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Economic Security in the Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers through the 2022 Moratorium on Migrant Worker Placement to Malaysia

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Abstract

This study analyzes the Indonesian government's 2022 moratorium policy on dispatching Indonesian migrant workers (PMI) to Malaysia. This policy was triggered by Malaysia's violation of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), Malaysia continues to use the System Maid Online (SMO), which legalizes the "depart first, process documents later" scheme, it is a practice that is illegal and side-stepping the legal system One Channel System (OCS). Using the conceptual framework of Economic Security, this study aims to analyze how the implementation of the moratorium functions as an instrument to protect PMI's financial rights and well-being. With qualitative method and secondary data collection through literature review and official documents. This study argues that the Moratorium policy is no longer merely an administrative diplomatic measure, but rather a defensive strategy to uphold economic security standards for the migrant workers. The results indicate that the 2022 moratorium was a strategic effort by the state to ensure the economic security of its citizens.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini menganalisis kebijakan moratorium pengiriman Pekerja Migran Indonesia (PMI) ke Malaysia yang diberlakukan oleh Pemerintah Indonesia pada 2022. Pengambilan kebijakan ini dipicu oleh pelanggaran kesepakatan Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) oleh pihak Malaysia. Malaysia masih menggunakan System Maid Online (SMO) yang melegalkan skema "berangkat dulu, urus dokumen kemudian" dan bersifat ilegal dan side-stepping legal sistem yang disepakati One Channel System (OCS). Dengan menggunakan kerangka konseptual Keamanan Ekonomi, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis bagaimana pemberlakuan moratorium berfungsi sebagai instrumen perlindungan terhadap hak-hak finansial dan kesejahteraan PMI. Metode

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yang digunakan adalah kualitatif dengan pengumpulan data sekunder melalui studi pustaka dan dokumen resmi. Penelitian ini berargumen bahwa kebijakan ini bukan lagi sekadar tindakan diplomasi administratif, melainkan strategi defensif untuk menegakkan standar keamanan ekonomi bagi pekerja migran. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa moratorium tahun 2022 merupakan upaya strategis negara untuk menjamin keamanan ekonomi warga negaranya.

Keywords: Economic Security, Malaysia, Moratorium, Indonesian Migrant Workers

Introduction

Migration has become a vital instrument in the dynamics of the global economy, especially in the 21st century. This phenomenon is not merely the physical movement of people across national borders, but a manifestation of economic interdependence among countries.[1] Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) are known as foreign exchange earners for the nation, bolstering Indonesia's domestic macroeconomic stability through remittances.[2] However, behind these economic contribution figures lie systemic vulnerabilities that threaten human security, especially economic security. According to the UNDP (1994), economic security extends beyond GDP to include guaranteed access to income and the fulfillment of basic needs.[3] For PMI, this is measured not only by the remittance amounts, but also by income stability, employment security, social protection, and resilience to shocks.

In 2020, the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs reported that approximately 2.7 million Indonesian migrant workers were in Malaysia, but only around 1.6 million worked through legal channels. This legal labor market reflects high employer demand in Malaysia and limited job opportunities for locals in Indonesia. The complicated, expensive, and time-consuming migration process leads many migrant workers to choose the illegal channel. As a result, they are more vulnerable to exploitation, overwork, physical and mental abuse by employers, and deportation without adequate legal protection.[4] 2022 was a crucial period for labor relations between the two countries. In the first quarter of 2022, 1.63 million Indonesian migrant workers were recorded working in Malaysia, representing nearly half (49.7%) of all Indonesian migrants worldwide.[5]

