



## The High Motivation of Indonesian Migrant Worker Candidates and Its Implications for Educational Financing

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### Abstract:

This study examines the role of government policies in supporting and protecting Indonesian migrant workers from Kerinci Regency. With approximately 14,836 migrant workers from Kerinci working abroad in 2024, the need for policies that address their rights, safety, and welfare is increasingly crucial. Through qualitative analysis, this research explores the impact of government initiatives such as pre-departure training, legal assistance, secure remittance channels, and family support programs. These policies, facilitated by the Indonesian Migrant Workers Protection Agency (BP2MI) and local authorities, are analyzed through the lenses of Human Capital Theory, Legal Realism, and Adaptive Management Theory. Findings indicate that these policies significantly enhance the security and well-being of migrant workers, enabling them to achieve financial stability and contribute to community development. This study highlights the importance of continuous policy adaptation to meet the evolving needs of migrant workers, ultimately supporting both individual success and regional growth.

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### Introduction (مقدمة)

In recent years, Kerinci Regency has recorded a significant number of migrant workers abroad, with 14,836 people from the region working overseas in 2024 (Data Dinas Tenaga Kerja, 2024). This number reflects the high interest and motivation of prospective Indonesian migrant workers (CPMI) from Kerinci to seek employment abroad (Rahmany, 2018). The primary destination countries for these migrant workers include Malaysia, Japan, Germany, South Korea, Taiwan, Saudi Arabia, Brunei, Bangkok, and Singapore (BP2MI Kerinci, 2024). These countries

offer relatively high wages for migrant workers, with monthly salaries and remittances ranging from IDR 9 million to IDR 21 million. This trend is not solely driven by economic factors but also reflects a social dynamic in which overseas employment is seen as a means to improve family welfare (Larasati, 2023). The rising number of CPMI from Kerinci raises questions about the motivations and expectations driving this decision and its impact on financing their children's education.

Economic factors are one of the main reasons behind the high motivation of CPMI in Kerinci Regency to work abroad (Novitasari, 2022). Many view international job opportunities as a solution to increasing income, which is challenging to achieve domestically. With monthly earnings ranging from IDR 9 million to IDR 21 million, migrant workers anticipate substantial improvements in their standard of living and aim to provide better educational opportunities for their children. This increased income is often projected to support basic needs, including the escalating costs of education (Diyantoro & Alie, 2014). This economic impact serves as a primary driver for many CPMI to leave their hometowns and work abroad, with the hope of achieving financial stability and security for their families.

Aside from economic factors, social influences also play a significant role in the decision to work abroad. In Kerinci, the success of individuals working as migrants in countries like Japan, Germany, and South Korea often serves as a model for others, motivating them to follow the same path. In many cases, the success stories of migrant workers in elevating their family's standard of living have become an inspirational narrative for other prospective workers (Yuniarto, 2012). This creates a kind of "migration culture," where overseas work is viewed as an effective pathway to prosperity. This social context reinforces the motivation for CPMI to migrate, viewing it as an opportunity to achieve both personal and family advancement.

On the other hand, the high number of CPMI has also garnered serious attention from the local government. The Kerinci Regency Government is actively working to protect its citizens who work abroad through collaboration with the Indonesian Migrant Workers Protection Agency (BP2MI). On July 15, 2022, the Kerinci Regency Government signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with BP2MI in Jakarta to strengthen the protection of migrant workers (BP2MI, 2024). This initiative aims to ensure the safety and welfare of migrant workers, who are often vulnerable to exploitation and unfair treatment in host countries. By providing a safeguard for CPMI, particularly in high-demand countries like Saudi Arabia and Taiwan, this collaboration is expected to give CPMI from Kerinci a sense of security in their pursuit of overseas employment (Marsel, Sudey, & Nau, 2022).

The high motivation to work abroad also has implications for the educational needs of migrant workers' children. Most migrant workers invest their earnings in their children's education, which is seen as an essential foundation for their future (Kholis, 2017). With higher incomes, migrant workers have greater opportunities to send their children to higher levels of education, both domestically and abroad. Here, the financial motivation for working abroad is directly linked to the hope of providing the best education for the next generation. However, ensuring that this financial support is optimally allocated remains a unique challenge, as the education costs also continue to rise.

