



## Decision Making of Indonesian Migrant Workers in Donomulyo District, Malang Regency

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### Abstract

This study aims to analyze the socioeconomic and demographic conditions of Indonesian migrant workers in Donomulyo District and identify the factors influencing their decision to migrate. Using a quantitative descriptive approach, the research was conducted in Donomulyo District, Malang Regency, with a population of 722 individuals whose family members work as migrant workers. A sample of 88 respondents was determined using the Slovin formula and proportional random sampling. Data were collected through field observations and interviews, processed using single and cross-tabulations, and analyzed with inferential statistics, specifically the Chi-Square test. The results show that migrant workers in Donomulyo District predominantly have a junior high school education, are married, and support an average of three dependents. Before migration, most were engaged in agriculture, either as laborers or self-employed, earning between IDR 1,500,000 and IDR 2,000,000, with an average land ownership of 0.09-0.2 hectares. Among the variables studied, the most significant factor influencing migration decisions was their previous occupation in agriculture. These findings highlight the socioeconomic challenges faced by rural communities and their influence on migration patterns, providing insights for policymakers in addressing migration-related issues.

Keywords: decision making; Indonesian migrant workers.

### Introduction

Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) are Indonesian residents (WNI), both men and women, who will, are, or do work and have completed the requirements to go to another country to work for a certain time and receive wages or salaries. Indonesian migrant workers can be called the country's foreign exchange heroes who have contributed to the country's economic development. Indonesian workers will not only increase a country's foreign exchange but will also bring benefits and impacts to their home regions.

Lack of employment is a major problem to overcome unemployment in rural areas. Where the low quality of human resources and the limited number of available jobs have not absorbed much of the workforce in large numbers, causing the unemployment rate to increase. So that increasing

job opportunities or creating jobs is indeed necessary, considering that most rural residents still depend on income from the agricultural sector and other sectors that are not able to meet household economic needs. On the other hand, improving the quality and skills of human resources is also a solution to overcome unemployment in rural areas, not only depending on available jobs. This research was conducted in Donomulyo District which is the largest contributor of Indonesian Migrant Workers in Malang Regency

Donomulyo District is dominated by karst land which makes the condition of the area infertile for agriculture compared to other areas because of the availability of water in the ground. This condition certainly affects the development of the population's agriculture, most of the residents of Donomulyo District work in the agricultural sector, from the agricultural products are considered insufficient to meet the needs. Therefore, residents will look for initiatives to work to increase income in other areas which are expected to help meet their living needs. On the other hand, the work of the residents of Donomulyo District, the majority of whom work as farm laborers, certainly does not have a large income and does not get farm labor jobs every day, so that this condition encourages residents to work as Indonesian Migrant Workers abroad.

Based on BPS data from Malang Regency in 2019, during the period 2016-2019 the number of migrant workers recorded working abroad based on the placement of the destination country reached 674 people, the data includes Donomulyo District which is one of the districts with the largest contributor of Indonesian Migrant Workers in Malang Regency. The countries that most migrant workers go to are Hong Kong and Taiwan, this is based on high wage levels, cultural similarities, regional proximity to Indonesia and the kinship factor of friends and family. In accordance with Revenstein's statement that there is an important factor that affects population migration, namely the distance factor, where people tend to choose the closest distance and go to the centers of economic growth of the country (Mantra, 2015).

The conditions of the region of origin include economic and social conditions that are less supportive in fulfilling the lives of individuals and their family members will indirectly affect the process of migrating to other areas to find jobs that are expected to meet the needs of their families. Based on data BNP2TKI 2019, most of the Indonesian migrant workers who are most workers at the end of junior high school and elementary school education levels with the number per January period of 2018-2020 is 24,134 people. This can also affect individual decision-making to become Indonesian migrant workers.

Donomulyo District, where most of the population depends on the agricultural sector, is not enough to meet the needs of their families, so there is migration to other areas or even other countries to work. Economic and social conditions are the motive for a person to migrate to other regions. According to Todaro in the Economic Theory of Village-City Migration, migration occurs due to the rational decision of individuals because of an economic phenomenon around origin such as low income in origin and the availability of jobs between the area of origin and the destination.