With the resumption of full placement access, this number persisted, though it varied. However, Malaysia remained a premier destination. On July 13, 2022, the Indonesian government enacted a Moratorium (temporary restriction) on Migrant Worker Placement to Malaysia. The policy followed because Malaysia violated the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the Placement and Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers in the Domestic Sector, signed on April 1, 2022. Malaysia still uses the Online Maid System (SMO), a recruitment system without clear protection measures, it also "side-stepping" Indonesia's One Channel System (OCS). This illegal system directly

undermines the pillars of Indonesian Migrant Workers' economic security by legalizing the "depart first, process documents later" scheme, which carries a high risk of human trafficking and eliminates transparency in employment contracts and minimum wage guarantees.[6]

Therefore, it is crucial to examine how the 2022 Moratorium on Migrant Worker Placement to Malaysia protected the economic security of Indonesian Migrant Workers, amid ongoing violations of recruitment agreements at that time. This study analyzes the impact of the 2022 moratorium on illegal recruitment practices and labor exploitation of PMI in Malaysia, and evaluates the extent to which the policy has reduced migrant workers' economic vulnerability. This study argues that the policy is no longer merely an administrative diplomatic measure but rather a defensive strategy to uphold economic security standards for migrant workers.

Research by Safitri and Wibisono (2023), argues that the protection of PMI requires a policy paradigm shift from controlling migration and the country's economic interests (remittances) to an approach that positions Indonesian Migrant Workers as rights holders.[7] Meanwhile, Regina Meylan Nur Unnisa, Yusep Ginanjar, and I Wayan Aditya Harikesa (2025), also see this as reflecting pressure on future relations between Malaysia and Indonesia. The moratorium is viewed as the government's effort to ensure a safe migration process, protect the rights of Indonesian Migrant Workers, and pressure the Malaysian government to comply with the MoU to protect workers' welfare.[8] However, non-procedural migration challenges continue to overshadow the fulfillment of economic security.

This study highlights the 2022 Moratorium on Migrant Worker Placement to Malaysia policy as a government effort to address economic security concerns stemming from violations of the recruitment system agreement, including income security (remittances) and protection against exploitation that could lead to individual losses. This policy was ultimately revoked and officially reinstated on August 1, 2022. This research is expected to contribute to restructuring the PMI regulatory system to be more equitable and more secure.

Research Method

This study uses qualitative methods to examine how the Moratorium on Migrant Workers (PMI) placement to Malaysia in 2022 is part of the Indonesian government's economic security efforts in response to Malaysia's violations of the recruitment system agreement. This method allows a deeper understanding not only of the regulatory perspective and government narrative on MoU violations, but also of how the policy articulates human security concerns to protect migrant workers' economic well-being abroad. Qualitative methods allow researchers to identify complex issues, interpret social phenomena, and understand participants' lived experiences and perspectives.[9] Researchers must

be curious, empathetic, and intellectually open to understand how economic, social, political, and international legal contexts shape state behavior and the lived realities of migrant workers.

The study draws on secondary data, including documentation and literature reviews. The data were collected through analysis of books, scientific journal articles, the annual report of the Indonesian Migrant Workers Protection Agency (BP2MI), bilateral agreement documents, official statements regarding Malaysia's use of the Online Maid System (SMO) that triggered the moratorium, and official publications from the Ministry of Manpower and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs related to the Indonesian Migrant Workers protection initiative. This secondary data analysis aims to connect economic security theory with the moratorium policy's implementation in the field. This study gathers comprehensive qualitative evidence to explain the urgency of economic security as a key pillar of protecting citizens abroad.

Result and Discussion

Migrant workers are among the largest contributors to foreign exchange earnings. Malaysia has long been a primary destination for Indonesian migrant workers. To protect them, the government enacted Law No. 18 of 2017 concerning the Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers and Government Regulation No. 59 of 2021. These regulations emphasize that the country protects its migrant workers before, during, and after employment. However, implementation remains suboptimal, with migrant workers often facing various issues such as a lack of legal protection and official documents, as well as limited access to communication with Indonesian representatives abroad.

