



RATIONAL CHOICE THEORY AND TASTE OF JAPANESE POPULAR CULTURE IN MOTIVATION OF PMI TO ENTER JAPAN'S GLOBAL LABOR MARKET

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Abstract

Developed countries as the axis of world industrialization attract developing countries with young demographic conditions to participate in the global labor market. According to the ILO's World Employment and Social Outlook-Trends 2019, the participation of the youth workforce has decreased. Besides being faced with an aging population, Japan also has a shortage of workers in the middle and low-skilled sectors. Meanwhile, Indonesia has the potential to experience a demographic bonus. The TITP / Kenshusei scheme is a realization of the labor demand and supply relationship. Rational Choice Theory by Coleman focuses on the rational actions of individuals in making decisions to achieve goals, with the calculation of benefits. According to Sonja Haug, indicators of capital and cultural capital influence the decision-making of migrant workers to migrate. In Futaba, workers from developing countries in Japan describe a relationship of mutual need. The state rationally forms a labor mobility policy in the era of the global labor market. Futaba then found that most participants drive-by economic needs and limited employment opportunities in their home countries. Based on the three indicators, career orientation and financial adequacy are the main factors besides the popularity of Japanese culture. Institutionally, the role of the family is the motivation for migration to meet financial needs at the beginning of a career. There is a process of adopting a lifestyle to the way of interaction and cultural habits of Japanese society. Herewith Japanese popular culture such as; the film, anime, manga, and game industries have contributed to the motivation of migrant workers to Japan.

Keywords: Motivation; Indonesia Migrant Workers; TITP/Kenshusei; Japanese Popular Culture.

Abstrak

Negara maju sebagai poros industrialisasi dunia menarik negara berkembang dengan kondisi demografi muda untuk berpartisipasi dalam pasar tenaga kerja global. Menurut World Employment and Social Outlook-Trends 2019 ILO, partisipasi angkatan kerja muda mengalami penurunan. Selain dihadapkan pada populasi yang menua, Jepang juga kekurangan tenaga kerja di sektor menengah dan rendah. Sementara itu, Indonesia berpotensi mengalami bonus demografi. Skema TITP/Kenshusei merupakan realisasi dari hubungan permintaan dan penawaran tenaga kerja. Teori Pilihan Rasional oleh Coleman berfokus pada tindakan rasional individu dalam mengambil keputusan untuk mencapai tujuan, dengan perhitungan keuntungan. Menurut Sonja Haug, indikator modal dan modal budaya mempengaruhi pengambilan keputusan buruh migran untuk bermigrasi. Di Futaba, pekerja dari negara berkembang di Jepang menggambarkan hubungan saling membutuhkan. Negara secara rasional membentuk kebijakan mobilitas tenaga kerja di era pasar tenaga kerja global. Futaba kemudian menemukan bahwa sebagian besar peserta didorong oleh kebutuhan ekonomi dan kesempatan kerja yang terbatas di negara asal

mereka. Berdasarkan ketiga indikator tersebut, orientasi karir dan kecukupan finansial menjadi faktor utama selain popularitas budaya Jepang. Secara institusional, peran keluarga menjadi motivasi migrasi untuk memenuhi kebutuhan finansial di awal karir. Ada proses mengadopsi gaya hidup ke cara interaksi dan kebiasaan budaya masyarakat Jepang. Berikut budaya populer Jepang seperti; industri film, anime, manga, dan game telah berkontribusi pada motivasi para pekerja migran ke Jepang.

Kata Kunci: Motivasi; Pekerja Migran Indonesia; TITP/Kenshusei; Budaya Populer Jepang.

INTRODUCTION

The availability of jobs is one of the factors that drive the economy of a nation-state. The existence of employment functions as a means of empowering working-age individuals. According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), in 2017, 5.6% of the global population needed jobs. As many as 470 million job opportunities are needed in various fields, because the openness of opportunities for migrant workers is carried out globally from 2016 to 2030.¹ The formation of policies that facilitate opportunities for migrant workers to mobilize, is an option for developing countries that lack the number of workers and developing countries that need jobs. This issue has resulted in bilateral and even multilateral cooperation between nation-states. No exception to Indonesia and Japan, which have had historical relations since 1958, this cooperation covers various aspects of the state, including employment. Particularly for Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI), the workforce sending scheme has various destination countries' choices. One of them is the Japanese TITP (Technical Intern Training Program) scheme.

According to the Institute of Developing Economies, Japan External Trade Organization (IDE-JETRO) in 2013, found that migrant workers in developing countries who participate in labor-sending schemes construct on difficulties in getting jobs in domicile countries. Aside from that, migrant workers might have the confidence to increase personal value and then become better in quality in the country of origin later. In addition, the data findings show that there is encouragement from government policies that facilitate obtaining documents and the need for migrant workers to participate in labor-sending schemes in various countries, including Japan and South Korea. The state is an important actor driving the mobilization of foreign workers.