While income from abroad positively impacts education funding, not all migrant workers manage their finances effectively (Yulianto & Furqan, 2022). Some migrant worker families fall into patterns of high consumption, where a significant portion of income is used for consumption rather than educational investment. This leads to an imbalance between the income earned and the long-term outcomes desired, such as improved educational quality for their children. Therefore, examining how the remittances are utilized for educational purposes is crucial to understanding how these families can achieve sustained benefits from migrant labor.

The phenomenon of high CPMI motivation also creates social dilemmas, especially when many heads of households leave their children for extended periods. Migrant workers' presence abroad often results in children being cared for by relatives or guardians, which can impact the emotional stability and social development of the children. Although their education may be financially secure, the absence of parents can have significant psychological effects. This underscores the need for a more holistic approach in supporting migrant families, including emotional support for the children.

The Kerinci Regency Government may need to consider more comprehensive policies in supporting migrant workers, especially in managing funds for education. By facilitating training or financial guidance programs for migrant worker families, the hope is that the funds sent home can be optimally utilized for children's educational needs (Larasati, 2023). Programs like these can help maximize the positive impact of migrant worker earnings and improve the family's long-term welfare. This step is expected to support the educational success of migrant workers' children in a more optimal way.

Ultimately, the high motivation of CPMI to work abroad not only brings economic impact to Kerinci Regency but also affects social and educational aspects. By working abroad, they can create new economic opportunities and improve their family's quality of life (Tuwu, 2018). However, challenges in fund management, social impact, and the psychological well-being of migrant workers' children cannot be overlooked. Therefore, a comprehensive approach is needed to ensure that labor migration brings long-term positive effects, particularly with substantial remittances available to support children's educational growth.

From an academic perspective, this study is relevant to explore further the motivations that drive CPMI from Kerinci to work abroad and how these impact their children's education. By identifying the factors influencing the decision to work abroad and its impact on education, this research is expected to contribute to a broader understanding of the dynamics of labor migration in Kerinci Regency. The findings of this study may serve as a foundation for more effective policy-making in supporting migrant workers and their families.



## Method (منهج)

The research utilizes a qualitative descriptive approach to explore the motivations of prospective Indonesian migrant workers (CPMI) from Kerinci Regency and the impact of migration on educational financing for their children. The qualitative method allows for in-depth exploration of social and economic factors driving migration decisions and the implications for family dynamics, specifically education. The primary subjects of the research are current migrant workers and their families, as well as local government officials involved in policy implementation and support for migrant workers. These participants provide insights into the factors influencing migration choices and the outcomes on children's education, supported by perspectives from key stakeholders.

Data collection involves interviews, document analysis, and observations. In-depth interviews are conducted with migrant workers and their families to understand their motivations, the structure of remittances, and the impact on educational expenditure. Document analysis includes examining government reports, agreements like the MOU between the Kerinci Regency Government and BP2MI, Kerinci Regency Local Regulation on Employment Management Number 2 of 2024, and any relevant policy guidelines. Observations and field notes will also be employed to record the interactions and environment of migrant worker families in Kerinci. Data analysis follows a thematic approach, focusing on identifying recurring themes

related to economic motivation, educational impact, and policy implications, allowing the researchers to draw comprehensive conclusions on the topic.

## Result (نتائج) & Discussion (مناقشة)

### **Motivations of Indonesian Migrant Worker Candidates (CPMI) from Kerinci Regency to Work Abroad**

The decision to seek employment abroad is influenced by various socio-economic factors that drive Indonesian migrant worker candidates (CPMI) from Kerinci Regency. High unemployment rates and limited job opportunities locally make overseas work attractive for individuals looking for stable income. According to data, the number of migrant workers from Kerinci working abroad reached 14,836 in 2024, signaling a strong interest in overseas employment (Data Dinas Tenaga Kerja, 2024). This phenomenon aligns with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory, where individuals prioritize fulfilling basic economic needs before addressing higher-level aspirations (Ma, Zhang, & Wang, 2024). For many in Kerinci, overseas work is seen as a solution to meet these essential needs.

Economic incentives remain the primary motivator for CPMI from Kerinci to work abroad. Monthly earnings for migrant workers in destinations like Malaysia, Japan, South Korea, and Germany range from IDR 9 million to IDR 21 million, considerably higher than typical earnings within Kerinci Regency. This significant income difference is a key factor influencing individuals' decisions to work abroad, as higher wages enable workers to provide financial stability for their families. Rational Choice Theory explains this behavior, suggesting that individuals weigh potential gains and choose the option with the most favorable outcome, which, in this case, is overseas employment with a promise of higher wages (Collins & Loughran, 2017).