In 2022, around 43.163 PMI migrated to Malaysia. However, numerous reports indicate that Migrant workers in Malaysia experience inhuman treatment, such as overwork, unpaid wages, poor living conditions, physical abuse, and sexual harassment. To address these issues, Indonesia and Malaysia signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the Recruitment and Placement of Indonesian Domestic Workers on April 1, 2022. Indonesian President Joko Widodo and Malaysian Prime Minister Ismail Sabri Yaakob signed this agreement. The MoU regulates the use of the One Channel System as an integrated mechanism for the recruitment and monitoring of PMI.[10]

The problem escalated when Malaysia was deemed to have violated the MoU. Malaysia is still using the Online Maid System (SMO), which allows direct recruitment without going through the official mechanisms agreed in the MoU (One Channel System). The SMO opened up loopholes for illegal recruitment practices and reduced transparency in employment contracts. Regarding this, the Indonesian government imposed a moratorium on July 13, 2022. This policy shows that the state acts not only as a facilitator of labor migration but also as a responsible actor in ensuring its citizens' economic security. Economic security

is the primary lens for understanding this issue. Economic security is defined as a condition in which an individual has a stable, adequate income to meet basic needs, protection against the risk of job loss, and access to a social safety net. There are four main variables: Income Stability, Employment Security, Social Protection, and Resilience to Shock.

Income Stability

The Indonesian Government believes that Malaysia's MoU violations could increase migrant workers' vulnerability to economic exploitation and job insecurity. From an economic security perspective, this situation threatens migrant workers' income stability. Income stability means a worker's ability to earn a sustainable, guaranteed income without the threat of salary cuts, unilateral dismissal, or late payment. Many PMI in Malaysia have experienced passport confiscation, excessive salary deductions by agents, and job placements that do not comply with their contracts, resulting in economic instability for migrant workers and their families in Indonesia.[11]

The Moratorium was implemented to pressure Malaysia to comply with the official placement mechanism through the OCS. Migrant workers are often in a vulnerable position, and prior to the 2022 MoU many domestic workers experienced delayed salary payments, unilateral wage deductions, and even received no wages at all.[12] Through the OCS mechanism, worker data, contracts, and payments became more transparent, allowing the government to monitor the economic rights of migrant workers. According to Indonesia's Minister of Manpower in 2022, Ida Fauziah, the OCS also aims to reduce illegal recruitment practices and excessive levies that burdened migrant workers before departure. The Indonesian government can also strive to ensure that migrant workers receive certainty of work contracts, guaranteed wage payments, and protection against human trafficking and labor exploitation. This shows that the moratorium is not merely a policy to stop worker placement, but also a tool to protect migrant workers' economic security.

The second indicator is decent wages. A living wage is a crucial indicator because it directly affects an individual's ability to meet basic needs. In the 2022 Indonesia-Malaysia MoU, both parties agreed to a minimum wage standard for domestic workers in Malaysia. This agreement reflects recognition that migrant workers must receive a decent income, consistent with the International Labor Organization's (ILO) Principles of Decent Work. Decent wages are a key component of worker protection because they directly relate to well-being, the ability to meet living expenses, and reduced economic vulnerability.[13] One of the main reasons Indonesians work in Malaysia is the significant wage gap compared to domestic wages in Indonesia. Nevertheless, in reality, many migrant workers still receive below-standard wages because of high

administrative fees, manipulated employment contracts, and weak oversight of recruitment agencies.

Economic protection encompasses not only job security but also safeguards migrant workers' wage rights to prevent economic exploitation.[14] The 2022 Moratorium policy can be seen as a form of state protection to ensure Indonesian migrant workers receive decent wages in accordance with their contracts and appropriate labor standards. The Indonesian government is working to improve the placement system, so migrant workers no longer face a weak bargaining position with agents and employers. A living wage is also important because Indonesian migrant workers contribute to the country's foreign exchange. Bank Indonesia notes that remittances from Indonesian migrant workers are a significant source of foreign exchange for the national economy. However, the PMI's high economic contribution is not always accompanied by adequate protection of workers' rights. Therefore, the moratorium also serves to evaluate the effectiveness of implementing the 2022 MoU, which emphasizes protecting the rights of Indonesian domestic workers in Malaysia. One of the main objectives of this agreement is to minimize violence, exploitation, and violations of migrant workers' rights that happen in Malaysia.[15]

