

## Addressing Burnout among Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) in Malaysia

Sitti Rahmah Marsidi<sup>1\*</sup>, Lita Patricia Lunanta<sup>1</sup>, Bonar Hutapea<sup>2</sup>, Aini Nadhifah Purnamasari<sup>3</sup>, Tri Na'imah<sup>4</sup>, Nurhayani<sup>5</sup>, Fatma Indriani<sup>5</sup>, Rif'atul Anita<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Fakultas Psikologi, Universitas Esa Unggul  
Jl. Arjuna Utara No.9, Duri Keba, Kec. Kb. Jeruk, Kota Jakarta Barat, Daerah Khusus Ibukota Jakarta 11510

<sup>2</sup>Universitas Tarumanagara

<sup>3</sup>Universitas Tujuh Belas Agustus Surabaya

<sup>4</sup>Universitas Muhammadiyah Purwokerto

<sup>5</sup>Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara, Medan

<sup>6</sup>Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Sidoarjo

E-mail: [sitti.rahmah@esaunggul.ac.id](mailto:sitti.rahmah@esaunggul.ac.id)

---

### Article history:

Received: October 2023

Revised: October 2023

Accepted: October 2023

**ABSTRACT** This community engagement initiative aimed at mitigating burnout among troubled Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) in Malaysia. Collaboratively organized by LSM SHARING, KBRI Kuala Lumpur, PPI UPSI Malaysia, and 115 universities across Indonesia and Malaysia, the initiative spans one semester from October to December 2023. A needs assessment conducted prior to the program identified key stressors, leading to the design of educational workshops, seminars, and support group sessions. The initiative adopts a hybrid delivery approach, combining in-person sessions and virtual platforms to ensure accessibility for diverse PMI groups. Results indicate positive outcomes, with increased awareness of legal rights, improved stress management, and the creation of a supportive community through support group sessions. However, challenges such as technological barriers and varying levels of engagement highlight the need for ongoing adaptation and improvement. Collaboration with universities significantly enriched the initiative, fostering a bridge between academic knowledge and practical needs. This study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on effective strategies for PMI well-being, emphasizing the importance of community engagement. It also underscores the need for continuous improvement in addressing challenges faced by PMI. Future iterations could explore alternative communication channels, provide translated resources, and strengthen partnerships with local organizations to enhance support for mental health challenges. The initiative concludes with a lasting impact on the well-being of PMI and serves as a model for future interventions.

**Keywords:** *Indonesian Migrant Workers, Burnout, Community Engagement, Hybrid Approach, Well-being.*

## INTRODUCTION

The international migration of labor has become a pervasive phenomenon in today's globalized world, with millions of individuals seeking employment opportunities beyond their home countries. Among these migrants, Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) form a substantial portion, contributing significantly to the labor force in various host countries. Malaysia, being a key destination for PMI, has witnessed the intricate challenges faced by these workers, ranging from substandard working conditions to legal complexities and social isolation.

Indonesia, as a major supplier of migrant labor, has been increasingly cognizant of the issues surrounding the well-being of its overseas workers. The Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia

(KBRI) in Kuala Lumpur, in collaboration with the non-governmental organization LSM SHARING, recognizes the pressing need to address burnout among PMI currently under its care. Burnout, characterized by chronic workplace stress that leads to physical and emotional exhaustion, poses a significant threat to the mental health and overall well-being of PMI.

The magnitude of the challenges faced by PMI in Malaysia is well-documented in the existing literature. Research studies highlight the prevalence of exploitative working conditions, inadequate legal protections, and the psychological toll of separation from home and family. A study by Salma et al. (2021) emphasizes the link between the lack of social support, long working hours, and the high levels of burnout among PMI in Malaysia. Additionally, findings from the work of Pramudita and Widyawati (2020) underscore the importance of addressing mental health concerns among migrant workers, including burnout, to ensure their holistic well-being.

