Officially named Republic of Korea (ROK), South Korea lays in East Asia, precisely in the Korea peninsula. According to the World Bank data in the year 2020, South Korea has 51,78 million population, not including the migrant workers that significantly growing in South Korea. Since Industrialization has grown rapidly in South Korea, economy development also growth in the last few decades.

Korea's gross national income (GNI) per capita climbed fast from US\$67 in the early 1950s to US\$33,790 in 2019, making it the first former aid recipient to

join the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).^③

Despite of rapid development, since 2002 South Korea has continued the low birth phenomenon for this two decades (Cho; 2021). This fact also affecting the economically active population in South Korea. In September 2021 South Korea Statistics office, or known as The Korea National Statistical Office, released ‘Economically Active Population Survey (EAPS)’. The survey shows in a year from September 2020 to September 2021, economically active population (participation rate) in South Korea increase 0.5 percent. Although increasing, that number was not sufficient to cover labor demand in the country. Thus, Korean government in 2021 try to prioritize structural reform in labor market such as reform employment protection legislation, and strengthen policies to support employment of women and older persons.

In other studies, while life expectancy has arisen among Korean older generation, fertility rate shows the opposite. Decline constantly and become the lowest in the developing countries.

After the economic crisis at the end of 1997^④, the crisis changes the corporate labor management. Korean workers high adaptability gradually changes to meet the high-skill workers demand and ensure to secure the job, but the low-skilled-workers were mostly handled through outsourcing or by using non-regular employees (Hur; 2003). Many job seekers especially from the developing countries looking at South Korea’s labor market as a rising star.

^③ Cited from an article released in the World bank’s official website www.worldbank.org

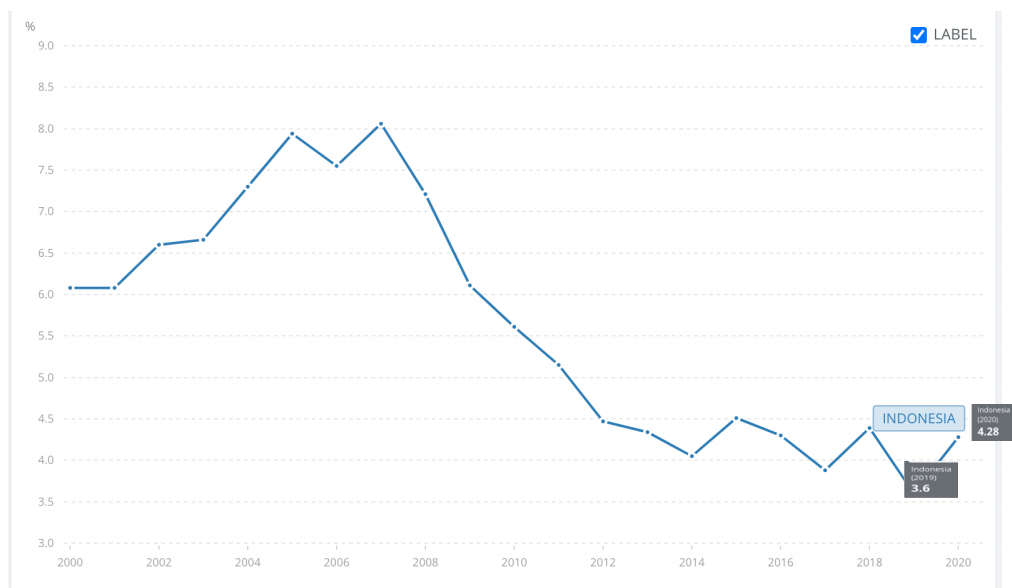
^④ Refer to The 1997-98 Korean Financial Crisis: Causes, Policy Response and Lessons <https://www.imf.org/external/np/seminars/eng/2006/cpem/pdf/kihwan.pdf>

In the 2020 Survey on Immigrants' Living conditions and Labor Force, 1.332-million-person foreigners currently living in South Korea and 63.7 percent included to the employment population ratio of foreigners.^⑤

1.1.3. Background

Figure 1.2.

Indonesia's unemployment rate (% total labor force) year 2000-2020



Source: www.data.worldbank.org

As a country with the fourth biggest population in the world, Indonesia's unemployment population is quite significant. From the world bank data, in the last twenty years, Indonesia reaches its lowest unemployment rate in the year of 2019 (3,6%). However, due to Covid19 pandemic (as stated in the world bank press

^⑤ Data obtained from 2020 Survey on Immigrants' Living Conditions and Labor Force released by The Korea National Statistical Office.

release)^⑥ in the year of 2020 unemployment rate increase to 4, 28% compared to the total labor force as illustrate in the figure 1.2.

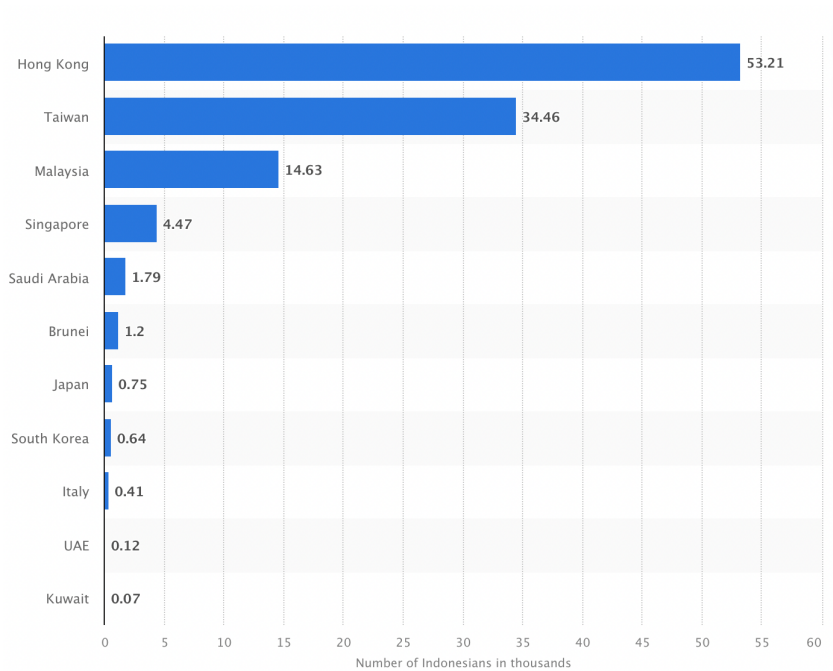
Numerous productive age Indonesian has been forced by circumstances to seek job opportunity in other countries. East Asia, the Middle East and Southeast Asia become the main destination. Even though the current view on migration is optimistic, there is a risk and downside to international migration as well (Sinnema; 2019). This research has a primary focus on Indonesia, where thousands of migrants leave to work abroad every year (Spaan & Naerssen, 2018; 681)

In East Asia, including South Korea, Indonesian is one of the labor migrant source countries. Based on Embassy of Indonesia release data on February 28th, 2019, there were 42.043 Indonesian migrants living in the Republic of Korea. 28.167 of them are workers that came to Korea under G-to-G scheme with Employment Permit System.

^⑥ The covid 19 pandemic is likely to reverse some of the gains that Indonesia has benefited from the creation of jobs in past couples of decades (<https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2021/06/30/creating-middle-class-jobs-can-pave-the-way-to-a-more-prosperous-indonesia-says-world-bank>)

Figure 1.3.

Number of Indonesian working abroad 2020, by destination country



(Source: www.statista.com)

This regulation restricts foreign worker from changing employer and workplace during a certain period of employment, and more importantly, didn't allow any migrant from the 16 countries for coming to Korea without pre consent and contract with an employer in South Korea. Most potential labor migrants have enough information about what kind of work that they will do but have insufficient information regarding the employer itself.

Most previous studies regarding the labor migrants, Republic of Korea focus on Korea regulation, environment and working condition. Jeon (2017) mentioned "Owing to the employment permit system that restricts the size of eligible workplaces, most foreign workers are engaged by small-sized employers".

In another study, Sutrimo (2019) focus on the mental health of Indonesian workers that must stay for several years in Korea. However, based on the finding and recommendations of several studies, this research will focus on the personal adaptation of the Indonesian labor migrant to the Korean employer. Whether it is because of the Korean employer treatment to the workers or other factors as gender and personal capacity of the migrant itself that make Indonesian labor migrant adapt relative well, need to be studies by this research.

1.2. Purpose of Research

This research intention is to learn about how the Indonesian labor migrant adaptation to Korean employer treatment in South Korea. A more comprehensive understanding will be found within this study what major factor creates supportive reasons for the Indonesian labor migrants to cope with a different condition they found in the workplace.

