

DIGITAL ECONOMY AND LAW: EQUIPPING INDONESIAN MIGRANT WORKERS IN BORDER REGIONS

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ABSTRACT The digital economy and usage of technology have led to a significant increase of Indonesian migrant workers in Malaysia. Digital platforms and digital skills from migrant workers are need more and digital skills as we transition to a digital economy. Technologies have the potential to enhance the employment opportunities, remittance payments, and labor mobility of migrant workers. Indonesian migrant workers do not share equal access to digital economy and its benefits in Malaysia, cause of the lack of law such as legal issue complexities and regulations, social isolation, and mindset as obstacles for migrant worker to increase their chance of being a highly mobile workforce in the global economy integrations. This article examined the role of digitalization in changing the landscape of international migration and technology to facilitate labor mobility for prepared and capable, leading to increased productivity and the long term. Alternative research hypotheses applicable in various scientific disciplines were included in this research through a qualitative analysis method and a reflective case study approach. This research finds that contribution that companies' and governments played in educating and training migrant workers so they could engage more effectively in the digital economy through the implementation of appropriate policy measures. Thus, as South-East Asia's competitiveness grows, economic digitalization might pave new and creative paths toward decent treatment for migrant workers.

Keywords: *Digital Economy, Digital Skills, Law, Indonesian Migrant Workers*

1. INTRODUCTION

The digital economy and digital skills is one of the opportunities for migrant workers to develop their creativity and ability the economic field in globalization era. Migrations occur when people or groups of persons react to external pressures such as a particular political or social force, or the demand for resources (McLeman and Hunter 2010). According to the International

Organization, a migrant is a person who relocates temporarily or permanently from their customary abode, either inside a country or across an international boundary (IOM, 2019).

The development of the digital economy, as a phenomenon and relatively new, is a challenge, especially for developing countries and rural crossing borders like Southeast Asia regions (World Economic Forum, 2015). In the 1990s, the influence and early adoption of enterprise computing and computerized manufacturing became the fundamentals of digital economy technology began to be laid out until it expanded rapidly around the world (Lynn et al., 2022; Sturgeon, 2021). The wide variety of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and the huge potential they have for entrepreneurs are the single most important drivers of innovation, competitiveness, and growth, (Kupenova et al., 2020). In the G20 meeting, the definition of the Digital Economy as the opportunity for all economic activities that depend on, or are significantly enhanced by the use of digital inputs, including digital technology, digital infrastructure, digital services, and data. The guidance refers to the collaboration of all producers and consumers, including governments, who utilize these digital inputs to enhance their economic activities.

The digital economy has ushered in a new era of global connectivity and economic opportunity, transcending geographical boundaries and revolutionizing industries. Concurrently, the world continues to witness the displacement of millions due to conflicts, persecution, and environmental factors. The intersection of these two phenomena – the digital economy and migration people crossing borders – presents a compelling yet intricate landscape marked by legal intricacies, regulatory hurdles, and evolving mindsets (Shields, 2014).

Besides, the digital economy provides greater access to employment and socioeconomic integration for migration people who do not have the legal right to work. Integration of migration people into the digital economy has increased employment opportunities in areas where local economies are unable to absorb job seekers. However, many forcibly displaced populations face challenges such as limited or nonexistent internet access, low levels of digital literacy, and socioeconomic, linguistic, and cultural barriers. To maximize the positive potential of digital transformation for the future of work while minimizing its negative impact, global action and planning must pay greater attention to economically and politically marginalized populations, such as migration worker.

The future of digital economy and digital skill for migration solutions is exciting. We can expect to see more innovative solutions that make it easier for migrants to access information and services as technology advances. AI-powered chatbots, for example, can provide instant language translation and connect migrants to resources in their native language. Virtual reality can be used to

provide job skill and language proficiency training and education. These advancements will significantly improve the lives of Asian migrants(Charles et al., 2022).

The digital economy has altered people's perceptions of work. In terms of migration, the fact that many jobs in the digital economy are no longer dependent on physical interactions is perhaps the most significant opportunity and the greatest divide created by technology. The project was developed at the Federal University of Roraima's (UFRR) Reference Center for Migrants and Refugees as part of the program 'Portuguese as a Reception Language,' which provided a technology lab with twenty computers with internet access and a children's room to receive the project participants' children (Alencar & Camargo, 2023).

This shift has accelerated the 'gigification' of jobs, which has been accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic(Charles et al., 2022). These types of jobs, which no longer rely on in-person interactions and transcend geography, immigration controls, and, in some cases, legal status, present an opportunity for refugees, the majority of whom have limited access to employment due to challenges such as hiring discrimination and legal barriers to the right to work. The digitization of the labor market is fundamentally altering how migrants and refugees earn a living and find work(Bhattacharai, 2020). A rapidly expanding global digital economy offers numerous new opportunities, but it also introduces new challenges and risks. The International Labour Organization (ILO) has released a new report that examines the growing role of digital economies for migrants and refugees, including case studies from Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Europe.