Income diversification indicators reflect individuals' or households' ability to secure alternative income sources, reducing reliance on a single source. Before the moratorium, Malaysia was a key destination for PMIs because of its geographic proximity, ease of language use, and high labor demand in the domestic and plantation sectors. Data from the Indonesian Migrant Workers Protection Board (BP2MI) shows that in 2022, the number of Indonesian migrant workers placed increased significantly to 198,754 after a previous decline due to the COVID-19 pandemic.[16] However, heavy dependence on the Malaysian labor market left many prospective migrant workers economically vulnerable when the moratorium was implemented. The Indonesian government subsequently encouraged PMIs to diversify their destination countries, including Japan, South Korea, and several Middle Eastern countries with stronger labor protection systems. This diversification is crucial to reduce economic dependence on a single destination country while expanding safer, more viable employment opportunities for Indonesian migrant workers.

Beyond diversifying destination countries, secure remittances are also crucial. Remittances are a primary source of income for many migrant worker families in Indonesia, particularly in migrant enclaves such as East Java, West Nusa Tenggara, and Central Java. However, labor exploitation and unpaid wages often prevent workers from sending remittances regularly to their families. According to Bank Indonesia data, remittances from Indonesian migrant workers in Malaysia reached US$4,426 in 2022, representing 34% of total remittances that year.[17]

By using the OCS and monitoring salary payments, the government is working to ensure that migrant workers receive their full income and transfer it through secure, official channels. The government also needs to begin strengthening economic empowerment programs for migrant workers' families. This is crucial because remittances from migrant workers contribute significantly to household economies and the country's foreign exchange reserves. However, complete reliance on remittances without proper financial management, can increase the socioeconomic vulnerability of migrant workers' families if workers lose their jobs or are deported.[18]

Employment Security

Employment security is also crucial in assessing how well a country protects Indonesian migrant workers (PMI) from job uncertainty, exploitation, and loss of access to basic economic rights. Employment security can be analyzed through three main indicators: legal employment, job security, and labor protection. BP2MI data show that the number of PMI placements increased from 113,436 in 2020 to 200,761 in 2022. In 2022, Malaysia became the third-largest destination country with 43,163 PMIs, after Hong Kong (60,096) and Taiwan (53,459).[19] This data demonstrates Malaysia's strategic position in providing employment for PMIs. However, the large number of placements also increases risk if placement management does not proceed through official, protected channels. In other words, the greater the flow of labor migration to Malaysia, the greater the need for robust protection mechanisms.

The first indicator is the availability of legitimate, legal, and documented employment opportunities. In this context, the moratorium cannot be understood solely as a policy that blocks Indonesian migrant workers' access to employment in Malaysia. It is more appropriate to view the moratorium as a corrective policy that ensures employment opportunities available to Indonesian migrant workers are legal and subject to legal accountability. The SMO directly undermines this indicator by creating opportunities for Indonesian migrant workers to work without valid employment contracts, without clear employer identities, without previously agreed-upon wages, and without adequate supporting documentation.[20] This situation places Indonesian migrant workers in a legally vulnerable position, even when the departure process appears official. The core issue is not only the number of available jobs, but also whether those jobs are registered and protected by the state's protection system. Therefore, employment security cannot be equated with the principle of "Opening doors as many as possible".

Conversely, employment security requires that every job accessed by PMI be accompanied by legal certainty, a clear contract, and a protection mechanism that can be implemented if violations occur. The SMO leaves the Indonesian government without adequate data on Indonesian migrant workers, making it

difficult to secure protection when they face issues such as passport confiscation, salary deductions, and lack of employment contracts.[21] Thus, the moratorium serves as a diplomatic pressure tool to compel Malaysia to comply with the official mechanisms agreed by both parties (OCS). This means the government is not eliminating employment opportunities for Indonesian migrant workers, but rather re-screening employment pathways to ensure that available opportunities meet legal and protection standards.

