

# Negative Impact of International Migration on Child Psychological Health

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International migration, in addition to have positive impact on migrant families, on economic aspect, also has a negative impact, especially on the children psychological health. This is visible in the higher issues of "emotional symptoms, conduct problems, and hyperactivity" in migrant families compared with nonimmigrant. It means that the loss of one role, a mother or father, or even both of them, has raised certain problems for children. Therefore, we need to make an effort to address this issue comprehensively.

This is one of the conclusions derived from studies of several UGM and other campuses researchers with the title: Children Health and Migrant Parents in Southeast Asia (CHAMPSEA) or the impact of international migration on families and children of migrants.

Drs. Sukamdi, M. Sc and Dr. Anna Marie Wattie, M.A representing a team of researchers from Indonesia said that the case study took place in Sukabumi and Tasikmalaya (West Java) as well as Ponorogo and Tulungagung (East Java) in the years 2008-2010. In addition, the research is also conducted in Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam and Philippines.

Sukamdi said from the CHAMPSEA study, there is a difference between children in migrant and non-immigrant households. Children in migrant households have identified to have more symptoms of social problems, more often cause problems, and hyperactivity.

"In other words, children in migrant families have more problems with peers compared with children in the non-immigrant family," said Sukamdi on the dissemination of CHAMPSEA research results in the office of UGM Master of Policy Studies (MSK), Thursday (27/10).



He added that psychologically, children in non-immigrant household are stated to be happier compared with children in migrant families. Children in migrant households tend to be more passive in terms of overcoming the problems that arise, both within the family (siblings) as well as school tasks. These children, says Sukamdi, also showed a tendency for the more reserved and closed when expressing feelings as well as seeking support or assistance when compared with children in the non-immigrant household.

"So, from this study it can be said that international migration has a direct impact on children's development and social environment that was being left. While not directly visible, constantly this impact remains to provide different effects, especially on the development of child psychology," said Sukamdi.

Similarly, Anna Marie Wattie said with the research results, the policies that need to be pursued is the optimization of remittances utilizations, not only for domestic economic interests but also a larger portion for the children education. This can be done by empowering migrant families with training in family financing management. In addition, in order to overcome the psychological problems of children, government and NGOs need to provide guidance to the children.

"The method is assistance through non-schools and schools track," Anna explained.

Meanwhile, Assistant Deputy Minister for Child Protection, Ministry of Women and Child Protection, Usman Basuni, M.A said that in the future this research could be followed up more in-depth and exploratory, so that it can support the position of the left out child. "What needs to be revealed again is about the success of migrant workers who need to go abroad, not only exposing the failure or ugliness," said Usman.

At the same time the Head of National Agency for Protection and Placement of Indonesian Workers (BNP2TKI) Ir. Jumhur Hidayat admitted that his office continues to improve its services for the migrant workers abroad. Many breakthroughs have been conducted for workers and their families such as the access opening of crisis center that allows families to communicate or to know the condition of family members who become migrant workers abroad.

"In addition, the office or service at the Indonesian Embassy in Hong Kong is closed every Saturday and Sunday. While in fact the workers have their day off on that day. Well, we pioneered with the budget assistance so that presently the service at the Indonesian Embassy remains open in the holidays," said Jumhur

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