In practice, migrant workers are the main actors directly influencing the circulation of the global labor market. Therefore, there are variations in motivation that influence PMI in its decision to participate in the scheme of sending foreign workers and the availability of opportunities and financial fulfillment. This motivation aims to examine PMI's considerations in its participation in the TITP / Kenshusei scheme using the perspective of Rational Choice Theory and provide a view of PMI's benefits when participating in the TITP scheme. The emergence of

¹ International Labour Organization, "World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2023," Report, January 16, 2023, http://www.ilo.org/global/research/global-reports/weso/WCMS_865332/lang-en/index.htm.

research questions in the form of, how the rational and irrational choices of PMI migrating to Japan appear from the perspective of RCT and Japanese Popular Culture.

TITP / Kenshusei Workforce Sending Scheme In Japan

Japan is one of the world's developed countries, which has 26.6 percent of the total elderly population of the total population. In this composition, the need for a certain age, the workforce is needed to fulfill several levels of work. This background affects the structure of the Japanese economy. In the high skilled sector, the Japanese population is highly educated. However, on the other hand, in the middle and low-skilled structures, it is necessary to have a capable and willing workforce to fill the jobs called 3K by the Japanese people. 3K define as Kikken or dangerous, Kitanai or dirty and, Kitsui or complex.² The year 1990 marked a revision of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Law policy, regulating the entry and exit routes for migrant workers. This amendment stipulates that migrant workers who enter Japan must have expertise in specific fields to set standards for migrant workers in Japan.

The formation of TITP or Kenshusei in 1993 became one of the routes for sending foreign workers from several developing countries (Philippines, Vietnam, and Indonesia) to Japan. The TITP scheme regulates standardization of worker competencies which are then categorized to then enter the Japanese labor market. The labor policy adopted during the reign of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in 2018 brought 300,000 migrant workers to Japan.³ The function of the TITP / Kenshusei scheme is said to be a technology transfer program from Japan for migrant workers who come from developing countries. Apart from that, politically, it is one of Japan's access to increasing global influence and obtaining workers efficiently.⁴

The Japan International Training Cooperation Organization, known as JITCO, established a system for recruiting migrant workers., arranged through classification, educational background, expertise, and level of Japanese language proficiency. The advanced stage of the system established by JITCO consists of training, providing a one-year visa, which can then be processed again with three years of work.⁵ During this training period, migrant workers acquire new skills, and legally their existence in the form of a residence permit is protected by Japanese

² Kurniawaty Iskandar, "Japan Aging Issues, Long Term Care Insurance (LTCI) and The Migration of Indonesian Nurse to Enter Japan Labor Market," *Journal of Strategic and Global Studies* 2, no. 2 (2020), <https://doi.org/10.7454/jsjgs.v2i2.1020>.

³ Nikkei Asia, "Japan to Ease Language Requirements for Unskilled Foreign Workers," *Nikkei Asia* (blog), 2018, <https://asia.nikkei.com/Economy/Japan-to-ease-language-requirements-for-unskilled-foreign-workers>.

⁴ Chikako Kashiwazaki, "Japan's Resilient Demand for Foreign Workers," [migrationpolicy.org](https://www.migrationpolicy.org), 2002, <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/japans-resilient-demand-foreign-workers>.

⁵ JITCO, "What Is the Technical Intern Training Program?," *JITCO* (blog), 2017, <https://www.jitco.or.jp/en/regulation/index.html>.

labor law.⁶ TITP / Kenshusei, which is an employment option, requires consideration in making migration decisions for each PMI participant. This consideration arises due to the mobility of individuals who move to other countries, which means that they will go through training and adaptation in the sphere of work and social life.

The Phenomenon of Global Migration and The Urgency of Labor Needs

Global labor migration realizes the dynamics of the world system when the understanding to maximize profits and ownership of resources apply to the mechanism of trade in capital, goods, and labor at the transnational level.⁷ Therefore, migration is a social phenomenon where individuals or groups have mobilization from one region to another. This phenomenon is motivated by various supporting aspects and factors. Apart from being due to individual interests, relations between countries have an essential role. There is a need for bilateral to multilateral cooperation agreements to enable the creation of a worker mobilization policy and legal acceptance of migrant workers who enter the industrial domain of a destination country.

Japan and Indonesia implement foreign policies in the labor sector. Due to the urgent need for labor, Japan revised the legal protection policy for migrant workers through the Immigration Control Act. The purpose of this revision is to reduce the number of illegal workers who are not legally protected, as well as efforts to suspend conditions from participating countries that send their migrant workers to Japanese territory. Foreign nationals who are legally registered as migrant workers are allowed to stay and are allowed to extend according to specific work conditions until they are allowed to earn work wages.

⁶ Haning Romdiati, "Globalisasi Migrasi dan Peran Diaspora," *Jurnal Kependudukan Indonesia* 10, no. 2 (2015), <https://doi.org/10.14203/jki.v10i2.69>.

⁷ Ruth Achenbach, *Return Migration Decisions* (Germany: Springer VS Wiesbaden, 2017), <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-16027-2>.

