

**THE COMPETITIVENESS  
AND EMPLOYMENT  
PROSPECTS FOR SKILLED  
INDONESIAN WORKERS  
IN THE NETHERLANDS**



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## PREFACE

This book is intended to explain the characteristics of the Indonesian skilled workers in the Netherlands, their competitiveness as well as the prospect of Indonesians to be able to work in the Netherlands. The book's topic emerges as a continuation project under the topic of migration in the Netherlands that has been carried out for more than five years in the Research Center for Regional Resources, Indonesia Institute of Sciences.

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Jakarta, March, 2011

Drs. Dundin Zaenuddin, M.A

Director of Research Centre for Regional Resources  
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Preface</i>	v
<i>Table of Contents</i>	vii
<i>List of Table</i>	x

### **CHAPTER I : AN INTRODUCTION TO COMPETIVENESS AND EMPLOYMENT PROSPECTS FOR SKILLED INDONESIAN WORKERS IN THE NETHERLANDS ..... 1**

*Nur Aisyah Kotarumalos and Gusnelly*

- A. The Netherlands: a Country of Immigration
  - B. Employment Phenomenon and Opportunities  
in The Netherlands
  - C. Skilled Labor Migration
    - 1. Manager and Executive
    - 2. Engineer and Technician
    - 3. Academicians and Scientists
    - 4. Businessmen
    - 5. Students/scholars
- Bibliography

**CHAPTER II :    INDONESIAN MIGRANT IN  
                  A GLOBALIZED WORLD ..... 23**

*Amin Mudzakkir*

- A. Indonesian Labour Migrant: Background
  - B. The Politics of Migration
  - C. Role of Trade Unions and NGOs
  - D. Globalisation: Prospects for Indonesian Skilled Labour?
  - E. Migrant Workers Policies
  - F. Concluding Remarks
- Bibliography

**CHAPTER III: THE PHENOMENON AND  
                  CHARACTERISTIC OF INDONESIAN  
                  SKILLED LABOR  
                  IN THE NETHERLANDS ..... 53**

*Gusnelly*

- A. Introduction
- B. Indonesian Workers in the Netherlands at a Glance
- C. Characteristic of Indonesian Skilled Workers In the Netherlands
  - 1. Recruitment Process
  - 2. Work Motivation
  - 3. Education
  - 4. Age and Sex
- D. Organizations for Indonesian Workers

- in the Netherlands
- E. Concluding Remarks  
Bibliography

**CHAPTER IV: THE COMPETITIVENESS  
OF INDONESIAN WORKERS  
IN THE NETHERLAND ..... 99**

*Nur Aisyah Kotarumalos*

- A. Introduction
- B. The Competitiveness of Indonesian Skilled  
Workers
  - 1. The competitiveness of Indonesian  
Nurses in the Netherlands
  - 2. The Prospect of Indonesian  
workers
  - 3. Revitalization of Indonesian  
Workers' Role
- Bibliography

**CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION: LESSON LEARNT  
FOR INDONESIA ..... 131**

Research Team

## LIST OF TABLE AND PICTURE

- Table 1.1: Characteristic of Skilled Labor Mobility
- Table 2.1: Placement of Indonesian Migrant Workers 1994-2008
- Table 3.2: Reasons for moving out of present job to go abroad based on push factors and pull factors
- Table 3.3: Work Motivation Based on Previous Work Field and Ultimate Work Goal for Indonesian Workers in the Netherlands
- Table 3.4: Perceived impact migration
- Table 4.1: Persons Employed in the Health Sector per Professional Group
- Table 4.2: Skilled Migrants Based on Labour Sector in 200 and 2006
- Table 4.3: Persons Employed in the Health Sector per Professional Group
- Picture 3.1: The nurse's house in Amsterdam Amstel
- Picture 3.2: Nurse in Holland
- Picture 3.3: Smiling Faces Program Campaign by Indonesian National Nurses Association

## CHAPTER I

# AN INTRODUCTION OF COMPETIVENESS AND EMPLOYMENT PROSPECTS FOR SKILLED INDONESIAN WORKERS IN THE NETHERLANDS

Nur Aisyah Kotarumalos and Gusnelly

### A. The Netherlands: a Country of Immigration

Since the beginning of 1960s, the Netherlands has changed from emigration country to immigration country (Zorlu & Hartog 2002, 119). Since then, except in 1967, Netherlands has actually been a country for immigrants; but the Dutch never admits it (Vermuelen & Penninx 2000, 5). The prosperity which is increasing significantly has decreased the emigration and improved immigrations at the same time. The migration of<sup>1</sup> foreigners to Netherlands

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<sup>1</sup> Migration is a transfer process which is done selectively. One of characteristics of international migration is the age selectivity where the characters of the migrating people tend to be young and the people are still enlisted as international workers. Meanwhile, Santoso 2004 who cited from the results of International conference on 1924 Emigration and Immigration in Rome defined the immigration as an activity of human mobility to enter a country with objectives to stay and to live in the new place. The migration which is categorized in this book is the Indonesian workers who come to Netherlands to work.

after the World War II can be divided into three main categories: *first*, immigrants from colonial countries; *second*, those who were recruited for jobs that did not require expertise (known as visiting worker); and the last, refugees and political asylum seekers (Vermuelen & Penninx 2000, 5).

Immigrants who came from colonial countries to Dutch for the first time were Indonesians (the Netherlands East Indies) and Papua (New Guinea) which were estimated at 300,000 in 1946–1962 periods. Amersfoort (cited from Gusnelly 2005, 82) stated that there were four periods of Indonesian migration to Netherlands, i.e.: first, in 1945–1948 which was dominated by refugees and workers who were imported by the Dutch colonial government, such as nurse and teacher, also Indonesians who are married to Dutch. Second, in 1949–1951 people who came to Netherlands to gather with families who have settled there. Third, in 1951–1956 which was the period when most Indonesian who came to Netherlands were dominated by Mollucans. The last one was in 1958 when Indonesians came to Netherlands because they rejected the nationalization process in Indonesia.

Since the middle of 1950s, Netherlands experienced labor shortage as the result of post-war reconstruction. Thus, the Dutch invited workers from Mediterranean because geographically it was closed to Netherlands; so, it would be easy for the Dutch to send the workers home. Unfortunately, this assumption was refuted given that the guest workers just invited their families to come to Netherlands. But, started from 1992, immigration from Turkey and Morocco experienced a significant reduction and it is still at the lowest level ever since.

Learning from the migration experience, the Dutch government made tight policies in responding the migrant surplus; the policies were specially aimed to migrant groups which were potentially create burdens for the government. But, on the other hand, the Dutch actually requires immigrant supply as an effort to solve the problems of the declining population growth. This is also supported by United Nations report in March 2000 (UN Secretariat ESA/P/WP. 160 cited from Apap 2001, 3). Based on the analysis of trends in world population and future projection of 1995-2050, this report requires 'replacement migration' as compensation from the trend of population

decline in Europe and other states. According to this report, immigrants need to avoid 'total population decrease' in European countries within 50 years from now; it was estimated equal to the average immigration in 1990s, i.e. 857,000 people averagely for the netto migration each year (Apap 2001, 5). But, the report recommended that the number of immigrants who come to a country must be doubled as an attempt to prevent the occurrence of a declining labor force.

In the case of labor in Netherlands, skilled-labor deficits occur, especially in sectors of information technology, health education, etc. (McLaughlan & Salt 2002). This condition not only happened in Netherlands; it is also happened in other European countries, such as German, England, Ireland, French, England and other countries, such as United States, Canada and Australia (McLaughlan & Salt 2002, Bauer & Kunze 2003). Each country seeks to attract professional immigrants in an attempt to overcome shortage in the labor market.

For countries that joined European Union, their citizens have freedom to move within the scope of the

European region; but, each European country has its own regulation in recruiting citizen from outside of European Union membership (Bauer, et.all. 2000 cited from Chalamwong 489). Generally, immigrants from developed countries and the top level managers from any countries can come to Netherlands and other European countries; that can be relatively easier compared to unskilled labor. The study conducted by Carrington and Detragiache (1998 taken from Michael 2006, 1) proved that by using data from OECD countries and found that individual who has low education level generally has limited access to international migration due to institutional barrier. This is happened because a skilled labor is expected to be the *contributor net fiscal* so that the migration is considered to profitable for the locals.

## **B. Employment Phenomenon and Opportunities in The Netherlands**

The Netherlands has experienced labor growth which is relatively stable because of its advantageous geographical position in European continental and its flexible employment regulation (Apap 2001). Thus, the Netherlands still has the attraction for investors and foreign workers

who want to work. Recently, the Dutch government that acknowledged the labor shortage in the fields of information technology and telecommunication skill made a policy that the work permit for positions in the field of information technology and telecommunication can be made without a very detailed recruitment process. This is stated in the new regulations which regulate the legal resident – 2000 *Vreemdelingenwet* (Foreigner Law) in the article 13 that became effective on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2001. Unfortunately, the process of work permit application often means that the candidate cannot visit Netherlands for the work interview when the application is being processed (Apap 2001, 14).

The most important qualifications to obtain work permit in Netherlands are related to personal ability and quality. The candidate must be a professional and meet criteria of expertise offered and advertised; but a company is failed to get people with expertise in accordance to the position or it has to be admitted as a rare profession. A candidate must also meet the legal regulation, i.e. 18 – 45 years-old, even though a candidate less than 23 years-old is obliged to have certain expertise according to the required professional

position. For citizens with other nationalities and from countries which are not exempt from visa, the candidates must apply for residence permit (MVV) at the Dutch embassy where the candidates come from before the work permits are made. After that, the candidates are prohibited to travel to Schengen countries until the work permit is obtained. If a candidate has already had a work permit for a company but the candidate wants to work to another Dutch company, the matter is impossible to do until the company obtains a work permit. Unless the candidate is exempted from residency requirement (such as Norway, Iceland, Switzerland, Japan, Australia, Canada and United States), the first stage of the process is that the candidate is required to make temporary residency permit (MVV) through the embassy in the candidate's country. Then, the permit is firstly submitted to the regional employment board (RBA) which will approve it and then it is submitted to the national employment board (AFB) that will make final decision and responsible for national and European labor market. Finally, when the work permit is approved, the Dutch embassy will issue residency permit and the candidate can come to Netherlands to start working.

One of Netherlands' attractions for foreign workers is that the workers are entitled to receive 35 percent income tax exemption. The Dutch embassy must first acquire an agreement to issue temporary residency permit from the immigration officer in Netherlands. Thus, it is very important for an applicant to apply temporary residency permit for 3 months before the planned date.

After 3 years working in Netherlands with work permit, then, someone usually can acquire permanent residency permit automatically. The foreign worker will also be free to get any jobs and does not need any work permit which is sponsored by the company. The competent authority in this issue is the Immigration and Naturalization Service within the Justice Ministry.

Study done by Docquier and Marfouk (2006: 168 cited from Skeldon 2008, 4) mentioned that the proportion of migrant population which had skill and age above 25 years-old and lived in Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries increased from 29.8 in 1990 to 34.6 percent in 2000. In 2000, it was estimated that 20.4 million migrants in OECD countries had high education

background and this increased compared to 1990 when there were only 12 million people and 56 percent of them came from developing countries. Meanwhile, if it is seen from the absolute number, developing countries, such as India, Philippines, Mexico and China have dominated the supply of skilled labor.

Indonesia which is a country that supplies unskilled labors has also begun to fill positions of skilled labor in the international world, although it is not as many as India, the Philippines and China. Thus, the study on competitiveness<sup>2</sup> and opportunity for Indonesian skilled labors in Europe, especially Dutch labor market, is very important. The objective of this book is to explore about the Indonesian skilled labors particularly on their characteristics and its' competitiveness in the Netherlands. This issue also covers about on how to get the jobs, the jobs' requirement, the work environment condition and problems/barriers faced by the Indonesian workers in the Netherlands. This book

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<sup>2</sup> Labor competitiveness can be meant as an ability from an individu as a labor to maintain or improve one's position in labor market, whether in national or international scale; thus, the one can survive in the future. Competitiveness will be seen from the individu's or labor's ability in maintaining one's position from the competitors.

also discusses about the Indonesian government policy on the placement of Indonesian workers abroad.

### **C. Skilled Labor Migration**

Research on worker's mobility in global economy is concentrated more in migration area where the experts see attracting factors that make the workers leave their home. Various studies on Human Resources, whether in the sociology and economic disciplines have admitted the mobility of skilled labor as an 'international human capital' (Mahroum, 1999). A very skilled labor is generally defined based on the jobs, such as businessman, IT worker and engineer, medical worker, student and academician, worker in NGO and entrepreneur (Ewers 2007, 121).

Meanwhile, the Dutch government defines a very skilled labor as a graduate from post-graduate school or doctor from well-known university or higher educational institution which is enlisted at the Center of Application for Higher Education Study Program (CROHO) or a graduate from post-graduate or doctorate program outside of Netherlands and has a grade of 150 top world universities based on the list made by Times Higher Education in 2007 or Academic Ranking World Universities 2007 which was

issued by University of Jiao Ton Shanghai 2007. The diploma must be approved by Dutch Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education Field (NUFFIC).

For the recent years, developed countries have applied immigration policy which facilitates skilled immigrant from unskilled immigrants. The skilled labor mobility has improved considering that the country has made it easier for permissions and loosened restrictions on the entry of qualified labor. Wooldridge (2006) showed the global war on talented people:

*'Most developed countries are already struggling to find enough doctors and teachers, and are wondering how they will manage when the baby boomer generation retires. Developing countries, for their part, realize that they will not be able to plug into the global knowledge economy unless they give their people the freedom to move around. A powerful array of interest, from multinationals to city politicians, supports the idea of a global market for the best people. Countries cut themselves off from it at their peril' (Wooldridge 2006, 14 cited from Ewers 2007, 122).*

The issue of 'brain drain' became a very popular issue when the debate on migration of people who had expertise was related to the development. The assumption that the loss of human resources that will be potentially harm the country of origin. At the beginning, the debate occurred in 1960s when scientists from Atlantic, especially England, tried to start a new living by migrating to United States; but, now, the issue of 'brain drain' has been widened to developed countries, especially to Asia economies (Skeldon 2009, 5).

Gaillard and Gaillard (1998), and then Johnson and Regets (1998), introduced a concept of 'brain circulation'; or, other academicians described it as a transfer of 'professional transients' (Appleyard, 1991 cited from Mahroum 1999, 171). The mobility form is considered to be the positive mobility which provides network for science transfer. Report of OECD (1997) identified the transfer of professional labors and differentiated two outcome of the mobility: *brain exchange* and *brain waste*. *Brain exchange* implies two-way flow of expertise between the sending country and the receiving country. But, where the flow is only heave in one direction the term becomes *brain gain*

and *brain drain*. Otherwise, *brain waste* describes the waste of expertise when a skilled migrant moves to other country which requiring expertise and experience obtained in the previous job (OECD 1997 cited from Mahroum 1999, 171).

Below are the characteristics of skilled labor migration which is based on the definition and classification taken from International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) as a clue (cited from Mahroum 1999, 171-175). For the last category, i.e. student/scholar is actually not in the ISCO group, but this category is a contributor from other categories.

### **1. Manager and Executive**

This category is affected much by company's policy, especially the policy related to the expansion on business activity abroad and internationalization. This form of mobility is mentioned as accidental tourist because the decision for the movement is often unplanned and surprising; it is based on merger or expansion of the company's activity. Often, this transfer is originated from the company's internal transfer but, then, it becomes long-term and permanent.

## **2. Engineer and Technician**

This category is affected much by government's policy on immigration, industry and employment. They are like economy-class passengers because they are driven and attracted by economy factor; for example, to get better offer. Government, company and individuals make their decisions based on mechanism of supply and demand in the labor market. But, the individuals make a decision based on what they believe as something that can give better reward. Thus, they will travel wherever the demand on their expertise is high and they are given high reward.

## **3. Academicians and Scientists**

The transfer of scientists and academicians is mostly affected by the bottom-up development in the scientific world. Generally, the scientists are seemed to be interested in the nature of the work and the condition where they have to do the job. For example, Deeds and McMillan (1998) argued that a reputation is a scientific openness (such as driving staffs to publish their researches); it is an important criterion for a company to recruit talented scientists. To test the argument, they conducted survey on 400 PhD students to determine whether the company's support for

publication is an important thing in looking for a job. The result showed that the publication has the role for choosing a workplace, even though it is not as much as the quality of the research staff, work condition and income. But, the ranks of the big three of the institutions that are targeted by students reflect that the institution has track record on publication.