The factors of job availability, large salaries, culture in the destination country are factors in international migration, this is in accordance with the increasing flow of labor abroad, especially in countries such as in Indonesia, which is very determined by the conditions that encourage in

the area of origin, especially economic difficulties and attraction in the destination area, namely high wages in the destination area (Budijanto, 2016).

Todaro's theory is also supported by the statement of Word Bank (2014) that the migration of migrant workers is based on the difference in wages between the sending country and the destination country. The lack of employment and poverty in the country of origin strengthens the motivation of the population to become workers in other countries to improve their living standards. The selection of migration destination areas is also based on economic reasons, because areas with natural or human resources will certainly be easier to create economic growth, while areas with high human resources will attract industries and services, especially for those who apply modern technology. According to Lancee and Bol (2017) and Machado et al. (2023) stated that by migrating or working abroad will get a higher wage or salary and gain extensive experience and knowledge.

Based on the problems in the background above, the study aims to explain the factors related to the decision-making of Indonesian Migrant Workers abroad in Donomulyo District and an overview of the social, economic and demographic characteristics of the population of Donomulyo District on decision-making as Indonesian migrant workers.

**Methods**

This study is a type of quantitative descriptive research, which is useful for finding out the relationship between independent variables and bound variables. The unit of analysis in the study is a family whose family member is an Indonesian migrant worker abroad, not the person concerned but someone else who provides the answer. In this study, the sample obtained was 88 respondents from all villages using proportional random sampling and the solving formula. The administrative map of Donomulyo District can be seen in Figure 1.

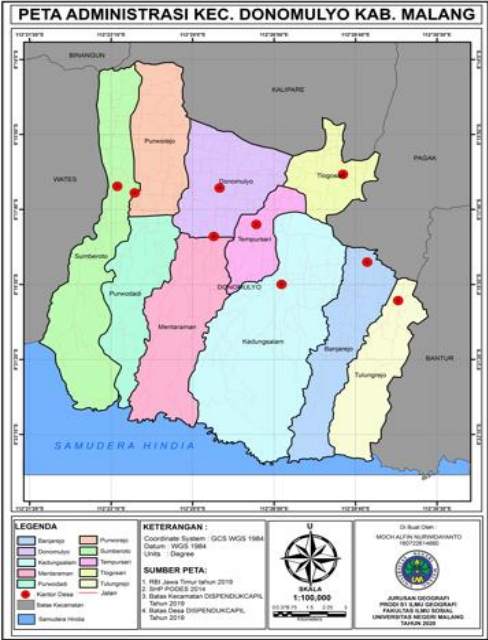


Figure 1. Administrative Map of Donomulyo District

The instrument in this study is in the form of structured interviews to minimize the respondents' answers that are not valid. The types of data are classified into two types of secondary data and primary data. Primary data was obtained directly through interviews with respondents using questionnaires, while secondary data was obtained at the Malang Regency Manpower Office to support primary data including the number of migrant workers in Donomulyo, the number of population and other data. Data processing was carried out by making single tabulation and cross tabulation. While the analysis was carried out with non-parameterized chi square inferential statistics for the number of samples per village, it can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Number of Samples Per Village

No	Village	Population	Sample
1	Sumberoto	95	12
2	Purworejo	89	11
3	Taraman	54	7
4	Donomulyo	36	4
5	Tempursari	74	9
6	Tlogosari	53	6
7	Kedungsalam	66	8
8	Banjarejo	78	10
9	Tulungrejo	83	10
10	Purwodadi	94	11
	Sum	722	88

Migration decisions as dependent variables are classified into two categories, namely the decisions of oneself and others. As for the independent variables in this study, they are described in Table 2.

Table 2. Classification of Independent Variables

No	Independent Variables	Indicators	Classification
1	Social	Last level of education	Elementary, Junior High, High School
2	Demographics	1) Marital status 2) Dependent burden	Unmarried, Married, Divorced 2, 3, 4 (person)
3	Economics	1) Original work 2) Original income  3) Land ownership area (ha)	Farmers, Farm Laborers, Others a) $\leq 1,500,000$ b) $1,500,000 - 2,000,000$ c) $2,000,000 - 3,000,000$ d) $\geq 3,000,000$ a) $0.07 - \leq 0.09$ ha b) $0.09 - \leq 0.2$ ha c) $\geq 0.2$ hectares

## Results and Discussion

The presentation of Tables 3, 4, and 5 provides a comprehensive overview of the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of Indonesian migrant workers in Donomulyo District, their decision-making patterns, and the relationships between various factors influencing migration. Table 3 summarizes the single-tabulation analysis, highlighting key attributes such as education, marital status, number of dependents, previous occupation, income levels, and land ownership. Table 4 delves deeper into cross-tabulations, showcasing the interplay between individual

initiatives or external influences in the decision-making process across different demographic categories. Lastly, Table 5 presents the results of the Chi-Square analysis, identifying the statistically significant relationships between variables, with the strongest correlation observed in the factor of previous occupation. These tables collectively provide critical insights into the factors shaping migration decisions and their broader implications for rural communities.

