



Exploring the way Indonesian domestic workers deal with migration challenges and difficulties: Learning from migrant social media data

Stevanus Wisnu Wijaya*, Jason Watson**, Christine Bruce***

*Prasetiya Mulya University, Indonesia

** Queensland University of Technology, Australia

*** James Cook University, Australia



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- low-skilled workers which are popularly known as “*tenaga kerja Indonesia (TKI)*” or “*buruh migrant Indonesia (BMI)*”.
- they have low educational background and from low income families.
- They need to take the opportunity to work in foreign countries as they have difficulty entering the Indonesian job market.



- Indonesian migrant workers bring their authentic way of life to the host country.
- Then, enjoying the nuance of community life is a common practice of Indonesian migrant domestic workers such as interacting with each other's especially with their respective members of the community.



The essence of community life can be facilitated by the digital technologies in term of facilitating interactions, collaborations, and collective actions for those who have similar interest.



This research was employ a virtual ethnography approach. Data was collected from a 6 month of online observation and interviews to 19 members of Indonesian migrant domestic workers online communities. Data from the observation logs and interview transcriptions was subjected to a qualitative thematic analysis using NVIVO 10, from which two key themes emerged that describe migrant online practices in social media platforms.



This was expressed by Participant 9 as follows:

*The total number of my friends is increase.
There are a lot of people add me.*

She emphasized that the online communities helped her to get to know each other, and maintain the relationship. Facebook' user profiles helped migrant workers to know about each other.



Online communities provide them with the opportunity to penetrate the boundary of isolation. as emphasized by Participant 1 that:

So, migrant workers can know with each other.

Indonesian Migrant domestic workers mostly live in circumscribed working spaces which consequently they find difficulties to interact with others.



Sharing about various problems were a common practice, for instance discussed the unfavourable treatment from agencies as posted by Participant 1:

AGENCY IS ODD BUT REAL: Are the agencies blind, they can't see any legal law in Taiwan?? Do the policies released by the agencies fit with humane treatment? Of course, the answer is "NO" .

This posted message had been responded from various perspectives, which attract others to proposed ideas about the ways to fight against any injustice treatment.



The agency was criticized for not doing the job properly as emphasized by Participant 4:

Every Indonesian domestic worker must be informed about domestic migrant workers' rights, and it is the main task of the agency where we were recruited and educated as domestic workers.

The discussions were followed by a more in-depth discussion about migrant domestic workers condition in their working places



Accessing social media is a common practice of Indonesian migrant domestic workers. This practice provide them with an opportunity to be connected with their similar others, and develop a relationship and accessing knowledge from the online communities.