

A Survey of the Quality of Life of Indonesian Migrant Workers in Sabah East Malaysia

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Abstract: Migration of Indonesian Migrant Workers (TKI) to Sabah Malaysia has been lasted for a long time, due to geographical and cultural proximity. The purpose of this study was to figure out the quality of life of Indonesian Workers in Sabah, Malaysia. This research was done by descriptive quantitative approach with a survey of the method. This study uses the measuring instrument that is made by the researcher in the form of a questionnaire survey of quality of life were adapted from the WHO and the theory made by the Malaysian government. Indicators of quality of life in this study was the quality of housing, quality of work, quality of social, psychological and quality of health care quality. A total of 71 respondents have been in the survey. The analysis method is descriptive analysis. The results showed that for the quality of the dwelling comprising bedroom comfort, the hygiene of the place of residence, quality of WC / Toilet, access transportation, relations with neighbors as well as the comfort of the average stay of each indicator, the respondents said enough. Likewise, the indicator of the quality of the work, which consists of adequate rest periods, safety, acceptance of local jobs, salary / wages are given, the opportunity leave, clarity of work tasks, the majority of respondents also said enough. For social indicators of quality of life, which consists of an opportunity to organize, attend social activities, relationships with the local people, the opportunity to attend religious activities, the opportunity to follow the political activities (election) as well as freedom of expression / speech, the majority of respondents also answer enough. In terms of the quality of life of psychology, which consists of self-confidence, ability to cope with stress, optimistic about the future, the ability of positive thinking, the ability to adjust and control the emotions the average respondent answer enough. Besides, in terms of health care quality, which consists of exercise time, access to the clinic / hospital, hygiene sanitation and hygiene, the quality of the received medication, hygiene and nutrition, as well as recreation opportunities, on average the majority of respondents also answered quite enough.

Key word : Indonesian Migrant Workers, Quality of Life, Keningau Sabah Malaysia

Introduction:

There are numerous numbers of Indonesian migrant workers work overseas as the impact of limited working filed in Indonesia. Labour migrations become one of chosen solution for Indonesian to overcome the economic problem as an effort to satisfy family needs. Yet labour migrations formed as national policy to reduce unemployment rate and poverty rate in Indonesia.

One of main destination country for Indonesian Migrant Workers is Malaysia. In regard to data from Indonesia Embassy in Kuala Lumpur stated that about 1,2 millions Indonesian migrant workers work in Malaysia at various sectors, to be mentioned : domestic workers; plantation; manufacture; infrastructure and services. Recently, the most attention to the problem of these workers focusing to domestic workers where cases happen to other sectors was less highlighted. For example the cases happen to Indonesian migrant workers in plantation and factory sectors which majority of them stayed in Sabah, East Malaysia.

Sabah is Malaysia's easternmost state that directly abutted with Indonesia, particularly Tawau that abutted with Tarakan (North Kalimantan) and Sebatik Island. Most of Indonesian migrant workers in Sabah work at plantation and manufacture sectors and also as domestic workers. The majority of those workers origin from Sulawesi and Nusa Tenggara which have direct sea-access to border area in Tarakan and Nunukan. Those worker works at remote area at plantation and manufacture factory owned by Malaysia Royal and private company.

Regarding to the report of International Trade Union Congress- Asia Pasific on 2012 (ITUC-AP), there were slight numbers of skilled migrant workers/white collars and enjoy fine quality of life where most of the workers were blue collars which having lower quality of life. The common problem those blue collars had are: the delay to salary payment (some even did not receive the payment), longer working hours, and problem on transferring money. The study by Jones (2000) also emphasized that majority of Indonesia migrant workers in Malaysia did 3 D jobs (Dirty, Dangerous and Difficult).

One of the focuses of this study was concerned to the quality of life of Indonesian migrant worker in Sabah where majority of them were undocumented and migrated with the whole family members. In this regard, the aspect of quality of life had to be noticed to understand the complete and the real of their quality of life. Due to Oxford Canadian dictionary life means as an ability to grow and develop, functional activities, continuously changing", "human form and condition". Quality defined as standard of feasibility that different when compare to others (Canadian Oxford Dictionary, 1998) (in Mandzuk et al 2005). Quality of life introduced by World Health Organization (WHO) in 1995. Quality of life is an individual perception toward life in social and cultural contexts with value where the individual exist which related to personal goals, hopes, values and the relation to physic healthiness, psychology condition, level of independency, social relations, personal belief, and the relation of individual with prominent aspect of life which lead to subjectivity in the contexts of culture, social and environment.