Practically, this research will give some suggestions for Indonesia Government in term policy of Indonesian migrant protection and supervision.

1.3. Significances

This study is important to give the current situation how Indonesian labor migrant adaptation in South Korea based their interaction with the Korean employer. Another importance is as a supplement for the Indonesian government to determine the policy should take by Indonesia Embassy in South Korea in promote the protection and life quality of Indonesia citizen in South Korea.

The significance of this research is: (1) the importance of understanding the development of the Indonesian labor migrant and the development of community life that accompanies it. (2) provide a more complete picture of the other side of Indonesian labor migrant's life to readers and interested parties in (3) taking Indonesian labor development and structuring policies.

1.4. Scope and Limitations

The research focus is the relation between the Indonesian labor migrant with the Korean employer, specifically on inequality treatment towards the workers based on their gender. This research limited to the selected worker within South Korea with Indonesian nationality. A balance number will be selected among men and women workers with working experience more than 3 years.

1.5. Research Questions

This study aims to examine labor migrants' adaptation shown from the length of their staying in South Korea. This study also aims to seek the different factors that support their staying. The finding the answer to the main question "How Indonesian labor migrants adapt to Korean employer treatment", it is divided into three sub-questions as follows:

1. What difficulties Indonesian workers face in the term of employer-employee relations in South Korea?
2. How Indonesian labor migrant do the adaptation to South Korea life working condition?

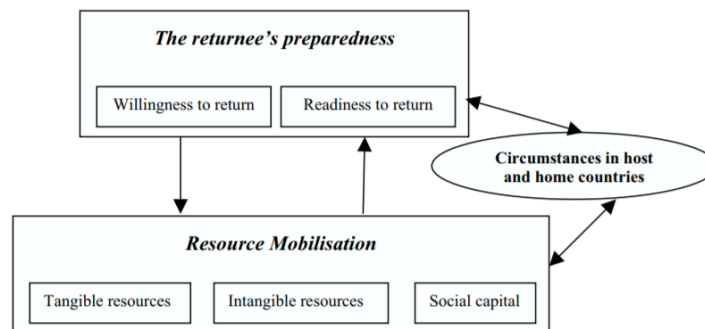
3. What is the main factor of Indonesian labor migrant adaptation in the relation with Korean employer treatment?

1.6. Conceptual Framework

For better understanding, all concepts mentioned above necessary to be put together in a conceptual framework. By adapting Cassarino's (2004) concept, researcher modified a return preparation model into this study's conceptual framework. Instead of finding what is behind the return of the labor migrant, this model uses to find the main factors of Indonesian labor migrant adaptation to stay longer in South Korea and how they adapt to their Korean employer treatment. The original model of Cassarino as presented on figure 1.4.

Figure 1.4.

The return preparation model, Cassarino, 2004



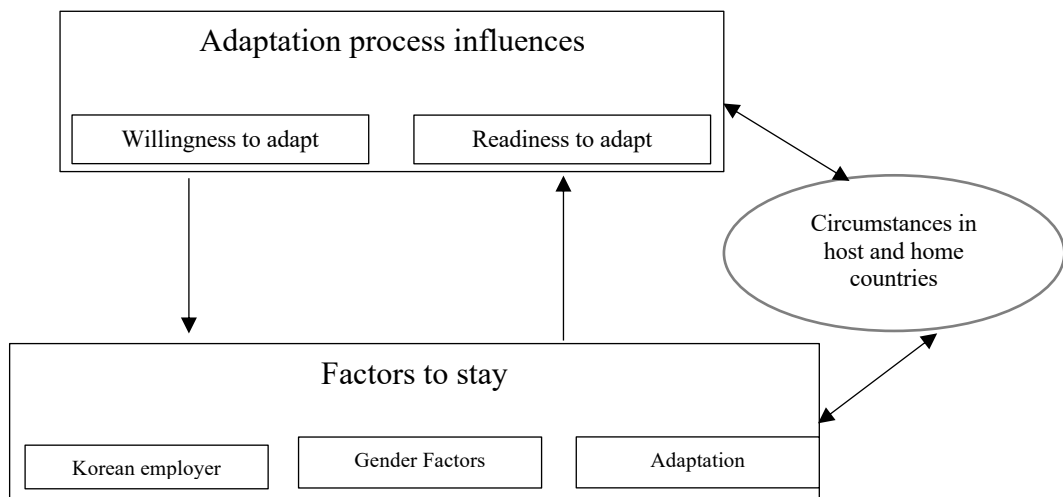
Source: Adapted from 'Theorizing Return Migration: The Conceptual Approach to Return Migrants', (Cassarino; 2004)

As seen in the figure 1.4, while the original model focuses on return influence, this study tries to adapt Cassarino's concept in different attitude. An action this study focus is the adaptation process influences before the labor migrants go to the destination country. When those influences affected by their circumstances in the host and home country, their adaptation also might be different one to each other.

As seen in the figure 1.5., researcher try to answer the questions and sub questions proposed and categorize them as factors to stay.

Figure 1.5.

Conceptual framework for research on the Indonesian labor migrant's adaptation to the Korean employer treatment



Source: Researcher.

The adaptation process influence by their factors to stay. Three different factors were focused to study in this research such as Korean employer treatment, labor migrant's gender factor and their adaptation itself to the circumstances in the home and host country.

Foreign workers may stay employed for three years once they enter South Korea. In this study, the interviewees limited to a minimum have stayed and work in South Korea for three years, this means they must have return to Indonesia and then come back to South Korea again either once or more.

Depend on how good the situation in their circumstances in Indonesia, influence the condition to return home (Sinnema; 2019). There's a chance the same condition applied why they continue to work abroad. Although this study focusses on their adaptation to Korean employer treatment, but other factors cannot be neglected. They were tangled together. Through this study, the connection between Indonesian labor migrant adaptation to the Korean employer treatment can be understand and studies widely.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

South Korea labor market is considered small for the Indonesian job seeker compared to other countries' market in the region. However, the migrant that went to South Korea tended to have pull and push factors to the country. In prior research, Yazid (2017), found if the aim is to provide safe and beneficial migration for Indonesians, the migration scheme to South Korea seems to be one of the logical choices.

The culture of South Korea, but more specifically the work culture of South Korean society can be used as a positive example for Indonesian migrant workers (Sulistiyono and Sulistianingsih; 2020) despite of how employers treat the workers might be considered as a stimulus of a stressful condition. In another study, Sutrimo, Ade (2020) found social and cultural adjustments during the resettlement process and occupational issues can be stressful for migrant workers, which can lead to symptoms of depression and anxiety.

Migrant worker adaptation to the different place other than their origin is a challenge. Human capital is an important factor of the migrant workers' integration (Wang & Fan; 2013). From the previous concept of immigrant adaptation, Wang & Fan (2013) were comparing immigrant adaptation a traditional integration framework with a theory of segmented integration proposed by Portes and Zhou. This theory argues there are multiple segments in the process of their assimilation (Portes and Zhou, 1993; Portes, 1995; Zhou, 1997).

According to Mokretcova et.al (2016), by considering different point of view labor migrant adaptation issue can be approached. The two different point of

view as they argued, first is related to the perception of something new, and second related to migrant's adjustment.

These few concepts mentioned above align with this study's conceptual framework which can be found in the figure 1.5. The process of migrant worker adaptation is influenced by the several factors that lays between two circumstances.

In the previous research that focused on the relation of foreign worker rights in industrial relations and the implication for workplace related adjustment problems, Anwar (2010) founds due to many unfavorable conditions, Indonesian migrant workers reported their complaints directly to management or employers even though many of them did not receive a satisfactory settlement. Based on this research, the researcher attempts to reveal the Indonesian labor migrant adaptation to the treatment received from their Korean employer in South Korea.

2.1. Definitions

There are three terms that need to be defined for this study:

1. Indonesian labor migrant

This term defines as the Indonesian migrant in South Korea with working visa and meet the Indonesian Government Regulation No. 10 / 2020 of the Procedures of Placement of Indonesian National Migrant Workers by the Agency of Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers, Article 8. It is stated that every Indonesian Migrant Worker required:

- (a) A minimum age of 18 (eighteen) years old.
- (b) Competence.
- (c) In healthy condition, both physically and mentally.

(d) Registered with social security participation.

(e) Completed the required documents.

2. Adaptation

There are three definitions can be taken from the thesaurus dictionary and other sources. applied to this study:

(a) The act or process of adapting (thesaurus).

(b) Something such as a device or mechanism, that is changed or changes to become suitable to a new or special application or situation” (Hughes, Larry; 2015).