UNDP stands ready to assist governments and the technology community in forming alliances to create opportunities for migrants so that they do not fall behind in the digital revolution. We urge policymakers at the GFMD to set an ambitious agenda to ensure that migrants of all skill levels can use technology to increase their contributions to development(Buhr & Desille, 2021). In practice, digital work for refugees takes many forms, ranging from low-skill, micro-work done on a smartphone to high-skill online consulting, language interpreting, teaching, or translation(Martin-Shields et al., 2019). Along with the digital nature of work types, digital technologies and platforms connect service providers with customers or consumers (Hackl et al., 2021).

This includes both location-based labor platforms, such as ride-hailing or delivery platforms, and web-based digital labor platforms that are not restricted to a specific geographic area. Another aspect of the digital economy among refugees is the use of e-commerce platforms such as Ali Baba and Jumia, as well as informal digital entrepreneurship via apps such as WhatsApp.

2. METHOD

As a situated community that views the globalization movement as a chance to advance their capacity to use digital technologies, migrants' conceptions and approaches to the new digital economy are analyzed in this research. This paper offers a reflexive method for case study research, addressing the associated methodological challenges through the synthesis of theoretical and cross-disciplinary perspectives. The hope is that this method will improve the productivity of analytical exploration of the multidimensional qualities of state and non-state actors in the management of the digital economy for migrants, who are at the center of the current digital transformation.

In migration research, qualitative research methods are commonly used to investigate migrants' subjective experiences and to comprehend the social and cultural contexts of migration. Here are some examples of qualitative research methods used in migration studies: Interviews: Interviews are a common method for gathering information from migrants. They can be structured or unstructured, and they can take place in person, by phone, or online. Interviews can provide rich data on migrants' experiences and perspectives.

Group Discussions: Focus groups are a type of group interview that consists of a moderator and a group of participants. Focus groups can help researchers understand the diversity of experiences among migrants by providing insights into the social and cultural contexts of migration.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

There are several migration and development theories, but no single comprehensive theory that explains all aspects of migration. The lack of systematic theorizing limits our ability to understand how macro-structural factors shape migration processes and to explain the wide range of migration experiences across ethnic, gender, skill, and class groups (Shields, 2014). World Systems Theory explains the relationship between migration and development in the context of the global capitalist system, in which the core countries benefit from the exploitation of the periphery countries through unequal exchange and resource extraction.

To fully comprehend contemporary migration processes, a sophisticated theory that incorporates a variety of perspectives, levels, and assumptions is required. World Systems Theory is a perspective that explains the relationship between migration and development in the context of the global capitalist system. According to this theory, the core countries profit from the exploitation of the periphery countries through unequal exchange and resource extraction (Bhattarai, 2020). According to World Systems Theory, migration is a natural result of economic globalization, in which businesses now operate across national borders.

A high demand for immigrant labor in global cities acts as a driving force behind migration. The interaction between societies is an important determinant of social change within societies, according to World Systems Theory. In summary, World Systems Theory provides a comprehensive view of past and current migration and situates contemporary issues in a historical context.

The digital economy has provided new opportunities and challenges for migrants. There are some of the ways that the digital economy affects migrants, as participation in the Digital Economy;

1. Migrants can participate in the digital economy at any time and from any location, using mobile phones and other digital tools to find work and connect with employers across national borders.
2. Access to information: Mobile phones and social media provide migrants with access to information about their destination country, such as legal and administrative procedures, job opportunities, and housing options.
2. Effect on migration decisions: Mobile technologies, such as smartphones and social media, can influence migration intentions in addition to traditional push factors such as conflict, civil war, economic hardship, and family impact.
3. Navigation and logistics: Migrants use mobile phones to navigate through unfamiliar territory, using GPS and mapping apps to find their way to their destination. Mobile technologies can also help refugees and undocumented migrants with logistics, such as locating safe routes and gaining access to essential services. Risk exposure: When migrants use public Wi-Fi networks and interact on social media, they open themselves up to surveillance from state entities, non-state actors, and extremist groups. Opportunities for financial inclusion: Mobile banking can provide opportunities for financial inclusion for migrants by allowing them to transfer money across national borders and access previously unavailable financial services.

Navigating Regulations legal complexities and mindset issues can be difficult for migrants and refugees also. Here are a few takeaways from the search results:

1. Regulations and legal complexities

The legal challenges faced by migrants in Southeast Asia are shaped by a fragmented set of policies and reactions to emergencies. The majority of Southeast Asian nations have not ratified any international treaties about refugees, and thus have not established a regional framework for coordinating responses to refugee populations in policy. The 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, which require the UNHCR to organize long-term solutions for refugees, are only ratified by Cambodia, the Philippines, and Timor-Leste.

Furthermore, there are a lot of illegal migrants in the region, and many of them have irregular immigration statuses in their new countries. Migrant exploitation is a problem as well, with female migrants being particularly susceptible to mistreatment and forced labor. These elements add to the legal challenges that Southeast Asian migrants encounter, emphasizing the necessity of all-encompassing and well-coordinated programs to safeguard their welfare. With the proliferation and fragmentation of forms of protection and asylum procedures, the legal framework governing the rights and protections of refugees and asylum seekers can be highly restrictive and complex. In Egypt, the legal framework governing the rights and protections of refugees and asylum seekers is ambiguous and subject to frequent change (Charles et al., 2022). Any person who is "physically present in the United States, or who arrives in the United States (whether or not at a designated port of arrival...), irrespective of [their] status, may apply for asylum," according to the Immigration and Nationality Act.