Table 1. Data on Foreign Workers by Country (2016-2018)

Nationality and region	平成28年 2016	2017	2018
Asia			
India	28,667	31,689	35,419
Indonesia	42,850	49,982	56,346
Philippines	243,662	260,553	271,289
Viet Nam	199,990	262,405	330,835
Malaysia	9,084	9,638	10,368

Source: reprocessed, based on data from the Japan Statistical Yearbook 2020.

Especially for PMI in Japan, based on residence permits to work for a medium to long term stay, the number of Indonesian citizens in Japan has increased in the period from 2014 (30,210 people) to 2016 (42,850 people). Several PMIs follow various schemes for sending and managing foreign workers by Japan. These various schemes of sending foreign workers were motivated by the demand for workers who have expertise under the specifications of the field of work, listed in the labor cooperation between Japan and Indonesia since 1993 (Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Tokyo, Japan, 2019).

The actualization of cooperation begins with implementing the MOC (Memorandum of Cooperation), which discusses further the scheme of sending foreign workers. Including; In 2008, IJEPA (The Indonesia-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement. In terms of access to labor) coincident with the implementation of the TITP / Kenshusei and which has been announced since 2019 and will begin after eliminating the travel ban on COVID-19, namely SSW (Specified Skilled Worker). In its implementation, IJEPA has several main elements: the Movement of Natural Person. This element agrees that a scheme will provide facilities for the mobility of a skilled workforce. IJEPA opens two job opportunities through the nurse expertise scheme, with a two-year work experience classification as a nurse. As an elderly nurse (care workers) who do not need to have two years of experience, the second job opportunity with a D3 education level.⁸ In his dissertation on the IJEPA scheme, explained that the Japanese Government's policy of limiting the spread of TKA (Foreign Workers) looks logical. However,

⁸ K. Iskandar, *Trajektori Sosial Ekonomi Perawat Dalam Perspektif Rantai Nilai Global Suatu Analisis Migrasi Perawat Indonesia Ke Jepang* (Depok: University of Indonesia, 2016).

at the beginning of the recruitment process, both parties should realize that this collaboration ignores the existence of a Skilled Gap, type of work, or existing profession. The shift of professions from nurses to careworkers indicates an unsynchronized or unmatched service. Between the service commodities supplied with the user's primary needs (in this case, Japan) or users. In this case, shisetsu (orphanage) and the Japanese elderly. This orphanage resulted in such a lengthy and time-consuming recruitment scheme for both professions with rigorous screening.

Furthermore, Iskandar saw that the primary need for Japan is a support workforce for the elderly because, indeed, the number of elders is increasingly disproportionate to the number who serve them in LTCI. Therefore what is needed more is careworkers than nurses. Meanwhile, the professional pathway that developing countries have as a supplier is the nursing profession. Upgrading is possible if expertise measuring the ability in the same type of profession. A high upgrade, according to Gereffi's perspective, is the increase in skills such as getting adequate education and training, being able to move from a low-paid low-paid job to a high-paid job. The problem that arises here is when nurses change professional paths where the roots of knowledge taught in the careworkers profession are different from those of nurses.

The following scheme is sending Indonesian workers to Japan through the Specified Skilled Workers (SSW) program, or the Japanese term can be called Tokutei Ginou. 2017 marks the beginning of the formation of a new policy arrangement for SSW, by determining 14 work fields, in the form of; manufacturing of machine tools and spare parts, factory machinery, electrical-electronic and information, construction, shipbuilding, and ship engineering, maintenance, and repair of motor vehicles, aviation, agriculture and animal husbandry, fishery and aquaculture, hospitality and tourism, production food and beverage, foodservice industry, elderly caregivers and cleaners. These migrant workers must-have skills that comply with policy standards and have a certification of Japanese language proficiency. The formation of this scheme has a specific target for TITP participants who have completed their work period. So that if approved, participants will follow a period of work in Japan for five years.⁹

The implementation of the TITP (Technical Intern Training Program) in particular is a realization of the consensus of bilateral relations between Indonesia-Japan in the case of workforce management. On which BP2TKI (National Agency for Placement and Protection of Indonesian Workers) carries, which was later revitalized to become BP2MI (Indonesian Migrant Workers Protection Agency) and JITCO (The Japan International Training Cooperation Organization). The aspect that distinguishes the TITP / Kenshusei scheme from other schemes

⁹ K. Iskandar, "Skema Specified Skill Workers (SSW)/Tokutei Ginou" (Paper presented at the Seminar Daring Nasional KWJ-SKSG UI Seri Ke-1, Indonesia, 2020).

lies in the format of the system and the agreed field of work to be filled in by PMI and some migrant workers from other countries. This MoC allows the rate of labor mobility between the two countries to progress and easier access to the legal acquisition through applied administrative requirements and standards.¹⁰