Job security means the PMI have clarity on their employment status, employer, type of work, workplace, wages, rights, and obligations during employment. The MoU stipulates that only employment contracts that are validated by the Indonesian Representative in Malaysia can be accepted for work permit applications. This provision matters because the employment contract protects Indonesian migrant workers in disputes with their employers.[22] The MoU also stipulates that Indonesian migrant workers in the domestic sector work in specific job categories and at a single workplace as per the contract. The employment contract must also state the initial salary, and the Indonesian Representative helps determine the salary's appropriateness by validating job orders and work contracts. When these elements are documented in a formal contract, the Indonesian migrant worker's bargaining position strengthens because the employment relationship no longer depends on verbal agreements or unilateral employer control.

Employment security matters more because the domestic sector is highly vulnerable to exploitation. ILO data shows that 29% of migrant domestic workers surveyed in Malaysia are in conditions that meet the statistical definition of forced labor. The ILO also notes that overtime working hours and low wages are common for migrant domestic workers. In fact, when adjusted for international working-hour standards, none of the domestic worker respondents received wages equivalent to the minimum wage.[23] This data shows that domestic workers in Malaysia face a serious risk of exploitation. Therefore, a moratorium is relevant as an effort to prevent migrant domestic workers from entering an unsafe labor market that does not meet protection standards.

Vulnerability is evident in the high number of complaints. As of June 2022, Malaysia had the highest number of complaints from PMIs, with 293, surpassing Saudi Arabia's 201, Taiwan's 94, and the United Arab Emirates' 53.[24] These complaints covered a range of issues, including excessive workloads, overstaying, human trafficking, wage deductions, and contract violations. In 2022, Indonesian migrant workers in Malaysia filed 451 complaints, including unpaid wages, poor working conditions, and contract violations. This data shows that threats to employment security are not merely assumed but manifest in the patterns of vulnerability experienced by PMI.[25]

Law Number 18 of 2017 stipulates that Indonesian migrant workers receive legal, social, and economic protection at all stages of labor migration. The moratorium is a form of state responsibility when the existing placement mechanism is deemed inconsistent with the national protection system. Through the OCS, the MoU strengthens labor protection by requiring registration of Indonesian and Malaysian agents, updating migrant worker data, explaining employment contracts to migrant workers, and monitoring working conditions. The MoU also stipulates that migrant workers are not responsible for work-related costs in Malaysia, and employers are the ones who bear costs arising from Malaysian policies. Furthermore, migrant workers must be able to communicate with their families and relevant authorities, while Malaysia must facilitate the consular functions of the Indonesian Representative.[26]

The employment security of Indonesian migrant workers in Malaysia concerns not only their individual income but also the economic resilience of their families back home. If Indonesian migrant workers work without contracts, face wage cuts, are not even getting paid, or are trapped in debt for placement fees, the economic security of their families in Indonesia will be compromised. Nevertheless, lifting the moratorium does not signify that threats to Indonesian migrant workers' employment security are over. Instead, it marks the start of an implementation phase that requires strict oversight. If the OCS is not implemented consistently, old risks such as non-procedural recruitment, unclear contracts, document retention, and labor exploitation could resurface.

