

Writing Inspirational Short Stories to Reduce Migrant Burnout

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ABSTRACT Most migrant workers, especially those from Indonesia, often feel boredom. Starting from difficulties adapting, pressure from superiors, work piling up, and even a lack of self-efficacy can cause excessive burnout in someone in another country. Burnout that occurs repeatedly and causes low quality of work must be addressed. Unfortunately, burnout is not easy to overcome with socialization and motivation alone. For this reason, conscious effort training to reduce burnout in Indonesian workers abroad needs to be carried out. 25 Indonesian migrants are working in Malaysia. The training method is carried out in several stages, namely planning, training, and evaluation. The instrument of this training is a written test. All migrant workers were given training to write inspirational short stories. They told stories or experiences of facing problems while being migrants in Malaysia. It is hoped that this inspiring story will provide knowledge and lessons for other migrants who encounter the same problems. Indicators of this training are having a clear theme, the ability to write a story according to an interesting plot, being able to present appropriate characterization, describing the story according to the place, positioning the point of view and an interesting language style, and inspiring for the reader. The results of this training found that migrant workers from Indonesia were able to write inspirational short stories. Short stories begin by telling the story orally. This short story contains the intrinsic elements of a literary work. Inspirational elements are also present in the short story. They feel satisfied expressing their problems and providing inspiration for other migrants. This training concluded that inspirational short story writing therapy could reduce the burnout of Indonesian migrants in Malaysia.

keywords: burnout; inspirational short story; migrant; writing therapy

1. INTRODUCTION

Meeting the needs of the family is an obligation for the head of the household. In certain cases, this task is carried out by the wives. The wife tries to help fulfill household needs because the needs are increasing. Under the pretext that working abroad will result in higher wages, wives are tempted to become migrants. They received information from word of mouth that the Regional Minimum Wage (UMR) abroad, especially in Malaysia, was much higher than in Indonesia. They hope that by working in Malaysia they will be able to fulfill their needs and lifestyle.

Every effort is made to be able to work in Malaysia. They borrow money from banks or other lending places to take care of all the requirements to become migrants. Full of enthusiasm for earning large incomes, they do not realize that they cannot face the new environment. Working in a foreign environment that has very different habits from Indonesia must be a consideration. As immigrants with labor status, they may be assessed as low by their superiors/employers.

Various problems arise after these migrants work. Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) experience layoffs, unpaid salaries, extra work without incentives, and other suffering (Rahmawati, 2020). Difficulty adapting, lack of self-confidence, great work pressure, leading to burnout. Burnout has been recognized as an occupational hazard and can happen to anyone. Burnout is a psychological syndrome in the form of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and low personal accomplishment that can occur in individual workers who interact with many people in a certain capacity (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). The International Classification of Diseases (ICD) states that burnout is a work syndrome that results from poor management in the workplace and is characterized by exhaustion (a feeling of energy depletion), work-related negativism or cynicism (a feeling of being increasingly distant from work), and reduced efficacy professional workers (Departmental news World Health Organization, 2019).

Burnout does not appear by itself. Several factors influence burnout. Internal factors can be controlled by the individual. Meanwhile, external factors that occur in the work environment can have an impact on internal factors. Internal and external factors can include the ability to manage emotions, workload beyond capabilities, a work environment that lacks care, lack of respect for workers, feeling less valuable, not getting justice, and low emotional intelligence (Spector, 2021). According to Alzyoud, Othman, and Isa, high work pressure can reduce employee performance and motivation (Ali et al., 2021).

There are three dimensions of burnout, namely emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and feelings of low self-esteem (Schaufeli, 2018). If a person feels emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, then this can lead to a loss of meaning in work. Their work motivation will decrease, even disappear. Not only that, the quality of service provided to superiors worsens if there is a lack of confidence in one's abilities. Schaufeli said that motivation can contribute to burnout, namely self-determination theory. Self-determination originates from more self-determined motivation. It can be hypothesized that when motivation is highly self-determined, one is likely to feel more control over one's behavior, and motivation is expected to be more adaptive.

Migrants' limited access to digital communication, which is currently popular, also has an impact on their emotions. Migrants are not allowed to use Android while working. They seem to have a dividing wall in the world of work and everyday life. This adds new problems (Chaturvedi et al.,

2021). It cannot be denied that limitations in using social media have the potential to cause burnout (work fatigue).