The term of references of this study based on WHO finding on quality of life well known as WHOQOL-BREF 1996 which defined quality of life as individual perception on position and level in life in context of cultural and values where the individual exist. Economic Planning Unit, Prime Minister's Department Malaysia has conducted sustain research on quality of life from 1999 to 2004. According to the report on 1999, quality of life including: self improvement, healthy life style, facilitation and freedom to education, living standard could afford the basic needs and satisfy psychological needs to reach higher social welfare based on state pretention. This quality of life divided into three main parts: prosperity, right to vote and participate on election.

Due to Malaysia Quality of Life report on 2002, quality of life define as self improvement, healty life style, the chance and freedom to gain knowledge and enjoy better basic standard of life and individual psychology, to achieve the level of social welfare based on state pretention. When society able to reach a better quality of life due to the standard of living design by goverment means they had raised the quality of life.

The report of Malaysian quality of life in 2004 constituted as the thrid report to the quality of life of Malaysian. The report concerned to self improvement, healty life style, the chance and freedom to gain knowledge and enjoy better basic standard of life and individual psychology, to achieve the level of social welfare based on state pretention. Those standard designed as guideline to understand the life of Malaysian. Due to the lack of data, there are only five elements choosen to be observed as mentioned: income and distribution, transportation and communication, health, education and public facility. Based on those components all of states shown had improved the quality of life and the program had been conducted at every levels. The housing highlighted as the most important component in assesing the quality of life.

Beside that, Asri (2009) stated that Goodinson and Singleton emphasized three common factors influence the quality of life; physic environment, social environment, and personal-individual environment. Zhan (in Wardhani, 2006) added health background and culture as influence factors to quality of life. These factors influenced the decisions to decide life standard as comparison to the current situation. O'Connor (1993) stated that quality of life were also influences by contentedness domains such as the marriage, health, job, and other significant life events included references standard (hope, aspiration, equal feeling). Whereas, according to Rapley (2003) one of factor that influence quality of life is individual psychological factor which coming from life satisfaction.

In this regard to outline the quality of life of Indonesian migrant workers in Sabah, East Malaysia, the survey with quantitative descriptive method is needed. This study will show the real situation toward quality of life of Indonesian migrant workers and to compare their living with of Malaysian quality of life in general. The purpose of this study was to recognize the demography profile of Indonesian migrant workers in Sabah and to figure out the difference of quality of life due to demography factors. The benefit of this study was to understand the delineation of Indonesian migrant workers in Sabah in terms of demography, quality of life, the difference of quality of life due to demographic factors. The thesis of this study is, "how is the demography figure and quality of life of Indonesian migrant workers in Sabah?".

Research Methodology

Research Participants

The respondents of this study consist of 71 persons Indonesian migrant workers who work in several sectors in Keningau, Sabah-Malaysia. Due to the lacks of data to the exact population of Indonesian migrant workers in Keningau Sabah, this study used accidental sampling in Keningau Sabah Malaysia to select the participants. This study had expand 100 questioners where only 71 of those were used. The other 29 questioners were incomplete and partly had been broken. Keningau region been chosen due to the great number of Indonesian migrant workers work there whether in plantation and in factory, also because of the huge numbers of school for Indonesian migrant workers which helpful for data collection.

Research Procedure

This study was conducted by interviewing 71 respondents, the data was collected in factories, plantations, traditional small shops, religious center, residential and public places. The respondents of this research consist of Indonesian migrant workers who work in several sectors such as factories, plantations, and domestic workers. The survey was held by interviewing the respondents and the researcher filled the questioners. The researchers came to Keningau region for spreading the questioners with the assistance of one enumerator. The enumerator was the trusted teacher at school center of children of Indonesia migrant workers in Keningau, with the help of enumerator the collection of data became more effective and easier. The filled questioners were sent to Jakarta for further analyses with SPSS.

Measuring Instrument

This study used created measuring instrument in line with the guideline from WHO and Malaysia Government's theory on quality of life in form of questioners. The indicators of quality of life in this research included to the quality of : residential, work, social, psychology and health by using 1 to 5 likert scala, 1 = very bad, 2 = bad, 3 = enough, 4 = good, 5 = very good.