Table 3. Single Tabulation of Indonesian Migrant Workers' Decision Making in Donomulyo District

Factor	Category	$\Sigma$	
		F	%
Education	Elementary School	22	25
	Junior High School	37	42
	Senior High School	29	33
Sum		88	100
Status Marriage	Unmarried	45	51.1
	Married	26	29.5
	Divorce	17	19.3
Sum		88	100
Number of Dependents	2 people	24	27.3
	3 people	46	52.3
	4 people	18	20.5
Sum		88	100
Occupation	Farmer	54	61.4
	Farm labourers	19	21.6
	Other	15	17.0
Sum		88	100
Income	$\leq 1,500,000$	31	35.2
	1,500,000 - 2,000,000	36	40.9
	2,000,000 - 3,000,000	15	17
	$\geq 3,000,000$	6	6.8
Sum		88	100
Land Area Ownership	0.07 - 0.09	32	36.4
	0.09 - 0.2	35	39.8
	$>0.2$	21	23.9
Sum		88	100

Table 4. Cross-tabulation of Indonesian Migrant Worker Decision Making in Donomulyo District

Factor	category	Own initiative		Others		$\Sigma$	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
		Education	Elementary School	7	12.5	15	46.9
	Junior High School	26	46.4	11	34.4	37	42.0
	Senior High School	23	41.1	6	18.8	29	33.0
Sum		56	100.0	32	100.0	88	100.0
Status Marriage	Unmarried	32	60.4	13	37.1	45	51.1
	Married	11	20.8	15	42.9	26	29.5
	Divorce	10	18.9	7	20.0	17	19.3
Sum		53	100	35	100.0	88	100.0
Number of Dependents	2 people	14	25.9	10	29.4	24	27.3
	3 people	30	55.6	16	47.1	46	52.3
	4 people	10	18.5	8	23.5	18	20.5
Sum		54	100	34	100.0	88	100.0
Occupation	Farmer	32	64.0	22	57.9	54	61.4
	Farm labourers	8	16.0	11	28.9	19	21.6
	Other	10	20.0	5	13.2	15	17.0

Factor	category	Own initiative		Others		Σ	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
Sum		50	100.0	38	100.0	88	100.0
Income	≤1,500,000	17	30.4	14	43.8	31	35.2
	1,500,000 - 2,000,000	25	44.6	11	34.4	36	40.9
	2,000,000 - 3,000,000	10	17.9	5	15.6	15	17.0
	≥3,000,000	4	7.1	2	6.3	6	6.8
Sum		56	100.0	32	100.0	88	100.0
Land Area Ownership	0.07 - 0.09	19	35.2	13	38.2	32	36.4
	0.09 - 0.2	22	40.7	13	38.2	35	39.8
	>0.2	13	24.1	8	23.5	21	23.9
Sum		54	100.0	34	100.0	88	100.0

Table 5. Chi Square Analysis Results

Characteristic	value	Sig.	information
Education	64.5	0.00	Related
Marital Status	66.8	0.00	Related
Number of Dependents	42.6	0.00	Related
Occupation	80.0	0.00	Related
Income	46.1	0.00	Related
Land Area Ownership	52.5	0.00	Related

Based on the description in the previous chapter, it can be used to explain the discussion of factors related to the decision-making of Indonesian migrant workers to other countries in Donomulyo District. These factors include education level, marital status, dependent burden, income, and land ownership. Of course, there are those that play an important role in influencing a person's migration abroad, namely the individual factor itself.

According to Lee (2015) in migration theory, the most important factor that underlies a person's migration decision is the individual, because he can assess that the destination area can meet personal needs or vice versa, therefore when making a decision depends on each individual. Residents or individuals who carry out mobility/migration in rural areas generally have economic reasons due to limited land ownership, lack of job opportunities and low wages.