Social Protection

Social protection is crucial because Indonesian migrant workers need not only access to employment but also assurance that their economic situation will not collapse when they face problems in their host country. Therefore, social protection can be operationalized through three main indicators: social security, social assistance, and social safety nets. The moratorium on PMI placements to Malaysia on July 13, 2022, is not simply a temporary suspension of worker placement. The SMO is problematic because it allows PMIs to enter Malaysia on tourist visas and then convert them to work visas upon arrival. This pattern bypasses the procedures stipulated in Law No. 18 of 2017, weakens state data collection, and creates opportunities for exploitation, as PMIs may work without a valid employment contract, social security coverage, clear employers, or strong legal protections.[27]

The first indicator is social security, including BPJS Employment, pension protection, and health and work insurance. Law No. 18 of 2017 stipulates that protection for migrant workers (PMI) includes protection before, during, and after employment, including legal, social, and economic protection, as well as the provision of social security.[28] In this context, the moratorium serves as a corrective mechanism because placement through the SMO leaves the PMI's

status incompletely documented. If PMIs are not registered, the state cannot determine whether they have an employment contract, are registered with BPJS, have insurance, or can claim protection in a work accident or death.

The 2022 MoU signed by both parties strengthens social security indicators through cross-border protection. The Indonesian government must ensure that Indonesian migrant domestic workers are registered in social security programs before departure. Meanwhile, the Malaysian government must ensure that employers register Indonesian migrant domestic workers in the "Employment Injury Scheme" under the Employees' Social Security Act 1969 and provide health insurance. [29] This means social protection for Indonesian migrant workers operates through two layers, which is protection in Indonesia through BPJS Ketenagakerjaan and protection in Malaysia through PERKESO/SOCSO and employer-paid health insurance.

In Indonesia, Minister of Manpower Regulation No. 18 of 2018 states that workers must be registered for Work Accident Insurance (JKK) and Death Insurance (JKM) and may also participate in Old Age Security (JHT). JKK and JKM contributions for PMI placed by placement agencies are IDR 370,000 for the protection period before, during, and after work.[30] In Malaysia, PERKESO, through the Skim Bencana Kerja (LINDUNG PEKERJA), states that foreign workers, including foreign domestic workers, are protected under the Employment Injury Scheme since January 1, 2019. This scheme covers workplace accidents, work-related travel, emergencies, and occupational diseases, and employers must register their workers.[31] The moratorium not only pressures Malaysia to open access to work but also ensures employers fulfill their social protection obligations to PMI.

Then there's social assistance, specifically access to assistance for Indonesian migrant workers when facing problems in their host country. For PMI, social assistance does not always take the form of cash assistance, it can also include complaint services, legal aid, consular assistance, shelter, repatriation assistance, and facilitation of problem resolution with employers. The 2022 MoU stipulates that PMI must be able to communicate with their families and relevant authorities in Malaysia, and the Malaysian Government must facilitate the consular functions of Indonesian Representatives without delay.[32] This arrangement is crucial because PMI in the domestic sector work in the private sphere of the household, making them vulnerable to isolation if they experience violence, unpaid wages, or document retention.

The urgency of social assistance is proven by the high number of complaints from Indonesian migrant workers in Malaysia. As of June 2022, Malaysia had the highest number of complaints from Indonesian migrant workers, with 293 complaints. During the same period, BP2MI recorded 32,104 formal and 30,083 informal migrant workers in June 2022, with domestic workers making up the

largest group (25,012).[33] This data shows that social assistance is a crucial component of economic security. Without prompt assistance, Indonesian migrant workers could lose income, become trapped with their employers, face difficulties accessing healthcare, or be repatriated without their rights fulfilled.

A social safety net is a preventive mechanism that helps protect migrant workers from more severe exploitation. In this context, the social safety net is implemented through the temporary suspension of risky placement pathways and the reinstatement of OCS. At the 2022 inter-ministerial and inter-agency coordination meeting, the Chief of Staff of the Presidential Office of the Republic of Indonesia, Dr. Moeldoko, explained that the SMO leaves the Indonesian government with inadequate data on migrant workers, making it difficult to provide protection when issues such as passport confiscation, salary deductions, and the absence of employment contracts arise.[34] Therefore, data collection, employment contracts, and employer monitoring are not merely for administrative matters but the foundation of social protection.