3. Korean employer

A new definition combined from various sources explain this term. Employer term means a business owner, or a person responsible for the management of a business or a person who acts on behalf of a business owner with respect to matters relating to workers.^⑦

Korean employer is an organization own by a Korean nationality individual or Korean individual in a private sector that hires and pays foreign workers for their work.

Beside those three main terms which used often in this study, several definitions need further defny from the table 2.1. In order give clear explanation how those words/concept operationalized within this study.

^⑦ Labor Standards Act, Act No. 11270, February 1, 2012, Article 2 (definitions) point 2.

Table 2.1.

Definition and operationalization of the term used in conceptual framework

Term	Definition	Operationalization
Willingness to adapt	The reason why migrants prefer to stay in the workplace and adapt to the Korean employer treatment (Originally from Cassarino;2004, willingness to return, the reason why migrants return to their home country)	Adaptation can be voluntarily or forced by circumstances.
Readiness to adapt	Migrants' readiness to adapt to their Korean employer treatment	Indicated by the length of stay in the workplace as labor migrant.
Korean employer	A person, company, or organization in South Korea that pays people to work for them (Cambridge dictionary)	A Korean company or Korean individual who employs Indonesian labor migrant.
Gender factor	A way of looking at how social norms and power structure impact on the lives and opportunities available to different groups of men and women (GSDRC; 2014).	Gender differences influence individual adaptation to Korean employer treatment.
Adaptation	Something such as a device or mechanism, that is changed or changes to become suitable to a new or special application or situation" (Hughes, Larry; 2015)	Migrant workers act or perception to adjust their life in the workplace especially with the Korean employer.

Chapter 3. Research Design

3.1. Research Design of The Current Study

This research intends to seek in-depth knowledge of Indonesian labor migrant experience in South Korea. The research design chapter will describe the data acquired, follow by participant recruitment and the characteristics of the interviewees/respondents.

There are several main reasons why the researcher conducted a qualitative study in this study. First, the case study provides a “solid description” of the lives and whereabouts of Indonesian migrant workers in South Korea as a naturalistic evaluation (research). Second, this approach provides an experiential perspective in contrast to other approaches to evaluation that rely on a priori instrumentation, design, or hypotheses.

Third, this study are holistic and life-like. The researcher presents a believable picture of the existence and life of Indonesian labor migrants for actual participants in a setting, and can be easily incorporated into the "natural language" of the people (users) concerned.

Fourth, qualitative studies simplify the range of data which is asked to consider and can be made as beautiful as possible so that they best serve the purpose that the researcher has in mind. Instead of being confronted with endless technical tables, the reader is provided with essential information in a focused, conversational format. Instead of asking oneself to integrate a very wide variety of information provided in different forms. The reader is presented with a well-

integrated statement that states the important points of the study itself (Siregar; 2008).

3.2. Data Collection

This study data was acquired in qualitative research through a certain approach. In-depth interview was used in the beginning, followed by focus groups. The data collected in this study was from July until November 2021. Like other qualitative research, the researcher is the main instrument for data collection and analysis. So, the main research answer lies in the empirical data found by the author in the field and is the main source of truth. This is done so that researchers are not fixated on existing concepts or theories, so that information or data can be explored as deeply as possible.

The researcher conducted a descriptive research, because the researcher wanted to emphasize the experiences of Indonesian labor migrant during their adaptation to their employer. The process is in the form of collecting and compiling data, as well as analysing and interpreting the data. Qualitative analysis is used to explain phenomena with scientific thinking rules that are applied systematically without using quantitative models; or normative by conducting a classification, assessment of standard norms, the relationship and position of an element with other elements (Siregar; 2008).

Regarding the role of the researcher, according to Locke, Spirdoso and Silverman (1987), qualitative research is an interpretive research. Thus, the researcher's biases, values and judgments are stated explicitly in the research report. Such openness is considered beneficial and positive. The process of obtaining

permission to enter the research site and the ethical issues that arise are two elements of the researcher's role.

3.1.1. In-depth Interviews

Personal experience of each respondent was the aim of each interview conducted in this study. To gain in-depth information related to their experience, individual interview was conducted. In-depth interviews are mostly long-duration, face-to-face, interviews conducted to achieve desired goals (Showkat & Parveen; 2017). Researcher may gain interviewees personal experiences through motivations, ideas, and thoughts (Hennink et al.; 2010). Through in-depth interview, researcher may understand the individual context labor migrant live in their workplace.

Unstructured questions interview was conducted. This method has been chosen due to the circumstances. It was important to build the trust first from respondents to the researcher. Unstructured interviews are moreover like a daily based conversation. There is no specific set of predetermined questions (Showkat & Parveen; 2017). Therefore, different questions have been asked to the respondents. This method is important to gain knowledge of the dynamic relations between the Indonesian labor migrant with people surround them, especially Korean employer as a determinant factor for their stay in South Korea. Due to the varieties in cases, all interviews were different, although all also have similarities.

The length of an interview also different for each respondent. Varied between 15 minutes to 1,5 hours. The respondent's reaction and openness to the researcher, influence the length of the interview. However, it was found that women respondents tend to have a longer duration than the men respondents.

Most interview All interviews were conducted in Indonesian language since both researcher and respondents were native in Indonesian language. This language also chosen to avoid misinterpretation between researcher and respondents and to give the comfortable feeling to respondent while expressing their experiences to the researcher, then all the interview script were translated into English by the researcher.

Each interview was started from an introduction of the researcher and a question of the respondent's personal health condition. The key question was different to each respondent, but after they were asked "How does your work going?", the answer was varied and then information related to their adaptation with the workplace and the employer will come up with different stories. The interview guide will be found in the appendix 1.

3.1.2. Focus Group

Beside in-depth interviews, focus group also conducted in this study. There were three focus group were used during the data collection period. It was found that respondents tend to open in sharing their experiences while in the focus group rather than interviewed individually. Once one respondent expressed their experience, the other respondents confirming and start to reveal their own experience.

The first focus group conducted with three women participants. The second focus group were mixed two women and two men. The third focus group also conducted mix women and women. However, there might be some bias found due to not all participants were interviewed in the focus group. The reason behind this

condition because some of the participant lived in the Daegu city and couldn't coincide their schedule to participate in the focus group.

Focus group information can be found in the appendix 2.

3.1.3. Other Data

Beside the interview with the labor migrant's origin from Indonesia, an officer in charge of the Indonesian migrant worker from The Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in South Korea also interviewed to provide the framework of the Indonesian labor migrant in South Korea.

The government officer was found through networking, and the interview has conducted twice, first where a face-to-face interview conducted then continue with in-text interview. The data received from the government was related to the insight of the current situation of the Indonesian labor migrants in South Korea and the issues found.

3.3. Participant Recruitment

Oxford dictionaries identify a participant as a person who takes part in something. Thus, the participant in this study is the Indonesian migrant who work as a labor force in South Korea. For this study, 10 Indonesian labor migrants were interviewed. This study goal is to learn and find why the Indonesian labor migrant adapted to their employer treatment with the working their condition. A few men and women workers who work in Seoul and have working experience no less than five years take part as the respondents. In total, 5 women and 5 men participated.

According to Showkat & Parveen (2017) in-depth interview is one of the most significant forms of data collection, not more than a total of some 10-15 people are interviewed individually in a study using an in-depth interview method of data collection. Additionally, the participant of the interview recruited through a snowball sampling. The first respondent was contacted through researcher networking. Parker et al. (2019) defines snowball sampling as the agreeable participants which then asked to recommend other contacts who fit the research criteria and who potentially might also be willing participants. Therefore, social networks established as the initial link then finished once the target respondent reached the number of 10 participants.

3.4. Data Analysis

Except for a government officer interview, all the 13 interviews were recorded. All respondents were stated as anonymous. As the varied on the length of the interview, the data proved in the interviews also wide and vary. After all transcripts were finished, all the data collected were summarized using a deductive method. Hennink et al. (2010) describe deductive codes as originated from concepts from the theory or the conceptual model. In this study, analysis done by following the conceptual framework found in the figure 1.5.

3.5. Limitations

The role of the researcher in qualitative research, in particular, as the primary instrument of data collection requires the identification of personal values, assumptions and prejudices at the outset of the study. The researcher's contribution

in the research setting can be beneficial and positive, not detrimental (Locke et.al; 1987).

Since this study was using a in-depth interview method, the sample size of the participant is very small. Due to the small size, participants were not selected in a proper scientific procedure as random sampling, etc. Another limitation found in this study was a reflection on the positionality. Hennink (2010) mentioned characteristic, and position of the researcher can influence the data collection.

A gap could be found between the researcher and the target group. A Gap between scholar and migrant worker appeared in the beginning of research. Hesitation from the respondents was the main reason why the interviews took about three months to get complete. After some approach from the researcher, finally the target sample found, and interviews can be conducted through in-depth interview and focus group.

