

THE EMPLOYABILITY AND WELFARE OF FEMALE LABOR MIGRANTS IN INDONESIAN CITIES

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Abstract

The aim of the study, first, is to examine which factors are important to explain the employment status of female labour migrants in the cities in Indonesia. The second aim is to examine the welfare of female labour migrants measured by their earnings to occupation and poverty status in the cities. This study takes advantage of a data source of Rural Urban Migration of Indonesia and China (RUMiCI) of 2011 conducted by Australian National University (ANU) focusing on four Indonesian cities, including Tangerang, Samarinda, Medan, and Makassar. The study concludes that female migrants survive in the cities in terms of their employability and welfare. Although there is no significant difference in terms of their occupation status compared to female non-migrants, female life-time migrants mostly receive higher earnings and less likely to be living under poverty. Education is an important predictor for employability and welfare of female migrants.

Keywords: Rural-Urban Migration, Female Workers, Employment, Poverty

JEL classification: J61, I32, J16

1. Introduction

More than two decades, most countries in Southeast Asia, including Indonesia, have been experienced a great urban population growth (Firman, 2016). According to 2010 Population Census, the annual rate of urban population in Indonesia grew by 3.33 percent, which is more than doubled the annual rate of total population which grew by only 1.35 percent. The high population growth rates in the areas are dominated by in-migration from rural areas (rural-urban migration) (Firman, 2016). In total, Manning and Pratomo (2013) noted that there are about three million people in Indonesia had migrated from rural to urban areas in last five years. The massive rural-urban migration is a result of the economic development, together with the transformation of economic structures from less productive agriculture sector in rural areas to modern industry and service sectors in urban areas.

Although migration in Indonesia is still dominated by males, more than 40% of rural-urban migrants now are females (Effendi et al, 2009). In other words, females are now as likely as males doing migration, both internal and international migration. Females are no longer migrate for family reunification only, but they also migrate in their capacities as workers (Oishi, 2002). In Indonesia, the recent increased number of female internal migration is quite significant, potentially related to the improved transportation and travel safety within the country (Gunawan, 1996). Oishi (2002) also argued that global economy and the export-oriented industrialization supported social acceptances in global female migration.

There are three main females' motives of internal migration in Indonesia. First, females migrate to continue their studies for higher education in the universities, which more likely to be found in the cities. Malamassam (2016) showed that in Indonesia mostly there are more young female migrants for education than the male migrants. Young female migrants tend to face less family constraint compared to males (Fan, 2003).

Second, females migrate to the cities to enter the labour market in the modern sector, transforming from local agricultural landscapes in rural areas. However, compared to males, female migrants find more difficulties in accessing the modern sector employment in urban areas. The study by Manning and Pratomo (2013) showed that female migrants in the cities have lower probability to enter formal sector occupation compared to males and more likely to join the informal work, where the barriers to entry tend to be low. Effendi et al (2009) also

noted that a high proportion of female activities are recorded as family workers, which is classified as informal sector employment.

Third, there are some female migrants who migrate reflecting a process of family migration, following their parents or husbands. From family perspectives, female migration is important for family reunification process. At destination, female migrants are more likely to participate in employment which is closely related to the needs of the family (Donato, 1993 and Zlotnik, 1995).

Related to female migrants employability, the aim of the study, first, is to examine which factors are important in explaining the occupation status of female migrants in labour market in Indonesian cities. Although most of the previous studies (see Singh et al 2004, and Manning and Pratomo, 2013) showed that several female migrants have to work in the informal sector and having difficulties to enter the formal sector, Effendi et al (2009) showed that recent female migrants in Indonesia tend to be more educated with more probability to enter formal sector employment.

The second aim of the study is to examine the welfare among female migrants in the cities. Firstly, the welfare is measured by the earnings to occupation among female migrants' workers in the cities. As pointed out by Manning and Pratomo (2013), duration of stay is important, as a result of assimilation process in the cities. Therefore, among them, female long-term migrants are predicted to have greater probability to be employed as paid employed in formal sector employment and receive better payments than female recent migrants.

Finally, the welfare can also be measured by the poverty status of female migrants in the cities. The previous study by Resosudarmo et al (2009) found that more than 10% of total life-time migrants are likely to be included as poor households. Therefore, female migrants are also under risk of being poor when they move to the cities, if they cannot compete with the local residents in terms of their employability.