Social safety nets also help prevent forced labor. In 2023, ILO found that 29% of migrant domestic workers surveyed in Malaysia were in conditions that met the statistical definition of forced labor. The study involved 1,201 migrant domestic workers in Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand from July-September 2022.[35] These findings reinforce the argument that social protection is not merely compensation after a risk has occurred, but a preventive system to prevent migrant workers from entering exploitative employment relationships. However, a moratorium is not a final solution, as many migrant workers without formal procedures fall outside the scope of formal protection. The effectiveness of social protection depends on consistent implementation of the MoU, employer monitoring, the functioning of the Joint Working Group and Joint Task Force, and both countries' ability to ensure migrant workers work safely and legally, are protected, and do not lose their socio-economic rights.

Resilience To Shock

Economic security is a crucial matter because labor migration decisions are fundamentally rooted in securing a livelihood, elevating family welfare, and reducing economic vulnerability. When threats to the security and sustainability of Indonesian migrant workers' jobs arise, the Indonesian government has an interest in intervening to prevent these risks from escalating into greater economic vulnerability. The Moratorium is an intervention, and the Indonesian government believes that the inadequate implementation of the MoU could increase the vulnerability of Indonesian migrant workers.

Shocks are not always macroeconomic crises, they can also involve changes or disruptions to the conditions that enable individuals to secure income. Resilience to shocks is an individual's or group's ability to withstand disruptions, maintain well-being, and recover from pressure.[36] Rather than letting these

structural shocks persist, the government used the temporary moratorium to compel other countries to return to compliance with agreements that guarantee migrant workers' economic security. As a result, lifting the moratorium in August 2022 was accompanied by a renewed commitment to implement the MoU, and this action was seen as an effort to reduce migrant workers' exposure to pre-departure risk.

However, the resilience to shock indicator is not sufficiently significant to be used in this case study. This does not mean the moratorium policy was unsuccessful or failed; rather, it indicates a limited fit between the indicator and the characteristics of the research object. The 2022 PMI moratorium is essentially a policy focused on protecting PMI by controlling recruitment and placement mechanisms and using policy pressure to ensure compliance with bilateral agreements. Therefore, indicators that measure aspects outside the policy's direct scope cannot serve as the primary basis for assessing resilience in this case.

A policy can be highly relevant to one indicator but less relevant to another. In the case of the Indonesian migrant worker moratorium to Malaysia, empirical evidence strongly points to the government's institutional capacity to respond to and adapt to disruptions in the Indonesian migrant worker protection system. Meanwhile, this indicator has no direct link to the observed policy mechanism. Therefore, the discrepancy reflects an analytical limitation of the indicator, not a failure of Indonesian government policy.

Concluding Remarks

The 2022 Moratorium on Migrant Worker Placement to Malaysia can be understood as a foreign policy instrument oriented towards strengthening economic security as part of the PMI human security framework. The Moratorium is no longer merely an administrative diplomatic measure for Malaysia to comply with the agreement in April 2022, but also a structural protection mechanism that addresses the root causes of PMI’s economic vulnerability in the host country and a defensive strategy to uphold economic security standards for migrant workers.

The moratorium successfully encouraged the MoU to establish a minimum wage and implement a One Channel System to monitor salary payments and strengthen the security of migrant workers' remittances. It also strengthened the formalization of employment relationships through contract registration, dispute resolution mechanisms, and oversight of illegal and exploitative placement practices. Furthermore, the moratorium expanded migrant workers' access to social security through BPJS Ketenagakerjaan and SOCSO in Malaysia, as well as healthcare services, demonstrating the government's efforts to broaden economic protection for migrant workers.

However, resilience to shock cannot be applied meaningfully to this case. This does not indicate a failure of the moratorium policy, rather, it reflects the limits of the research. Overall, the 2022 Indonesian migrant worker moratorium to Malaysia strengthened economic security through three main aspects: income stability, employment security, and social protection. This research demonstrates the relevance of a human security approach in viewing labor migration as a multidimensional issue.

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