

# Earning Doctorate for Researching Contested Divorce Among Migrant Workers

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International mobility of migrant workers has a positive impact for the region because of the flow of remittances to the region of origin. Even so, the negative impacts emerged, such as the high divorce rate of migrant families. Research carried out related to divorce cases in East Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara, found many cases of divorce among migrant workers.

"Most divorce cases are experienced by domestic migrant workers," said the lecturer of the University of Muhammadiyah Mataram, Lalu Tajuddin, S.Pd., M.Si., at his open doctoral examination at the Graduate School of Universitas Gadjah Mada, Friday (22/1).

Tajuddin explained that in 2010 in the area of East Lombok, there were as high as 724 cases of divorce, consisting of 613 cases of contested divorce by female, and the rest by male. Furthermore, until mid-2011 there were 442 cases with 370 contested divorce by female. In fact, until the month of April 2013, there were 73 cases, including 55 cases of contested divorce by female.

Lalu Tajuddin's research was conducted on migrant workers from East Lombok who worked in East Malaysia palm oil plantations and their spouses who were left behind in the area of origin. Lalu concluded that the high divorce rate in East Lombok is due to the courage of Sasak women who are abandoned by their partner to migrate. They are beginning to understand their position as not only a wife, but also as the head of the family.

"They are only positioned as a second person as a result of patriarchal ideology," he said.

However, according to Lalu, the high divorce rate is also due to the feelings of loneliness. "Loneliness can be raised in the form of personal turmoil in the form of stress. Each person addressed it their own way. Some people manage it positively and other manage it badly," he said.

He added that the positive activities include becoming farm laborers, construction workers or actively attending prayers gathering to suppress loneliness. "But there are others who responded negatively by making deviant behavior," he said.

According to Lalu, it is necessary for them to undergo mental coaching and debriefing in preparation for the final departure, involving many related elements to anticipate against any deviant behavior, understanding the rights and obligations of migrant workers to the spouse while they work abroad. "The local government should not just debrief them, but also empower them to improve their income. The spouse living at home country should also spend their leisure time with positive activities," he concluded.

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