#### **4. Businessmen**

They are people who are oriented on the coming business with capital and ideas that aim to open the business. They are stimulated by various policies, especially government policies (visa, tax, protection, etc.) and credit facilities. Some countries, such as Australia, Canada and United States have regulation which allows businessmen for immigration and stay with pre-condition that they invest or bring some specific capitals to the country. A study done by David Keeble (1989) showed that about 70 percents of IT businessmen in Cambridge were immigrants.

#### **5. Students/scholars**

They are the main sources on labor supply in local or international labor market. They are affected much by the

government policy, inter-government policy and inter-institution policy. Student and scholar are considered as passengers travelling to certain destinations but their motives and main objectives are unknown. For the case within Netherlands, the Indonesian students who obtained scholarship through the STUNED program had the opportunity to work in Netherlands after being graduated.

The receiving country is often a receiver of main benefit from the flow of student/scholar migration because, generally, they stay in the country. But, the receiving country is not always as the main user of the migration of student/scholar. The concept of 'brain circulation' which refers to the circulation of the transfer for study and, after that, job opportunity and coming back home to the origin country to get better opportunity will improve the knowledge transfer to the sending country. But, when a student/scholar stays and not replaced by foreign student/scholar, that will cause 'brain drain' because the sending country is considered losing the potential human resources unless the sending country will receive the benefit for the emigrants who maintain contact and relation, such as student/scholar from Japan, Korea, Taipei

China and China. For developing countries, it is the student/scholar who is abroad that will give benefit because the student will send their remittent frequently.

**Table. 1.1 Characteristic of Skilled Labor Mobility**

Group	Drive and Attraction Factors	Types of Policy
Manager and Executive	Benefit and remuneration	Business orientation
Engineer and Technician	Economy factor (mechanism of supply and demand) National condition of economy	Immigration regulation Income tax
Academician and Scientist	Bottom-up development in scientific world Job condition Institutional prestige	Interinstitution and inter-government policy
Businessman	Government policy (visa, tax, protection, etc.) Financial facility Bureaucracy efficiency	Government and regional policy Immigration regulation
Student/Scholar	Admittance of global condition	Policy among government

	Inter-cultural experience	and inter- institution Immigration regulation
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*Source:* Mahroum 1999, 180

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## CHAPTER II

### INDONESIAN MIGRANT IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD

*Amin Mudzakkir*

#### **A. Indonesian Labour Migrant: Background**

Globalization has opened up opportunities for people across the world to migrate. This is especially true for skilled workers. They take advantage of this opportunity to improve their quality of life. This opportunity applies not only for skilled workers in developed countries (often called expatriates), but also for skilled workers in developing countries. For the latter, while in their home country they may be low paid, in receiving countries they are referred to as highly-paid expatriates. With his expertise, they compete in the position work of transnational and multinational corporations.

However, the state understands migration with paradox. On the one hand migration is recognized as a way to cope with population density and poverty, on the other side migration is considered as a threat. For the state, population mobility is often regarded as embryo for the

emergence of social and political movements that threaten the power. Since the colonial period to the present the state has placed migration as an important political issue; it is not to protect the population, but to the interests of state power. Therefore, reports on Indonesian migrant workers often appear in the media; it usually contains of tragic stories. In that situation, the state seemed always comes too late to respond. Indonesian government's official representative abroad, either embassy or consulate office, reportedly often cannot do much.

Issues regarding the state protection became an important theme in discussions about migrant workers. Besides mandated by the 1945 Constitution Article 28, the issue is related to the questions about human rights that has become a global concern. In the current situation of interdependence, the Indonesian government cannot circumvent the so-called globalization. Although globalization contains some paradoxes in both the concept and its praxis, it is the challenge for migrant workers in the middle of the limitations of the domestic economy.

One section in this book will discuss globalization as a prospect for the skilled labor. For the Marxist answer to the question about the role of the state in protecting citizens and their relationship to globalization may have been clear: the state is the instrument of the interests of the bourgeoisie, so it is difficult to imagine the state would protect migrant workers by reason of the constitution and especially human rights. However, another view states that the state is not monolithic and static entities; it always going contend and changes in state policy. By following the latter view, it is also important to look at the role of non-governmental organizations or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that are concerned with issues of migrant workers.

Some observers argued the Indonesian government as a whole seems to have no vision as well as no clear framework in the issue of migrant workers. It is not yet a picture of how state practices in implementing an ideal citizen protection mechanism as mandated by the constitution and the basic ideas of human rights. The establishment of the National Agency for Placement and Protection of Indonesian Workers (BNP2TKI) in 2006 by

President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono was initially expected to be able to answer that challenge. In fact, the aspect of 'protection' in reality often competes with 'placement'.

This chapter will discuss the more general terms on the relationship between the state and Indonesia migrant workers in the context of globalization. Related to the research of DIPA PSDR-LIPI 2010, this paper will highlight the existence of Indonesian migrant workers in the Netherlands. Conceptually, the terms of the 'state' and 'migrant' are simplification that recognized from the beginning. In fact, these two terms refer to complex and dynamic notions. For the purposes of this paper, the dynamics will be focused on the attraction between the economic and social aspects inherent in the role of the state. Economic aspect embodied in the form of the state's role in 'place' of Indonesian migrant workers abroad that benefits both the migrant workers themselves, government and business circle, while the social aspect is the state's role in 'protecting' their legal and political interests.

## **B. The Politics of Migration**

Basically the basic problem of migrant workers is population movement from one place to another; conceptually demographers call it the issue of population mobility (Tukiran et al, 2002). In general, there are two reasons the residents move; it could be due to voluntary and forced. For an analysis of residents who moved voluntary, economists and demographers have explained very well with the theory of push and pull factors. Based on this theory, the economic gap always appears as the most important factor; residents of poor areas will be moved to a more affluent one. In international migration, this theory can explain the reason or motive for migration from developing to developed countries. Meanwhile, the forced displacement of population is usually due to a natural disaster (Hugo, 2004). In addition, there are also political factors, such as a riot, war, expulsion, or revocation of citizenship, which can make people be forced to migrate. This latter type is usually referred to refugees and asylum seekers.

Mobility of peoples is always faced with a political institution called the state, because it will relate to the territorial issue. Territorial issue is important, if not the most important, in the discourse and practices of the modern state. Within its territorial boundaries, the state has legitimacy to use coercion and violence instruments. This is part of the principle of sovereignty, a most basic principle in the practice of the modern state. In the territorial limits of state, people will always be the object of surveillance. By using the apparatus and technology of its power, the state runs project legibility and simplification of its citizens (Scott, 1998). The projects are run not for the sake of protection of citizens, but rather for the territorial integrity of state power. In the language of the writer Pramoedya Ananta Toer, citizens are supposedly placed in a 'greenhouse' (*'rumah kaca'*), where state can freely control their movements.

In discussing the power of the state project, it is interesting to learn the relation between state and citizens in Indonesia's history. Since the colonial period, the state always sees people paradoxically; while politically they are considered as a threat, economically they are viewed as

potential. Some historians who studied the condition of the population of Java in the 19th century shows how population growth, which is actually a consequence of modernization introduced by colonialism, was taken as a threat to political stability (Boomgard, 1989). A drastic increase in the total population at that time feared would give birth to social unrest, besides of course the demands of an increased prosperity, which led to the formation of a political movement-something that is greatly feared by the colonial government. To prevent that, the government decided to move some people from outside Java to Java, even abroad. In the early 20th century, the decision was formalized as part of the 'ethical policy'.

On the other hand, population number is a great potential for economic development. In the colonial period, plantation is the most advantaged sectors of the economy. By paying low wages, the planter can reap the benefits which were plentiful. In Java, these businessmen got a huge profit with '*cultuurstelsel*' or 'forced cultivation' in 1830. Population burdened mandatory obligation to plant crops that are selling in world markets. Traditional systems of authority have made the policy in the Dutch East Indies as a

producer of wealth for the mother country. Elsewhere, industrial plantations in East Sumatra receive similar benefits from the abundance of the population as workers; population was recruited and sent there, not only from Java, but there are also imported from India and China. They become 'coolies' who exploited without sufficient social security, let alone legal guarantees (Bremen, 1997).

Under the banner of the colonial empire, many Javanese people were recruited and sent to the Dutch colonies overseas. The most numerous and most phenomenal is that they were sent to Suriname, in addition to some that were sent to New Caledonia and Vietnam (Tirtosudarmo, 2007: 234). From 1880s to 1930s it was recorded that 30 thousands Javanese migrated to Suriname, most worked as farm laborers. From this fact shows that the mobility of population that has occurred since the colonial period was part of the project country that goes hand in hand with capitalism.

Rational considerations play a role when the people choose to move or migrate. However, that choice is limited by structural conditions surrounding it. The issue of poverty and lack of jobs in the area of origin, due to limited

land and abundance of labor, makes the population hard to reside in their country. Instead of originated from voluntary basis, migration appears due to economic disparities between one region to another. However, in contrast to the arguments in the theory of push and pull factors, the economic gap here is not present objective reality taken for granted, but rather the result of inequality structures of regional and global political economy that has been going on since centuries of colonialism to the present. As a result, workers who migrate from Third World countries like Indonesia are generally poor people with no job skills-trained or unskilled labor, not professionals or skilled workers or the expatriate labor (Tirtosudarmo, 2010; Ford, 7).

Having entered the period of independence, the issues of migrant workers temporarily disappear from the surface. This issue resurfaced during the New Order, exactly in the mid-1980s, when many Indonesian workers sought employment abroad. Economic factors are considered as pull and push factors of the labor migration. Generally they are not skilled labors who work in neighboring countries like Malaysia and Singapore, besides of course Saudi Arabia.

The government issued a regulation, but only a ministerial-level regulation. As will be discussed below, until the year 2004 there is no single level of regulation that formulated jointly by the government and parliament to deal with the issue of migrant workers in Indonesia.

Since the mid-1980s labor-sending businessmen have organized themselves. In 1984, they founded the Indonesian Manpower Service Association (IMSA), the first chairman of Abu Bakr al-Jufri. Middle East, particularly Saudi Arabia, is the main destination countries for migrant workers Indonesia at the time. In the process, led by Tanyo AP IMSA., Soedharmono (1987--1992) and Yapto Soeryo Soemarno (1992--1994), two people are known to be close to the military and the Suharto family. In 1994, Cosmas Batubara, Ministry of Manpower at the time, issued a Ministerial Regulation No.5/1994 which regulates workers sent abroad. The same year also released Ministry of Manpower Decree No. 1307 on technical guidance of Indonesian workers to Saudi Arabia (Tirtosudarmo, 2007: 240). As a result of that decision, IMSA organization cannot run the activity as usual. In 1995, businessmen formed a new organization called the Association of Indonesian

Labor Service Company (APJATI) which obtained recognition from the government as an official representation of companies engaged in the delivery of migrant workers.

### **C. Role of Trade Unions and NGOs**

Since the oil boom in the mid-1980s, the Indonesian government took interventionist approach towards migrant workers (Ford, 8; Hadiz, 1997). This approach is applied to all processes through which the workers began series of process from recruitment, training, placement, to delivery of the workers. The same approach is applied to migrant workers when they returned or repatriated. This condition has long been a target of government criticism among NGOs that the government assess more focused on economic considerations, namely remittances, rather than protection of migrant workers. Focus on the issue made the government understand the mobility of remittances of migrant workers only as an economic process only; which stressed on number of migrant workers that placed in the recipient country, not on how can the government protect them.

Weak protection of Indonesian migrant workers is compounded by the absence of trade unions which organized them. So far no Indonesian migrant labor unions that really strong, cross-profession, and has a network not only in sending countries but also in the recipient country. Organizations such as the Indonesian Migrant Workers Union (SBMI) do not have a strong network abroad. In Hong Kong, Indonesia unions do get a good reputation because of the success of some of their advocacy, but the scope of its activities is very limited, only within the territory of Hong Kong. In addition, there is also a kind of association with similar occupations, such as the Indonesian National Nurses Association (management &) whose members are scattered in many countries, but their program is intended only to its members, not to the Indonesian migrant workers in general.

The absence of trade union politics of migrant labor is the legacy of New Order's highly interventionist method. According to Vedi R. Hadiz (1997), the relationship between labor and the state in the New Order era is characterized by the co-optation and repression of an extraordinary country. Besides All Indonesia Workers Union (SPSI), which later

turned into Federation of All Indonesian Workers Union(FSPSI), an organization sanctioned by the state workers, other labor organizations were watched closely, they can be dissolved at any time if deemed as threatening the state power.

However, interventionist approaches used by the state against the workers not only in Indonesia, but also in neighboring countries like Singapore and Malaysia. In both countries, labor organizations are strictly controlled and incorporated into the structure of state power. Therefore, not surprising that in Southeast Asia we can not find alliances between trade unions fight for workers' interests in a joint agenda across the boundaries of state territory. There is no trade union in Malaysia, which helps advocate the protection of Indonesian workers, and vice versa (Hadiz, 2005).

In the unfortunate situation of the workers, there are some NGOs concerned with issues of migrant workers, especially female migrant workers. One NGO is Migrant Care. Formed by a number of activists in 2004, Migrant Care fights for migrant workers rights. While at the international

level they are trying to build a solid network, at the domestic level they actively advocate for the rights of migrant workers by demanding responsibility of the state. The presence of NGOs fills the gap that is not explored by the labor movement. Cooperation with the media and religious organizations is a strategy undertaken by NGOs such as the Migrant Care in educating the public which is still not care to migrant worker issues.

#### **D. Globalisation: Prospects for Indonesian Skilled Labour?**

The relation between globalization and migrant workers raises various questions. In this chapter we will discuss a question about the influence of globalization on the state's role in the protection of its citizens who become migrant workers. For some, globalization is considered as a threat to the existence of nation-states, states will only be used as 'thugs' or a security guard the interests of capitalism, while among workers and peasants are ignored altogether (Wibowo, 2010). Circles critical of globalization further explained that 'state thugs' understanding of labor as a rational actor who can choose where he will work, at home

or abroad. Emphasized by the state itself is the capacity of workers as individuals. The role of state obscured in such a way. Mobility of labor left to the law of supply and demand, such as goods and services.

As an academic concept, globalization has attracted many scholars. For some, globalization is not a new phenomenon at all. Inter-continental trade which took place in Southeast Asia since pre-colonial century as portrayed by Anthony Reid (1992) is viewed as an early form of globalization. However, it is not the meaning which is used in this paper. Temporally, globalization began at least in the late 1980s, since communism collapsed, so that the world is no longer divided by ideological lines between the Western bloc and Eastern bloc. According to a demagog like Fukuyama, other 'ideology' than liberalism is considered to have died; which left liberalism that is now developing into neo-liberalism. The main player in this new world arena is transnational corporations. While the international Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank still exists, as well as the national state, their role is a waiter or 'thugs' for transnational companies.

For skilled labor the current global situation can be very profitable. They can win the chance to work anywhere, no longer bound by territorial borders of nation-states, the important promises a good career with high wages. A study sponsored by the World Bank (2006) refers to globalization as the driving force and simultaneously pull the occurrence of skilled labor migration from developing countries to developed countries. In the long run, migration of skilled labor could be a solution to the problem that crippled the world economy. While able to develop a career in developed countries, the income they get some of it will be sent as a remittance. Remittance is what will drive the local economy, in addition to reducing poverty and unemployment, in their home countries.

Admittedly, not the least of Indonesian migrant workers classified as skilled labor managed to take advantage of the opportunity provided by this globalization. For them, the opportunity to work in developed countries clearly will add capabilities and network. As a professional worker, if they are called brain drain away, while if the home is called the brain gain. Most of them work in East Asian countries, like South Korea, Japan, and Hong Kong.

Others are working in the United States, Europe, and Australia.