The study takes advantage of a data source of Rural Urban Migration of Indonesia and China (RUMiCI) of 2011 (the latest round of RUMiCI) conducted by Australian National University (ANU) focusing in four Indonesian cities, including Tangerang, Samarinda, Makassar, and Medan. The study contributes to the literature by providing information on employability and welfare of female migrants in the cities in Indonesia. Compared to the studies of Indonesian female international migrants, the study of rural-urban migration in Indonesia is relatively limited. The study therefore significantly increases the scope of previous explorations and more explicitly expand the analysis to the internal aspects of migration policy in Indonesia.

The rest of this paper is organized as follows. Section 2 discusses the research methodology. Section 3 discusses the data set used the study. Section 4 analyses the main findings. Section 5 provides conclusions.

2. Research Method

To determine the employment opportunities of female migrants, a multinomial logit model will be estimated by a maximum likelihood method. In the first estimate, a multinomial logit model is used due to that the dependent variable consists of four possible employment categories of females in the cities, including (1) paid employment, (2) small business, (3) unpaid family workers, and (4) unemployed categories. The main independent variable used in this study is the migration status of females including whether she is categorized as recent female migrants, life-time female migrants or female non-migrants. Following Manning and Pratomo (2013), migrant is defined based on the household head status assuming that the status affects the behavior of the head's spouse and other member of household. Females are categorized as migrants if the household heads have lived for at least five continuous years in rural areas before 12 years old. Meanwhile, among migrants, females are categorized as recent migrants if the household heads move to the cities from the village within the preceding five years before the survey conducted, while they are categorized as life-time migrants if the household heads have already moved to the cities for more than five years. The others are categorized as non-migrants

It might be expected that recent female migrants are less likely to be involved in paid employment category, which is mostly defined as formal sector employment, particularly because of its short time for adaptation during their stay in the cities (see Manning and

Pratomo, 2013). Life-time female migrants, in contrast, with more duration of stay in the cities are more likely to be included as paid employment and (or) doing small business. The other independent variables used in the equation include: educational attainment, age, number of dependent, urban-rural residential dummies, previous activities in the village, main reason for migration, and partner's/household head's occupation status.

In the second estimation, the earnings among females labor migrants who are working in the cities are estimated indicating the welfare of females in the cities. The Ordinary Least Square (OLS) estimate is used with the log of earnings is employed as a dependent variable. The migration status of females in the cities, including recent migrants and long-term migrants with the reference of non-migrants are also worked as the main independent variable. The other independent variables tend to follow the first estimation.

Finally, the study will also look at the female migrant household to examine the probability of female migrants' households living at a poverty in destination as another proxy for welfare of migrants in the cities. The dependent variable includes three different poverty levels based on the definition constructed by the Indonesian Central Bureau of Statistics using household expenditure data in four cities, namely (1) poor households, (2) near-poor households, and (3) non-poor households (see Resosudarmo et al, 2009). Females are categorized as who are living in poor households if their per capita household expenditure are below the poverty line of the cities. Near-poor households category is added to see whether females are living in the vulnerable condition. In the study, female migrants are categorized as near-poor households if their per capita household expenditure is in 20% above the poverty line. Meanwhile, female migrants are categorized as non-poor households if their per capita household expenditure are above 20% of the poverty line. The independent variables will also follow the first and second estimation with the migration status of females is employed as the main independent variable.

3. The Data Sources

The data used in this study is the Rural Urban Migration of Indonesia and China (RUMiCI) data set of 2011 surveyed by the Australian National University (ANU). RUMiCI is a longitudinal-household level survey (2008-11) conducted to investigate the socio-economic conditions of individuals who have migrated from rural to urban areas. RUMiCI data for Indonesia focuses on household who were living in the four largest recent migrant destination cities in Indonesia including Tangerang (Banten province, sub-urban of Jakarta, the capital city), Medan (North Sumatra province), Samarinda (East Kalimantan province), and Makassar (South Sulawesi province). The cities are also chosen to represent four largest geographic islands in Indonesia: Java, Sumatera, Kalimantan, and Sulawesi. The survey cities (regions) is presented in figure 1.

The total sample of RUMiCI for Indonesia consists of around 900 non-migrant households, 900 long-term migrant households, and 600 recent migrant households. The sample used in the study consists of more than 1400 female migrants and non-migrants who are in the labor force, consisting of 473 females from Tangerang, 467 females from Medan, 281 females from Makassar, and 238 females from Samarinda.