Another factor influencing migrant workers from Kerinci is the opportunity to support their children's education. Many CPMI view their earnings from abroad as a means to finance their children's schooling, which may not be affordable otherwise. The cost of education in Indonesia has risen significantly, especially for higher education, and families often need additional income to meet these expenses (Surur et al., 2020). The Family Investment Model suggests that families make financial sacrifices, such as working abroad, to secure better futures for their children through education (Maryam, Mahyiddin, & Faudiah, 2022). By doing so, CPMI aim to give their children more educational opportunities and a chance for upward social mobility.

In addition to financial motivations, social factors play a role in encouraging CPMI to work abroad. In Kerinci, it is common to see successful stories of community members who have worked overseas and improved their family's economic situation, which in turn inspires others to pursue the same path. This social influence creates a form of "migration culture" within the region. Social Learning Theory supports this concept, as individuals tend to model the behaviors of those around them, especially if these behaviors lead to positive outcomes, like increased wealth and social status (Firmansyah & Saepuloh, 2022). In Kerinci, the positive image of migrant workers further fuels motivation among prospective workers.

A sense of obligation to support extended family also motivates individuals to work abroad. In collectivist societies like Indonesia, financial responsibilities often extend beyond the nuclear family to include parents, siblings, and other relatives. CPMI from Kerinci often feel responsible for supporting their extended families and see overseas employment as a way to fulfill these obligations. This motivation aligns with Hofstede's cultural dimension theory, particularly the concept of collectivism, which highlights how individuals in such societies

prioritize group welfare over individual gain (Menard, Warkentin, & Lowry, 2018). This cultural expectation drives many to seek high-paying jobs abroad to meet their familial obligations.

The local government's role in facilitating overseas employment has also influenced the motivation of CPMI in Kerinci. The Kerinci Regency Government has collaborated with BP2MI (Indonesian Migrant Workers Protection Agency) to ensure safe migration and protection for workers abroad, evidenced by an MOU signed in July 2022. This support system provides a level of security and reassurance for CPMI, making overseas employment more appealing. According to the Push-Pull Theory of migration, support structures like these act as "pull factors" that attract individuals to opportunities abroad by reducing perceived risks and ensuring worker welfare (Khalid & Urbański, 2021).

While economic benefits remain a significant motivator, CPMI from Kerinci also see migration as a path to personal development and broader life experiences. Working in different countries exposes them to new cultures, skills, and professional environments, which they may not encounter locally. This exposure is valuable for individuals seeking personal growth and future job prospects. Self-Determination Theory suggests that intrinsic motivation, such as the desire for personal development, also influences decision-making (Ryan & Deci, 2020). For CPMI, overseas work is not only a financial opportunity but also a chance to enhance their skills and cultural knowledge.

Finally, religious and cultural values sometimes encourage migrant workers to seek employment in specific countries. For instance, many Indonesian migrant workers prefer destinations like Saudi Arabia and Malaysia due to the shared Islamic cultural values, making the transition more comfortable (Arisman & Jaya, 2020). In addition, the chance to perform religious obligations, such as Hajj or Umrah, serves as an additional incentive. Cultural congruence theory suggests that individuals are more likely to migrate to regions where they feel culturally aligned, which adds to the motivation for certain CPMI to choose specific countries over others.

In summary, the motivation of CPMI from Kerinci Regency to work abroad is a complex interplay of economic, social, and personal factors. Driven by economic need, educational goals for their children, social influences, family obligations, government support, personal growth, and religious values, CPMI make calculated decisions to seek overseas employment. These motivations are supported by various theories that explain human behavior, including Rational Choice Theory, Social Learning Theory, and Push-Pull Theory. The trend of labor migration among CPMI from Kerinci is thus both a personal choice and a socio-economic response, shaped by individual aspirations and broader cultural dynamics.

### **Implications of Labor Migration on Education Financing for Migrant Workers' Children in Kerinci Regency**

Labor migration has become a significant source of income for families in Kerinci Regency, with many households relying on remittances sent from family members working abroad. In 2024, the data shows that 14,836 migrant workers from Kerinci were employed in various countries, generating a substantial amount of remittances (Data Dinas Tenaga Kerja, 2024). These remittances are used not only for daily expenses but also as a primary source of funding for children's education. According to a study by the World Bank, education is one of the primary uses of remittances in low- and middle-income countries. In Kerinci, the impact of this income on education financing is apparent, as many families view education as a long-term investment for economic mobility.