In the Netherlands, a research conducted by researchers PSDR-LIPI in 2010 shows that many Indonesian workers comes from the student internship. They were sent by educational institutions in Indonesia to the Netherlands for a certain time, usually not exceeding 24 months. After the internship time runs out, many of them decided to continue working there. In addition, there are also workers who are specifically looking for work, either through agents or directly related to the service user. From interviews with sources revealed his views on globalization are interpreted positively. By exploiting advances in information technology, particularly internet, they can access the job market in the Netherlands and find out what requirements are needed, so they are ready with an increasingly tight labor competition. What interesting story is the absence of Indonesian government's role in assisting the process of placement and employment protection. They managed to get jobs because their own efforts.

For recipient countries, particularly for countries in Europe, the existence of skilled labor migrants from developing countries responded to numerous, but at least there are two general views that contrast in this case (Legrain, 2009). Firstly see them as a threat. In Western countries, the first opinion is intensified after the tragedy of the WTC 2001. Migrants from Muslim countries, usually referring to Arab countries, suspected of being terrorists. Bombing events in London and in Madrid in 2005 was seemed to be evidence. The ultranationalist right politicizes this situation by submitting a more restrictive proposal on migration policies. In the global and regional economic conditions that are less good, ultranationalist group proposal gaining wide right of the public.

The second views the presence of migrants in a more positive (Legrain, 2009). In Europe, a concern about ageing society is a fact, so the presence of migrant workers is a necessity. Although unemployment in some European countries tends to continue to increase, there are many specific job positions that are traditionally filled by migrant workers. Nurse job, for example, like to chose users from Asia because they are known more delivering better care

than the local nurses do. The field of information technology as well are usually filled by workers from India and China.

**Table 2.1** Placement of Indonesian Migrant Workers 1994-2008

No	Country	1994	1997	2000	2005	2008 (April)
	<b>ASIA</b>					
1.	Malaysia	41.712	36.248	191.700	201.887	66.816
2.	Singapore	15.678	35.487	25.707	25.087	8.231
3.	Brunai D.	1.846	2.659	4.370	4.978	1.122
4.	Hongkong	3.306	5.282	21.709	12.143	9.686
5.	Taiwan	3.423	9.597	50.508	48.576	17.651
6.	South Korea	3.294	8.385	6.689	4.506	1.453
7.	Japan	-	-	-	102	1
8.	Others	1.474	3.963	3.503	12	-
	<b>MIDDLE EAST &amp; AFRICAN</b>					
9	Saudi Arabian	96.710	121.965	114.067	150.000	60.014
10	U. E. Arab	1.948	9.362	9.558	5.622	10.994
11	Kuwait		-	3.771	16.842	10.360
12	Bahrain	76	4	169	21	708
13.	Qatar	1	2	949	1.002	2.723

14.	Oman/Tunisia	19	-	-	1.216	2.802
15.	Jordan	-	-	6	2.081	3.480
16.	Cyprus	-	-	-	-	-
17.	Egypt	-	-	-	-	-
18.	Others	133	401	648	-	-
	<b>AMERICA</b>					
19.	USA	3.950	1.074	1.302	17	66
20.	Others	86	115	207	-	6
	<b>EUROPE</b>					
21.	Netherlands	951	43	77	-	3
22.	Italia	-	666	-	-	6
23.	UK	-	-	-	-	-
24.	Spain	-	-	-	-	4
25.	France	-	-	-	-	-
26.	Others	757	-	-	-	-
	Total	175.187				

Source: Depnaker (2006, 2008)

However, still in the case of Europe, regionalism which is institutionalized in the European Union (EU) could also be read as a new political economic bloc that would limit the influence of globalization, when globalization is construed as an entrance opening countries to the current national mobility of goods, capital, people and ideas. With

certain policies in migration, EU governments would prioritize job seekers from the EU rather than from the outside environment. By job seekers from the former communist countries in Eastern Europe, the opportunity is used as much as possible, especially after some of the country's official entry as a member of the EU. This situation is a challenge for job seekers from developing countries, including Indonesia.

However, the bulk of Indonesian migrant workers are those who are categorized as unskilled labor. They generally work as laborers in the plantation industry and as domestic household workers. In terms of gender composition, most of them are women. With these two predicates, unskilled and women, Indonesian migrant workers occupy a dark part of the globalized world. They become commodities, as goods services, almost since their departure from Indonesia. They were sent without any guarantee of legal protection and adequate political, even many of those sent through illegal channels. The businessman who acted as the sender of labor is the beneficiary of this condition.

## E. Migrant Workers Policies

One of the key events that accelerate the birth of the law on migrant workers is Nunukan tragedy in 2002. The tragedy called the government and the parliament to establish immediately a policy as level as the law (*undang-undang*) in managing the issues of placement and protection of migrant workers. Before the event, the issue of migrant workers is only governed by the policy-level ministerial regulation or presidential decree. These conditions reflect the ignorance of the Indonesian Government towards migrant workers. Although their number is very large—Chief of BNP2TKI estimating the amount of them in 2008 is about 6 million scattered in 41 countries of destination—their legal position is very weak.

In addition to several ministerial regulations on service companies sending workers as mentioned above, there are other policies in addition to the Act No. 39/2004 which regulates migrant workers. These policies are:

1. Presidential Decision No. 29/1999 on the Coordinating Body for the Placement of Indonesian Migrant Workers Overseas;

2. Ministerial Decision No. KEP.137/MEN/2001 on the Organization and Work Practices in the Department of Manpower and Transmigration;
3. Ministerial Decision No. KEP.104A/MEN/2002 on the Placement of Indonesian Migrant Workers Overseas;
4. Decision of the Director General of Development and Placement of Overseas Migrant Workers No.KEP.312A/O.P2TKLN/2002 on Technical Instructions for the Protection of Overseas Migrant Workers;
5. Ministerial Decision No.KEP.10/MEN/2004 on the Formation of the Team for the Evaluation of the Performance of Indonesian Migrant Labour Sending Companies;
6. Ministerial Regulation No. Per-04/MEN/II/2005 on The Organization of Final Training Before Departure for Indonesian Migrant Workers Overseas;
7. Ministerial Regulation No. Per-05/MEN/III/2005 on The Determination of Administrative Sanctions and the Means though which those Sanctions are

- Imposed in the Conduct of the Placement and Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers Overseas;
8. Ministerial Decision No. Kepmen No. KEP.14/MEN/I/2005 on the Team for the Prevention of Non-Procedural Departures and Return Services for Indonesian Migrant Workers;
  9. Ministerial Regulation No. Per-07/MEN/IV/2005 on the Standard of Holding Centres for Intending Indonesian Migrant Workers.

Officially, the issue of placement and protection of labor migrant is coordinated by the National Agency for Placement and Protection of Migrant Worker (BNP2TKI). The Institution established by the mandate contained in the Act NO.39/2004 was established in 2006. However, the issue of migrant workers would not only be handled by BNP2TKI. In administratively, this issue involves many institutions of government. According to the observations of Migrant Care, there are at least eight ministries which are authorized to take care of migrant workers' issues, namely the Ministry of Labor, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Communications, Ministry of National Education,

Ministry of Health, Ministry of Social Affairs, and Ministry of Home Affairs.

Conceptually, the unification between the placement and protection in a single container contains some problems. 'Placements' has meaning in relation to economic considerations, while the 'protection' is a state obligation to citizens. Uniting these two things in one container is like uniting water and oil together in one container. In practice, the BNP2TKI has not able to overcome the overlapping of authority between agencies in government, especially with the policy of regional autonomy and decentralization where local governments were involved in the regulation of migrant workers in their respective regions. Local government in West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) for example has a local policy relating to migrant workers (Tirtosudarmo, 2010).

Migrant workers are citizens, but their rights are still neglected, even when compared to domestic workers. Protection of workers is part of the mandate of the 1945 Constitution Article 28 1 Paragraph (4) of the 1945 Constitution which states that "the protection,

advancement, upholding, and fulfillment of human rights is primarily the responsibility of state government." Meanwhile, under article 11 of Law No.39/2004, migrant workers can only be placed to destination countries that already have a written agreement with the Indonesian Government. However, the clause is ignored because in reality only a few countries that have these agreements, namely Malaysia, South Korea, and Jordan.

## **F. Concluding Remarks**

Migration is an important political issue in the discourse and practices of the modern state. However, the country's main concern lies in the territorial boundaries, not the protection of residents. Territorial boundaries have two functions at once; while outside it is a fence that keeps the existence of power from the interference of other countries, inside it is the guards who watched the movements of people. The Indonesia history shows that the state is more interested in protecting corporations than residents. This condition runs since the colonial period to the present.

The role of the state is weak in the protection of migrant workers. The state is more concerned to placement

than protection. The government was already doing its role by sending as many workers overseas, but how to protect them still far from the attention. In the political ethics, it is a problematic. At the offices of the Indonesian government representatives abroad, as in the Embassy in The Hague, the Netherlands, there is no data that contains information precisely about the presence of Indonesian migrant workers. Without the data, it is difficult to make a solid policy to protect them.

In the global situation—conceptually referred to what is called as globalization—there are Indonesian migrant workers to succeed in job in foreign countries. They are skilled labors who successfully capture the globalization as prospect for the development of their professional careers. However, their numbers were less than the greatest composition of Indonesian migrant workers which is categorized as unskilled labor. Their condition aggravated by the absence of strong migrant labor unions. Tirtosudarmo (2010) assess this condition as a reflection of the politics of migration in Indonesia that inward-looking. Luckily there are few NGOs that concern. They are actively building a network in both the

international and domestic levels to advocate for the rights of migrant workers, as mandated in the constitution and the universal values of human rights.

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## Chapter III

### THE PHENOMENON AND CHARACTERISTIC OF INDONESIAN SKILLED LABOR IN THE NETHERLANDS

*Gusnelly*

#### A. Introduction

Highly-skilled migration is the type of migration currently most popular with receiving country governments. Since the 1980s, the United States, Canada and Australia have set up privileged entry systems to attract entrepreneurs, executives, scientists, professionals and technical specialists. More recently, Western European and some East Asian countries have followed suit (Findlay, 1995). Any country would be possible to avoid human mobility or migration. Cross-border migration must be seen as a demographic phenomenon because migration is the movement of an individual to settle (temporarily or permanently) across a country border. The movement happens due to negative and positive factors; which when considered, the decision for migration is taken. Usually, negative factors relate to unfavorable economic problems

in the origin country and to observed advantages in other places.

In migration theory, a migrant is a free individual who has autonomy in making their own decision and is also a rational creature who makes a decision based on profit and loss and what is best for oneself; thus, a decision for migration is always said to be a rational choice (Darwin Muhajir, Anna Marie Wattie, 2005: 248). The impact of the migration decision, the money sent back to family in the home country becomes foreign exchange for the origin country. Given that the migration decision is an individual right, there is a role for government to facilitate and even help to find job opportunities abroad.

Foreign workers or migrant workers affect the host country labor market by increasing the size of the labor market. Migrant workers may have a negative impact, but this impact is not caused by inflexibilities in the labor market alone. Native workers fear that foreign workers take away their jobs. The new workers may differ from the native workers in their knowledge and skills. The very high-skilled and talented migrant workers may contribute to an

economic leading sector growth. Migrant workers may help to overcome particular skill shortages in the labor market. An important example is the existence of shortages in the health care sector, which are likely to increase because of the ageing population. Labor shortages may be preferable to long lasting vacancies (Roodenburg, Hans. 2004: 385-386).

The Netherlands is both a small country and a small player on the world market. Despite this, every year the country permits the entry of newcomers into its territory. Those who come to the Netherlands come from different countries, from within the European region and from outside the European region, including from Indonesia. The number of Indonesian workers in the Netherlands has increased rapidly in recent years. Many factors urged Indonesians to work abroad; including the will to seek experience abroad; but, in practice, it is because they are tempted by high wages.<sup>3</sup> Indonesian workers in the

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<sup>3</sup> The solution pursued by some job seekers is to work in other countries (sending workers abroad). There are job seekers who work abroad through employment agencies and there are also job seekers who come to foreign country individually. The orientation of sending Indonesian workers abroad is viewed as a temporary and strategic solution to reduce unemployment; whereas what is expected from it all

Netherlands, besides attending school, apply for jobs because there are offers from companies in the country.

Based on the level of education, the characteristics of those who work in Korea and Japan are generally high school graduates who obtain brief skill training in factory work. Those who work in Europe, especially in the Netherlands, are generally young professionals who have graduated from diploma schools (such as nurses) and from universities in the Netherlands or other leading universities. Similar characteristics also apply to workers from the Philippines and Japan. Filipino nurses represent the largest category of health workers migrating, followed by midwives and doctors. This migration may be motivated by economics, working conditions and socio-political factors. The youngest professionals taking up opportunities abroad tend to be well-trained, skilled and experienced because of their specialization. In other words, work opportunities for Filipinos and Japanese entering and working in the Netherlands is greater than for the people of Indonesia.

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is foreign exchange or calculation of cost and benefit from the activity. Foreign exchange resulting from labor exports is second only to oil and gas revenues.

This article will elaborate on the phenomenon of skilled Indonesian workers in the Netherlands. What is the process they get a job in Holland? Governments can facilitate and help make it easier if all the provisions or requirements to work are already possessed. The dynamics of work like what they experience in the Netherlands, would be an interesting story to be known. What do the characteristics of those who are currently employed mainly skilled workers in the Netherlands? The known age of those working in the Netherland is relatively young, from 25 to 35 years, and in general they are new school or university graduates. So it is necessary to know the purpose and motivation of their work in the Netherlands. This will provide useful information for obtaining job opportunities in Europe, particularly in the Netherlands.

## **B. Indonesian Workers in the Netherlands at a Glance**

The Netherland is one of the most popular countries with highly-skilled migrant workers, according to an SEO Economic Research Bureau survey of 11 industrialized countries. The Netherlands scored high marks for its labor market, salary levels, higher education reputation and the

reputations of its higher education institutions and knowledge infrastructure. It scored somewhat lower on living environment. According to the Dutch Economic Affairs Ministry, approximately 26,000 foreign nationals currently work in the Netherlands under the highly-skilled migrant's scheme.<sup>4</sup> More than 100 foreign companies opened Amsterdam offices last year, and 18 of them made that office their new European headquarters. The new companies created 1,255 new jobs, and brought to more than 1,900 the total number of international companies in the city. International companies employ nearly 17 percent of Amsterdam's total workforce.<sup>5</sup>

In the history of the arrival of foreign workers to the Netherlands after WW II, it was recorded that one of the immigrant groups were Indonesians. In the middle of 1930s, the Dutch Government imported Indonesians to the

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<sup>4</sup> DutchNews.nl, see in the <http://www.nfia.com/nieuws.html?id=664> accessed 21/01/2011

<sup>5</sup> The 2009 newcomer companies have home offices in North America, Asia or elsewhere in Europe. Most of the new companies are technology firms, but creative enterprises and business service units are also well-represented. Source Radio Netherlands Worldwide and Dutch News see in <http://www.nfia.com/nieuws.html?id=664>

Netherlands to work as ship crews, ship mechanics, restaurant workers and other industrial manual labor.<sup>6</sup> In the 1990s, contrary with the 1960s, many foreign workers that migrated to the Netherlands were highly educated and skilled, such as technical experts and managers.

Today, there are many Indonesians in the Netherlands. As mentioned, 1,450 Indonesian students studied in the Netherlands in the 2007/2008 academic year. Thus Indonesians ranked fifth place in terms of foreign students studying in the country. This is an initial step for students to be able to work in the Netherlands. Among those who work in the Netherlands now, most are able to work because they are college graduates or have training (apprentice) experience in the Netherlands. With their status as immigrants from Indonesia, the Indonesian Government is only responsible for their protection as Indonesian citizens. According to Indonesian Law No. 39/2004, those working abroad and in receipt of payments from parties that employ them can be considered as

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<sup>6</sup> Hisyam, M. 1996, *A Glance of History and Roles of Islamic Da'wah in Netherlands*, PPME/YMAE Press, Den Haag, page 9-17

Indonesian Workers. Approximately 80 percent of survey respondents said they wanted to stay in the Netherlands for a long time and they wanted to apply for permanent residence, whilst 20 percent wanted to stay short term, after which they would return to work in Indonesia.