Figure 1: Survey Regions in Indonesia

Source: <https://www.rse.anu.edu.au/research/centres-projects/rural-urban-migration-in-china-and-indonesia/survey-documentation/>

Compared to other data set in Indonesia, such as the Indonesian Family Life Survey (IFLS) or the Population Census, RUMiCI offers large number of observations or households focusing on rural-urban migration data. The Indonesian National labor Force Survey (Sakernas) does not provide the rural-urban migration data. Table 1 presents the summary statistics (mean and standard deviation of the predictors).

Table 1. Summary Statistics of the Explanatory Variables

	Paid Employment		Self-Employed		Unpaid Family W		Unemployed	
	Mean	S.E	Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.
Recent Migrant	0.133	0.014	0.049	0.010	0.139	0.029	0.192	0.050
Lifetime Migrant	0.319	0.019	0.422	0.023	0.360	0.041	0.280	0.060
Age	34.342	0.416	43.507	0.499	39.522	1.126	30.526	1.284
Age-sq	1287.0	31.479	1999.0	45.812	1733.3	95.072	1024.2	92.648
Married	0.631	0.019	0.833	0.0180	0.786	0.035	0.596	0.065
Widowed	0.090	0.011	0.124	0.016	0.029	0.014	0.052	0.029
Medan	0.313	0.019	0.338	0.022	0.25	0.037	0.280	0.060
Samarinda	0.128	0.013	0.215	0.019	0.242	0.036	0.245	0.057
Makassar	0.180	0.015	0.197	0.019	0.242	0.036	0.245	0.057
No. dependent	0.957	0.040	1.058	0.051	1.102	0.094	1.280	0.143
Education	10.764	0.157	8.443	0.178	8.676	0.316	9.105	0.490
Head of HH is working	0.875	0.013	0.910	0.013	0.941	0.020	0.789	0.054
N	623		426		136		57	

Note: S.E.: Standard Deviation Source: Author Calculation

4. Empirical Results

Table 2 presents the occupation status of females labor migrants in four cities in Indonesia using a multinomial logit. As mentioned above, the occupation status is divided into four categories of employment, including whether females are categorized as: (1) paid employed, (2) self-employed, (3) unpaid family workers, or (4) unemployed. Females who are

out of the labor force are excluded from the analysis, assuming they are not intended to enter the labor market. The study reports the marginal effects of each coefficient to make the interpretation more informative and comparable within different categories.

Based on the result, the migration status of females across the four different categories of employment are not significant in all categories. The result indicates that there is no significant difference between female migrants, both recent and life-time migrants, and also female non-migrants in the probability of joining each employment category in the cities. Unlike Manning and Pratomo (2013), the result suggests that the adaptation or assimilation of female migrants in the cities in Indonesia is not an issue, and also suggest that Indonesian cities are relatively friendly for female migrants who enter the cities to join the labor market. The result is different with Manning and Pratomo (2013) that suggest recent migrants (not specific on females) tend to be employed in the informal sector while long-term migrants are more likely to be employed in the formal sector.

Education is an important factor for females in the cities in choosing employment category. Females with higher education have higher probability of joining paid employment category in the cities. Paid employment is the formal sector employment which is mostly benefitted by permanent job security, health insurance, and old-age pensions. The result is consistent with Gong et al (2004) in Mexico found that higher educated females not only have a greater probability to be employed, but also more likely to be employed in the formal sector employment. On the opposite side, females with lower education are more likely to enter self-employment and unpaid family employment, which more likely categorized as informal sector employment. Some less educated females are also likely to be trapped as unemployed.

Table 2. Employment Status among Female Migrants and Non-Migrants

	Paid Employment		Self-Employed		Unpaid Family W.		Unemployed	
	M.E.	P value	M.E.	P value	M.E.	P value	M.E.	P value
Recent Migrants	0.024	0.67	-0.081	0.13	0.047	0.22	0.009	0.57
Lifetime Migrants	0.007	0.82	-0.006	0.84	-0.0007	0.97	-0.0008	0.94
Age	-0.016	0.12	0.033	0.00	-0.012	0.01	-0.004	0.26
Age Squared	0.0005	0.70	-0.0002	0.02	0.0001	0.00	0.00002	0.70
Married	-0.194	0.00	0.217	0.00	-0.0171	0.58	-0.005	0.73
Widowed	-0.011	0.90	0.138	0.12	-0.121	0.00	-0.005	0.81
Medan	-0.107	0.01	0.089	0.03	-0.001	0.96	0.019	0.27
Samarinda	-0.236	0.00	0.137	0.00	0.057	0.09	0.041	0.10
Makassar	-0.204	0.00	0.117	0.01	0.06	0.07	0.026	0.21
No, dependent	-0.028	0.09	0.009	0.52	0.011	0.19	0.006	0.16
Education	0.033	0.00	-0.021	0.00	-0.008	0.00	-0.004	0.00
Working Head of HH	-0.061	0.24	0.039	0.41	0.066	0.00	-0.004	0.07
Number Obs.	1242							
R-squared	0.1424							