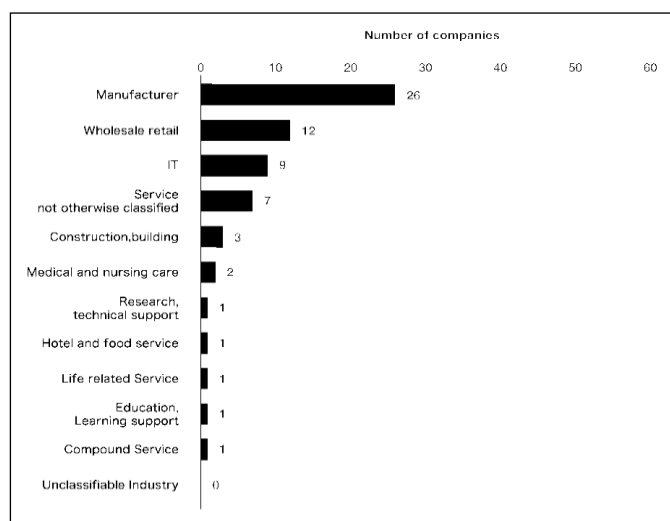
Implementing the TITP / Kenshusei happens because of demand on requests for Indonesian workers by Japan. The workforce is selected and adjusted according to their expertise and the capability to speak Japanese language skills. The growing demand for foreign workers also impacts the socio-economic life of labor supply countries, such as Indonesia. The increasing number of PMIs affect by the background of supporting Indonesian workers to work abroad. Among them offers the opportunity to be able to add skills and experience working in Japan. Apart from the expectation of practical benefits, legally mobilizing foreign workers is facilitated by The Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare (厚生労働省). One of them is in the form of arranging a work visa request in Japan. Administrative rules related to duration and guarantee of stay are also directly regulated by JITCO. Some of these policies become a reference that Japan has prepared to welcome foreign workers, immigrant workers in the circulation of economic activities.¹¹

Concerning the opening of the labor market in Japan, it will create opportunities for foreign migrant workers to fill vacancies in several work sectors in Japan. Migrant workers are positioned in the 3K work sector (Kitsui, Kitanai, and Kiken) because these fields of work are not in demand by the Japanese youth workforce. So that this immigration movement helped Japan in the industry and provided jobs for PMI, therefore in seeing the potential of working in Japan as an option by PMI, it can be related to several factors motivating migration.

¹⁰ S. Setiawan, "Analisis Dampak IJEPa Terhadap Indonesia Dan Jepang," *Jurnal Ilmiah Ekonomi Dan Bisnis* 17, no. 2 (2012).

¹¹ JITCO, "What Is the Technical Intern Training Program ?"

Table 2. Field of Placement of Foreign Workers Industry



Source: METI Government of JAPAN, Japan Internship, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, 2020.

Globally, the improvement of transnational relations between Indonesia and Japan through TIT (Technical Intern Trainee) will establish policy Number 89 of 2016 on Proper Technical Intern Training and Protection of Technical Trainees (Act on TITP) on 2016. Taking effect from 1 November 2017, this program regulates the demand for PMI classified through several work sectors. Adjusted to the needs of the technical workforce (especially in manufacturing engineering, machinery, automotive, electronics, along with others) and nursing has a high demand rate compared to other fields.

The number of participants of the TITP / Kenshusei program from Indonesia is among the top three in Southeast Asia. It was stable from 2017 to 2019. The push for high-capacity industry needs implies that demand for workers has increased, thus creating demand for foreign workers by Japan, amid the phenomenon of the aging population problem. Implementing state policies is the realization of state rationality based on leadership characteristics or interests in seeing a phenomenon of conflict.

Rational Choice Theory describes the scope of actors who apply rational thinking at various levels, from individuals to countries. In international relations, the state becomes an actor capable of thinking and moving rationally, which is motivated by aspects of the interests or influence of the country's leadership characteristics.¹² policy formation aims to maximize benefits and contains calculations of costs and risks in policy implementation. Hence, Japan is taking advantage of bilateral relations to obtain labor efficiently, and Indonesia as a country that

¹² Daniel W. Drezner, *The Sanctions Paradox: Economic Statecraft and International Relations*, Cambridge Studies in International Relations (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511549366>.

sends its workers to other countries is one of the efforts to manage labor. This consideration is an implication of the openness of countries with free trade area (FTA) economic cooperation.

Conceptual Framework of Rational Choice Theory

Rational Choice Theory further elaborates the rational judgment of individuals, in the context of migrant workers, for their participation in the TITP / Kenshusei scheme. The perspective understands the actions and decisions of individuals, in this case, migrant workers, which generating through interaction. Therefore the individual considers that he/she has done his best for personal gain based on his goals, resources, and situation. According to Yoshimici Sato, Rational Choice Theory contains the assumption that individual actors have the right to choose alternative rational choices which they believe subjectively can provide optimal benefits. The elements of this assumption divide into five parts, namely, constraints, alternative options, results of action, utility, and personal beliefs.