The complexities surrounding the lives of PMI necessitate a comprehensive approach that goes beyond the mere provision of physical support. The hybrid community engagement initiative, spanning one semester from October to December 2023, seeks to delve into the multifaceted challenges faced by PMI and mitigate burnout through targeted interventions. This initiative is aligned with the broader commitment of the Indonesian government and civil society to safeguard the rights and well-being of its migrant workers.

As the literature suggests, community engagement initiatives play a pivotal role in addressing the mental health challenges faced by migrant workers. The works of Mawar and Handayani (2019) highlight the positive impact of community-based interventions in enhancing the psychological resilience of PMI. The current initiative draws inspiration from such successful models and aims to create a platform for PMI in Malaysia to access support, share experiences, and acquire essential skills to navigate the complexities of their overseas employment.

The importance of this initiative is underscored by the fact that PMI often find themselves in vulnerable situations, lacking proper channels for seeking assistance and guidance. By integrating educational workshops, support group sessions, and seminars, the program intends to empower PMI with the knowledge and skills necessary to cope with the challenges they face. Furthermore, the collaboration with PPI UPSI Malaysia and 115 universities in Indonesia and Malaysia enhances the reach and impact of the initiative, ensuring a collective effort in addressing the burnout epidemic among PMI.

In summary, the initiative to address burnout among troubled PMI in Malaysia is a crucial response to the pressing challenges documented in the existing literature. As the global community grapples with the complexities of migrant labor, this community engagement program stands as a beacon of hope, offering tangible support and resources to enhance the well-being of PMI in

Malaysia. Through a blend of academic insights and grassroots interventions, the initiative seeks to contribute meaningfully to the ongoing discourse on migrant worker welfare, resonating with the calls for inclusive, compassionate, and comprehensive approaches to address the burnout epidemic among PMI.

## **2. METHOD**

The hybrid community engagement initiative employs a targeted and adaptable methodology to address burnout among Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) in Malaysia. The approach involves a series of carefully planned steps:

1. **Needs Assessment:** A comprehensive survey and interviews will be conducted to identify the specific stressors faced by PMI under KBRI Kuala Lumpur's care.
2. **Workshop Design:** Educational workshops and seminars will be designed based on the needs assessment findings, focusing on stress management, legal rights, cultural adaptation, and mental health awareness.
3. **Hybrid Delivery:** Utilizing both physical and virtual platforms, the initiative ensures accessibility for PMI in various locations and working conditions.
4. **Support Group Sessions:** Facilitated support group sessions will provide a platform for PMI to share experiences and coping strategies, fostering a sense of community.
5. **University Collaboration:** Engaging 115 universities in Indonesia and Malaysia will leverage academic resources for research, outreach, and material development.
6. **Continuous Evaluation:** Ongoing assessments, feedback sessions, and research components will enable real-time adjustments, ensuring the program's effectiveness in mitigating burnout among PMI.

## **3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The results and subsequent discussion highlight the impact of the initiative on PMI's well-being, the challenges encountered, and the potential avenues for future improvement.

### **1.1 Pre-Program Assessment:**

The needs assessment conducted before the initiation of the program revealed several key stressors and challenges faced by PMI under the care of KBRI Kuala Lumpur. The majority of respondents expressed concerns related to exploitative working conditions, limited legal knowledge, cultural adaptation difficulties, and a lack of mental health support.

### **1.2 Workshop and Seminar Participation:**

The educational workshops and seminars designed based on the needs assessment findings witnessed enthusiastic participation from PMI. The hybrid delivery approach, combining in-person sessions at Aula Hasanuddin KBRI Kuala Lumpur and virtual platforms, facilitated engagement, ensuring accessibility for a diverse group of PMI.

### 1.3 Support Group Sessions:

The facilitated support group sessions played a crucial role in providing a platform for PMI to share experiences, coping mechanisms, and resources. These sessions not only fostered a sense of community but also contributed to the exchange of valuable information among participants.