Starting in 1970s the demand to fill the nursing manpower shortage would have been undertaken by the Dutch Government. This situation continued until the late 1990s when some employment agencies took the initiative to recruit nurses from outside the Netherlands, such as from Indonesia and the Philippines. Indonesian nurses represent the largest category of migrant health workers in the Netherlands. Indonesian nurses who came in the late 70s were employed in the health sectors, such as hospitals.

The profession of Indonesian nurses is very profitable because in reality Indonesian nurses are preferred by patients. Indonesian nurses are well-known for their friendliness, politeness and patience in taking care of patients. When the work visa or training period ends, many of them decide not to go back to Indonesia. Besides, the Indonesian Government has not well regulated the

rights and the obligations of a nurse in the world of work, consider the following interview<sup>7</sup> excerpt:

*“When a contract expired, we will seek new jobs in Netherlands and not coming back to Indonesia. Coming back does not guarantee us to get new job; and if there are any, we are not sure to get salary with all best facilities. Meanwhile, in Netherlands, our labors are valued higher and treated better by employers because there are clear regulations of employment relations between employer and employee. The employee can protest if they get unfeasible salary or rights from the employers”*

The salary as a nurse in the Netherlands is still better than in Indonesia.<sup>8</sup> The salary of a nurse at the level of 3<sup>rd</sup> NIEVAU ranges from 1200-2000 Euro, depending on the tenure. Moreover, if there is overtime, night-shift work or on-duty work, they can get additional payments. Indonesian nurses are well accepted because they have a better nurse education background compared to that in the Netherlands.

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<sup>7</sup> Interview with *Syafei*, an Indonesian who was sent for health training in Holland, and later on decided to stay in Holland as a nurse. The interview was conducted on 15 May 2010 in Amsterdam Amstel, Netherlands.

<sup>8</sup> The profession of a nurse has not been treated equal to other professions in Indonesia. A physician has the right to get better salary, while a nurse who does job in the same field, i.e. to assist a doctor, has salary much lower from a physician.

Even when compared to nurses from the Philippines, India and Poland, Indonesian nurses have better medical knowledge. The weakness of Indonesian nurses is the poor ability to speak English; thus, it is hard for them to communicate with the patients. Meanwhile, Philippines nurses are able to speak English well.<sup>9</sup>

The phenomena above are only some advantages and features that will be obtained by those working in the Netherlands. It is not only the special wages and good work facility; it seems that there are also some special treatment provided by the Dutch government for Indonesians in the Netherlands. For those working in the Netherlands, the Dutch Government or company, employees are encouraged to communicate in Dutch language, especially those in a national private company. Foreign workers are will be funded for Dutch language courses and permitted to take the course during work time.<sup>10</sup>

Interactions with colleagues are prioritized to maintain work-professionalism and hard work. The

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<sup>9</sup> Interview with Ika Palupi on 15 May 2010 in Amsterdam Amstel, Netherlands.

<sup>10</sup> Interview with Nanda on 21 May 2010 in Amsterdam.

relationship with the Dutch is not the main thing; it is more focused on professional and collegial relationships. Often, current information on the government's policy which related to salary, rights and obligations is obtained from Dutch colleagues. In the Netherlands, achievement is assessed based on the living environment and maintenance of good relationships, not competition, with others. With respect to quality, Indonesians are not inferior to the Dutch and other countries.

A weakness of Indonesians is that they feel insecure and they are afraid to contribute ideas. Meanwhile, the advantage to Indonesians who attend school in the Netherlands – is to be educated to be critical and creative. To maintain a relationship with other Indonesians, information take-and-give on how to get job opportunities, especially for students who want to work in Netherlands.



**Picture: 3.1** The nurse's house in Amsterdam Amstel

Source: Field Research Photograph

Information received from some respondents mentioned that the colonial relation in the past is one of the conveniences for Indonesians to be accepted in Holland. Principally, this does not have any correlation at all; but, in fact, the Dutch government gives special treatment. This is seen in the provisions on western and non-western category in the residence status in the Netherlands. The Dutch 2004 statistical yearbook 2004, in the description of *foreign background*, mentions clearly:

*"The non-western first generation is made up of persons born in Turkey, Africa, Latin America and Asia, except Indonesia and Japan. Person born in*

*Indonesia and Japan are considered western on the basis of their socio-economic position”.*

Entry patterns of Indonesians who live and work in the Netherlands include marital relation with the Dutch, for family reunion, to attend school and work. According to an Indonesian Embassy staff in De Hague, most Indonesians work in informal sector.<sup>11</sup> However, those who work in the formal sector with various expertise also exist; such as in the field of IT, Civil Engineering, Engineering, nursing, teaching and lecturing. It is difficult to track statistics on the number of workers because they report to the embassy only to request for passport renewal and only a few mention their occupation in the Netherlands. This becomes a problem for many parties, especially for observers of

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<sup>11</sup> Those undocumented workers work in informal sectors, for example as a gardener. The salary for an hours work is around 40 Euro. The salary is the minimum standard salary in the Netherlands which ranges from €39.27-€39.01/hour and for a years work, the minimum salary for manual labor is €29.000 per year or €1.560 per month after tax. Mostly, they work for 3-5 hours in a day and they are not bound to an official work contract. It seems that this factor is risky or harmful for their illegal status; still, their labor is needed in the Netherlands. Even though they are illegal, the Dutch police do not feel bothered by Indonesians. If an Indonesian is caught, the person will be imprisoned from 2 weeks to 2 months; after that, the person will be released on condition that the person agrees to not commit crime in the Netherlands. Interview with an Indonesian Embassy staff in Den Hague on 14 May 2010 in Holland.

labor issues because it is difficult to track how many Indonesians face competition in the European labor market, particularly in the Netherlands. On the other hand, there is a misunderstanding within the Indonesian Embassy in handling Indonesians in the Netherlands. In this respect it is argued that it is not important now to perform data collection on Indonesians working in the Netherlands. This has happened because there is not yet any bilateral agreement between the two countries with respect to Indonesians working in the Netherlands.

If there are for Indonesians working in the Netherlands, their entry process is not through the labor mechanism of the Indonesian government; it is based on the employment provision of the Dutch government. For all this time, the Indonesian Embassy serves and receives Indonesians, whether for residence permit, visa or passport. If Indonesians are requested to write down their occupation, only a few of them are willing to write it. Thus, the Indonesian Government only protects Indonesian

workers as migrants in the Netherlands (tourist, student or trainer).<sup>12</sup>

### **C. Characteristic of Indonesian Skilled Workers In the Netherlands**

Today, it is not a wonder for Indonesians to be living and staying in the Netherlands. The Dutch statistics show that in 1995 there were about 413,000 Indonesians; however, this number subsequently decreased to 404,000 in 2000; 403,000 in 2001 and to 401,000 in 2003.<sup>13</sup> Job opportunities are often offered by companies in the Netherlands for the sectors of nursing, IT and shipping (Engineering). As mentioned before, there are many reasons for an Indonesian to seek a job abroad, including to the Netherlands. From the key interviews mapping was undertaken as well as a representation of Indonesian people who worked in the Netherlands, in particular skilled workers (see Table 3.1).

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<sup>12</sup> Interview with an Indonesian Embassy staff member on 15 May 2010 at Den Hague, in the Netherlands

<sup>13</sup> See the statistic data of the Netherlands in year 2004 page 33 and 214 or visit <http://www.cbs.nl>

The table illustrates the main characteristics of young professional workers in the Netherlands. Young males generally have the courage to decide to work and stay for a long time abroad. The difficulty is that only a select few Indonesians are admitted to Dutch institutes or other leading universities in the world. Thus, only the middle class can enter the European labor market, especially for the work group of *skilled labor*.

**Table 3.1** Characteristics of Indonesian Skilled Worker in the Netherlands

No	Job	Sex	Education	Age	Status	Parents' occupations
1	Nurse	Female	Nursing Diploma	35 years	Married	Civil Servant
2	Junior tax analyst (Finance)	Male	Hogeschools Amsterdam	25 years	Not married	Private
3	IT programming	Male	Undergraduate in Computing in Indonesia	26 years	Not married	Lecturer
4	Database System, Data	Male	Graduate in Computer Science,	37 years	Married	Junior High School

	Warehouse and Business Intelligence		Bina Nusantara University			teacher
5	Junior engineer (Civil engineer majoring in mechanical geology and geohydrology)	Male	Dutch Undergraduate (S1)	25 years	Not married	Civil Servant
6	Civil Engineer	Male	Indonesian Undergraduate (S1)	24 years	Not married	Business man
7	Finance	Male	Hogeschool	26 years	Not married	Merchant /entrepreneur

Source: processed data

## 1. Recruitment Process

The present system of labor migration in the Netherlands allows employers who cannot find suitable staff to fill vacancies within the European Economic Area (EEA), to hire, on a temporary basis, employees from

countries outside that area. This system can be characterized as *demand-driven* (Roodenburg, Hans, 2004: 396). The recruitment process of foreign workers is not easy either because it first involves a priority process; it means that the companies will first try to find a Dutch person first and if none is found, the job opportunity will be offered to Europeans; if the European candidates do not meet the requirements, the job opportunity will be offered to foreigners from other countries.

In recent decades, the Dutch Government has recruited highly skilled workers. It is manifested in the form of *kennismigrant* or *highly skilled migrant* program. These are professionals, managers and technical workers. Their movement reflects the global nature of modern business. The Dutch Immigration Department ("IND") established its 2010 salary thresholds for processing applications for residence permits for Highly Skilled Migrant Workers or *Kennismigranten*. The Dutch Government set minimum salary requirements for Highly

Skilled Migrant Workers residence permit (KMP)<sup>14</sup> as follows:

- Annual base salaries for highly-skilled foreign workers under the age of 30 raised from €35,997 to €36,801.
- Annual base salaries for highly-skilled foreign workers aged 30 or older raised from €49,087 to €50,183.
- Annual base salaries for foreign students who graduated with degrees in the Netherlands and who are hired as highly-skilled foreign workers raised from €25,800 to €26,376.

The term '*kennismigrant*' or *knowledge migrant* or *expatriate* is meant for those working in Holland through a special recruitment program that can be accessed in the origin country.<sup>15</sup> This program is essentially an agreement by some companies to provide facility in seeking foreign

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<sup>14</sup> <http://lexuniversal.com/en/> accessed 21012011

<sup>15</sup> Interview with M. Gibran a worker in a *Marine Contractors B.V* company dated on 18 May 2010 in Leiden, Holand.

workers in certain sectors and for certain wage limits. It means that if a foreign worker meets the job qualification and the minimum wage has been set, it will be easy to work and stay in Netherlands. Learning the Dutch language has been given a high priority and has become a compulsory part of the introduction programs for foreign workers or *kennismigrant*.<sup>16</sup>

Another challenge faced when someone enters the European labor market is tight competition with European labor that have occupied the main position in recruitment. However, that does not mean that there is no opportunity to get a job. The internet provides access to job opportunities. For example, Rahmananda Noor, an information system specialist, accessed the Dutch labor market from a job vacancy on an internet based job site. An academic potential test and interview was conducted in Indonesia with the Dutch company's representative *Daya Dimensi Indonesia (DDI)*. The recruitment process for the

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<sup>16</sup> Interview with Rahmananda Noor on 21 May 2010 in Leiden, Holland.

placement took about 2 months with all costs borne by the company.<sup>17</sup>

Migrant labor in the Netherlands comes about by reason of the individual, or in groups, perhaps on company sub-contract arrangements. The placement of Indonesian workers abroad is different for every region. The placement in Malaysia and Saudi Arabia has a similar mechanism, i.e. Government to Government (G to G).<sup>18</sup> The placement of

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<sup>17</sup> Interview with Rahmananda Noor on 21 May 2010 in Amsterdam, Holland.

<sup>18</sup> Indonesian workers who work in Malaysia and the Middle East use a special channel of labor recruitment which has been provided by the country. The authorized agent that becomes the labor recruiter is appointed by the government; PJTKI (Indonesian Labor Service Company). This PJTKI organization is authorized to recruit and process the export and placement of Indonesian workers abroad. The government, through the National Body of Placement and Protection of Indonesian Workers (BNP2TKI) with the Presidential Regulation No 61/2006, becomes the party that judicially implements the order of Laws No. 39/2004 on Placement and Protection of Indonesian Workers abroad. The Foreign Ministry takes care of problems related to consular and inter-country cooperation. To optimize its performance, the BNP2TKI cooperates with many active parties in managing and placing Indonesian workers abroad and with organizations that have networks in destination countries. The Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration at central level and the Office of Manpower and Transmigration at the regional level, is responsible for monitoring

Indonesian workers in the Netherlands is based on cooperation between companies with a person or group. It means that, so far, the cooperation is built between private parties and there has not been cooperation between the two governments. For example, a group of nurses working in the Netherlands, were recruited through an official agent placement. Hence the nurses came to the Netherlands on temporary work visas. Workers that applied as individuals entered the Netherlands with a variety of ways including on as student visa, tourism visa or work visa as an expatriate.

The recruitment for Indonesian workers who worked in the IT sector as it gets into direct without going through the agency. According to one respondents working in the IT sector company of *Strukton Engineering*, the job opportunity for skilled Indonesian workers is significant; but, currently, the economic condition is decreasing; thus, competition is very tough. However, the possibility to work in the IT sector is considerable when the Indonesian companies are active to cooperate with Dutch companies,

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Indonesian worker agencies that have obtained placement licenses or SIPTKIS.

such as is done by Indian IT companies. The promotion and cooperation among these companies are aimed at having international certification in special expertise and wide networking.

Students constitute another large group of migrant workers in Holland. Their admission for educational purposes is a policy practice in most countries. Students are normally admitted for limited time periods, and usually not allowed to enter employment. Those respondents working in the IT sector are generally undergraduates and postgraduates, some from Dutch universities, although, a few are only apprentices or trainees for some months in Holland.

## **2. Work Motivation**

The reason or motivation is a necessity or a willingness which will be achieved from the decision or the objective of doing the act. Generally, someone's motivation in working abroad is economic related, i.e. to find higher wages or salary and experience in working abroad. These approaches are often known as "push-pull" theories, because they perceive the cause of migration to lie in a

combination of push factors, impelling people to leave the areas of origin and pull factors, attracting them to certain receiving countries (Castles and Miller 1998: 20). Push factors include in-adequate salary, economic and political instability. Pull factor include for instance: greater opportunity to get better jobs and education, better environment and pleasant neighborhood, fair compensation at work and higher salary in the destination country. The characteristics of skilled labor migration based on the pull and push factors are taken from the International Labor Office as the main factors in every activity of migration (quote from Marilyn, Fely, et al, 2005: 64).

**Table 3.2** Reasons for moving out of present job to go abroad based on push factors and pull factors.

Reason	Push Factors	Pull Factors
Economic	<p><b>Local:</b></p> <p>Low salaries, neither commensurate with cost of living nor to years of service</p> <p><b>International:</b></p> <p>High salary, economic</p>	<p><b>Local:</b></p> <p>Family, higher salary in receiving countries</p> <p><b>International:</b></p> <p>Higher salaries and improved benefits, fair</p>

	stability	compensation at work.
Individual/family related	<p><b>Local:</b></p> <p>Seek partner in life</p> <p><b>International:</b></p> <p>Promotion and salary</p>	<p><b>Local:</b></p> <p>Quality of life and social benefits.</p> <p><b>International:</b></p> <p>Independence from family, to get away from a difficult relationship, family integration/citizenship, security for the children, opportunity to see places and meet new people from other countries.</p>
Job related	<p><b>Local:</b></p> <p>Inadequate salary</p> <p><b>International:</b></p> <p>overwork time, overworked staff.</p>	<p><b>Local:</b></p> <p>For the family benefit</p> <p><b>International:</b></p> <p>Additional knowledge, better working conditions, quality of life</p>
Socio-political and economic environment	<p><b>Local:</b></p> <p>Political and Economic Crisis</p> <p><b>International:</b></p> <p>Need for political back up to get a job, unstable government political situation</p>	<p><b>Local:</b></p> <p><b>International:</b></p> <p>Availability of jobs, higher standard of living, motivation and support from relatives in receiving countries</p>

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Source: International Labor Office

Of importance and often discussed is someone's reason for working abroad; in this respect, Indonesians working in Holland (see table 3.3). However, the objective to obtain a high salary is different for each person. The difference in meeting needs is caused by rational thinking from an individual when deciding about migration, not because of the causes of the migration decision. The cause and the reason of rational thinking are different; they are similar items but have different impacts. Interview results showed that Indonesian workers and their families were perceived to derive the most benefit from emigration (see table 3.3)

**Table 3.3** Work Motivation Based on Previous Work Field and Ultimate Work Goal for Indonesian Workers in the Netherlands

Motivation	Previous Job	Work Field in Netherlands	Primary Goal
For growth and development of professional skills and increase family	Nurse in an Indonesian Hospitals	Nurse	To become a lecturer in an Indonesian Nursing School

income			
To get better education and get a job in the Netherlands	Student at Hogeschool	Junior tax analyst (Finance)	To open a restaurant and business for organic foods in Indonesia
Raise money to create business in Indonesia and obtain work experience abroad	IT department in an Indonesian national private company	IT Programming	To create a business for Indonesian traditional foods
Helping family in Indonesia	Student	IT consultant in an International bank	To create IT business
To get certification and international work experience	Student	Junior engineer (Civil engineering at the Department of Mechanical Geology and Geo-hydrology)	To get international certification and it easier to find a job in developed country
Like the work system in Holland (discipline, cooperative and professional)	Student	Civil Engineer	To be a lecturer in Indonesia

To avoid the ethnic conflict in Indonesia caused by political issues	Student at Hogeschool	Finance	To create shoe business in Indonesia
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Source: processed data

Even when there are different objectives, most working in Holland still have a willingness to return to Indonesia and to work in their own country. Nurses are less willing to work in Indonesia due to concern that the work facility and salary will not be as good as in Holland. Even when there is a willingness to return to Indonesia, it will be after obtaining further education in the Netherlands or after retirement.