Burnout cannot be allowed to drag on. Burnout that is slow to overcome or even ignored has an impact on the psyche of workers. Burnout as a process of excess stress leads to loss of work motivation. Burnout can be overcome with several therapies, such as forms of attention and/or cognitive behavioral therapy (Greenberg, 2020), venting feelings to others, and writing. Writing is considered better to release burnout because it does not have a sustainable negative impact.

Writing is a productive language skill. Writing activities are also part of the psychological. Writing therapy is done first to reduce emotional problems that occur in a person (Pennebaker, 2018). Inspirational writing categorized as expressive writing is expected to be able to turn negative signals into positive ones. Expressive writing is also effective at altering prepubescent maladaptive reactions (Barcaccia et al., 2017). Several writing therapies have been performed and the results are encouraging. Expressive writing therapy was given to 30 orphans for three consecutive days. Their level of sadness decreased relatively from this treatment (Savitri et al., 2019). Writing therapy also proves that people who have physical and mental health with mood disorders get better (Baikie et al., 2012).

From the cases above, thoughts emerged on how to overcome migrant burnout that has dragged on with therapy. The therapy that will be done is to write inspirational short stories. Writing short stories is an option because migrants are directed to tell their life experiences while working. Unpleasant experiences are sought to be of positive value. This is where this experience will become an inspiration for others.

2. METHOD

Writing inspirational short stories is done as a therapy to suppress migrant burnout. This therapy is expected to be a solution to almost the same problem in some migrants. The initial condition of migrants was found to have various problems, ranging from work pressure, inability to adapt, even to the lack of confidence of migrants. The problems experienced by these migrants make performance decrease, even low. Morale is also reduced. The impact is huge. They have nowhere to vent their feelings properly and restrainedly. Therefore, dedication to these migrants needs to be done to accommodate the problem. By writing inspirational short stories, migrants are expected to be able to control emotions, solve problems that are almost the same as self-experience, and be able to think positively about what is experienced. The result will have an impact on suppressing burnout in the subject. Burnout is divided into three, namely emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and feelings of inferiority

This community service is carried out using training methods. The procedure is carried out through the stages of preparation, implementation, and evaluation. At the preparation stage, the service explores information on training needs, material determination, participant determination, and completing material aids. The implementation stage is carried out with initial tests, training, and final tests. The evaluation and reporting phase is carried out with the evaluation ending with reporting. Analysis techniques are based on indicators of intrinsic elements of short stories and minimization of burnout in the form of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and feelings of inferiority.

The subjects of this inspirational short story writing training are Indonesian migrants who are at the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia (KBRI) Malaysia. These migrants numbered 28 people. Training activities were carried out at the Hasanuddin Hall of the Indonesian Embassy in Kuala Lumpur. The training process will be carried out for four (4) months from September 2 – December 10, 2023.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia (KBRI) located in Malaysia reported that many migrants from Indonesia had work problems. As a result of the interview, they have a bad relationship with the boss where they work. They find it difficult to adapt even though they have been working in Malaysia for a long time. This adaptation difficulty can be caused by language inadequacy, lack of self-efficacy, to having a bad past towards foreigners. Their knowledge of the world of work is also very minimal.

Indonesian migrants who experience these problems are the responsibility of the Indonesian Embassy. The Indonesian Embassy considers it necessary to provide socialization and training to reduce the emergence of the same or almost the same problems. For this reason, the Indonesian Embassy in collaboration with the NGO Sharing-Indonesia held a service to Indonesian migrants to find solutions to these problems. Community service as part of this service activity provides solutions with therapy to write inspirational short stories to reduce burnout of Indonesian migrants.

This service is carried out in three stages, namely the preparation, implementation, and evaluation stages.

3.1. Preparatory stage

Devotion made various preparations to implement this inspirational short story writing training. Efforts to find the root of the problem of migrant burnout are passed by digging for information on migrant needs. This process was carried out through an open interview with the Indonesian Embassy in Malaysia through the NGO Sharing - Indonesian Academic Community.

Some migrants are tired of their jobs because of piling up tasks, a lot of pressure from employers, victims of fraud, and others. These problems decrease the motivation and performance of migrants.

The low efficacy factor makes it difficult for migrants to vent their feelings. They harbor boredom and difficulties faced. What's worse is that they confide in their feelings to people who may be untrustworthy or even misleading. Therefore, immigrants need a means to reduce excessive depression by venting their emotions, sadness, disappointment, anger in the written media. Media that can keep their burnout in positive terms.