3.6. Characteristics of The Respondents

The participants from the Indonesian labor migrants were recruited in a balance number between men and women. Gender factor was one of the indicators mentioned in the conceptual framework, thus important to include this point to determine to get equal information from both genders.

The age range of the respondents are between 29 years old until 45 years old. All labor migrant participants came to South Korea under the government-to-company scheme of migration, however, during the stay in the country, one of the participants' status changes become an illegal worker.

Currently, all the participants work in manufacture company. One participant has previous experience working in the fishery work. Except one participant that became illegal, nine of them migrated more than once to South Korea. Thus, they have more than five years working experience as a labor migrant in South Korea.

Table 3.1.

Respondents list of the study

#	Name/ Initial	Gender	Age	Time Abroad	Origin	Working location
1	IN	Female	32	9 years	Cirebon	Cheonan
2	M	Female	31	8 years	Indramayu	Ansan
3	EN	Female	40	10 years	Yogyakarta	Ansan
4	N	Female	32	6 years	Cirebon	Sareung
5	A	Female	29	5 years	Semarang	Bucheon
6	KS	Male	50	7 years	Yogyakarta	Ansan
7	KR	Male	33	10 years	Indramayu	Ansan
8	SM	Male	35	10 years	Cirebon	Daegu
9	SW	Male	40	10 years	Cirebon	Daegu
10	B	Male	28	5 years	Yogyakarta	Ansan

Respondents mentioned that they receive information about working as a labor migrant from their family member or acquaintance. The preparation needed such a training and language course, arranged and paid by themselves.

In the focus group interviews, involved participants were related to each other. The first group member are relatives to each other, while in the other two groups were acquaintances and bond a brotherhood/sisterhood like relation to each other.

Chapter 4. Finding and Analysis

This section will discuss labor migrants experienced for understanding of their adaptation the social life in South Korea, especially in term of relations with their employer or senior employee. Based on the desk study, the first sub section will describe the trend and policy overview in South Korea itself to see how Indonesian labor migrant compare to other countries labor migrant will be shown and discussed as an illustration to see how Indonesian labor migrants' adaptation going.

The following sub-section will discuss the finding of influences Indonesian labor migrant received in order to willing and ready to adapt with the situation they have to face in South Korea. And lastly the third sub section will discuss the factors to stay in south Korea found from Indonesian labor migrant experience as a process of their adaptation.

At the end of this chapter, the author will also describe the daily activities in which are generally a description of the activities of migrant workers. can also be categorized as a description of the adaptation of migrant workers to their work and environment. In order to make the picture clear, some secondary data obtained from other sources were rechecked through interviews and observations.

4.1. Indonesian Labor Migrant and Labor Migrant in South Korea

The description of this section is intended to give description of the situation and circumstances that become the research background. The researcher

considers it important to provide a complete picture of the research background about labor migrant in South Korea. In addition to reviewing some aspects of the lives of migrant workers in South Korea, it is also to provide information on where and how this research took place.

The background of the research in the form of situations and circumstances that want to be described in this chapter includes the trend of migrant workers in South Korea, the regulations that apply in South Korea and the situation of Indonesian migrant workers themselves, especially those in South Korea.

4.1.1. Labor Migrant Trend in South Korea

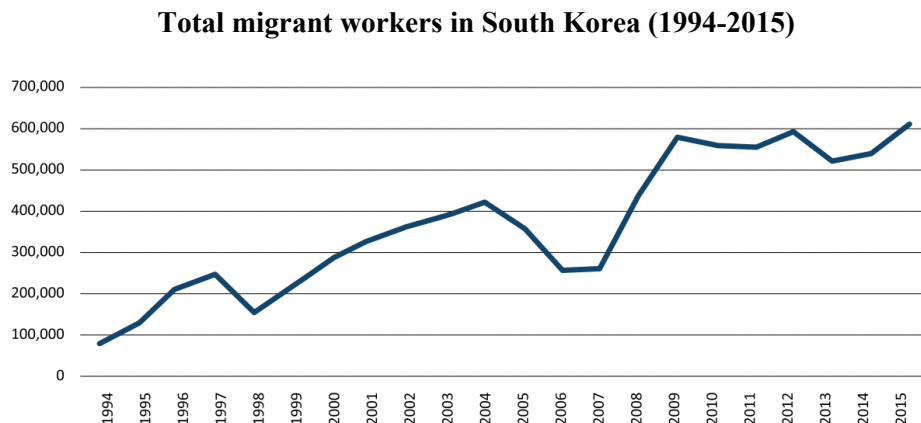
The existence of migrant workers in South Korea is an evidence of the rapid development of economy and industry in this country. South Korea is highly dependent on manufacturing product for export[®]. But most young Korean now aspire to work as a white-collar employee which offers stability (Hur; 2018). The high demand for migrant labor force in South Korea is high, therefore South Korea had to open their door for workers from other countries to fill the unskilled work position (Callinan; 2020). These factors creating need for migrant workers.

Bangladesh, Indonesia, Nepal, and the Philippines are the major labor-exporting nations in South and Southeast Asia (Basnet & Seo; 2016) including to South Korea. Still according to their study, most migrant that come to South Korea, did not have sufficient knowledge of Korean language and customs, Korean legislation, and labor right. Limited job opportunities that make the situation difficult for the migrant to find a good job and to adapt well in South Korea.

[®]Emerging markets: analyzing South Korea's GDP by Prableen Bapjai, updated on June 16, 2021. <https://www.investopedia.com/articles/investing/091115/emerging-markets-analyzing-south-koreas-gdp.asp>

Their finding regarding difficulties in finding a good job contrasts with the data published by Korean Statistical Information Service (KOSIS) in their website. Although this data as shown in the figure 4.1 were showing only until the year of 2015, but that was the last data officially released by Korea Statistic Office regarding labor migrant number in South Korea. As shown in the figure 4.1., since 1994 until 2015 total migrant in South Korea increasing significantly. For two decades, the increasing number from 1994 become more than five times in 2015.

Figure 4.1.

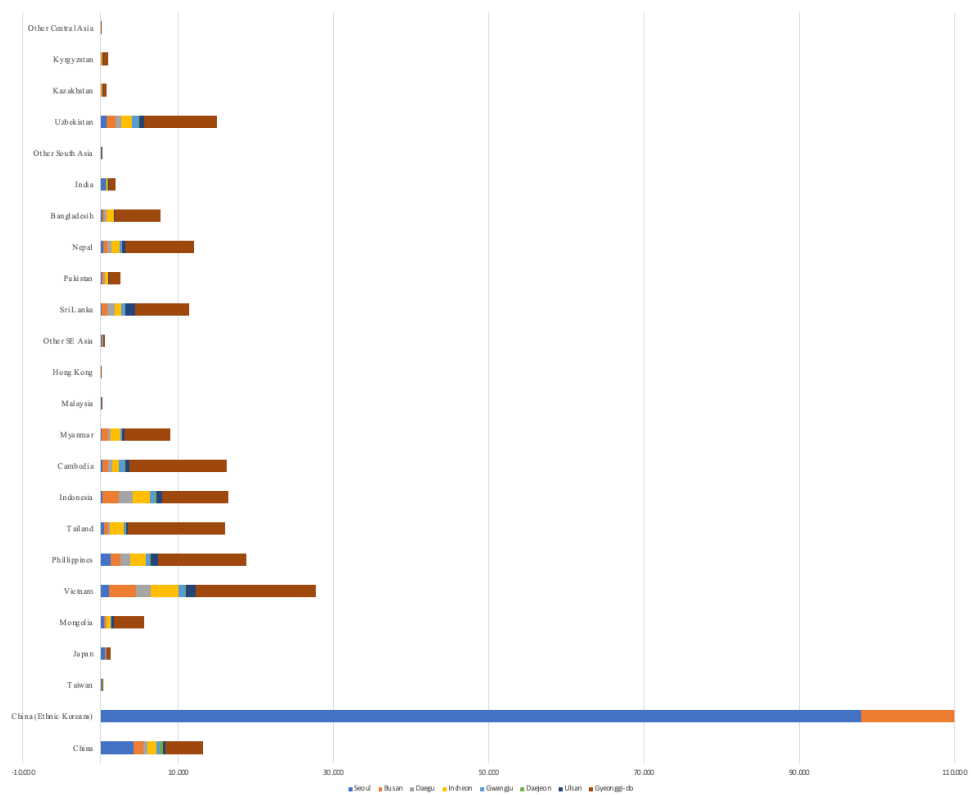


Source: Korean Statistical Information Service

Another data released by the same office shows the composition of International migrant workers in South Korea by the year of 2015. Migrant workers from China with Korean ethnicity dominate compared to other countries. However, as shown in the figure 4.2., compared to another region South-east Asia contribute a higher number of migrant workers in South Korea.