The decision to stay for a long time for most Indonesians working in the Netherlands is usually related to access to equal rights with the Dutch citizen. In order to obtain a permanent work visa, someone has to work for at least 5 years in the Netherlands. When a foreign worker enters the labor market, after a one year work period, the person will get a contract/probation for 1 year; then, continues to the *probation* stage either for 1 or 2 years. Following the 3 year work period, the company must make the employee permanent. With the permanent status, the

person will receive severance pay upon retirement; at least as much as 3 months' salary.<sup>19</sup>

**Table 3.4** Perceived impact migration

	Positive effects	Negative effects
Individual and family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Personal and professional development- independence, development of professional skills and meeting other nationalities</li> <li>■ Family increased income, implying better quality of life</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Personal homesickness which may lead to depression</li> <li>■ Family disruption in family relationships</li> </ul>
Profession	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Growth and development of the professional</li> <li>■ When the worker comes back and applies/shares what s/he has learned</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Depletion of the pool of skilled health workers</li> <li>■ Depletion of medical capability</li> <li>■ Inexperienced health workers who replace those who leave have nothing substantial to contribute to the profession</li> <li>■ Demoralization of the non-doctors who have up nursing</li> </ul>
Health-care system and quality of health care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Health care is enhanced</li> <li>■ Availability of more aggressive staff replacements who are eager to learn</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Continuity of programme/services is adversely affected</li> <li>■ Quality of care is compromised</li> <li>■ People in the community are deprived of health services</li> <li>■ Improvement of the hospital is delayed when resources are used to train staff replacements</li> </ul>
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Economy improves with the remittances</li> <li>■ Unemployment is reduced</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Loss of government resources used in education and training</li> <li>■ Resources are spent on training of staff replacements</li> <li>■ Reduced government income of the province and country from taxes of health professionals</li> </ul>

Source: International Labor Organization

For Klaus F Zimmermann and Amilie Constant, the individual or group decision for migration and staying was often categorized as a positive relation. The migration decision is often affected by differences in welfare, income, and unemployment levels between the origin and

<sup>19</sup> Interview with Halim dated on 17 May 2010 in Amsterdam

destination countries and living costs in the destination country. However, the high salary is expected to overcome the economic problem faced by the worker. The possibility to obtain high income will result in high remittance being sent to the origin country as well. According to Connel (1980) and Hugo (1978), the awareness of a worker's to migration is related with the level of awareness to send remittances for family in sending countries. For the permanent migrant, professional worker or *skilled labor*, the tendency is to not send money to their origin country too often; thus, the remittance will be smaller when compared to temporary workers (circular). The same idea was also mentioned by Lucas et al. (1985) who argued that the longer a migrant stayed in the destination country, the smaller the remittance. The negative impact is caused by the reduction of the migrant's burden in the origin country. For example, the worker and family have already relocated to the new place or the family is deemed to have adequate income.

### 3. Education

Another dimension of getting a job abroad is the education qualification. Job opportunities often offered by Dutch companies are for undergraduates. For those who graduated with a diploma, the opportunity is likely to be for a nursing position. However, diploma program graduates from *Hogeschool* face broad job opportunities because the school prepares students to be work ready. Consider the following interview excerpt:

*"The Netherlands is like Singapore in that it has become a financial and legal centre. So, the finance and IT sectors are needed. The opportunity to work here is very wide; the important thing is that the requirements for the resident permit can be met. To be honest, actually, for Indonesians who graduated from universities there, moreover for those who are only high school graduates, it is a little bit difficult to get a job in Holland; because, they are only considered as expatriates. For example, the annual income here is on average 26,000 Euros per person; but, an expatriate below 30 years-old must get income of 40,000 Euros annually. Imagine, it is almost 80 percent higher than for the Dutch. The Dutch companies which are willing to recruit expatriates must also present evidence that they have sought Dutch people for*

months and are unable to find the right workers; thus, they have to outsource"<sup>20</sup>

As mentioned, a study by Carrington and *Detragiache* (1998 taken from Michael 2006, 1) proved that individuals with lower education levels generally have limited access to international migration because of institutional constraints. This is caused by the expectation of a skilled worker to be the *contributor net fiscal normal*, thus their migration is considered to be profitable for local society. In terms of work competition, each individual competes professionally and is competent. Thus, education becomes an important thing, especially in technological ability. The natural conditions are not good because the ground water is quite high, with most of the big cities situated in areas dominated by soft soil and with space limitations. Thus, technology and innovation are required. Moreover, as new problems emerge, the youth and workers are stimulated to be as creative as possible.

A worker in the expatriate category will not be subject to income tax or health tax cuts. The disadvantage is that the health cost must be paid personally. Usually, the

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<sup>20</sup> Interview with Halim and Hendri on 17 May 2010 in Amsterdam.

expatriates working temporary will obtain advantages in terms of knowledge. Working on a temporary basis means technology transfer. A temporary worker does not think to raise money or get knowledge; the person will consider only a better career, thus, family welfare and income will improve accordingly. Deciding to quit work before the work period expired is not the correct choice either because there will be failures only (Kuznetsov.Yevgeny, 2006: 29).

#### **4. Age and Sex**

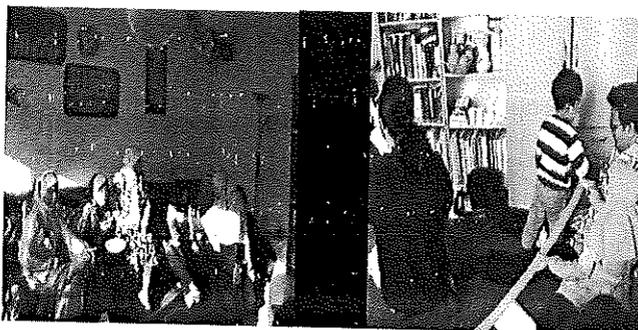
Similar to the Turks and Japanese, the Indonesians working in the Netherlands are generally male, young, and single, especially technical workers (IT workers). Aged below 35 years and on average they are about 20 years-old (fresh graduates). For nurses, the number of men and women are almost equal. Even those still single when working in the Netherlands, eventually found their partners there, or they married with co-workers. When contracts expire, some couples decide to find a new job. The momentum of *family formation or family reunion* and the

decision of these migrants to stay permanently become more obvious.

Many Indonesian graduates have work in the Netherlands. Students or scholars graduated from Dutch education institutions often get priority for work in Dutch national and international private companies. The decision to work after finishing school in the Netherlands has been under consideration since the beginning of their study. Job opportunities accessible by most Indonesian students in the Netherlands may not be obtained in Indonesia. Concerns about the difficulty of finding a job encourages young Indonesian children to choose to work abroad. Certification and international wage scales also inform the decision to work overseas.

The type of migration currently most popular in Holland is highly-skilled and educated workers. The drives for educated or brilliant Indonesian youths to find jobs are currently higher. Many youth Indonesian has getting jobs in Holland, such as nurses. In the other case, the economy and politic crisis also contributes in the strong willing to find jobs abroad. Working in Europe is a form of achievement

because it is difficult to get. Moreover, after the formation of the European Union and the joining of some ex-Soviet Union countries, it is more difficult to access work in Europe, including in Holland.<sup>21</sup>



**Picture: 3.2** Nurse in Holland

Source: Field Research Photograph

The attraction for many students/scholars to work in Holland is the policy for resident permit (permanent stay) for foreigner; given after living for 5 years in Holland. Not

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<sup>21</sup> Consider the migration trend after the EU based on the origin country, the countries sending workers include ex Soviet Union or CEECs (Central and Eastern European Countries) such as Andorra, Armenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia and Poland. In 1999 the Netherlands received around 130,600 immigrants from CEECs. The policy on EU immigration for the ex Soviet Union countries is rather different with immigration treaty in the previous years. Non skilled workers and skilled and professional workers face different policy. Professional workers are expected to fulfill the demands of the World Trade Organization's General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS).

only that, but there is a policy for dual citizenship. For example, people with Turk and Moroccan citizenships are allowed to be citizens of the Netherlands and of Turkey or Morocco (SOPEMI 1996; p.133).

For the government receiving many students/scholars and later recruiting them as workers, it is a benefit, including employing Indonesian students who obtained scholarships through the STUNED program. The supply of qualified and fresh-graduate labor is a benefit, including for the Netherlands. The opportunity to be the main beneficiary of migration flows of students/scholars or *brain circulation* is wide open. Thus, the knowledge transfer of youth from foreign countries, including Indonesia, is utilized first by the Dutch. Meanwhile, the sender country experiences delay in current knowledge transfer from Europe because the students and scholars choose to live in the country where they have received the knowledge. The sender country is considered to lose potential human resources. The sender country experiences a process which is called *brain drain*. Science transfer can happen as long as the communication to the home country lasts. The

expected benefit will be the money from the wages sent to their families in the homeland or remittance.

Remittance<sup>22</sup>, according to the IMF's definition, can be categorized into 3: (i) worker's remittance or transfer in cash or in other similar forms from the foreign worker to the family in the homeland (ii) compensation of work or income, salary or remuneration in cash or in such forms paid to an individual working in a foreign country where their existence is legal, and (iii) money transfer of a foreigner which refers to the capital transfer from monetary assets gained by the person as his transfer from one country to another and staying for more than one year (Addy, Wijkstrom, and Thouez, 2003). The form of remittance can be varied, such as income transfer to the home country (in the form of money or goods) or knowledge transfer (ideas, style or behavior). Some remittance sent by migrants is an income source which can meet the family's standard of living needs and drive the

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<sup>22</sup> Remittance is part of international foreign worker income sent to the worker's original country. According to the World Bank, 'remittance is said to be as 'transfer remittance' and it can apply for both international and domestic use (World Bank, 2006).

process of economic development in the origin region (Mulyadi, 2003; Syahriani, 2007).

#### **D. Organizations for Indonesian Workers in the Netherlands**

The social organization of Indonesian workers plays an important role to assist those interested in working in the Netherlands. A group of skilled workers in Holland created an organization of PALAPA, an independent, non-profit organization of Indonesian professionals, with the aim to make a concrete and professional contribution to Indonesia.

PALAPA aims to make a positive contribution to Indonesia.<sup>23</sup> Organizational links operate to update labour information and support members to survive in the Netherlands. Then, the role of Indonesian Government, in this respect, the Indonesian Embassy, is to be active to seek

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<sup>23</sup> Vision, mission, and complete information about the PALAPA organization in Holland can be accessed at [www.palapanet.org](http://www.palapanet.org) and information about the Indonesian National Nurses Association (INNA) in Holland can also be found. The information was provided by a PALAPA organization management member in Holland on 21 May 2010.

opportunities in bilateral cooperation. It is not only limited to IT; it can be in almost any field, in particular the health sector which requires skilled workers; and, Indonesia has skilled workers. Skilled workers will always be sought, especially those who have broad experience, ability in speaking foreign languages well and wide networks. In this current global crisis, developed countries and international companies try to push budgets by seeking cheaper skilled workers. Companies from developing countries try to compete in getting projects from developed countries. It means that quality workers and networks are very much needed now.

In Holland the Indonesian National Nurses Association (INNA)<sup>24</sup> campaigns on labor market issues for health workers. In recent decades, the increased demand for nurses in the Netherlands, led the Dutch Government to recruit nurses from outside the European Union. This

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<sup>24</sup> Being an organization that can unite all nurses working in Dutch Indonesia, protect, nurture and develop the members of Indonesian nurses in the Netherlands in an effort to improve the scientific, professional nursing care, increased welfare, legal protection and efforts to further involvement with the organization nurse Indonesia and also International, see <http://inna-netherlands.org//content/blogcategory/29/40/lang.id/>

opportunity was exploited by some nursing organizations to try to enter the nurse labor market in the Netherlands.<sup>25</sup> The organization helps nurses by providing information including on employment opportunities in the Netherlands. Related with the issue, nurse's organization established Smiling Faces Program to help nurses to find job in the Netherlands. The organization open selection procedures are also for admission of nurses to the Netherlands (see picture 3.2). Organizational links between local institutions and immigrant institutions at the national scale in the Netherlands.



**Picture: 3.3** Smiling Faces Program Campaign by Indonesian National Nurses Association

<sup>25</sup> Interview with Safiuh Kamil on 18 May 2010 in Amsterdam

## **E. Concluding Remarks**

Migration is not a new phenomenon in the study of the history of the development of the world and Europe's population. Migration in this globalization era is increasing. In 2007, it was recorded that 190 million people or about 3 percent of the world's total population lived in a country where they were not born. In general, people come to foreign countries, especially to developed countries, to seek jobs and get a higher salary when compared to working in their own countries. Labor migration needs to be integrated into the country's program for economic modernization and global competitiveness.

The opportunities to work are very broad; but the important thing is that the requirements for resident permit are met. If observed further, contributing factors for Indonesians to enter the skilled labor market in the Netherlands include:

1. Having an undergraduate degree from a Dutch institute or from a world leading university.

2. Working experience or certification of special expertise on a national or international scale is one of things considered by Dutch companies in employing new staff. For example, to be a Field Engineer, the requirements are Bachelor diploma and more than 3 years of work experience. While for engineers, the education level is at HBO or WO level (equal to bachelor degree) and experience is not necessary.
3. Having ability in speaking English or Dutch.
4. Working in a Dutch company which has an office representative in Indonesia and requesting a recommendation to be promoted to work in Holland.

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**CHAPTER IV**  
**THE COMPETITIVENESS OF INDONESIAN WORKERS**  
**IN THE NETHERLANDS**

*Nur Aisyah Kotarumalos*

**A. Introduction**

This chapter will discuss how the competitiveness of Indonesian workers and its prospect to work in the Netherlands. The current economic globalization has opened a window of opportunity for people to move from developing countries to the developed countries and vice versa. Especially, the international mobility of skilled migrants who come from the developing countries is increasing. Among the developing countries in 2000, the Philippines has a greatest number of skilled workers who are going abroad, that is 1,236,260 people and followed by India (1,037,626) and Mexico (922,964) and China (816,824) (cited from Kuznetsov & Sabel, 2006: 3).

On the other side, for a few decades, special immigration programs have been created in some attractive

immigration destinations such as Canada and Australia in order to attract the best and brightest worldwide, based on an immigrant's ability to contribute to the host country's knowledge-based economy (Shachar, 2006: 152). Other countries now have introduced fast track admission process to recruit high skilled professionals such as the Netherlands, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Sweden, Ireland and other European countries. This new policy is intended to allow those who are high-skilled to immerse themselves quickly in the host country's workforce. In addition, they are also offered to get permanent residence and secure membership status (and thereby entering the EU free-movement zone).