When individuals choose alternative actions that they might believe to be optimal in facing an obstacle, these actions may increase their utility. There are two points of view when looking at RCT, including forward-looking rationality and backward-looking rationality. Individuals with a forward-looking rationality viewpoint tend to make predictions from the results of their actions before acting, even though they cannot be predicted with certainty. Meanwhile, individuals with a backward-looking rationality viewpoint believe that decisions that were resulting in positive input are decisions that should be re-designed or re-elected.¹³ In the study of rational and irrational compatibility of migration behavior in China, for example, according to Hu, Wang, and Liang, the phenomenon of migration in China is influenced by individual preferences. One of them is the timing of migration and the risks it thinks about, which is inconsistent. Individuals do not always prioritize reasons for economic adequacy, but they also intervene with emotional aspects, the environment, and even information networks. Security information, acceptance of newcomers in the area, as well as job opportunities. Optimizing utility is the orientation of thought used by migrant workers rather than the aspect of maximizing utility. There is a personal preference in viewing the maximum benefit possible from each migrant worker.

Rational Choice Theory tends to be used to understand complex social phenomena, which stem from the actions and motivations of migrant workers, which are motivated by the need and desire for a higher level of knowledge and experience.¹⁴ From the perspective of behavior/action theory, migration has a goal as an option for solving problems and the economic

¹³ K. H. Satoru Kumagai, "Economic Impacts of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership: Analysis Using IDE-GSM," *IDE-JETRO*, 2021.

¹⁴ James S. Coleman, *Foundations Of Social Theory*, 1990.

conditions of the perpetrators. Migration is considered a rational decision that will maximize the potential (maximizing expected utility) of migrant workers. Individuals consciously decide to migrate, evaluating the costs and benefits principal and thus anticipating a significant income.¹⁵ So that it can explain that migrant workers are seen as rational actors as their decision to immigrate is the result of a balance between costs and benefits.

According to Sonja Haug, the decision to migrate will correlate with joint decision-making, which is influenced by power (parents, spouses, and employers). Macro-level discusses the level of economic improvement, political structures, immigration regimes, and broad belief systems (the use of ideology that helps interpret daily realities, bias in religion, political affiliation, philosophy of life to aspects of spirituality). Meso level is a factor level that refers to a social network, exo a factor level that indirectly affects the external environment through relationships. The micro-level refers to family activities as an agent or circle of friends in the scope of work.¹⁶

The factors that influence individual decision-making are demographics, age, gender, family relationships, and career. On a personal level, personality and behavior, and traditional values might make-believe to be some of the supporting factors on a micro-scale to explain the phenomenon of migration. The micro-scale will be continuous, with the macro scale as the influencing variable. Hence based on perspective, the priority system and levels of influence the environment has on migrating up to the duration of stay, approximately four to five years. The macro-scale influences the situation of a country (whether it is conducive or not) for migrant families to settle down. The influences include security, guaranteed quality of education and living facilities, friendly to migrant workers, or friendly careers to the people who will interact socially directly.

In Japan, migrants have two thought patterns in their survival. The migration phase has a character such as a moratorium phase from personal life. Therefore they have career and profit-oriented (usually in the first years of migration). The second pattern has the desire to build a family, supported by a desire for the expansion of individual life. So then, rationally, it can be seen that the factors that influence the existence of this migration become some participatory considerations in decision making.

¹⁵ Sonja Haug, "Migration Networks and Migration Decision-Making," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 34, no. 4 (2008), <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691830801961605>.

¹⁶ Patricia Voydanoff, "The Effects of Work Demands and Resources on Work-to-Family Conflict and Facilitation," *Journal of Marriage and Family* 66, no. 2 (2004), <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2004.00028.x>.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative method, in which in-depth interviews are one way of obtaining primary data in information processing. The selected resource persons are TITP / Kenshusei participants in the period 2018 to 2020. Three of the five selected speakers have completed a three-year working period in Japan. One resource person has entered the extension or termination phase of work, and the last resource person just entered the year's first tenure in Japan. Two male participants and three female participants. Be in the age range of 19 to 25 when participating in the TITP / Kenshusei scheme. The characteristics of informants working in the technology industry are manufacturing, automotive, agriculture, and food and beverage production industries. Through qualitative methods, the procedure to be carried out will produce detailed or descriptive data. Qualitative research will produce descriptive data in the form of written words or derived from the individual's spoken words and their behavior that can be investigated.

Qualitative observation originates from specific unique characteristics, requiring researchers to find these particular characteristics.¹⁷ Qualitatively, researchers meant to understand at the personal level of the individual and see the individual as they describe themselves in their situation and perspective. Another exciting thing about this type of qualitative research is that it is flexible to the changes needed according to the conditions in the field.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Various factors influence the background to the mobilization of migrant workers. Rationally, migrant workers who have agreed to be involved as migrant workers have personal considerations which, when explained through the perspective in the Rational Choice Theory, generally relate to the motivations of the financial situation. According to Coleman, this theory contains a functionalist view and a personal view of achieving goals. The functionalist view will place individual actions influenced by social structures. Individual actions and social outcomes can be interpreted using the assumption of goal-directed behavior, consistent with specific criteria of rationality. The rational choice theory mentioned by Coleman will arise when individuals face choices that require them to make choices. A decision can be a rational choice if the decision is taken to meet needs, thus causing individuals to take action consequences.¹⁸