Figure 4.2.

Migrant workers in South Korea by countries (2015)



Source: Korean Statistical Information Service

Figure 4.3.

Labor migrants' origin from Southeast Asia (2015)

Country of Labor Migrant	Region							
	Seoul	Busan	Daegu	Incheon	Gwangju	Daejeon	Ulsan	Gyeonggi-do
Vietnam	1109	3472	1886	3559	796	160	1230	15476
Philippines	1258	1288	1251	1986	569	138	861	11460
Thailand	486	451	238	1749	288	61	217	12553
Indonesia	252	2045	1802	2218	673	136	792	8552
Cambodi	253	723	462	943	701	69	558	12502

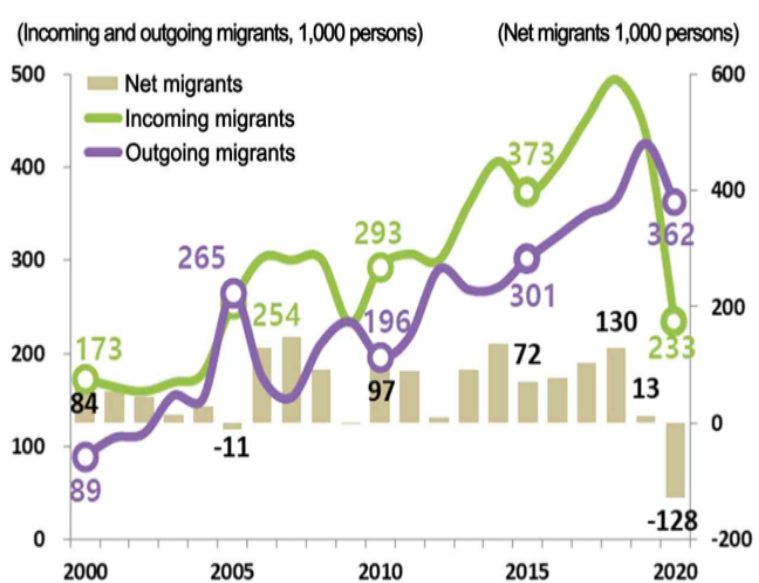
a								
Myanmar	133	839	278	1252	263	16	266	5946
Malaysia	141	6	2	8	3	3	3	26
Hong Kong	1	3	2	0	0	1	0	6
Other SE Asia	140	45	3	46	45	8	7	288

Source: Korean Statistical Information Service

Another migration of foreigner data of the year 2020, officially released by Korea statistic office in 2021, shows the number of incoming and outgoing foreigners' migrant in South Korea (in figure 4.4). However, no information included to differentiate labor migrants from the other migrants.

Figure 4.4.

Incoming and upcoming migration in South Korea (2000-2020)



Source: Adapted from International Migration Statistics in 2020, Korea Statistic Office.

From figure 4.3., revealed until 2015, most of Southeast Asian labor migrant were concentrated in Gyeonggi-do province compared to other regions in South Korea. The differences were quite significant. This significant number explains why most of the participants in this study coming from Gyeonggi-do, although it was unintentionally since the participants were selected through a snowball method.

As an province that surround the capital city, Seoul, Gyeonggi-do province evenly developed in manufacturing complex and in fast growth of small and medium-sized company or industries.^⑨ Choi (2018) argues that in facing the hike of minimum wage, South Korean employers responded in different way. Rather than cutting employment, such as reducing employee benefits/allowance, strengthening labor intensity, etc. This condition, such as working in less benefit salary but loaded with labor intensity, mostly give less attraction and avoided by the local labors. Due to that, employers have no options other than looking for foreign workers that mostly come from a low-income country and willing to work in minimum wage payment.

If we look by industry, manufacturing sector plays as a key industry in South Korea and accounts for the largest share for migrant labor force, about 45% of total migrant workers in South Korea (Jeon; 2020). Jeon also reported nearly half of them (49%) engaged in low-income elementary occupation. While male workers concentrated in the income range USD 1,700-2,600, majority of female workers in the income range USD 860-1,700 (Jeon; 2020).

^⑨ Gyeonggi Province. www.en.wikipedia.org

Table 4.1.**Technical manpower shortage by industry**

(Unit: person, %)

Industry/manufacture		Current Employees	Short- age	Short- age rate
Total		626,636	28,181	4.30
8 Key Industries	Electronic Industry	95,781	2,197	2.24
	Machinery Industry	57,325	3,241	5.35
	Chemical Industry	44,196	2,753	5.86
	Automobile Industry	33,522	914	2.65
	Semiconductor Industry	32,192	555	1.70
	Ship Industry	20,858	403	1.90
	Steel Industry	15,434	1,038	6.30
	Textile Industry	7,451	386	4.93
Other Manufac- turing Sectors	Manufacture of Fabricated Metal Products, Except Machinery and Furniture	17,457	1,357	7.21
	Manufacture of Medical, precise, optics,	12,168	990	7.52
	Manufacture of Food Products	8,171	481	5.56
	Manufacture of Other Non-metallic Mineral Products	6,497	151	2.28
	Manufacture of Pulp, Paper and Paper Products	2,457	40	1.60
	Manufacture of furniture and wood Products	1,373	264	16.12
	Reproduction of Recorded Media	1,293	14	1.10
	Manufacture of Beverages	1,036	21	1.94
	The other manufacturing business	825	62	7.02
	Manufacture of Tanning and Dressing of Leather, Manufacture of Luggage and Footwear	447	16	3.38
	Manufacture of Wood Products of Wood and Cork; Except Furniture	335	16	4.57
	Manufacture of Tobacco Products	182	5	2.60
	Research and development	78,584	2,454	3.03
Printing		65,855	5,796	8.09
Architecture, engineering, other technical service		41,901	1,945	4.44
Computer programing, integration and management		31,376	1,095	3.37
Professional service		18,299	801	4.20
Information Service		8,642	493	5.40
Communication		8,547	355	3.99
Business facilities management		6,213	145	2.28
Business support services		5,353	87	1.60
The other professional, scientific, and technical service		2,478	82	3.19
Renting and Leasing		390	24	5.82

Source: Statistics Korea (<http://kostat.go.kr>).

Table 4.1. shows the percentage of the employees shortage in manufacturing sectors. 2020 data which released this year (2021) mentioned overall there are still 4.30% shortage rate in manufacture sectors open for either local workers or labor migrants. As a matter of fact, although Korean economy still

recover from the COVID-19 shock, the export growth and economy productivity remain robust with the growth set reach 4% in 2021.^⑩ Decreasing in local labor supply with high productivity and export comes from the manufacture industry, South Korea demands on labor migrants remain high and leave the door open for job seekers from developing countries, including Indonesia.

In the interview conducted to the participants, researcher were asking the same question:

“What was the reason for choosing South Korea as the destination country to work abroad?”

Four of ten participants answers was they choose South Korea due to the high demand in Korean labor market for a manufacture industry compared to many other countries.

“Most countries in middle east and our neighbouring in need of women migrant workers rather than men. Because most the job are as housemaid. Not much field left for me.”

(KS, 50, Ansan)

“ I don’t want to work in another country as a housemaid or caregiver, that’s why I choose South Korea. ”

(IN, 32, Cheonan).

^⑩ Economic Forecast Summary (December 2021), www.oecd.org

Compare to other countries that also open their labor market for foreigner, requirement that the labor migrant applicant must meet is relative high. As mentioned in the table 4.1. biggest labor shortage is in the manufacture sector. This fact also related to South Korea's regulation which did not give authorization to foreign citizen for working as a caregiver and domestics work. Indonesia's official office which in charge of labor migrants arrangement and protection released in their website, for applicants who wants to working South Korea must attained an education level minimum high school graduate.^⑪ Further explanation of the policy will be discussed in the next sub-section related to South Korea's policy of labor migrants.

4.1.2. South Korea's Policy of Labor Migrants

South Korea's rises in life expectancy and the decline in fertility rate have lead South Korea to labor shortages and creating a demand for migrant labor. Despite the legacy of homogeneity, demographic trends have pushed South Korean policymakers to encourage inbound migration,

Still related to the demographics change, about sixty percent of Korea's post-industrial workforce is employed in the services sector, but its economy still maintains strong. Industrial and agricultural sectors still in need of imported labor (Draudt; 2019). For those several reasons, South Korea's government was forced to accept the employment of workers from various countries due to rapid wage increases and labor shortages.