The number of high skilled migrants through post-secondary educational attainment and cutting edge technological skills has increased dramatically. As Shachar (2006, 152) notes that '[t]alent is different from other sources of competitive advantage. Talent is encapsulated in individuals . . . . As such, it cannot be codified, duplicated, sold, or easily transferred from one person to another. In other words, it is the human in "human capital" that makes it a unique, distinct, and irreplaceable resource. Add to this

the fact that highly skilled workers generate substantial economic value and wealth and it is not surprising that we are now witnessing a growing competition among industrialized nations to attract highly skilled migrants'.

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) report shows that these special immigration policies signify the increase of highly skilled migrants. Countries like Australia, Canada, Ireland, and the United Kingdom which applied the selective admission procedures have a highest proportion of well-educated people among immigrants (30%–42%). Meanwhile, the percentage of foreign students in the United States which has become the 'IQ magnet' for immigrants is being challenged. For example from 2001 and 2003 the proportion of foreign students declined sharply in the United States, dropping by 26% while in the inflow of foreign students increased by more than 36% in the United Kingdom, 30% in France and 13% in Australia (cited in Shachar, 2006: 152). This shows that America's competitors are more successful in attracting the highly skilled migrants. As Schahar (2006) argues that many leading destination countries are increasingly hunting the best and

brightest worldwide by offering admission and settlement otherwise they will lose out in the global race for talent. Under such conditions, national immigration policymakers have to compete with other countries by adopting their competitor programs and designing their own selective migration initiatives to attract the world class talent.

Nowadays, more and more firms in the so-called New Economy complain about their shortage of adequately skilled workers that led many developed countries to admit more skilled migrant workers and set up new initiatives. These new initiatives change an outstanding immigration policy from 'zero-immigration' policy since the first oil-price crises in the early 1970s to welcome immigration particularly in the European countries (Bauer and Kunze, 2004: 6). These new initiatives focus on the information technology and health industries that made possible for the non-EU citizens come and work in the European Union. By these initiatives, existing restriction for employers to hire high-skilled workers is reduced although the employers still have to show that there is no appropriate native candidate can be found. Moreover, the employers still have to pay foreign workers at least the same as the native workers. In

UK, the government has reduced the skills requirements for highly educated workers such as the length of experience that being required is shortened so that the employer can gain access to a wider range of work permits. Furthermore, work permits now, can be applied electronically to reduce the transaction costs. The foreign workers also will not be required anymore to apply for a new permit if they want to change employers as long as still in the same field.

This is also happening in the Netherlands facing a shortage of skilled workers. Every year, the foreign labour who work in the Netherlands is increasing (see table 4.1).

**Table 4.1** The number of skilled workers in the Netherlands (Top ten countries) in 2005 dan 2006

Current Nationality	2005				2006				Total 2005- 2006
	M	F	Total	%	M	F	Total	%	
Indian	250	30	280	17.4	834	100	934	26.0	1214
American	194	92	286	17.7	364	164	528	14.7	814
Japanese	80	8	88	5.5	172	17	189	5.3	277
Turkish	58	21	79	4.9	105	55	160	4.5	239

Chinese	37	32	69	4.3	91	51	142	4.0	211
Australian	60	16	76	4.7	93	38	131	3.6	207
Canadian	32	20	52	3.2	80	31	111	3.1	163
Polish	41	13	54	3.3	61	50	111	3.1	165
Russian	30	20	50	3.1	72	37	109	3.0	159
South African	24	13	37	2.3	73	25	98	2.7	135
Other	117	436	1613	100	267	917	359	100	5205
	7				5		2		

Source: *European Migration Network, 2007, 33*

The table 4.1 shows that the number of Indian skilled workers is the greatest among other countries in the Netherlands followed by the American and Japanese. Generally, those foreign labour are working in the information and technology sector as shown in the table 4.2

**Table 4.2** Skilled Migrants Based on Labour Sector in 2005 and 2006

Labour market sector	2005				2006				Total 2005- 2006
	M	F	Total	%	M	F	Total	%	
IT and other business	372	95	467	28.9	1161	280	1441	40.1	1908

services									
Industry	210	74	284	17.6	246	67	313	8.7	597
Academic education	126	60	186	11.5	264	125	389	10.8	575
Financial services	83	53	136	8.4	235	161	396	11.0	532
Minerals	72	21	93	5.8	246	81	327	9.1	420
Trade	71	20	91	5.6	134	47	181	5.0	272
Tourism and other services	11	10	21	1.3	74	30	104	3.0	125
Transport and telecom	34	6	40	2.8	66	18	84	2.3	124
Education	21	16	37	2.3	32	31	63	1.8	100
Health service and welfare	17	9	26	1.6	35	18	53	1.5	79
Building industry	12	2	14	0.9	15	1	16	0.5	30
Public benefit	6	6	12	0.7	9	6	15	0.4	27
Agriculture and fishery	3	2	5	0.3	12	3	15	0.4	20
Catering industry	2	-	2	0.1	9	-	9	0.3	11
Public administr	13	61	195	12	135	46	181	5.0	376

ation									
Total	117 7	436	1613	100	2675	917	3592	100	5205

Source: IND, 2007 dikutip dari *European Migration Network* 2007, p. 31

## **B. The Competitiveness of Indonesian Skilled Workers**

Based on the field research, many of the Indonesian skilled workers are actually entry into the migration system through universities. Skilled migrants are recruited through various channels (Vertovec, 2002, p. 5-6). Schools and universities are the primary channel of skilled migrants is being recruited especially after they completed degrees abroad. Many studies show that the more students studying abroad the more likely they will be skilled migrants at a later stage. They also may become the channels for colleagues and friends at home to get jobs. Meyer (2001 cited in Vertovec, 2002, p. 5) observes that researchers are more likely to migrate with their own network of colleagues and project collaborators while engineers and information technologists move abroad through institutional 'migration channels' such as recruitment and relocation agencies. Global professional organizations have taken greater role in providing access of migration channels and jobs abroad.

Particularly for Indonesia, the increasing wealth had made some people to have the opportunity to continue their studies abroad by using their own money. Some informants said that studying abroad particularly in the Netherlands is relatively cheap compared to studying in the private universities in Indonesia or in other western countries such as United States or Australia as the Dutch government are still subsidizing its universities. In addition, the Indonesian students have the opportunity to have part time jobs in order to earn some additional money for their living cost. This advantage condition will not be found if they study in Indonesia. Another way to study in the Netherlands is by scholarship funded by the Dutch government which this channel contributes to the enter of migration skilled workers in the Netherlands. Based on NESO report the number of Indonesian student who are studying in the Netherlands in the academic year 2007/2008 is 1.450 people and thus, Indonesian students constitute of the fifth greatest of foreign students in the Netherlands: the first is Germany (16,750 students), the second is China (4.750 students), Belgia (2.450 students, and France is the fourth (1.650) (Kompas online: 31-01-

09). The increase of foreign students in the Netherlands is due to the campaign of go international among the universities in Holland. The data from NESO shows the increase of foreign students by 12 percent or 53.550 people within the last three years.

The Dutch government realized that the success of the development in its country should be supported by the best human resources in its fields. Therefore, the Dutch government gives opportunity for the foreign students either self-funded or funded by the Dutch government to work in the Netherlands as 'knowledge migrants' after their completion of studies if they are offered an employment contract at the required income. The knowledge migrants will also be granted a residence permit for a maximum five years. Under the 'knowledge migrants'<sup>26</sup> scheme, foreign students with an MVV (Authorization for temporary stay) obligation do not have to return to their home country to

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<sup>26</sup> The knowledge migrant is defined by the Dutch governments on salary basis. For migrants under age 30, the salary criterion was €34,130 in 2007 and for migrants aged 30 and over, the salary criterion was €46, 541 in 2007. The definition of the knowledge migrant is not the similar to the definition that this book established. The salary criterion is revised annually using the most recent index figure for CAO (Collective Labour Agreement) salaries that published by Statistics Netherlands (EMN, 2007, p. 15).

apply for an MVV. However, this is not applicable for foreign students who only take vocational or training programs and after one year working in Holland, the migrant workers can stay in the Netherlands with a working visa. This opportunity especially for Indonesia students is a great change to work in the Netherlands, to enjoy the big amount of salary compared in Indonesia.

The Netherlands even its territory is small, however its location is very strategic in the European continent. In addition, the Netherlands has a very good law system and many treaties with other countries that make it easy for the multinational companies to run effectively and efficiently particularly in paying dividend or royalty to the mother country. Some informants say that: 'The Netherlands just likes a Singapore where it becomes a financial and legal centre' (interview with Ha and He). Thus, many multinational companies has their headquarters in the Netherlands. The more multinational companies in the Netherlands, the more human resources that they need them. A survey that has been conducted within four neighboring European countries: UK, France, West Germany and the Netherlands showed that most companies

employing foreign workers are more internationally orientation like having a higher export share and more likely to be foreign owned (Bauer & Kunze 2004). They usually value more the knowledge of foreign language and experience abroad such as knowledge of foreign markets. The findings shows that the motive companies recruit foreign high skilled workers is due to they have some knowledge that is not available nationally, i.e the foreign workers are complements to the natives.

The informants that we interviewed generally are working in the multinationals companies. For them, working in the multinational companies in the Netherlands is a great experience as they work with various nationalities such as the Dutch, American, Japanese, Chinese and other European countries. Thus, the English ability is required for them in order to work in the Netherlands while, the Dutch competency is not a major requirement to work in the Netherlands just as one informant describes:

*In my office where I work, the formal conversation is English including in writing report or presentation. All of them are in English. An international company commonly uses English as formal language and besides that our clients, subcontractor or internal labour are*

*also from overseas. Thus, Dutch language is only used for non-formal conversation. Well, it is much better when the foreign employee (buitenlander) are competent in Dutch language. The Dutch people will feel close to us when we speak Dutch to them. But, that is not a must, it is just a choice (interview with G).*

Besides, they must be able to show their competency in their fields. Whether someone is competent or not, the company will interview the candidates before they get the job as described by this informant:

*When you were interviewed in the Netherland, they will ask you what we have studied in the colleagues. It is really different compared in Indonesia as they will ask your grade. In my office, there are other four Indonesians and I am the oldest. All of them are working through studying in the Netherland first. Here, the most important thing is your attitude: discipline, hard worker and flexible. I think, being a hard worker is quite missing among the Dutch workers especially those in the financial sector. That's why the Netherlands needs lots of Asia people to work in the financial sector as the Dutch people do not like to work in the finance (interview with Ha).*

One of the best studying in the Netherlands is they have a great system that enabled all of the students in the third year to get an opportunity to have a job training in the multinational or Dutch companies. Thus, students will be able to exercise what they have learnt in the universities and the cases that they found in the reality. This system enable the students to understand more in the theoretical thinking as well as the practical things as they will be more able to cope with the problems as described by this informant:

*In the schools, we studied many theories. So once we work, we do not know what to do. Mostly, what we studied in the universities is different from what we do in the office. Thus, the Netherlands has a rule that all of its students must do internship in the third year. There, we have the opportunity to study on how to work in the companies, thus we will not be awkward once we work (interview with He).*

Some informants said that they have got job right now is through internship. Therefore, they said that internship is really useful not only to exercise what they have studied but also as a channel to get jobs in the Netherlands.

## 1. The competitiveness of Indonesian Nurses in the Netherlands

The major shortage of health workers has been an issue in the Netherlands since the end of the 1990s particularly with regard to nursing and caretaking personnel (see below table; it is the largest professional group in the health sector).

**Table 4.3** Persons Employed in the Health Sector per Professional Group

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Medical Professions	35,788	36,864	38,064	38,615	38,837
Paramedical Professions	36,912	38,128	38,862	39,334	39,746
Nursing and Caretaking Professions	387,824	399,498	414,179	423,428	426,695
Assisting Professions	41,418	44,315	46,701	48,915	51,662
<b>Total</b>	<b>501,942</b>	<b>518,805</b>	<b>537,806</b>	<b>550,292</b>	<b>556,940</b>

<sup>1</sup> Estimate based on trend.

Source: [www.azwinfo.nl](http://www.azwinfo.nl) cited from European Migration Network, 2006: 11

In order to solve the problems, the health care institutions/private recruitment agencies in the Netherlands took initiatives to recruit personnel abroad while the government did not involve in this (European Migration Network: 2006). However, this program provoked a lot of political and social discussion particularly in relation to the recruitment outside the European Economic Area (EEA) especially in 2001 and 2001 where there was political discussion in Parliament. Many of debates were against the Dutch restrictive migration policy which also applies to the labour migration as well. The healthcare institutions demanded to reconsider the restrictive migration policy as the Netherlands was experience an acute of personnel shortages in the health sector due to the ageing of population (the increase proportion of aged people) and the dejuvenation of the population (a decrease in the percentage of young people between 0 and 5 years) and the workforce is shrinking. Moreover, the nursing and auxiliary professions are not competitive compared to other professions due to the physical demands of the job and the high work pressure

and also lack of promotion (European Migration Network: 2006). One of the Indonesian nurses says:

*The Dutch people are actually lazy, not tough and the youngsters are not interested to work as nurses (interview with Z).*

Thus, there are not enough students to meet with the demands.

Many critics against the recruitment abroad as firstly, the political parties and social organizations see that there is a considerable supply of unutilized labour in the Netherlands (many people are still economically inactive) and secondly, the experience of having foreign medical personnel with a different mother tongue is not always good as many of them do not have a proper English. Lastly, the 'brain drain' issue was also highlighted in the debates.

The policy, that finally recruit foreign labour was best demonstrated in the agreement that was entered into between employers, employees and Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport in 2000, the *Convenant Arbeidsmarktbeleid Zorgsector (CAZ)* (Convenant on the Labour Market Policy for the Care Sector that took effective

from 1 July 2000 to 1 July 2004 (European Migration Network: 2006). However, the Ministerie van Sociale Zaken en Werkgelegenheid (SZW) (Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment) and the unions did not absolutely agree with the decision as they preferred to recruit Dutch jobseekers for the sector. It can be concluded that the support to recruit foreign workers is very limited especially due to the resistance from the political parties and social organizations. Only after 2002 when the scarcity was resolved, the debate was rapidly disappeared from the agenda.

Even though when there was an acute of medical personnel shortage, recruiting foreign workers only happened on a limited scale and using a commercial mediation agency that make a pre-selection. After that the health care institution finally selected the personnel in the country of origin that usually consisted of small groups 5-15 persons where come from Suriname, South Africa, the Philippines, Poland and Indonesia. The selected candidates would join a language course in their own country and after that they would travel to the Netherlands. There was a great recruitment in the end of 2001, namely a project

*Branchebelang Thuiszorg Nederland* (BTN) (interest Group for the Dutch Home Care Sector) which recruited 10,000 caretaking personnel from Slovakia to work in the home care sector. However, this project was critically criticized by the parliament and the government due to not fit with the Dutch policy in respect of labor migration and thus, this project died (Staatssecretaris Volksgezondheid, Welzijn en Sport: 2002 cited in European Migration Network: 2006). Meanwhile, there were two other projects that were supported by the central government:

1. The International Healthcare Training Program (IHTP), that was initiated by the Dutch and Indonesian Ministries of Health to bring the Indonesian nurses to come to the Netherlands with the objectives to get education and gain experience in the Dutch health sector, which they could transfer the knowledge once they go back to Indonesia (minister van Buitenlandse Zaken en Minister voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking: 2000).
2. A pilot project was initiated by five institutions for intramural care for the elder people in 2000 where Polish nurses were recruited. The Minister of Health,

Welfare and Sport thought that this was a good temporary solution in order to solve the acute shortage in the health sector. The Poland country was chosen as a result of the surplus of nursing personnel and the possibility of the Poland to be a member of European Union. Together the Polish Minister of Health and the Dutch Minister of Health, Welfare and Sport signed a letter of intent to bring the Polish nurses to the Netherlands. In reality, however this did not decrease the scarcity in the health sector due to still lots of resistance. As a result, the large recruitment of Polish nurses never got off the ground.

In those projects, actually the Dutch government focused on pre conditions only and did not actively involve in the recruitment process. Generally, it can be seen that the Dutch government did not really support the recruitment of nursing and caretaking personnel abroad as it is considered as less highly qualified personnel. On the other hand, the Dutch government is more supporting to formulate a fast and flexible admission for the highly skilled migrant at the end of 2004.