### Decision-Making based on Education Level

Education is a goal that a person does to gain knowledge or abilities through school media or other media (Budijanto, 2011). The level of education reflects the progress of the community in an area, because it is able to improve the quality of human resources for the development process of the region. In this study, the education levels completed by migrant workers are junior high school, high school, and elementary school. Equivalent. To find out the influence of respondents' decision-making based on their education level in migrating from 88 respondents. In the table, the difference in decision-making made by respondents based on education level. Decision-making made by migrant workers with elementary school graduates was 7 respondents or 12.5 on their own initiative, the remaining 15 respondents or 46.9% were influenced by others. Meanwhile, junior high school education from 37 respondents amounted to 46.4% decision-making due to individuals and 34.4% non-individual influences for the high school education level, as many as 41.1% made decisions because of individuals themselves, 18.8% outsiders. The calculation of Chi Squared in can get a coefficient value of 64.5 with a significance value of 0.00, which means that the level of education affects in making decisions to work abroad.

According to several studies, it is explained that an educated person could migrate to another area either for work or for other purposes, while a person with low education or even not going to school is likely to stay and even work in his or her home area. According to Revenstein (Mantra, 2015) population mobility occurs because it is influenced by a person's education level, the higher the education, the more frequent the level of mobility and vice versa, the lower the education, the lower the level of mobility.

This condition is supported by several studies that explain that the level of education is the cause of a person to make a migration decision, in this case as an Indonesian migrant worker. The type of work in the destination area is also influenced by a person's education.

### **Decision-making based on Marital Status**

Marital status is the status of the respondent when migrating abroad. Marital status is divided into three categories, namely married, unmarried and divorced widows, this is in accordance with the data obtained in the field.

Based on the table above, the decision-making of migrant workers who work abroad is mostly married with a total of 45 respondents or 51.1%, of which 60.4% make decisions because of individuals, 37.1% are non-individuals. For unmarried respondents, there were 26 respondents or 29.5%, of which 20.8% made decisions because of individuals and 42.9% non-individuals. The calculation of chi squared obtained a coefficient value of 66.8 with a significance of 0.00 which means that marital status affects the decision of individuals to work abroad.

The marital status of migrant workers makes a person have an obligation to meet the needs of their families in their home areas. According to Budijanto (2011) a person who is not married they will generally migrate for various reasons in origin such as narrowness and limited job opportunities, while those who are married usually migrate because they want to improve the economic condition of their family, because with marriage the need is also increasing.

According to Mantra and Mallo (Bagas, 2017) that marital status is one of the drivers for a person to migrate or not. Marital status, unmarried, widower or widow, will also affect the needs that must be met and issued by a married person.

### **Decision Making based on Dependent Burden**

The number of dependents is the number of families born in the area of origin by migrant workers. The number of dependents can motivate a person to work in another country. The large number of dependent burdens, of course, also expenses become a lot, and if you only rely on income from the original job, it is not necessarily enough. This condition certainly causes residents to make decisions to work as Indonesian migrant workers.

Based on the decision-making table according to the burden of dependents in Donomulyo District, the most is 3 people, as many as 46 respondents or around 52.3% with a comparison of 30 respondents or 55.6% making decisions on their own initiative, 16 respondents or 47.1% on the initiative of others. The total burden of dependents of 2 people was 24 respondents of which 25.9% made decisions because of individuals, 29.4% were non-individuals, while the number of dependents of 4 people was 18 respondents of which 18.5% made decisions because of

individuals, 23.5% were non-individuals. The calculation of Chi squared obtained a coefficient of 42.6 with a significance of 0.00, meaning that the burden of dependents affects individuals in making decisions to work in other countries.

The results of the study show that the number of dependents is influential in making decisions for residents, especially PMI in Donomulyo District. The number of dependents of migrant workers in Donomulyo sub-district is three people, this condition explains that the number of dependents in origin is getting bigger, deciding to go abroad to work to meet the needs of their families, because the needs are getting bigger.

Waridin (2002) states that the decision of the individual to be responsible for bearing the burden of family needs causes a person to migrate to another country's country to look for a job within a certain time.