Because to South Korea's deliberate loosening of migration rules, different

^⑪ Official announcement of labor job vacancy in South Korea in manufacture sector based on G-to-G scheme as release in BNP2TKI official website; <http://g2g.bn timer2tki.go.id>

types of residents from varied ethnic, political, and national backgrounds have been able to enter and stay, including migrant workers. In time, foreign laborers developed a noticeable presence in the country (Kim; 2004).

Mokretcova et.al (2016) argue that migration policy in countries hosting a considerable number of migrants. Their study 's argument in line with Jones (2019) study that focus on South Korean government large-scale support to small and medium enterprises which have been raised up in South Korea. One of the support is assisted through the right to hire foreign workers.

South Korean government open the door for migrant workers employment through certain policies. For non-national workers in unskilled positions, South Korea enact the work permit system called the Employment Permit System (EPS) (Callinan; 2020). According to Lee (2012), the concept of EPS was designed to attract workers who would fill simple technical jobs. EPS allows employers who couldn't hire local workforce to legally employ foreign workers. Under this employment permit system, there are two categories of foreign workers with long-term visas in Korea: nonprofessional and professional. Non-professional workers hold mostly nonprofessional employment (E-9), working visit (H-2) or compatriot (F-4) visas (Jeon; 2017).

The Korean Government maintains a list of countries that are eligible for EPS work permits and an annual quota of workers is maintained for each country (Abella & Kouba; 2016). Quota of the migrant workforce is considering the demand trends of Korean economic and labor market every year. Each employer allowed to have less than 300 regular workers.^⑫

^⑫ Publication of employment permit system in South Korea from Ministry of Labor, 2010.

EPS prohibit discrimination toward migrant workers. In the article 22 of The Act concerning the Employment System for Migrant Workers, stated “*An employer shall not give unfair and discriminatory treatment to foreign workers on the grounds of their status*”. By this Act, South Korea became the first country in Asia which importing labor to legally protect migrant workers (Amnesty International, 2006).

Although, there are various policy attempts to work on the issue of migrant workers the situation of migrant workers was found to be unsatisfactory (Basnet & Seo; 2016). Most labor migrants were not aware of those right.

Labor migrant allowed to stay in the country for 3 years and legally tied to their employer. They can also extend their stay in employment by 22 months also with the consent of their employer. Tied to their employers, make labor migrants not possible to change employers, except if the employer shuts down or they have evidence of mistreatment from the employer. These rules make labor migrants vulnerable.

Korea’s policies on labor migrants is limited to short-term labor needs and lacks connection with mid- to long-term foreign worker planning.^⑬ Consider of how long each participants has worked in South Korea, above five years can be categorized as a mid to long term employment. That means no certain protection or guarantee as well for them.

According to participants IN, she already stays in the country for almost 10 years and in the process to change her visa status from E9 into E7, otherwise she has to leave the country by the beginning of 2022.

4.1.3. Indonesian Labor Migrant

^⑬ As listed in the Article 23 and Table I attached Enforcement Decree of the Immigration Act.

Currently, there's no available official data of Indonesian migrant in South Korea published by Korea government, the other possible source of information was obtained from the interview conducted with government officer in The Embassy of Republic of Indonesia in South Korea. Per September 30, 2021, there are 34,346 Indonesian citizens documented living on South Korea. Total male workers are 30,232 and total female workers are 4,114.

In his study, Sinnema (2019) mentioned Indonesian migrants dominated about 60 up to 80 percent by women, while maid and caregiver still dominate being the biggest occupation number which take up Indonesian migrant workers. This study found certainly different pattern from most labor migrant—destination countries, Indonesian migrants were dominated by men. Different from most Indonesian labor migrant in other countries as well, most Indonesian labor migrants work in semi-professional field, manufacture, and fisheries.

There is no internationally agreed-upon definition of a migrant worker who is less or semi-skilled. In general, a semi-skilled worker is someone who requires some training or familiarization with the job before being able to operate at maximum/optimal efficiency, though this training is not of the length or intensity required for designation as a skilled (or craft) worker, and is usually not at the tertiary level. As a result, many "manual laborers" (for example, production and construction workers) should be categorized as semi-skilled. A less or low-skilled worker, on the other hand, is someone who has had less training than a semiskilled worker or who has learned competence on the job despite having received no training.

From the total Indonesian migrant, there are 27,824 Indonesian currently reside in South Korea as labor migrant. 21,194 among them were holding E9 visa

and came to South Korea through G-to-G scheme for manufacture or fishery sector. The rest of labor migrants with total number 6,258 migrants were holding E10 visa and work in fishery sector as a ship crew. However, there's no exact data found can differentiate the Indonesian labor migrant by gender and by location of their workplace.

4.2. Influences to Adapt

When labor migrants prepare to leave Indonesia to work in another country, they must navigate a complex web of laws and procedures. From the explanations above, it can be said that there were two stages of development that were recorded as influencing migrant workers to decide to work in other countries, whether they are willing to adapt with certain policies and requirements, and whether they ready to adapt with the new environment in the destination country.

In this sub section, influence to adapt with different environment and society will be discussed. Emphasized on the most important encouragement that influence their willingness and readiness to adapt in South Korea.

4.2.1. Willingness to Adapt

When leaving the origin country to work in South Korea, labor migrant equipped with knowledge of laws and policy from both, host and destination countries. When asked about the information-source and the facilitating part of their coming employment to South Korea, family members or relative were mentioned. Despite policy disparities across the labor migrants' destination countries, several policies apply to all labor migrants leaving Indonesia.

Another different found from other destination-country. Sinnema (2019) found on his study, the help from agency as the most facilitating party in accommodating migrant worker to go abroad. For working in South Korea, Indonesia government control and facilitate migrants through G-to-G scheme. Despite this fact, since the respondents of this study were connected in a family or relative relationship, support, and facility to meet the requirement obtained from the previous family or relative member who is already working abroad.

SM and SW, both origins from Cirebon, are siblings. They came together to South Korea and working in the same city, Daegu. As questioned by the researcher of which was the factor that influence them to go to South Korea, both answered “*my brother*”.

“I dare to apply working abroad because my brother also applying together with me”
(SM, 35).

Willingness came since they already have comfort feeling toward each other and certain feeling the presence of the brother will help them to adapt well in South Korea, although in Daegu they did not work at the same manufacture company. Respondent also explained, before coming to South Korea, they have to prepare such as documents, language training, etc.

Respondent IN, 32, mentioned:

“At least around 4 million Korean won were spent only for preparation to go to South Korea. Compared to Indonesian currency, that amount of money is huge. I got the money from my brothers.”

To make it clear, based on the interview, IN mentioned that SM and SW are her brothers that help and encourage her to work in South Korea. Therefore, family or relatives who already stay in South Korea lend the money and returned after they settle and receive their salary in South Korea.

In another situation, M who also an acquaintance of IN described :

“I borrow money from IN on behalf of my relative to help him come to work in South Korea”

The willingness effort to adapt with new environment started even before the migrant workers itself arrive in South Korea. Further, researcher questioned respondent M about who's the one who support her preparation to go to South Korea, M responded it was her husband who previously already work for couple of years in South Korea.

Cultural factor influence found from eight of ten respondents. Easy access to entertainment information and social media encourages respondents to have their own experience living in South Korea. Respondents admit that they knew how the working culture in South Korea is. Not only from media, relatives that already in South Korea also give preliminary knowledge of working condition, rules, and the employer treatment.

Another factor that also described by the respondents during in-depth interview and focus group, migrating to South Korea is not depend on agency authorization, but rather depend on someone capability to passed the test required such as Korean language test (TOPIK) and skill test. Researcher found this information quite different from Sinnema (2019) finding on his study where most Indonesian migrant workers in Hongkong bound to agency involvement and build up a loan to the agency during preparation time before departure. Those differences of employment to South Korea and host countries that passed from one to another gives confident to the respondents in preparing themselves to take action working in South Korea.

4.2.2. Readiness to Adapt

As previously mentioned, language training is one of the must-do preparations since it is required by South Korean regulation. Voluntary enrolled can be considered as evidence of their readiness to adapt in the new environment in South Korea. When asked what helped them get over the stressful situation before going to work abroad, respondents said that migration is common in their area and that they could talk to friends and relatives about it because they had already gone through it.