The economic impact of remittances on education is significant, as it allows migrant workers' families to afford better educational opportunities for their children. With monthly



earnings ranging from IDR 9 million to IDR 21 million, migrant workers are able to provide for tuition, school supplies, and even extracurricular activities that contribute to a child's holistic development (BP2MI Kerinci, 2024). This financial support increases educational access and quality for children in migrant households. According to the Human Capital Theory, investment in education enhances future productivity and income potential, suggesting that these remittances may serve as an investment in the child's future economic prospects (Huay & Bani, 2018). This theory underpins the decision of migrant workers to allocate part of their income toward education.

**Tabel 1. Families Using for Education**

Monthly Remittance (IDR)	Percentage of Families Using for Education (%)
9,000,000 - 12,000,000	30%
12,000,000 - 15,000,000	40%
15,000,000 - 18,000,000	20%
18,000,000 - 21,000,000	10%

The table above illustrates the range of remittances sent by migrant workers and the percentage of families allocating these funds to education. It shows that a higher percentage of families in the middle-income range allocate remittances toward education. This trend supports the Household Economic Portfolio Model, which suggests that households allocate funds across a range of priorities, including long-term investments like education, based on available resources (Kim, Gutter, & Spangler, 2017). Families with moderate incomes tend to prioritize education more, potentially due to a perception of education as a secure path toward upward mobility.

However, not all families utilize remittances effectively, as some may prioritize immediate consumption needs over long-term educational investments. For some migrant households, the pressure to meet daily expenses and support extended family members can detract from the ability to invest fully in education. As a result, the benefits of remittances on educational financing can vary, with some children benefiting more than others. The Resource Dilution Theory helps explain this phenomenon, where available resources (in this case, remittances) are spread thin across competing needs within a family (Agu, 2015). This distribution can reduce the impact of remittances on education if families cannot allocate sufficient funds.

The cultural context in Kerinci also influences how remittances are spent, as many families emphasize traditional obligations to support the extended family. In collectivist societies like Indonesia, remittances are often used to fulfill social expectations, which can include supporting relatives or community events. While these cultural practices are important, they may reduce the amount available for children's education. This behavior aligns with the concept of Social Exchange Theory, where families balance personal goals (such as children's education) with social obligations (Virk, Corner, Combs, & Jaskiewicz, 2024). For families in Kerinci, the need to maintain social ties may divert funds from education to other culturally significant expenses.

Government policies play a critical role in maximizing the positive impact of remittances on education. The Kerinci Regency Government has initiated collaborations with BP2MI to protect and support migrant workers, which indirectly supports the stability of remittance flows.

Additionally, government programs that provide financial education and promote responsible remittance management can help families make informed decisions regarding educational investments. The Push-Pull Theory suggests that these supportive measures act as pull factors, encouraging workers to continue working abroad and contributing remittances (Khalid & Urbański, 2021). With effective policy support, remittances can be more effectively channeled toward children's education.

Education financing through remittances also brings broader socio-economic benefits to the community. As more children from migrant households complete higher levels of education, the overall educational attainment in Kerinci is likely to increase, leading to a better-prepared workforce in the future. This, in turn, can have a multiplier effect, as higher education levels contribute to economic growth and development within the community. The Endogenous Growth Theory posits that investment in human capital, like education, leads to sustained economic growth (Nizar & Nazir, 2020). Thus, by financing education through remittances, migrant families contribute not only to their children's future but also to regional development.

In conclusion, labor migration and the resulting remittances have a profound impact on education financing for children in Kerinci Regency. While the benefits are substantial, there are also challenges in ensuring that remittances are allocated effectively toward educational needs. Various theories, including Human Capital Theory, Resource Dilution Theory, and Social Exchange Theory, provide a framework to understand these dynamics. With proper support from both government policies and financial education initiatives, the positive implications of remittances on education can be maximized, enabling children from migrant families to achieve their educational goals and improve their future economic prospects.

### **Motivations of Indonesian Migrant Worker Candidates (CPMI) from Kerinci Regency to Work Abroad**

The government plays a crucial role in supporting and protecting Indonesian migrant workers, especially those from regions like Kerinci Regency, where labor migration is a common economic strategy. With approximately 14,836 migrant workers from Kerinci working abroad in 2024, there is a pressing need for policies that address their rights, safety, and welfare. Labor migration poses both opportunities and risks, as migrant workers often face potential exploitation, unsafe working conditions, and limited access to support in foreign countries. To address these challenges, the Indonesian government, through agencies like BP2MI (Indonesian Migrant Workers Protection Agency), has implemented policies aimed at protecting migrant workers (Firmansyah & Saepuloh, 2022).