Moving on from the information obtained, the devotee determined the material, namely therapy to suppress burnout by writing inspirational short stories. The devotee prepares the material. Because the presentation of this material is online, the speaker prepares PowerPoint slides in the form of audiovisual recordings. The presentation of the material is designed to be attractive and inspiring. To clarify the form of inspirational short stories, speakers apply the master coffee technique as a medium that is considered appropriate. This training tool is an example of inspirational short stories that can be learned and read by Indonesian Migrant Workers. Determination of participants based on subjects who experienced burnout in the data of the Indonesian Embassy in Kuala Lumpur.

3.2. Training Phase

Before conducting training, the service provides material about the causes of burnout, distinguishing stress and burnout, and the worst effects if someone experiences both. The trainer explains the concept of the short story, the intrinsic elements contained in the short story, and how to make the short story an inspirational story. The materials that have been prepared by the devotee are neatly presented. The migrants listened enthusiastically.



Figure 1 (a) Participants enthusiastically listened to the material. short story online



(b) The speaker explained the steps to write an inspirational

This training stage goes through three phases, namely the initial test, training, and final test. At the beginning of the training, participants were asked to verbally share experiences that were memorable to them. A story begins with a problem without being given any treatment. Migrants are free to pour out their hearts. Some participants were enthusiastic and even very emotional. The other participants had almost the same story.

Emotional exhaustion is clearly illustrated in their storytelling. Some of them talk about fraud. They have been deceived by employers, intermediaries, and unknown people. The effect of this causes them to be less eager to work. They are sad to think about the losses that have been experienced. On the other hand, they feel inferior because the demands of superiors are too great.

In the next step, devotees direct participants to tell their stories to have a clearer flow. They must present the intrinsic elements of a short story in the form of themes, plots, characterizations, scenes, points of view, storytelling styles, and messages contained in it. Some participants seemed confused to understand the theory. Devotion provides an overview of the problems that occur, what is felt, where the problems occur, the people who play a role in the story, how the characters of these people fit into the story, to what is done to solve the problems faced. To make it easier for participants to understand the training, the devotee provided examples of inspirational short stories that were able to ease the burden on participants' minds on problems they had experienced. This technique is called master coffee.

The final test of this training is in the form of inspirational short stories of Indonesian Migrant Workers who can unravel the burden of their minds. Gradually, they were able to tell the bitter experience of being migrants in Malaysia. They are also able to provide inspiring stories to their listeners. Short stories told at the beginning of the training were developed and revised by migrants to obtain more literary and inspirational stories. In this final test, they were able to identify the intrinsic elements of the short story. Every story has a clear impression and message, not just telling a story of sadness.



Figure 2. Participants write inspirational short stories

3.3. Evaluation Phase

The evaluation phase is carried out through observation and interviews with migrant participants. Observations show that these migrants are calmer when recounting bitter experiences. They can control their emotions after receiving therapy. From interviews conducted at the end of the service, the migrants admitted that they were satisfied with this training. They can pour out their hearts calmly. Their stories are also a lesson for other migrants. Participants also admitted that they felt happier after telling what had been their burden so far.

4. CONCLUSION

From the results of service to Indonesian migrants at the Indonesian Embassy in Kuala Lumpur, the service can conclude that the training to write inspirational short stories to reduce migrant burnout has significant results. Migrants who have pressure on work and the surrounding environment can express their feelings through inspiring stories in the form of short stories. The master coffee technique makes it easy for them to conduct training according to procedures to obtain maximum results. Although some migrants are still reluctant to share their bitter experiences, the burnout of migrants is gradually diminishing.

Community Service provides advice to other service members to develop work motivation for further migrants. This inspirational short story writing training can be the first step to providing other training related to increasing migrant performance motivation. Mental development and the ability to adapt to the world of work in other countries need to be socialized. This is to avoid excessive burnout that can result in migrant psychiatric problems.

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CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

During his service at the Indonesian Embassy in Kuala Lumpur Malaysia, the service did not have a conflict of interest with anyone. This activity is carried out with self-funding. The concept of the

activity was designed by NGO Sharing - Indonesian Academic Community. Data collection and analysis are carried out independently by devotees to write articles and then submit them to IJCCH.

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