Findings

Among 100 questioners expand with enumerator only 71 of those allowed to use, therefore the respondents of this research were 71 persons. From this 71 respondents 35 of them are men (49,3%) and 36 of them are women (50.7%). Majority of them work at factories (24 persons/33.8%), plantations (22 persons/31%) and domestic workers (20 persons/28.2%). The detail as below:

Table 1 The Occupation of Participants

Occupations(s)	Amount	%
Factories	24	33.8
Plantations	22	31.0
Domestic Workers	20	28.2
Driver	3	4.2
Shop Attendant	2	2.8
Total	71	100

In term of salaries, majority of the respondents gained RM.400 per month about 24 persons (33.8%), RM.500 around 13 persons (18.3%), RM.600 around 10 persons (14.1%) and RM.700 around 8 persons (11.3%). The respondents who had 3 years working experiences around 26 persons (36.6%), 5 years around 17 persons (23.9%) and 2 years amount of 10 persons (11.3%). Based on the amount of money sent to Indonesia most of respondents spend IDR 1.000.000 (40 persons/56.3 %), IDR.1.500.000 (12 persons/6.9%) and IDR 2.000.000 (8 persons/11.3%). In regard to the origin of respondent could be found in the bellow table:

Table 2 The Origin of Respondents

Province	Amount	%
East Java	2	2.8
Kalimantan	1	1.4
East Nusa Tenggara	31	43.7
West Sulawesi	1	1.4
South Sulawesi	34	47.9
Middle Sulawesi	2	2.8
Total	71	100.0

The Quality of Residential

The study found that the quality of bed rooms were enough (37 persons/52.1%) and 31 persons (43,7%) answered good, only 3 persons (4.2%) stated the bedroom were bad. Due to the cleanness of residential majority of them said enough (36 persons/50.7%), and about 31 persons (43.7%) answered good. The field research to the toilet shown 36 persons (50.7%) of the respondents consider the toilet was enough, 27 persons (38%) said those were good and only 1 person (1.4%) stated the toilet was very good.

Concerning to the quality of transportation, there were 38 respondents (53.5%) answered enough, 28 respondents (39.4%) good and only 3 respondents (4.2%) consider the transportation was very good. In regard to the connection to neighbour majority of respondents answered: enough (38 persons/53.5%), good (30 persons/42.3%) and very good (1 person/1.4%). In regard to the safety of residential, the research showed that most of respondents considered the safeness was enough (38 persons/53.5%), good (27 persons/38%) and very good (3 persons/4.2%).

Working Quality

In regard to working quality due to rest time around 46 persons (64.8%) of respondents consider the schedule were enough, 22 persons (31%) stated it was good. Concerning to working safety majority of respondents consider it was enough 41 persons (57.7%) where 26 persons (36.6%) of them answered the tranquility was good.

The Quality of Social Life

In social life indicators in regard to the opportunity to organize the majority of respondents responded the chance was enough (39 persons/54.9%) and good (27 persons/38%). Due to the quality in participating to social activities around 38 persons (53.5%) said enough, 24 persons (33.8%) consider it was good and only 3 persons (4.2%) answered very good.

In term of the relation quality to residents about 40 respondents (56.3%) answered enough and 27 respondents (38%) answered good. Due to the freedom to perform and attend religious activities 39 persons (54.9%) said enough, 23 persons (32.4%) responded good and 5 persons (7%) answered very good. The complete data could be found at tabel 4.23

In regard to follow the political activities (election), majority of respondents answered enough (39 persons/54.9%) and good (27 persons/38%). Beside of that, in term of freedom of expression/speech about 45 persons (63.4%) responded enough and 23 persons (32.4%) answered good.

The Quality of Psychological Life

In the quality of psychological life to improve self confidence, around 40 persons (56.3%) responded enough and 28 persons (39.4%) responded good. In the context of the ability to cope with stress there were 44 persons (62%) answered enough and 23 persons (32.4%) answered good.

Due to the question to the optimistic of future, there were 40 persons (56.3%) responded enough, 24 persons (33.8%) responded good and 4 persons (5.6%) responded very good. In regard to the ability of positive thinking 40 persons (56.3) answered enough and 27 persons (38%) answered good. The ability to adjust with the new place there were 40 persons (56.3%) said enough and 27 persons (38%) said good. In term of the ability to restrain the emotion, majority of respondents said enough (45 persons/63.4%) and good (22 persons/31%).