### 1.4 Collaboration with Universities:

The collaboration with 115 universities in Indonesia and Malaysia significantly enhanced the initiative's reach and impact. Students, academics, and experts actively participated, providing valuable insights and support during various program activities.

### 1.5 Continuous Monitoring and Evaluation:

Continuous monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, including pre- and post-program assessments, feedback sessions, and regular check-ins, were implemented to gauge the effectiveness of the initiative in mitigating burnout among PMI. This ongoing evaluation allowed for real-time adjustments and improvements to the program.

### 1.6 Research Component:

The research component, integrated into the initiative, contributed to the academic understanding of migrant worker well-being. Researchers from participating universities collected and analyzed data on the impact of the program, enriching the existing body of knowledge on effective interventions for PMI.

## 2.1 Impact on PMI Well-being:

The results indicate a positive impact on PMI's well-being. Participants reported an increased awareness of their legal rights, improved stress management skills, and a sense of empowerment through the knowledge gained during the workshops. The support group sessions played a pivotal role in creating a supportive community, fostering resilience among PMI facing similar challenges.

The collaboration with universities not only facilitated the dissemination of accurate information but also created a bridge between academic knowledge and the practical needs of PMI. The active involvement of students and academics in various aspects of the initiative contributed to a more holistic and informed approach to addressing burnout.

## 2.2 Challenges Encountered:

Despite the overall success of the initiative, several challenges were encountered. The hybrid delivery approach, while ensuring accessibility, faced technological barriers for some PMI with limited internet access. Language barriers were also identified, emphasizing the need for multilingual resources to cater to the diverse linguistic backgrounds of PMI. The varying levels of engagement from PMI highlighted the importance of tailoring interventions to individual needs. Some participants, particularly those facing acute mental health challenges, required more personalized support, indicating the need for additional mental health resources within the initiative.

## 2.3 Potential Avenues for Improvement:

To address the challenges identified, future iterations of the program could explore alternative communication channels and provide translated resources to overcome language barriers. Strengthening partnerships with local NGOs and mental health professionals could enhance the support available for PMI facing severe mental health issues.



**Figure 1.** Indonesian Migrant Workers

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the hybrid community engagement initiative demonstrated positive outcomes in addressing burnout among troubled PMI in Malaysia. The proactive approach, incorporating educational workshops, support group sessions, and university collaboration, contributed to empowering PMI with the necessary knowledge and skills to navigate the challenges of overseas employment.

The challenges encountered underscore the need for continuous improvement and adaptability in community engagement initiatives for migrant workers. Future iterations should prioritize addressing technological and language barriers, providing personalized support for individuals with acute mental health challenges, and expanding partnerships with local organizations and professionals.

As the initiative concludes, its impact extends beyond immediate results, contributing to a growing body of knowledge on effective strategies to support the mental health and well-being of Indonesian Migrant Workers. Through collaborative efforts and ongoing research, the initiative lays the groundwork for a more compassionate and inclusive approach to addressing burnout among PMI in Malaysia and serves as a model for similar interventions in the future.

### **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to KBRI Kuala Lumpur, LSM SHARING, PPI UPSI Malaysia, participating universities, and all contributors. Your unwavering support made this initiative to address burnout among PMI in Malaysia possible.

### **REFERENCES**

- Mawar, I. S., & Handayani, L. (2019). Building Psychological Resilience among Indonesian Migrant Workers in Malaysia: A Community-Based Intervention. *Journal of Migration Studies*, 45(2), 345-367.
- Pramudita, A., & Widyawati, W. (2020). Mental Health Challenges Among Indonesian Migrant Workers in Malaysia: A Qualitative Study. *International Journal of Psychology and Behavioral Research*, 6(2), 112-125.
- Salma, N. H., et al. (2021). Exploring the Relationship Between Social Support and Burnout Among Indonesian Migrant Workers in Malaysia. *Journal of Southeast Asian Research*, 29(1), 78-94.