The existence of social interaction in the decision-making process will result in network relationships. Network relationships with collective actors (fellow / prospective migrant workers

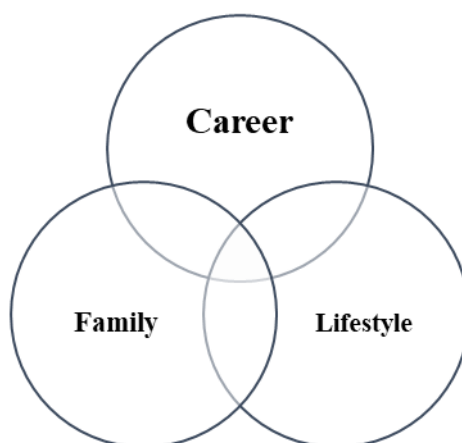
¹⁷ R. C. Bogdan and Sari Knopp Biklen, *Qualitative Research for Education* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1992).

¹⁸ Coleman, *Foundations Of Social Theory*.

and families, companies, and social communities) become further supporting factors for migrant workers because they will connect individuals with social organizations. Based on a sociological perspective that focuses on social systems, social phenomena or issues present social intervention. Therefore, the actor's intervention can create a social change. Individuals play an essential role in the social system as direct agents of change. Rational Choice Theory, according to Coleman, states that individual actions and their resources lead to a goal in the form of actions determined by personal values or preferences.

The migration decision view has indicators used to examine the background of PMI mobility. PMI position as a capital (personal expertise that produces value) driven by the social context so that it takes action on that context. Meanwhile, cultural capital is more external, which influences migrant workers to migrate—mentioned in the analogy of the intersecting triangle of influence.

Figure 1. Migration Drivers of Migrant Workers (Cultural Capital)



Source: reprocessed, based on *Migration Networks and Migration Decision-Making* (Haug, 2008)

Through this line of thought, the decision of migrant workers to migrate through the scheme of sending foreign workers to Japan is influenced by the desire to fill job opportunities. Furthermore, there are hopes of getting a more promising job level and wages for career advancement after returning from Japan. Given the number of skilled unemployed in the Indonesian labor market, both technical and language skills. Migrant workers, in this case, determine migration decisions in making choices based on consideration of capital (personal expertise) and cultural capital (influenced by the desire to improve careers, meet family needs, try new experiences / new lifestyles, are motivated by stories of experiences. from peers and many other factors).

In the article by Ishizuka Futaba, 'International Labor Migration in Vietnam and the Impact of Receiving Countries' Policies', Futaba describing Vietnam's position as a developing country. Vietnamese migrant workers in Japan have experienced a decline since 2010, where migrant workers have complained about non-transfer. Technology and some of them are stuck in debt to pay for their lives. Rationally, migrant workers foster networks that have been formed with fellow workers and even colleagues to obtain information and motivation. Networks have an essential role in considering rational choices, especially in terms of circulation of information acquisition and provision, regarding working in Japan. This information network forms intra-state communities commonly called 'Korean Village' or 'Taiwan Village' located in Taipei, according to the majority of migrant workers who live in an area in Japan. With the intentions of this community will be able to share information about job opportunities, but not a few of the Vietnamese migrant workers who attended the TITP returned home with difficulties in getting a job. The rational impulse to the individual does not go straight with opportunities that are not available. According to Futaba, not only migrant workers need to be selected for their skills and mental readiness. The countries also need to prepare policies that can manage foreign workers and vice versa for sending countries in order to be able to prepare and protect workers and prospective migrant workers from their own countries.¹⁹

After that, the backgrounds classify into three indicators of the cultural capital of the influence of migration on migrant workers. From a career point of view, family encouragement or demands to meet family needs and a desire to change lifestyles in other countries. The in-depth interview method was conducted twice. One Focus Group Discussion (FGD) session with five individuals (two men, three women) who participated in the TITP / Kenshusei workforce sending scheme carried out in stages from December 2020 until April 2021.

The results of interviews with former TITP / Kenshusei participants describe as follows. Two male participants will refer as EP (male, 25 years old) and YP (male, 22 years old). EP works in the food and beverage production goods industry in Fukuoka, and YP works in the building construction manufacturing industry in Gunma. YP has a supporting background that tends to fulfill career satisfaction and a desire to fulfill family financial needs, even though he is not married. Meanwhile, EP is already married with two children. According to related informants, their desire to participate in the workforce sending scheme to Japan was initially influenced by the environment when they attended Vocational High Schools (SMK), which had directed them to participate in the TITP / Kenshusei scheme. In the reality of work, both individuals are included in the group that gets a good position and company in recruiting foreign

¹⁹ Futaba Ishizuka, "International Labor Migration in Vietnam and the Impact of Receiving Countries' Policies," *IDE Discussion Papers*, IDE Discussion Papers, 2013.

workers. Therefore the experience of working in Japan, according to the informants, is equally enjoyable. One of which is due to the appreciative Japanese work culture in the eyes of EP and YP.