The Indonesian nurses that we interviewed come to the Netherlands through the IHTP program. In the beginning, they coming to the Netherlands was intended for an internship for 27 months. They must go back to Indonesia in order to transfer back the knowledge and experience that they have got in Holland. Those nurses were chosen and selected through some tests as told by this informant:

*At that time, I read in a newspaper that there was a vacancy for nurses to be placed abroad. I was already working as a nurse and the requirement that they asked for was having two years experience working as nurse. There were various tests that I had to pass: natural science test, physics, English, psychology test and health test. The candidates who pass those tests must have to join Dutch language course and at the end of the course, we were tested again. Finally, all candidates who pass the Dutch language test were able to come to the Netherlands (interview with Z).*

It can be seen that those Indonesian nurses have their competency to work in the Netherlands, however the Dutch standard competency in nursing area is different from Indonesia as described by this informant:

*Since the recruitment process, we were demanded to have both English and Dutch ability. Based on profession competency, I believe that Indonesian nurses were also competent compared with other nationality nurses in the Netherlands. Generally, Indonesian nurses must be able to intravenous feed and inject however in the Netherlands, the competency standard is different. Here, we can not intravenous feed if we have not pass the exam and this will be evaluated annually. For example if I have not intravenous fed for the last six months that I have a right to refuse to intravenous feed. The company where I work, is obliged to train me in intravenous feeding (interview with Z).*

The nursing and caretaking profession in the Netherlands has a detailed competency standard compared to its in Indonesia where nurses do all jobs from the lower level such as changing bed cover, showering the patients, injection or intravenous feeding. Based on the rule, all foreign nurses must have university grade, however particularly nurses from Indonesia are able to work in the Netherlands even though only college grade. This is due to the fact that Indonesian nurses have a good track in the Netherland where they had been transported by the Dutch colonial to work in the Netherlands. For sure, it is really a benefit for Indonesia.

## 2. The Prospect of Indonesian workers

Based on the field research, we found that there are two ways to be able to work in the Netherlands. First, the potential labour migrants are studying in the Dutch universities and after they complete their studies, they can apply for a job in the Netherlands. Through this channel, the opportunity to get jobs in the Netherlands is really big. Generally, our informants are working in the Netherlands through this channel particularly for those who are self-funded to continue their studies in the Netherlands. However, for those who get scholarship from the Dutch government are more likely to go home to Indonesia as many of them have official duty to their institution in Indonesia.

Second, the candidates of skilled migrant workers apply jobs from Indonesia either through emails or agency recruitment. Once, they have passed the selection then they will go to the Netherlands. This channel is known as 'expatriate' or '*kennismigran*' which the foreign workers will be paid with the standard of amount salary. Based on

the field research, we found that this channel is quite competitive as described by this informant:

*In fact, Indonesian people who graduated from Indonesian schools will be more difficult to get jobs in Holland as they will be considered as expatriates. As expatriates, they will get 80 percent more salary than the Dutch people get. For example the average salary here is around 26, 000 euro and for the expatriates they will earn around 40,000 euro annually under thirty years old. Imagine, that is nearly 80 percent higher than the Dutch people get. For Dutch companies which want to recruit foreigners have to show that they have been looking for the candidates in Holland for months and do not find the right candidate to fill the position and after that they can outsource (interview with Halim).*

It is no wonder as the Dutch government as well as the European Union prioritizes their citizens first and after that they can recruit foreign workers. Although it seems difficult, the Dutch government has relaxed their regulation to recruit foreign workers into more fast track admission process for the companies to hire foreign workers. Thus, this is a great opportunity for Indonesian people to work in the Netherlands as said by this informant:

*If we have great skills and these skills are very demanded in the companies, it will be easier for us to get jobs in the Netherlands (interview with BT).*

Many of the informants, Indonesia migrants have a great potential to work in the Netherlands as told by these informants:

*Talking about quality, Indonesian workers are competitive as well compared to other foreign workers. The sad thing is that Indonesians often feel insecure with themselves. So when they are right, they are afraid to talk or express their opinion. Whereas here, we are educated to express our ideas so our boss will know that we understand the issue and know how to solve it (interview with Ha).*

Indonesian nurses have great opportunities to work here in Holland. Actually, Dutch country is lacking of nurses as the East European countries now limits their nurses to work here in Holland due to they are lacking nurses itself in their countries. In addition, Dutch people itself are not interested to be nurses and most of all they are lazy and not really tough (interview with Zainal).

*When we talk about job competition in the Netherlands, it means that we have to think the Europe as well, because there are many foreign workers eager to work in the Netherlands. Indonesians are actually smart and more educated as they continue their studies until Doctorate. They are also serious and love to work hard. However when we talk about skills, most of European are better than us. In terms of communication,*

*deciding policies, rationality, and estimation and planning, Europeans are better than us. They are more capable in the macro level rather than the micro or details. Moreover, when they are in the universities they did lots of study cases, internship, learn to negotiate with stakeholders and etc. This kind of things that we never learn in our university. We are too much focusing on the theoretical staff rather than practices and study cases. I think this kind of learning should be adopted in Indonesia. That's make why the European workers are better than other foreign workers (interview with Gi).*

### **3. Revitalization of Indonesian Workers' Role**

Currently, the number of skilled Indonesian workers increases, unfortunately the Indonesian government both the Indonesian embassy in the Netherlands and the Indonesia Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration do not have the exact number of Indonesian skilled migrants who work in the Netherlands. This is due to the fact that the Indonesian skilled workers get jobs in the Netherlands with their own effort without any intervention from Indonesian government. However, Indonesian embassy actually can play significant role to identify the presence of Indonesian migrants. The absence of Indonesian workers data shows

that the Indonesia government has not seen the great potential of Indonesian migrants to develop the country.

If we look at China today, a giant economy in the world shows that Chinese diaspora turn to be the main actor of the development in the homeland. 70 percent of the foreign investment in China comes from the Chinese who are living and staying outside their motherland such as Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, Filipina, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand and many western countries (Devane, 2006: 61). The investment of Chinese diaspora generally is various and more likely to be in the small scale with their investment around 2, 4 billion dollar in the 1997 in the various of manufacture sectors. The investment of Chinese diaspora is not intended to develop their high technology like the Indian diaspora as the Chinese diaspora are not scientists.

Meanwhile in India, their Indian scientists who have been migrated to the western countries such as United States developed their high technology industries especially in the software industries in India. India is the example of developing country where it succeeds in developing the

software industries while its infrastructure was very low, no law and regulation in the environment sector and also the absence of government policy in the high technology investment (Devane, 2006: 61).

The software industries in India were growing rapidly, about 40 percent annually in the 1990s. Their income nearly reached 10, 2 billion dollar in 2000 and 7,7 billion dollar came from the export (Kuznetsov & Sabel, 2006: 15). In the same period, the employment was growing from 56,000 to 360,000 where they absorbed around 75,000 Indian IT every year. The number of software companies increased significantly from 700 to more than 2,800 and even the big company such as Wipro and *Infosys* got bigger and more complicated projects. The role of India expatriates who work abroad are very vital as said by Alok Aggarwal, the founder and chief executive of *Evalueserve* and ex-vice president of IBM research company:

*Expatriates provided valuable links with foreign markets, helped Indian firms to absorb technical and managerial practices and establish contacts with foreign customers. For instance some Indians who had emigrated to work for US firms in the 1980s have helped*

*US buyers find suppliers in India. Field interviews with US customers that in a couple of cases, the initial impetus for outsourcing to India came from employees of Indian origin...Most, if not all, US subsidiaries in India are headed or staffed by employees of India origin (cited from Devane, 2006: 61-62).*

The Indian diaspora play an important role particularly in 2000 in developing the IT and business process outsource industries in the United States as follows (Pandey, Aggarwal, Devane & Kuznetsov, 2006: p. 85):

- The Indian diaspora established the International school of business (ISB) in order to meet the needs of Indian IT companies particularly in the area of project management and business expertise. Indian professors who live and teach in the western countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada take leave for teaching in the International School of Business.
- Many Indians who lived in Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States go back to their home country and work in the big companies such as General Electric, Intel, IBM or start to create their own business. Those returned Indians have set up

more than 200 IT and business process outsourcing companies.

- The growing of Indian IT industry in India led to many venture capital companies in the United States to have a back end in India as it will save more on R&D cost. Based on Evaluaserve, by March 2004 there are more than 150 start ups companies having some forms of back end in India and front end in the United States and by March 2006 the figure is doubled.
- Some companies owned by the Indian diaspora in the United States funded the companies in India which produced intellectual property and innovative products in wireless technology, semiconductor design and technology and new business models for R&D.

China and India is the two examples of the developing countries which enjoy the benefit of their fellow citizens who are living outside their country. The Indonesian workers who live in the Netherlands have also vision to develop and contribute more to Indonesia. Unfortunately,

this potency has not been supported by the Indonesia government.

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## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION: LESSON LEARNT FOR INDONESIA

Nur Aisyah Kotarumalos, Gusnelly and Amin Mudzakkir

Based on our research findings, we see that the opportunity to work in the Netherlands is really big, either through studying channel or working as expatriates (*kennismigran* or knowledge migrant) for workers from Indonesia. The Indonesians who are studying in the Netherlands and funded by scholarships from Dutch government such as STUNED (and other schemes of scholarships) will get a privilege to work in the Netherlands for one year after their completion of studies. If we compared with the other scholarships such as from Australian government, (Australian Development of Scholarship [ADS], Australian Leadership Award, [ALA], Endeavour and other schemes of scholarships), we will not find this privilege as the Australian government require the Indonesians students to go back to Indonesia after they finish their studies in Australia. For sure, this privilege can be a great channel for Indonesian students to enter the job market system in the Netherlands.

The number of Indonesian migrants who are working in the Netherlands are increasing every year. This is a happy thing that Indonesian people are slowly considered as smart, hardworkers and competitiveness as well with other foreign workers. Slowly but sure, the Indonesian migrant workers will dominate the highly skilled migrants market in the world just as the Indians and Chinese. To make into a reality, thus those Indonesian migrant workers who are still working abroad can be utilised as a channel for other Indonesian workers who want to work in overseas. Currently, there are already three Indonesian skilled migrants organizations such as Perhimpunan Profesional Indonesia di Belanda (PALAPA), Jaringan Kerja Indonesia (JKI) dan Perhimpunan Perawat Nasional Indonesia (PPNI) the Netherlands branch. These three organizations have similar objective that is to contribute to the Indonesian development. Unfortunately, the Indonesian government, particularly the Indonesian embassy has not used the network the Indonesian who are living and working in the Netherlands. Therefore, in the future the Indonesian government can set up a special bureau to manage the

Indonesian overseas in order to develop Indonesia as just done by the Chinese diaspora and Indians.

In addition, the Indonesian government can set up a cooperation with the Dutch government, particularly on the placement of Indonesian nurses in the Netherlands as just happened through International House Training Program (IHTP). As we see, the Netherlands is facing a shortage of nursing and caretaking personnel while Indonesia is having a great supply in the health sector and besides that, the Indonesian nurses are recognised as competitive, friendly and also polite. If the cooperation between government is not possible, there is still other way to be able to send the Indonesian nurses to the Netherlands. Particularly, the cooperation between the Dutch private and the Indonesian private are more possible. This role can be played by the Indonesian embassy in the Netherlands to look for chances and opportunities in sending the Indonesian nurses as this is another way to reduce unemployment skilled workers in Indonesia.

# **RINGKASAN EKSKLUSIF**

# PROSPEK DAN DAYA SAING TENAGA KERJA INDONESIA DI BELANDA

Tim Penulis

## **Pendahuluan**

Belanda mengalami kekurangan tenaga kerja yang terampil, terutama di sektor teknologi informasi, kesehatan, pendidikan dan sebagainya (McLaughlan & Salt 2002). Kondisi ini tidak hanya terjadi di Belanda saja, namun juga terjadi di negara-negara Eropa lainnya seperti Jerman, Inggris, Irlandia, Prancis, Inggris dan juga di negara-negara lain seperti Amerika Serikat, Kanada dan Australia (McLaughlan & Salt 2002, Bauer & Kunze 2003). Masing-masing negara berupaya untuk menarik para imigran profesional sebagai upaya untuk mengatasi kekurangan pasar tenaga kerja.

Bagi negara-negara yang tergabung dalam Uni Eropa, warganya memiliki kebebasan untuk berpindah-pindah dalam lingkup wilayah Eropa, namun masing-masing negara Eropa memiliki peraturan tersendiri dalam merekrut warga negara di luar keanggotaan Uni Eropa (Bauer dkk 2000 dikutip dari Chalamwong 489). Pada

umumnya, imigran dari negara-negara maju dan para manajer di level atas dari negara manapun dapat masuk ke Belanda dan ke negara-negara Eropa lainnya relatif lebih mudah dibandingkan dengan tenaga kerja yang tidak memiliki keterampilan. Studi yang dilakukan oleh Carrington dan Detragiache (1998 diambil dari Michael 2006, 1) membuktikan hal tersebut dengan cara menggunakan data dari negara-negara OECD dan menemukan individu yang memiliki tingkat pendidikan yang rendah umumnya memiliki akses yang terbatas untuk migrasi internasional dikarenakan hambatan institusional. Hal ini dikarenakan bahwa tenaga kerja terampil diharapkan menjadi *contributor net fiscal* sehingga migrasi mereka dianggap menguntungkan bagi penduduk setempat.

Negeri Belanda telah mengalami pertumbuhan tenaga kerja yang relatif stabil dikarenakan posisi geografis yang menguntungkan di benua Eropa dan aturan ketenagakerjaan yang fleksibel (Apap 2001). Akibatnya negeri Belanda tetap memiliki daya tarik bagi para investor dan tenaga kerja asing yang ingin bekerja. Baru-baru ini pemerintah Belanda mengakui atas kekurangan pasokan tenaga kerja di bidang teknologi informasi dan keahlian

telekomunikasi, permohonan ijin bekerja dapat dibuat bagi posisi teknologi informasi dan telekomunikasi tanpa harus memperlihatkan proses rekrutmen yang sangat detail. Hal ini tercantum dalam peraturan perundang-undangan yang baru yang mengatur tentang penduduk legal-*Vreemdelingenwet* (Undang-undang Orang Asing) tahun 2000 artikel 13 yang efektif berlaku pada tanggal 1 April 2001. Sayangnya, proses permohonan ijin bekerja seringkali berarti kandidat tidak dapat mengunjungi Belanda untuk menghadiri wawancara ketika permohonan tersebut sedang diproses (Apap, 2001: 14).

Salah satu yang menjadi daya tarik bagi pekerja asing yang bekerja di belanda adalah mereka berhak untuk menerima 35 persen bebas pajak penghasilan. Kedutaan besar Belanda haruslah mendapatkan persetujuan dulu untuk mengeluarkan ijin tinggal sementara dari pejabat imigrasi di Belanda. Oleh karena itu sangatlah penting bagi para pemohon untuk mengajukan ijin tinggal sementara tiga bulan sebelum tanggal yang direncanakan.

Setelah tiga tahun di Belanda dengan ijin bekerja maka biasanya seseorang bisa mendapatkan ijin tinggal

tetap secara otomatis. Kemudian, mereka juga bebas untuk mendapatkan pekerjaan apapun dan tidak lagi membutuhkan ijin bekerja yang disponsori oleh perusahaan. Otoritas yang berkompeten dalam hal ini adalah Pelayanan Imigrasi dan Naturalisasi dalam kementerian Keadilan.

Indonesia yang merupakan negara pemasok tenaga kerja tidak terampil ternyata juga mulai mengisi posisi-posisi tenaga kerja terampil di dunia internasional walaupun belum sebanyak dengan India, Filipina dan Cina. Oleh karena itu, buku ini mencoba menggali informasi dan mengkaji tentang tenaga kerja terampil Indonesia di Belanda dan menganalisis tentang daya saing tenaga kerja terampil Indonesia dalam skala internasional. Isu-isu yang dibahas dalam buku ini adalah bagaimana peranan negara Indonesia dalam bidang ketenagakerjaan khususnya dalam pengiriman dan perlindungan tenaga kerja Indonesia ke luar negeri, karakteristik tenaga kerja terampil Indonesia, jenis pekerjaan apa saja yang mereka masuki, motivasi bekerja dan motivasi migrasi ke Belanda dan daya saing tenaga kerja asing khususnya tenaga kerja dari Indonesia.