### **Decision-Making based on Original Employment**

Original work is the work that migrant workers do before deciding to work abroad, whether it is a permanent job or a side job. Based on data from the field, employment data was obtained, namely agriculture, farm labor, and others, which included store employees, as well as factory employees.

Based on the table, most of the respondents worked in the agricultural sector with a total of 54 respondents or 61.4%, of which 32 respondents in making decisions were due to individuals, 22 respondents were influenced by others. Respondents who worked as farm workers accounted for 16% of individual decisions, and 28.9% of non-individuals, while other jobs including shop and factory employees accounted for 20% of decisions made on their own initiative, 13.2% or 5 respondents based on others. The calculation of Chi squared is obtained with a coefficient of 80.0 with 0.00 which means that the work of the region of origin affects the individual in making the decision to work abroad.

From the type of work in the area of origin, of course, it will affect the level of income, most of whom work in the agricultural sector, either self-managed or as agricultural workers. Working in the agricultural sector certainly cannot be every day or in a month of work, so you cannot earn a large income.

According to Khusnatul (2016) explained that the status or type of work of a person is a driving factor in the decision to work as a migrant worker with the aim of increasing income from the previous job to meet the needs of his life and his family. On the other hand, the income obtained from the job is not necessarily enough for daily needs, so they will decide by looking for another job, in this case becoming a migrant worker abroad.

### **Decision Making based on Regional Income**

Income is the main factor in meeting the needs of life, of course, income is very important, especially if you already have a family and a lot of dependents. The following is the decision to become a migrant worker based on the income of the region of origin in Donomulyo District.

Based on the table, it can be seen that migrant workers who previously had an income in their area of origin of less than Rp 1,500,000 as many as 17 or 30.4% made decisions on their own initiative, 43.8% based on others. For migrant workers with an income between 1,500,000 - 2,000,000, 25 or 44.6% made decisions on their own initiative, 34.4% or 11 respondents based on others, then for those earning 2,000,000 - 3,000,000 by 17.9% on their own initiative, 15.6% based on others, the rest with an income of  $\geq 3,000,000$  by 7.1% based on their own initiative, and 6.3% based on others.

The calculation of chi squared obtained a coefficient of 46.1 with a significance of 0.00 which means that the original income affects individuals in making decisions to work abroad. Based on these results, the factor of low income can be caused by the narrowness of arable land in the area of origin, both agricultural and non-agricultural.

### **Decision-making based on Land Ownership Area**

The area of land ownership or cultivated area is the area of land owned by migrant workers in the area of origin, whether it is their own or land cultivated in the rental system. In this case, it is assumed that residents who have a larger land area will be able to meet their living needs, while those who have a narrow land area will be less able to meet their living needs. It can be described that the decision-making made by migrant workers based on the land ownership area of 0.07-0.09 ha was 32 respondents of which 35.2% made decisions because of individuals, 38.2% were non-individuals, while 35 migrant workers who had land of 0.09-0.2 ha were 35 people with 40.7% making decisions because of individuals, 38.2% were non-individuals. The rest have more than 0.2 ha of land, 24.1% make decisions because of individuals, 23.5% are non-individuals. The calculation of chi squared obtained a coefficient of 52.5 with a significance of 0.00 which means that the area of land ownership affects individuals in making decisions to work abroad.

The area of land ownership of Indonesian migrant workers in Donomulyo District based on research data obtained that the average migrant worker has a land of 0.09-0.2 ha as many as 35 respondents or around 39.8%. An agrarian economic structure is certainly the main source of income for the community, if it is not enough or unable to meet their living needs, the community will look for other initiatives, namely becoming Indonesian migrant workers.

### **Conclusions**

In conclusion, the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of Indonesian migrant workers in Donomulyo District are predominantly marked by junior high school education, marital status, an average of three dependents, agricultural work as their primary occupation prior to migration, an income range of IDR 1,500,000, and land ownership of 0.09-0.2 hectares. The Chi-Square analysis revealed that the strongest factor influencing migration decisions is their prior occupation in agriculture, with a coefficient value of 80.0, followed by marital status (66.0) and education level (64.5). These findings emphasize the significant role of occupational and demographic factors in shaping migration decisions within rural communities.

### **Data Availability**

The datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

### ***Conflicts of Interest***

All authors in this publication declare no conflict of interest regarding the title, data, location, and results of the research.

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### ***Supplementary Materials***

This study does not include any supplementary materials.

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