Other supporting factors that can be classified on indicators of lifestyle changes, supported by EP and YP's hobbies or hobbies of culture and games originating from Japan, with the hope of experiencing the 'world' in the manga, especially One Piece, anime, and even games, by visiting the country. The origin of their hobby. In addition, the male informants felt privileged if they had already migrated to another country to pursue a career. This view is cultivating with the hope of getting better career opportunities when returning to Indonesia. Especially for EP individuals (25 years old) who already have an excellent Japanese language proficiency certification while still in school, the option to participate in the program to send foreign workers to Japan through TITP / Kenshusei is not a difficult decision. In addition, he received recommendations from peer tutors on Japanese language education training, ensure that he would follow the Specified Skilled Worker (SSW) scheme. This plan might depart in October 2021, bringing his wife and two children to migrate to Japan as long as the work contract is in effect. The EP even expressed that it is not reluctant to stay longer in Japan if the situation allows.

In another case with female sources who were younger (20, 22, and 25 years), the results state that LE (female, 20 years) is one of the participants with the youngest age, has a consideration due to the encouragement of the school. Which first established a networking partnership with one of the local foreign workers sending agencies in the area where she lives, in the DIY Yogyakarta area. Engaging in manufacturing in the Miyagi area has a desire to go abroad to experience a far different lifestyle from that in Indonesia. The thing that matters the most for LE is feeling things from a new perspective. Like the first time experiencing extreme weather, experiencing several times the handling of natural disasters (earthquakes) in Japan and how a work culture tends to be challenging but appreciative of workers. There are findings beyond the indicators during the interview. The encouragement to stay in Japan appears due to personal problems and having found host families and those who are said to be "new life" in Japan.

Individual interview results from RK (female, 22 years old) works in Nagasaki prefecture in the agricultural industry, acquiring knowledge of effective agricultural product management using technology. RK hopes that this knowledge can be applied in his home area, Cilacap, to empower the surrounding environment. Apart from being interested in Japanese agricultural products, RK joined the information network about the workforce sending scheme via Facebook. In this community group, both candidates, ex, and migrant workers still in Japan

provide input, suggestions, and recommendations to each other. In addition to admiring the culture and a respectful work environment, (seen from the point of view of bonuses if there is additional work). The unique thing beyond the indicators obtained is that RK's lifestyle is much healthier, and she cares about nutrition intake compared to when he was living in Indonesia. Consumption of seafood protein is one of RK's concerns, which is said to be easy to obtain in a new and high-quality state even though it is at a price that tends to be affordable. The rest said by RK, his experience while working in Japan changed his view on how to protect the environment from the smallest scope. Such as reluctance to litter, accustomed to categorizing waste so that it is easy to process, as well as cultures in communicating such as getting used to saying; 'Sorry' and 'Thank You'.

Another case for JN (female, 25 years old), the background of participating in this workforce sending scheme is due to boredom working as a health worker in Indonesia. Instead of registering in a similar field as in the IJEPA scheme, JN found TITP / Kenshusei as an opportunity to transfer professions and acquire new skills that are difficult to pursue in Indonesia due to an inappropriate educational background. JN works in the automotive industry located in Kyushu as one of the manufacturers of seat belts and airbags for one of Japan's bona fide automotive companies. JN also asked if Japan allowed making program transfers to follow the IJEPA scheme when the TITP / Kenshusei period had been completed. JN sees this as freedom in self-exploration so that he has more career options in the future. Unlike other participants who followed the scheme because of their educational and friendly environment, JN discovered this scheme through a network of families who had already worked in Japan. Although not through the same scheme, encouragement from relatives makes JN feel safe. It has a trusted guarantee that is more than just trusting in an institution that will help manage the individual's departure later. JN, who is married and has children, gets full support from his family because the wages are pretty helpful in his daily activities and needs. What then has a contradicting value is the socializing style of Japanese society at PMI, especially for female migrant workers, how to socialize closer to or familiarize themselves with colleagues by gathering or drinking alcohol together. Considering that most participants are Muslim and two of them are Catholic, both religions do not get used to drinking alcohol in their daily lives. The rest is looking to obtain halal food and ingredients, now they have more options, so they are not too distracting during the participation of participants in the TITP / Kenshusei scheme.

Based on these findings, Rational Choice Theory provides a focused line of thought about the motivations driving PMI's decision to participate in TITP / Kenshusei. From a career perspective that is inseparable from financial adequacy, wages, work experience, and possible career paths, PMI's main reasons for visiting Japan. The second indicator relates to the family.

Fulfilling the family's needs is an equally crucial driving aspect; to support a family in Indonesia or find a new family in Japan. The proximity factor in the personal sphere describes the role of collective actors (fellow migrant workers, family, colleagues in companies, social or religious communities) influencing PMI's decision to participate in TITP / Kenshusei. The role of the information network also influences the formation of inputs in migration decision-making. Information networks have the function of carrying out social interactions as the basis for the actions of migrant workers. So when an individual wish to migrate, interacting with fellow migrating individuals will update the knowledge and information they need to know in migrating.