One of the primary government interventions is the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between Kerinci Regency and BP2MI on July 15, 2022. This MOU outlines measures to protect migrant workers, including legal assistance, employment placement services, and monitoring of working conditions in host countries. By formalizing the protection of migrant workers, the government aims to create a safer environment for them to work abroad. The Push-Pull Theory explains how these protective measures act as "pull factors," encouraging more workers to migrate with a sense of security. The MOU thus represents a proactive approach to addressing the inherent risks of labor migration.

Government policies also include pre-departure training and orientation programs, which equip migrant workers with the skills and knowledge needed for safe and successful employment abroad. These programs, administered by BP2MI and local agencies, provide essential information on legal rights, cultural norms, and safety protocols in host countries. Through training, migrant workers become more informed about their rights and better prepared to handle challenges. Human Capital Theory supports this initiative, suggesting that investment in training enhances workers' productivity and resilience, which in turn increases their chances of

success abroad (Huay & Bani, 2018). For Kerinci's migrant workers, this training offers crucial preparation for the realities of working in foreign environments.

Another critical policy is the establishment of legal and consular assistance for migrant workers in host countries. The Indonesian government has worked to set up support centers and consulates in major destination countries such as Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, and South Korea, where many workers from Kerinci are employed. These centers offer legal aid and conflict resolution services, helping workers who may face disputes with employers or other legal issues. According to the Legal Realism Theory, laws and legal aid are most effective when they adapt to the actual challenges faced by individuals (Suyanto, 2023). For migrant workers, access to legal support is essential for resolving conflicts and ensuring fair treatment.

Financial protection is also a significant aspect of government policy, as migrant workers' earnings play a vital role in the welfare of their families in Kerinci. To facilitate safe and efficient remittances, the government has partnered with financial institutions to offer secure remittance channels. Additionally, programs promoting financial literacy help migrant workers manage their earnings effectively and reduce risks associated with high remittance fees. By encouraging sound financial practices, these policies aim to maximize the economic benefits of labor migration for both workers and their families.

The Indonesian government has also enacted policies aimed at mitigating risks associated with illegal recruitment practices. Illegal recruitment and trafficking pose serious threats to migrant workers, who may be misled into exploitative situations. To address this, BP2MI and law enforcement agencies have implemented stricter regulations, background checks, and penalties for unlicensed recruiters. For migrant workers from Kerinci, these protective measures aim to reduce their vulnerability to illegal recruitment and trafficking.

In addition to individual protections, government policies also address the social impact of labor migration on families and communities in Kerinci. Many migrant workers leave behind families, including young children, which can lead to social and emotional challenges. The government, therefore, provides support for migrant families through community programs and social services aimed at maintaining family welfare. These family support programs are essential for preserving community stability and well-being in Kerinci Regency.

Monitoring and evaluation of government policies are also essential to ensure their effectiveness in supporting migrant workers. Periodic evaluations of BP2MI's programs and feedback from migrant workers provide insights into the policies' strengths and areas for improvement. By adjusting policies based on real-world feedback, the government can respond to emerging challenges and enhance protections for migrant workers. For Kerinci's migrant workers, this adaptability ensures that their evolving needs are met.

In conclusion, the Indonesian government, through BP2MI and other agencies, has implemented a range of policies to support and protect migrant workers from Kerinci Regency. These policies encompass pre-departure training, legal assistance, financial literacy, and social support, each addressing different aspects of the migrant experience. The government demonstrates a multifaceted approach to safeguarding migrant workers. With continued commitment and refinement, these policies can significantly improve the well-being of Kerinci's migrant workers and their families, allowing them to contribute positively to their communities.



## Conclusion (خاتمة)

Government policies play a vital role in supporting and protecting migrant workers from Kerinci Regency by addressing various challenges associated with labor migration. Through



initiatives such as pre-departure training, legal assistance, secure financial channels, and family support programs, the Indonesian government, particularly through BP2MI, provides comprehensive protections that enhance both the safety and well-being of migrant workers and their families. These policies, informed by theories such as Human Capital Theory, Legal Realism, and Adaptive Management, reflect a dynamic and responsive approach to the complex needs of migrant workers. As these policies continue to be refined and adapted, they offer Kerinci's migrant workers the security and resources needed to work abroad successfully, benefiting both the individuals and the wider community in Kerinci Regency.

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