Interesting facts found during interview for this study, all the respondents were connected in a certain relationship one to each other. Three respondents (SM, SW, IN) were siblings, although in fact in South Korea they lived in different region and could not meet frequently. Other two were relatives to those siblings, and four respondents were couple while two of them were married. Respondents

argued that knowing in the have someone to rely on in South Korea influence their motive to go and support stable intention on their mind. This support also formed in established a contract between labor migrant and employer through personal arrangement scheme employment. Although this option is no longer available in South Korea, since all the respondents already work in South Korea for more than five years, previously they succeed to enter Korean labor market through this arrangement. In the other side, recommendation from the already employed labor migrant, assured the employer to issue a contract with the future labor migrant. this evidence supports the argument that readiness to adapt in the new workplace and the new employer is influenced by the circumstances in host country or in the destination country.

4.3. Factors to Stay

Labor migration differs from the common traditional migration by its temporary nature. Labor migration, unlike traditional immigration, implies a temporary residence in a host country, which raises the question of whether labor migrants must adapt. On the other hand, it is frequently decided to stay longer than they first intention after rather than a short term of working period they initially intending only to make a living. As a result, an issue of adaptation emerges as critical.

The adaptation process influence by their factors to stay. This sub-section is an empirical chapter which emphasized the life of respondents after migrating to South Korea. Firstly, the working condition and living condition will be discussed. Secondly, the adaptation of respondents will be explained. To conclude, an

overview of gender factors will be discussed. This sub-section contents derived from the in-depth interview with each respondent, and focus group conducted after the interview.

4.3.1. Living in South Korea

The respondents were asked whether they were struggled to live in the new environment. Most of the students answer 'no'. But three of the respondents mentioned, although passed the language training in Indonesia but they couldn't adjust the language barrier in South Korea. After questioned further, it was found that due to their fellow worker also labor migrant and some of them origin from Indonesia, Korean language were rarely used, except in the interaction with the employer or the senior employee. The barrier in language become harder when they have to interact with Korean out of the working place.

Fortunately, not every respondent had a negative encounter with the language. Some of them talk about how their language skills improved and how their communication with their employer improved. Six of ten respondents able to talk in Korean casually. During the observation period, researcher witnessed their ability to speak Korean language in daily life. However four of the respondents remain unable to speak Korean despite of long term staying in the country.

"I came to Korea with very basic Korean language, but during my employment, I learned some working phrases. Mostly from my interaction with the employer."

(KS, 50, Ansan)

Another respond from N,

“I don’t really speak Korean, but for working I think it’s enough, because I know some common phrases and sentences that often used by my employer.”

In term of adaptation to the language, different respondents have different of view. Although different, one similarity that found from their language experience is this two group try to mastered common basic Korean language that they feel important for communication with their employer. Adjusting to the employer become an important factor in determining their language barriers adaptation.

New environment giving new experiences. Researcher throw a question related to the language barriers, four of the respondents who answer that they couldn’t adapt well with the language. Then researcher continue questioning the reason behind their ability to adjust with new environment, the common respond was because they came from Java Island that relative well developed compared to other island in Indonesia, so it was no difficulties in facing modern life in South Korea.

Another respond from respondent N, due to most of the labor migrant in South Korea origin from Java, they found similarities to communicate and share new social community bond.

When the interview was conducted, one of the respondent who lives in Cheonan came to Ansan. Her visit intentionally to condole another Indonesian labor migrant who lost her family member in the home country. Social networks were built among labor migrant not only among migrants who work in the same company or lives in the same area, but the network also spread cross city or area.

Although majority respondents agree it is preferable to live near their family and speak positive about their loved ones, the unmarried/single respondents

mentioned they prefer to stay far from their family member but in reachable distance. Same as in Korea with a patriarchy society, their hometown culture was patriarchy as well.

One of the sibling respondents (IN, 32) who also relative to N (32) respond they preference to work in different city from each other, since they were female and did not want to be attached with the brothers who works in Daegu. SM, 35, and SW, 40, who were sibling to IN, 32, confirmed her argument and mentioned I were agreeing to work in South Korea as long as not live in the same workplace with the brothers. One of the reasons why the brothers' respondents encourage IN to work in South Korea were because they felt responsible of the sister who lives alone in their hometown an already loss both parents.

Research by Conroy & Brennan (2003) in Ireland told a different story of migrants. They found that most migrants were lonely because they missed their families, and they always sought their families to join them. During interviewed by researcher, respondents K,35, were already working for a year in South Korea before he encourages his wis wife to come to South Korea. M, 31, confirmed the argument and mentioned it took her almost another year to finish preparation and go to South Korea.

Although there is a regulation for labor migrant in South Korea not to bring family member, but by encouraging another family member to join as a labor migrant in South Korea. Living in the family circumstances motivate them to live adapt in the new condition.

The respondents were asked about the difficulties they face in the workplace and in the living place. Majority responds different treatment toward foreigner in the community as an obstacle. Especially after covid-19 pandemic

spread in the country, there were some phobias in the community toward foreign worker believed that they bring the virus to the country, even though they have stayed in South Korea long before the pandemic spread.

4.3.2. Employer and The Treatment

In this study, and employer considered as a Korean company or Korean individual who employs Indonesian labor migrant. However during the interview and focus group, it was found that beside employer there are several structural position that stands between the worker and the employer, such as senior employee or supervisor. All them including employer were all with Korean nationality.

From several interview, the respondents mentioned before deciding to work South Korea, previously they have worked in Indonesia as a labor force as well. Working in South Korea was not the first working experience. Two respondents explain that working regulation in their workplace relatively easy compared to their previous work in Indonesia manufacture company, however the working habit, tight schedule and overtime work were something that they have to adjust in the beginning.

All respondents of the study were having Islam as their religion. As part of the religion, five times a day praying is a must do for the Islam believers.

One of the respondents (M, 29, Ansan) admit,

“Even after several years, I try to be faithful on my religion and pray five times a day even though it was difficult during the working hours.”

Among five female labor migrants, M is the only person who is using scarf to cover her hair. In other interviews, respondents N, SM and SW described they have to adjust their praying time as the break schedule were so limited. Although difficult but they try to follow the situation and still praying.

However the remaining respondents admit that although they still keep the religion, but they didn't actually practice it a lot. Otherwise, the employer might be fired them because considered as non-productive workers.

This study has no primary intention to bring religious issue, but due to the in-depth interview with unstructured questions, the conversation was led to many issues that appear to the surface.

Employers treatments towards their workers gives some effect on the workers adaptation. Not to create a conflict with the scheduled working hours stated as the way to adapt to their employer. Practicing praying is concerning as a challenge in their adaptation to the employer. Despite the difficulties, respondents M didn't found a too difficult adjustment from the employer. Her way in covering her head create an unspoken understanding to the employer about her religious preference and did not interfere with the praying time.

As explained in the previous sub section, rise in minimum wage has driven employers to responds in some action. Generally, they wouldn't cut the employments instantly, instead, they seek alternative measures. Cutting back employees benefit/allowance (Choi; 2018) was one of the issue found during the interview.

When in-depth interview conducted individually, researcher asked question to each participant :

"Does employer has ever cut your salary due to any reason?".

However, none of the participants would like to raise an answer regarding the issue. But in different circumstances while the first focus group conducted to three participants 9IN, N & A), the other two (IN and N) were confirming A statement which after working for 11 months, she ought to receive a bonus in the 12th month. Without unreasonable reason, she didn't receive the promised bonus from employer. Instead, her works was suspended for two continues weeks and resumed again.

“The conditions applied create a reason to my employer for not giving me the annual bonus I supposed to receive” as stated by A during the focus group interview.

In the same focus group, after A clearly stated her experience, N confirming similar story of hers. According to common regulation on other factories that she knows (including factories where A and IN works), after working five days in a row, they supposed to receive a full day bonus payment as if they are working on Saturday. However N experience says differently,

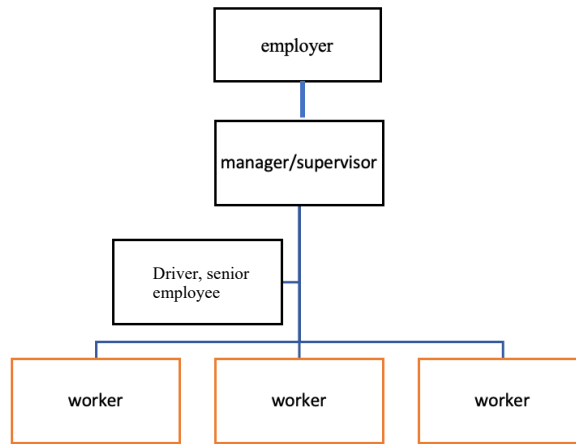
“I work six days in a row from Monday to Saturday and only have day off on Sunday, although he is nice as a person but my employer never gives us the one day bonus as what IN and A get” (N, works in Sareung, Gyeonggi province)

In another focus group interview, KD

From the interviews and desk studies, researcher found two common firm structures that employed Indonesian labor migrant. Both structures draw in the figure 4.4. and figure 4.5.