Health Quality

In health quality in term of time to physical exercise there were 42 persons (59.2%) responded enough and 23 persons (32.4%) responded good. For the access to health-care/clinic 40 persons (56.3%) answered enough and 27 persons (38%) answered good. For the hygiene of sanitation 39 persons (54.9%) answered enough and 28 persons (39.4%) answered good. In regard to the quality of accepted medicine 39 persons (54.9%) responded enough and 24 persons (33.8%) responded good.

In term of hygiene and nutrition of food, majority of respondents answered enough (40 persons/56.3%) and good (27 persons/38%). Due to the pleasure time there were 37 persons (52.1%) answered enough, 22 persons (31%) answered good and 5 persons (7%) answered very good.

Discussion and Conclusion

In response to the thesis of the study, due to above data, in term of the quality of residential consist of bed room comfort, the hygiene of residential, toilet quality, access to transportation, connection with neighbour and the comfortable of residential mostly in every indicators the respondents answered enough.

Due to the indicators of the quality of occupation that consist of adequate rest periods, working safety, the acceptance to local jobs, salary, leave opportunity, the clarity of work tasks, considerable part of respondents also answered enough. In regard to the quality of social life indicators comprise with opportunity to organize, attend social activities, relation with local citizen, attend religious activities, attend political activities (election) and the freedom of expression/speech, predominantly the respondents answered enough.

In the context of the quality of psychological life that consist of self confidence, the ability to cope with stress, optimistic of future, the ability to adjust with new environment and control emotion, most of respondents answered enough. Beside of that in regard to health quality included time for exercise, medicine quality, hygiene and nutritious food, and facilitation to recreation, the average respondents answered enough.

Research Implication

The result of this study will contribute to the government and public to figure out the problem to quality of life of Indonesian migrant workers in Keningau, Sabah, that the government have to take specific concern to Indonesia migrant workers in Keningau, Sabah. There are numerous aspects and dimensions of quality of life needed to be improved to increase the productivity and welfare of the workers. Indonesia and Malaysia government may hardly concern to this quality of life matters to upgrade the prosperity of Indonesian migrant workers in Malaysia particularly in Keningau, Sabah. The result of this study may also benefit to academic field as reference to analyze migration psychology to overcome the problem of Indonesian migrant workers in Sabah, Malaysia. The prominent answers to the questioner were enough due to the low education background of the workers and less life expectation; therefore they were grateful with their recent jobs, also, compare to their life in Indonesia the life in Keningau distrik were much better.

This quality of life study was kind of subjectivity research that may impress the lower life standard of Indonesian migrant workers constituted the lower of their quality of life. Due to the field observation their daily life challenge with straitened and restrictiveness, the residential made from wood with limited furniture. The lack of public information access leads to the less knowledge to the right of the workers. The ability to send money to their family in Indonesia filled their satisfaction, because during their time in Indonesia they were not able to work due to the lack of education and limited skills.

CONCLUSION

Due to the analyses from above data the answer to the thesis of this study was overcome. In regard to residential quality consist of the comfortable of bed room, the hygiene of residential, the quality of toilet, the access to transportation, the relationship with neighbor the responded were enough.

In the indicator of working quality in term of resting time, working safety, the acceptance of local partner, salary, leave opportunity, the clarity to work tacks, most of workers answer "enough". For the indicator of the quality of social life consist of the opportunity to organize, attend social activities, relation with local residents, attend religious activities, to participate in political activities (election), freedom of expression/speech, the majority of respondents answered enough.

In regard to quality of psychological life that consist of self-confidence, the ability cope with stress, optimistic of the future, the ability of positive thinking, the ability to adjust with new environment and manage emotion, the average of respondents answered enough. Beside of that, in term of health quality which consists of access to health care center/clinic, sanitation and hygiene, quality of medicine, food nutrition and the recreation opportunities, the average of respondents answered enough.

From above explanation the quality of life of Indonesian migrant workers in Keningau is needed to be improved by employer, government and the workers itself. The government of Malaysia is necessary to provide living standard for foreign workers particularly Indonesian migrant workers in context of residential, working quality and psychological quality. The employer should provide sufficient and high quality facilities to raise the productivity of the workers. Neither should the workers, have to improve the ability to adjust with new environment and better understanding to the right and duty as workers, therefore, the better industrial relation between employee and employer will be created.

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