Note: M.E. : Marginal Effect

Source: Author Calculation

Marital status is another important predictor for the occupation categories of females in the cities. The married females are less likely to participate in formal sector employment as paid employees compared to single or unmarried females. In contrast, married females are more likely to be employed in the occupation with more flexible working hours i.e. self-employed, allowing them to combine employment with their domestic responsibilities. The results are in line with the number of dependent variable, which suggests that an increase in the number of dependents in the households, females are less likely to work as paid employees. However, marital status is not significant as a predictor for females in unpaid family work and unemployment categories. In addition, if the head of household (and/or any other household

member) is working, females are less likely to be unemployed and more likely participating in unpaid family work.

Comparing the cities, all of the cities showed a negative coefficient for paid employment category. The result suggests that Tangerang (the reference), which is sub-urban of Jakarta, is employing more paid employment than the other cities in Indonesia. In other words, females in Tangerang have a greater chance to be employed as paid employees than females in other cities. This is related to the location of Tangerang which closed to the Jakarta, the capital city of the country that offers more varied modern sector employment than other cities in Indonesia.

For robustness check of the important of each predictor influencing the occupation status of female migrants, table 3 presents the same estimate but focusing on female migrants only (excluding female non-migrants). Most of the variables show the same sign with the first estimation. The education consistently shows as an important factor for female migrants entering paid employment category. On the opposite side, the lower education the female migrants have, the higher probability of being employed as self-employed, unpaid family workers, and unemployed.

The household characteristics are also significant. The married female migrants are less likely to enter the paid employment category, but more likely to be self-employed, relating with the possible time flexibility in self-employment category. Female migrants with more dependent are less likely to be employed in paid employment category, and more likely to be employed in self-employed and unpaid family workers categories.

Table 3. Employment Status among Female Migrants (Migrants Only)

	Paid Employment		Self-Employed		Unpaid Family W.		Unemployed	
	M.E.	P value	M.E.	P value	M.E.	P value	M.E.	P value
Age	0.002	0.92	0.022	0.09	-0.019	0.00	-0.004	0.22
Age Squared	-0.0001	0.39	-0.0002	0.35	0.0002	0.00	0.00002	0.47
Married	-0.298	0.00	0.321	0.00	0.004	0.92	-0.028	0.29
Widowed	-0.148	0.28	0.300	0.04	-0.138	0.00	-0.013	0.5
Medan	-0.117	0.07	0.179	0.01	-0.073	0.02	0.011	0.65
Samarinda	-0.21	0.00	0.153	0.03	-0.031	0.33	0.089	0.07
Makassar	-0.219	0.00	0.187	0.01	0.007	0.85	0.024	0.41
No, dependent	-0.009	0.00	0.058	0.02	0.031	0.02	0.004	0.44
Education	0.042	0.00	-0.027	0.00	-0.011	0.00	-0.003	0.07
Working Head of HH	-0.016	0.85	0.057	0.43	0.03	0.47	-0.072	0.08
No. Obs,	578							
R-squared	0.1754							

Note: M.E. : Marginal Effect, Source: Author Calculation

Table 4 presents the earning estimates of female workers indicating the welfare of females in the cities. Using OLS, the estimate is separated based on earnings of two occupation categories, i.e. Earnings of paid employment (first column) and earnings of self-employed (second column), assuming that those two categories has very different characteristics, where paid employment has more stable earnings than self-employed.

Based on the result, comparing the recent female and life-time female migrants, life-time female migrants are paid higher for paid employment category. The result suggest that earnings will improve in line with the females' length of stay in the cities. This is potentially related with the assimilation process faced by female migrants. The recent female migrants also tend to be young with less working experience with life-time female migrants. However, the earning estimate for self-employment category is not significant, suggesting that there is no significant difference in earnings between recent and long-term female migrants. The result indicates that probably skills and experience are more important than migration status explaining the earnings of self-employed, which need more creativity.

Consistent with the first estimation, education plays an important role on earnings in both paid employment and self-employment categories, suggesting that an increase in education will increase earnings that they receive. Comparing the coefficient of education variables for paid employment and self-employment, education for paid employment category (0.116) is relatively higher relative to self-employed category (0.029) suggesting that education is more important if females would like to enter paid employment category rather than self-employment. Overall, it should be noted that the study only compares the estimates among females, a study by Pirmana (2006) showed that females in urban areas in Indonesia generally received less earnings than male workers.