Figure 4.4.

Firm structure 1

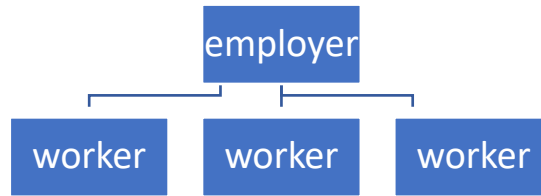


As argued by Mokretcova's et. al (2016), maintaining interpersonal relationship is one of the factors of capability for labor migrant to adapt.

The respondents were asked about relation they have with their employer. Many Indonesian labor migrants working in manufacture industry did not communicate with their employers, even though one of the requirements from both countries (South Korea and Indonesia) is a direct employment contract between the South Korean employer and the Indonesian employer, but in reality, during their working hours, the manager or supervisor is the one who deals with the employees on a daily basis.

Figure 4.4.

Firm structure 2



In a small company or in individually employed basis, respondents mentioned that the relation between Korean employer and the worker relatively close. Some positive and negative effect from the close relation mentioned by K who already work with the employer for seven years. Despite of professional relation most of the time put forward, but emotional treatment such as verbally harassed often received by the labor migrants. From the interviews and focus group, it is found that regardless of the firm size, there is a very distinctive coordination line that affect migrant. As seen from both figure (figure 4.3. and figure 4.4).

Respondents I who works in a small manufacture firm described her work was working with 9 machines that handled by 5 workers. All workers were migrants. Her workplace has a night shift. At least 2 days a week she works both in day and nightshift. Derived from the interview with Embassy's official, Indonesian labor migrant who works in South Korea mostly included categorized as semiprofessional due to their skill in handling certain kind of job. Five respondents argued that they were considered as a senior employee in their workplace and trusted with a specific role.

Different condition found with B, 28, who previously works in a fishery sector, then change to manufacture based on K recommendation. He described a physical abused received during working in the ship. However, he never reports

that action due to the circumstances, afraid if reported my endangered his life. After few months works in the new place, B must leave the job while being treated in the quarantine facility due to his illness (Covid-19). The reason mentioned by the employer was if B keep working it might spread the virus to other workers. Since that period, B not bound to a contract employment as required by South Korean government and became illegal workers.

Migrant that faces challenge ought to receive protection from the country. Unfortunately, according to respondents, they hesitate to ask support from Indonesia government due o uncertainty support. Instead of reporting, labor migrants willing to adjust any treatment they receive in order to secure the job and ensure their income.

4.3.3. Indonesian Labor Migrants' Adaptation to The Treatment

Social groups in the sense of common forms of life are an important discussion in sociology. The manifestation of this common life are diverse and countless groups. Social groups arise because humans and each other hold a relationship for common goals and interests.

Social group is a set or human units that live together, because of the relationship between them. These relationships, among others, involve reciprocal relationships that influence each other (Siregar; 2008).

The aim of this study was to get an in-depth knowledge of labor migrant experience in adaptation to their employer with a qualitative method. This subsection emphasized on analyzing the previous sub section discussion.

If a migrant chooses the strategy of assimilation, then personal identity has a tendency to approach to diffusive, “fuzzy” identity with indefinite life cycles, a decreased level of self-respect, a lack of internal integrity and uniformity (Blynova et.al.; 2020). According to their study of the Ukraine labor migrant, one of the common tendency of adaptation to the new environment was due to their “tolerance to uncertainty”.

Although there were only slightly mentioned and seems no differences between male and female workers, but researcher found a pattern in the labor migrant adaptation between men and women. Women labor migrants face less difficulties in adapting the Korean employer treatment compares to men. From the interviews conducted, despite they were living in the same environment, women receive less unpleasant treatment rather than men. However, men adjusting with the situation better than women. The acceptance level of the bad treatment from employer or supervisor handled with less complain on men compares to women workers. All respondents knew where to seek for support, but rather to involves in any conflict, labor migrant less likely to file any complain to employer or authorities related to their work to ensure the continuation of their employment.

Decision to stay and adapt to their work and employer is based on different motivation. This motivation, although responds by some respondents due to the force of the family economy condition, some other respondents reveal the motivation to stay was because they feel they already fit in with the work rhythm and the employer. The more often they migrated, the better their capability of adaption became. Despite the challenge, the social network kept close connections and was perceived as a reliable source for support.

Chapter 5. Conclusion

With a thorough research in the field this study sought to answer the research question: “How is Indonesian labor migrant adaptation to Korean employer treatment?”. To be able to give an answer to this question, a theoretical framework has been made and configured into a conceptual framework. This framework provided the main themes in this study. Divided under sub questions that can be found in the first section of this study.

This conclusion specifically focuses answering main question. Adaptation by Indonesian labor migrant to their employer treatment handled not limited to the relation between employer-employee, but their living support from family and social network found to be the support factor in their adaptation.

Finally, future research can use the findings of this study to better understand the factors influencing migration adaption patterns, as well as the contexts under which female labor migration may benefit or harm. Another suggestion is to study about Korean employer treatment toward labor migrant might be useful since there was limited study in examining this field. Recognizing the ways in which labor migrants adjust can aid in the study of migration and the formulation of a comprehensive migration policy in Indonesia.

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Appendix 1. Interview Guide

Introduction:

First, I want to thank you for making your time to meet me. My name is Asmida Rizki Siregar and currently conducting my research for my master's degree in international studies at Seoul National University. I am curious about your experience working abroad in South Korea for such a long time. Therefore, let's talk about your experience. I would like to ask, are you okay if I record our conversation?

Background Information:

Name:

Gender:

Time abroad:

Opening question

How does your work go?

Question about economic/social situation:

What kind of work do you do previously?

How is your living experience in South Korea?

How important family to you?

How does your social network in South Korea?

Question about work and relation with employer

What was your reason to work in South Korea?

How did you feel during your staying in your workplace?

How's your relationship with your employer?

Ending question:

Would you like to add something?

Appendix 2. Focus Group Guide

Introduction:

First, I want to thank you for making your time to meet me. My name is Asmida Rizki Siregar and currently conducting my research for my master's degree in international studies at Seoul National University. I am curious about your experience working abroad in South Korea for such a long time. Therefore, let's talk about your experience. I would like to ask, are you okay if I record our conversation?

Opening question:

We can start a round of introduction. May everybody introduce yourself?

Key questions:

Like interview questions, the difference is only the discussion format

Closing question:

Considering the different experience, which one do you think the best factor that makes you able to work in such a long time in your workplace?

Appendix 3. Table of Characteristics Interviewees

#	Name/ Initial	Gender	Age	Time Abroad	Origin	Working location
1	IN	Female	32	9 years	Cirebon	Cheonan
2	M	Female	31	8 years	Indramayu	Ansan
3	EN	Female	40	10 years	Yogyakarta	Ansan
4	N	Female	32	6 years	Cirebon	Sareung
5	A	Female	29	5 years	Semarang	Bucheon
6	KS	Male	50	7 years	Yogyakarta	Ansan
7	KR	Male	33	10 years	Indramayu	Ansan
8	SM	Male	35	10 years	Cirebon	Daegu
9	SW	Male	40	10 years	Cirebon	Daegu
10	B	Male	28	5 years	Yogyakarta	Ansan

Abstract

한국 고용주 대우에 대한 인도네시아 노동 이주자의 적응

Asmida Rizki Siregar

인도네시아 노동이민자들이 고용주 대우에 어떻게 적응하는지 조사하는 정성적 연구입니다. 이 연구는 그들의 장기 체류 결정에 영향을 미치는 요인들을 발견하는 것을 목표로 했습니다. 흥미롭게도, 고용주와의 더 나은 관계를 추구하기 위해 노력하는 대신, 인도네시아 노동 이주자들은 그들의 가족이나 가까운 사람을 가까이 두면서 노동과 생활 조건에 적응합니다.

남아서 그들의 일과 고용주에 적응하기로 한 결정은 다른 동기부여에 기초합니다. 이러한 동기는 일부 응답자들이 가족 경제 상황의 힘에 의해 반응하지만, 일부 다른 응답자들은 그들이 이미 업무 리듬과 고용주와 어울린다고 느끼기 때문에 잔류 동기를 드러냅니다. 더 자주 마이그레이션할수록 적응 능력이 향상되었습니다. 어려움에도 불구하고 소셜 네트워크는 긴밀한 연결을 유지했고 신뢰할 수 있는 지원 처로 인식되었습니다.

키워드: 노동, 이주, 적응, 한국 고용주입니다.

학번: 2020-21284 입니다.