2. Mindset challenges:

Mindset challenges for migrants in Southeast Asia can be attributed to various factors, including the lack of legal protections, exploitation, and social integration issues. Many Southeast Asian countries are not signatories of international refugee treaties, and they have yet to develop a regional mechanism to coordinate policy responses to refugee populations. This lack of legal protections can lead to migrants being vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. Migrants from and in the sub-region are victims of exploitation, with almost half of the victims in Asia being exploited within Southeast Asia. Female migrants are especially vulnerable to forced labor and physical, mental, and sexual abuse due to their prevalence in the precarious and largely informal sectors of domestic work, hospitality, and the sex industry.

Irregular migration: An estimated one-third of migrant workers in the Asia-Pacific region have an irregular status in their country of destination. Irregular cross-border movements are frequently facilitated by loose smuggling networks, which profit from porous borders, established migration routes, and the complex and costly processes often associated with legal migration and employment. **Social integration issues:** The idea that migrant workers are temporary and that forcibly displaced people require temporary protection in the region and resettlement outside it has become embedded within repertoires of migration governance in Southeast Asia. This mindset can limit the opportunities for social integration and long-term solutions for migrants.

Economic dilemma: Southeast Asia's vulnerable migrants pose an economic dilemma, as they contribute to the economy but often face challenges in accessing basic rights and protections. Addressing these mindset challenges requires comprehensive and coordinated policies to protect the rights and well-being of migrants in Southeast Asia. Scholarly literature on refugees' experiences

with displacement and forced migration has increasingly examined individual and collective instances of migrant agency across various contexts and stages of migration.

Refugees frequently face uncertainty in transit and destination countries because they have little control over many life choices. The promise of digital livelihoods arises from significant legal and practical barriers to work in many host countries, highlighting the importance of considering this population's participation in particular. To navigate these difficulties, it is critical to have a thorough understanding of the host country's legal framework and regulations.

As a result, it is critical to provide digital literacy training and access to digital tools to assist refugees and migrants in navigating the digital economy. Finally, it is critical to recognize the agency of refugees and migrants and to provide them with meaningful legal and integration support to reduce the risk of an incorrect denial leading to persecution (Buhr & Desille, 2021).

4. CONCLUSION

The digital economy has ushered in a new era of global connectivity and economic opportunity, transcending geographical boundaries and revolutionizing industries. Concurrently, millions of people are being displaced around the world as a result of conflicts, persecution, and environmental factors. The intersection of these two phenomena - the digital economy and border crossings - creates a compelling yet complex landscape marked by legal complexities, regulatory hurdles, and shifting mindsets.

Digital labor platforms and the online gig economy now promise work to anyone with an internet connection, a computer, and the necessary skills (Buhr & Desille, 2021). Inspired by this promise, governments, civil society, social enterprises, and international humanitarian and development organizations such as the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), World Food Programme (WFP), International Labour Organization (ILO), and Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) now run or support programs aimed at assisting refugees in becoming self-sufficient through digital or online remote work, which is frequently linked to forms of dignified work.

The future of human mobility for migrants, according to the search results, is an open question with many challenges and opportunities. Here are some key takeaways: Economic pressures, changing age structures, population growth, rapid urbanization, and environmental stress are all likely to increase international migration over the next few decades. Socioeconomic differences between countries have historically drawn migrants across international borders, and this trend is likely to continue in the coming years as increased Internet access allows more people to find better living conditions abroad. The challenges associated with relatively large and rapidly

shifting cross-border migration have increased demand for improved migration analysis to forecast short-, medium--, and long-term trends(Perkmann, 1999).

Decision-makers should similarly use data to improve the social and legal direct responses and structures within which migrants transit and live to ensure safe migration and empower migrants(Faist, 2008). Enhancing the positive impact of human mobility on societies and sustainable development can help to advance key priority areas of the UN Common Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as support the role of human mobility as a global public good for a renewed global social contract. Unlocking the potential of human mobility is the greatest challenge and opportunity of the twenty-first century, and it necessitates collaboration across borders, industries, and disciplines(Gallagher et al., 2023).

To address the challenges and opportunities of human mobility for migrants, a comprehensive and integrated approach involving various stakeholders such as policymakers, migrants, and data scientists is required. This approach should prioritize improving the legal and social structures in which migrants transit and live, empowering migrants, and capitalizing on the positive impact of human mobility on societies and sustainable development(Biagi et al., 2018). Furthermore, it is critical to predict short-, medium--, and long-term migration trends and to use data to inform policy decisions and program design. (Topak et al., 2015) Finally, it is critical to collaborate across countries, sectors, and disciplines to realize the full potential of human mobility and address the 21st century's challenges and opportunities.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

I declared that we have no conflict of interest on this Article.

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