Table 4. Earning Estimates for Female Migrants and Non-Migrants

	Paid Employment		Self-Employed	
	Coef.	P value	Coef.	P value
Recent Migrants	-0.037	0.70	-0.299	0.22
Lifetime Migrants	0.239	0.00	-0.087	0.42
Age	0.017	0.40	0.048	0.18
Age Squared	0.001	0.75	0.001	0.22
Married	-0.053	0.53	0.084	0.76
Widowed	-0.068	0.60	-0.063	0.84
Medan	-0.231	0.00	0.114	0.43
Samarinda	-0.054	0.58	-0.025	0.87
Makassar	-0.081	0.35	-0.171	0.28
No, dependent	-0.041	0.19	0.072	0.18
Education	0.116	0.00	0.029	0.06
Working Head of HH	0.003	0.98	0.315	0.09
Constant	12.214	0.00	11.974	0.00
Number Obs.	614		418	
R-squared	0.312		0.047	

Source: Author Calculation

Finally, table 5 presents the results of poverty status estimation among female labor migrants and female non-migrant. The poverty status is divided into three categories, including poor, near-poor and non-poor, as mentioned in the methodology section. As presented in the table 5, we can see that lifetime female migrants, as well as recent female migrants, are less likely to be categorized as poor households and more likely to be categorized as non-poor. The coefficient is higher for recent migrants on lifetime migrants. The result is consistent with Resosudarmo et al (2009) showing that migrants do make it as measured by improvement in their socio-economic status.

Education, once again, is the most important predictor as the higher their education the less likely they are categorized as poor households. The number of dependent is also significant, suggesting the higher number of dependent the more likely they are categorized as poor and less likely to be categorized as poor or near-poor. The working head of household is also significant, indicating more people in the household have a job. Interestingly, females work as self-employed and unpaid family workers are more likely categorized as non-poor. On the other hand, females work as paid employees are not significant.

Table 5. Poverty Status among Female Migrants and Non-Migrants

	Poor		Near-Poor		Non-Poor	
	M.E.	P value	M.E.	P value	M.E.	P value
Recent Migrants	-0.053	0.00	0.006	0.80	0.047	0.10
Lifetime Migrants	-0.029	0.03	-0.03	0.04	0.060	0.00
Age	-0.008	0.01	0.002	0.68	0.007	0.21
Age Squared	0.0001	0.02	-0.00002	0.64	-0.00007	0.25
Head of HH	-0.003	0.89	0.005	0.86	-0.001	0.97

	Poor		Near-Poor		Non-Poor	
	M.E.	P value	M.E.	P value	M.E.	P value
Married	0.036	0.07	0.012	0.59	-0.048	0.12
Widowed	0.04	0.43	0.005	0.91	-0.044	0.47
No of dependent	0.031	0.00	0.027	0.00	-0.059	0.00
Education	-0.011	0.00	-0.009	0.00	0.021	0.00
Working Head of HH	-0.061	0.05	-0.022	0.42	0.083	0.04
Paid Employment	-0.03	0.26	-0.036	0.21	0.066	0.11
Self-Employed	-0.056	0.02	-0.055	0.03	0.111	0.00
Unpaid Family W.	-0.058	0.00	-0.035	0.13	0.092	0.00
Medan	-0.029	0.05	-0.035	0.02	0.064	0.00
Samarinda	-0.006	0.70	0.006	0.75	0.0006	0.98
Makassar	-0.049	0.00	-0.071	0.00	0.12	0.00
Number Obs	1242					
R-squared	0.1218					

Note: M.E. : Marginal Effect, Source: Author Calculation

5. Conclusion

This study examines which factors are important to explain the employment status and welfare of female labor migrants in the cities in Indonesia. This study takes advantage of a data source of Rural Urban Migration of Indonesia and China (RUMiCI) of 2011 surveyed by Australian National University (ANU) focusing on four Indonesian cities, including Tangerang, Samarinda, Medan, and Makassar. Based on the results, the study concludes that female migrants survive in the cities. Unlike Manning and Pratomo (2013), there is no difference in occupation among recent migrants, long-term migrants, and non-migrants. However, female life-time migrants are the most successful category in terms of survival in the cities. They receive higher earnings and less likely living in poor households. Across explanatory variables, education consistently plays the most important role for surviving female migrants in the cities.

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