Sufficient information is needed to determine which sector of work is compatible with the capabilities of the migrant worker before entering the Japanese labor market. This information capital can be in the form of jobs, information about job prospects, to the circulation of job vacancies. This economic relationship, according to Granovetter, is an arrangement of information networks generated by social interactions. In its interpretation of economic and non-economic behavior networks, there are interaction activities carried out in individuals' social lives that affect the economic behavior to be carried out. This social network is formed based on mutual knowledge, mutual information formed from relationships between individuals, individuals, and institutions.²⁰ This network concept can increase the number of migrant workers, both for sending countries and receiving countries for foreign workers.²¹

The last indicator is the desire to have a different lifestyle experience, namely through working as a foreign worker in Japan. Through the results obtained, some findings are adapting to social and cultural ways, simple foods 'from nature,' extreme weather to potential natural disasters in Japan. The anticipatory and individualistic lifestyle of the Japanese community became a new insight into the way of life for some of the participants. An element outside the indicators mentioned in Sonja Haug's analogy is Japanese pop culture, which attracts the participants' interest to Japan towards their fans.

Some of the supporting factors that are not explained by Rational Choice Theory are the influence of love or hobbies on Japanese culture; in this case, it relates to the desire to feel the atmosphere like manga, anime, and even games originating from Japan. The influence of Japanese pop culture has its appeal for some of the participants used as sources for the research. Viewing Japanese popular culture through taste, according to Bordieu is, 'is what brings together things and people that go together.'²²

²⁰ G. Ritzer, *Teori Sosiologi: Dari Teori Klasik Sampai Perkembangan Terakhir Postmodern* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2012).

²¹ Haug, "Migration Networks and Migration Decision-Making."

²² P. Bourdieu, *Distinction a Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (Cambridge: Harvard

It explains that if individuals are in similar social and resource conditions, they tend to have similar tastes. Bordeau classifies the consumption of similar cultural products, united by the same taste (as in the same social class or profession). When groups of individuals move in similar social spaces, they can create similar taste patterns and similar cultural practices. So that things that smell of hobby become one of the unifying social factors. Like Indonesian care workers in Japan, Iskandar explains that PMI, which has a high taste in Japan, will have the ability to adapt to Japan's work system and social environment. This taste or penchant for Japanese things can be found in a penchant for language and culture, technological developments, to Japanese popular culture products. Therefore, the pressure found during working time does not feel like a heavy burden than individuals who do not have a taste.

Other aspects of influence besides the three indicators mentioned in the Rational Choice Theory, it was also found that there was an adaptation in terms of food, which was said by one of the participants to change his habits to eat more regularly and with sufficient nutrition. These findings directly resulted in changes in the taste of food among the participants, who had their preferences to follow the consumption patterns of the Japanese people, which had the characteristics of enjoying food with simple tastes. In contrast to Indonesia cuisine, which is more identify as complex flavors and highly seasoned. In addition, the role of educational institutions that act as companions and collaborate with labor-sending institutions is one of the factors found in this study. Rationally, support from the closest person includes a family in Rational Choice Theory can also be related to relatives who already have experience or even have previously been in Japan. So that the urge to work in Japan can be implemented in real terms because there is a sense of security in having someone known in Japan first.

This study found the background of PMI's desire to work in Japan, especially in the TITP/Kenshusei scheme seen from the Rational Choice Theory. This theory explains several aspects that influence individual participants in leaving for Japan in the workforce sending scheme. However, it does not deny that other aspects have participated in driving the participants to participate in the TITP/Kenshusei scheme.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, several conclusions drawn about the background of Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) in the scheme for sending foreign workers to Japan, TITP / Kenshusei are, participating PMIs are individuals of productive age and have personal considerations for joining the sending scheme. Foreign workers to Japan (in this context in TITP / Kenshusei. Referring to the Rational Choice Theory, a correlation shows three indicators of participation

motivation: improving career, demands for family needs, and lifestyle changes to PMI's motivation to go to Japan. Gender differences, there was no significant difference in the background of supporting participation in TITP / Kenshusei. The findings of motivation outside the indicators of Rational Choice Theory, which are influenced by Japanese popular culture, are an exciting aspect for PMI to migrate to Japan.

Several findings were not discussed in the Rational Choice Theory that significantly motivated participants in the decision-making process to follow the TITP / Kenshusei workforce sending scheme. In this context, there are hobbies, appreciative corporate culture, the influence of family experiences and the adaptative process of the participants, and information networks that help PMI obtain information on PMI's experiences that have previously followed the TITP / Kenshusei scheme. The interview results showed that the Japanese network and taste of the participants motivated and strengthened the reasons for PMI's decision-making process based on profit and loss calculations. Several cases need to prove whether individual capital about Japanese taste and mastery of Japan is the motivation that influences PMI participants to persist in the work system in Japan according to the contract that regulates it. Meanwhile, the other participants who did not have this Japanese taste were more likely to decide to return in the middle of the contract. In other words, they did not continue their work in Japan because of the challenging terrain they faced. The study's findings above are expected to enrich the explanations behind the motivation of individual participants to follow the TITP / Kenshusei scheme.

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