- **Penjelasan tentang Konsep Tenaga Kerja Terampil**

Penelitian tentang mobilitas tenaga kerja dalam ekonomi global lebih banyak berkonsentrasi pada ranah migrasi dimana para ahli melihat pada faktor penarik yang membuat para tenaga kerja ini meninggalkan kampung halamannya. Berbagai macam penelitian mengenai sumber daya manusia baik dalam disiplin sosiologi dan ekonomi telah mengakui mobilitas para tenaga kerja terampil sebagai 'international human capital' (Mahroum, 1999). Tenaga kerja sangat terampil secara umum didefinisikan berdasarkan pekerjaan seperti pengusaha, para pekerja IT dan insinyur, pekerja medis, mahasiswa dan akademisi, para pekerja di NGO dan wirausahawan (Ewers, 2007: 121).

Sementara itu, pemerintah Belanda mendefinisikan tenaga kerja sangat terampil sebagai lulusan program pascasarjana atau doktor dari universitas atau institusi pendidikan tinggi yang terkenal di Belanda yang terdaftar di Pusat Pendaftaran Program Studi Pendidikan Tinggi (CROHO) atau lulusan program pascasarjana atau doktor dari institusi di luar Belanda, namun memiliki peringkat sebagai 150 universitas top di dunia berdasarkan daftar

yang dibuat Times Higher Education pada tahun 2007 ataupun Academic Rangking World Universities 2007 yang dikeluarkan oleh Universitas Jiao Ton Shanghai 2007. Ijasah harus disetujui oleh Organisasi Belanda untuk kerja sama internasional dalam Bidang Pendidikan Tinggi (NUFFIC).

Beberapa tahun belakangan ini, negara-negara maju telah menerapkan kebijakan imigrasi yang memudahkan imigran yang terampil dibandingkan yang tidak terampil. Mobilitas tenaga kerja terampil semakin meningkat mengingat negara semakin mempermudah perizinan dan melonggarkan pembatasan akan masuknya tenaga kerja yang berkualitas. Wooldridge (2006) menunjukkan terjadinya perang global atas orang-orang yang berbakat:

*'Most developed countries are already struggling to find enough doctors and teachers, and are wondering how they will manage when the baby boomer generation retires. Developing countries, for their part, realize that they will not be able to plug into the global knowledge economy unless they give their people the freedom to move around. A powerful array of interest, from multinationals to city politicians, supports the idea of a global market for the best people. Countries cut themselves off*

*from it at their peril'* (Wooldridge 2006, 14 dikutip dari Ewers 2007, 122).

Isu 'brain drain' menjadi isu yang sangat populer ketika perdebatan mengenai migrasi orang-orang yang memiliki keahlian dikaitkan dengan pembangunan. Ada asumsi bahwa hilangnya sumber daya manusia yang potensial akan merugikan negeri asal. Pada awalnya perdebatan tersebut muncul pada tahun 1960-an ketika para ilmuwan dari Atlantik terutama Inggris, mencoba hidup baru dengan bermigrasi ke Amerika Serikat namun kini isu 'brain drain' juga diperluas ke negara-negara berkembang dan khususnya pada perekonomian negara Asia (Skeldon, 2009: 5).

Gaillard dan Gaillard (1998) dan kemudian Johnson dan Regets (1998) memperkenalkan konsep 'brain circulation' atau para akademisi lainnya menggambarkan sebagai perpindahan 'professional transients' (Appleyard, 1991 dikutip dari Mahroum 1999, 171). Bentuk mobilitas ini dianggap sebagai mobilitas yang positif yang menyediakan jaringan untuk transfer ilmu pengetahuan. Laporan OECD (1997) mengidentifikasi perpindahan para tenaga profesional dan membedakan dua *outcome* atas mobilitas tersebut: *brain*

*exchange* dan *brain waste*. *Brain exchange* mengimplikasikan dua arah aliran keahlian antara negara pengirim dan negara penerima. Namun, aliran itu hanya berat pada satu arah. Istilah tersebut menjadi *brain gain* dan *brain drain*. Sebaliknya, *brain waste* menggambarkan terbuangnya keahlian ketika migran terampil berpindah ke negara lain tanpa membutuhkan keahlian dan pengalaman yang telah diperoleh di pekerjaan sebelumnya (OECD 1997 dikutip dari Mahroum, 1999:171).

Berikut ini karakteristik migrasi tenaga kerja terampil berdasarkan definisi dan klasifikasi yang diambil dari International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) sebagai petunjuk (dikutip dari Mahroum 1999, 171-175). Untuk kategori terakhir yaitu pelajar/mahasiswa sebenarnya tidak ada dalam kelompok ISCO, namun kategori ini merupakan penyumbang dari kategori lainnya.

**Tabel 1.** Karakteristik Mobilitas Tenaga Kerja Terampil

<b>Kelompok</b>	<b>Faktor Pendorong dan Penarik</b>	<b>Tipe Kebijakan</b>
<b>Manajer dan Eksekutif</b>	Keuntungan dan renumerasi	Orientasi bisnis
<b>Insinyur dan Teknisi</b>	Faktor ekonomi (mekanisme penawaran dan	Peraturan imigrasi

	permintaan) Kondisi ekonomi nasional	Pajak Penghasilan
<b>Akademisi dan Ilmuwan</b>	Pengembangan yang bersifat bottom-up dalam dunia ilmu pengetahuan Kondisi pekerjaan Prestise institusional	Antar institusi dan kebijakan antar pemerintah
<b>Pengusaha</b>	Kebijakan pemerintah (visa, pajak, perlindungan dan lain-lain) Fasilitas keuangan Efisiensi birokrasi	Kebijakan pemerintah dan regional Peraturan imigrasi
<b>Pelajar/Mahasiswa</b>	Pengakuan atas kondisi global Pengalaman interkultural	Kebijakan antar pemerintah dan antar institusi Peraturan imigrasi

Sumber: *Mahroum*, 1999: 180

Negara penerima sering kali merupakan penerima manfaat utama dari arus migrasi para pelajar/mahasiswa

karena pada umumnya mereka tinggal menetap di sana. Namun, tidak selalu negara penerima menjadi pemanfaat utama dari perpindahan para pelajar/mahasiswa. Konsep 'brain circulation' yang merujuk pada perputaran perpindahan untuk studi dan kemudian mencari pekerjaan di sana dan kemudian kembali pulang ke negeri asal untuk mendapatkan kesempatan yang baik, meningkatkan transfer pengetahuan ke negara pengirim. Namun, ketika keluarnya para pelajar/mahasiswa secara menetap dan tidak digantikan oleh masuknya para pelajar/mahasiswa asing, hal ini menyebabkan terjadinya 'brain drain' karena negara pengirim dianggap kehilangan sumber daya manusia yang potensial. Kecuali, negara pengirim akan mendapatkan keuntungannya dari para emigran yang tetap memelihara kontak dan hubungan seperti para pelajar/mahasiswa dari Jepang, Korea, Cina Taipei dan Cina. Untuk negara-negara berkembang, justru para pelajar/mahasiswa yang di luar negeri akan memberikan keuntungan karena mereka akan mengirimkan *remittance* secara berkala.

## ▪ **Globalisasi: Prospek Bagi *Skilled Labour* Indonesia**

Relasi antara globalisasi dan buruh migran memunculkan beragam pertanyaan. Bagi sebagian kalangan, globalisasi dinilai sebagai sebuah ancaman terhadap eksistensi negara-bangsa; negara hanya akan dijadikan 'centeng' atau penjaga keamanan kepentingan kapitalisme, sementara kalangan buruh dan petani diabaikan sama sekali (Wibowo, 2010). Kalangan yang kritis terhadap globalisasi ini lebih lanjut menjelaskan bahwa 'negara centeng' memahami buruh sebagai aktor rasional yang bisa memilih di mana saja dia akan bekerja, di dalam negeri maupun di luar negeri. Yang ditekankan oleh negara adalah kapasitas buruh itu sendiri sebagai individu. Peran dan kewajiban negara, oleh karena itu, dikaburkan sedemikian rupa. Mobilitas buruh diserahkan kepada hukum penawaran dan permintaan, seperti barang dan jasa.

Bagi buruh terampil atau *skilled labour*, situasi global sekarang ini boleh jadi sangat menguntungkan. Mereka bisa meraih kesempatan untuk bekerja di mana saja, tidak terikat lagi oleh batas-batas teritorial negara-bangsa, yang

penting menjanjikan karir yang baik dengan upah yang tinggi. Sebuah studi yang disponsori Bank Dunia (2006) menyebut globalisasi sebagai pendorong sekaligus penarik terjadinya migrasi *skilled labour* dari negara-negara berkembang ke negara-negara maju. Dalam jangka panjang, migrasi *skilled labour* ini bisa menjadi solusi atas persoalan ekonomi dunia yang timpang. Sementara bisa mengembangkan karir di negara-negara maju, penghasilan yang mereka dapatkan sebagian akan dikirim sebagai *remittance*. *Remittance* inilah yang akan menggerakkan ekonomi lokal, selain mengurangi kemiskinan dan pengangguran di negara asal mereka.

Harus diakui, tidak sedikit buruh migran Indonesia yang tergolong *skilled labour* yang berhasil memanfaatkan kesempatan yang disediakan oleh arus globalisasi ini.<sup>27</sup> Bagi mereka, kesempatan bekerja di negara-negara maju jelas akan menambah kemampuan dan jaringan. Sebagai pekerja profesional, jika pergi mereka disebut *brain drain*, sementara jika pulang disebut sebagai *brain gain*. Dilihat dari negara tujuan, sebagian besar mereka bekerja di

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<sup>27</sup> Tidak ada jumlah yang pasti mengenai mereka. Sejauh ini data resmi tidak memilah buruh migrant berdasar kategori *skilled* dan *unskilled* secara statistik.

negara-negara Asia Timur, seperti Korea Selatan, Jepang, dan Hongkong. Sebagian yang lain, dengan jumlah lebih kecil, bekerja di Amerika Serikat, Eropa, dan Australia.

Di Belanda, penelusuran yang dilakukan oleh peneliti PSDR-LIPI pada tahun 2010 ini menunjukkan bahwa banyak tenaga kerja Indonesia berasal dari mahasiswa magang. Mereka dikirim oleh institusi pendidikan di Indonesia ke Belanda untuk waktu sekian lama, biasanya paling lama 24 bulan. Setelah waktu magang habis, banyak dari mereka yang memutuskan tetap bekerja di sana. Selain itu, ada juga pekerja yang memang khusus mencari kerja, baik melalui agen maupun berhubungan langsung dengan pihak pengguna jasa. Dari wawancara dengan narasumber terkuak pandangan mengenai globalisasi yang dimaknai secara positif. Dengan memanfaatkan kemajuan teknologi informasi, khususnya internet, mereka bisa mengakses bursa lowongan kerja di Belanda dan mengetahui persyaratan apa saja yang dibutuhkan sehingga mereka siap dengan kompetisi kerja yang semakin ketat. Yang menarik dari cerita narasumber adalah ketiadaan peran Pemerintah Indonesia dalam membantu proses penempatan dan perlindungan kerja. Mereka berhasil

mendapatkan pekerjaan karena usaha mereka sendiri. Di KBRI Den Haag sendiri, tidak ditemukan data mengenai jumlah buruh migran di Belanda.<sup>28</sup>

Dari sisi negara penerima, khususnya di negara-negara Eropa, keberadaan *skilled labour migrants* dari negara-negara berkembang ditanggapi beragam, tetapi paling tidak terdapat dua pandangan umum yang kontras dalam hal ini (Legrain, 2009). Pandangan pertama melihat mereka sebagai acaman. Di negara-negara Barat, pandangan pertama ini menguat pascatragedi WTC 2001. Migran dari negara-negara Muslim, biasanya mengacu pada negara-negara Arab, dicurigai sebagai teroris. Peristiwa peledakan bom di London dan di Madrid pada tahun 2005 seolah menjadi bukti dari pandangan pertama ini. Kaum ultranasionalis kanan mempolitisasi keadaan ini dengan mengajukan proposal kebijakan migrasi yang lebih restriktif. Dalam kondisi perekonomian global dan regional yang kurang baik, proposal kelompok ultranasionalis kanan mendapatkan sambutan cukup luas dari publik.

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<sup>28</sup> Penelitian lapangan tim peneliti PSDR-LIPI 2010 di Belanda.

Pandangan kedua melihat keberadaan kaum migran secara lebih positif (Legrain, 2009). Di Eropa, kekhawatiran terhadap *ageing society* adalah kenyataan sehingga kehadiran buruh migran adalah kebutuhan. Meskipun angka pengangguran di beberapa negara Eropa cenderung terus meningkat, ada banyak posisi pekerjaan tertentu yang secara tradisional diisi oleh pekerja migran. Pekerjaan perawat, misalnya, para pengguna jasa lebih memilih perawat dari Asia yang dikenal lebih peduli daripada perawat lokal. Dunia kerja di bidang *information technology* juga banyak diisi oleh para pekerja dari India dan Cina.

Akan tetapi, masih dalam kasus Eropa, regionalisme yang terlembagakan dalam Uni Eropa (UE) bisa juga dibaca sebagai blok ekonomi politik baru yang akan membatasi pengaruh globalisasi, jika globalisasi di sini dipahami sebagai terbukanya pintu masuk negara-negara nasional bagi arus mobilitas barang, modal, manusia dan ide. Dengan kebijakan tertentu dalam migrasi, pemerintah negara-negara UE tentu akan memprioritaskan para pencari kerja dari dalam lingkungan UE daripada dari luar. Oleh para pencari kerja dari bekas negara-negara komunis di Eropa Timur, kesempatan ini digunakan semaksimal

mungkin, apalagi setelah beberapa negara tersebut masuk resmi sebagai anggota UE. Keadaan ini merupakan tantangan bagi para pencari kerja dari negara-negara berkembang, termasuk dari Indonesia.

▪ **Kebijakan Pemerintah RI dalam Pengiriman Tenaga Kerja**

Terdapat kebijakan lain selain UU NO. 39/2004 yang mengatur pengiriman buruh migran. Kebijakan-kebijakan itu adalah:

1. Presidential Decision No. 29/1999 on the Coordinating Body for the Placement of Indonesian Migrant Workers Overseas;
2. Ministerial Decision No. KEP.137/MEN/2001 on the Organization and Work Practices in the Department of Manpower and Transmigration
3. Ministerial Decision No. KEP.104A/MEN/2002 on the Placement of Indonesian Migrant Workers Overseas;
4. Decision of the Director General of Development and Placement of Overseas Migrant Workers No.KEP.312A/O.P2TKLN/2002 on Technical

- Instructions for the Protection of Overseas Migrant Workers;
5. Ministerial Decision No.KEP.10/MEN/2004 on the Formation of the Team for the Evaluation of the Performance of Indonesian Migrant Labour Sending Companies;
  6. Ministerial Regulation No. Per-04/MEN/II/2005 on The Organization of Final Training Before Departure for Indonesian Migrant Workers Overseas;
  7. Ministerial Regulation No. Per-05/MEN/III/2005 on The Determination of Administrative Sanctions and the Means though which those Sanctions are Imposed in the Conduct of the Placement and Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers Overseas;
  8. Ministerial Decision No. Kepmen No. KEP.14/MEN/I/2005 on the Team for the Prevention of Non-Procedural Departures and Return Services for Indonesian Migrant Workers;

9. Ministerial Regulation No. Per-07/MEN/IV/2005  
on the Standard of Holding Centres for Intending  
Indonesian Migrant Workers

Secara resmi persoalan penempatan dan perlindungan buruh migran menjadi wewenang Badan Nasional Penempatan dan Perlindungan TKI (BNP2TKI). Lembaga yang dibentuk oleh amanat yang terkandung dalam UU NO.39/2004 tersebut berdiri pada tahun 2006. Akan tetapi, persoalan buruh migran tentu tidak hanya bisa ditangani oleh BNP2TKI. Secara administratif, persoalan ini melibatkan banyak institusi dalam pemerintahan. Menurut pengamatan *Migrant Care*, paling tidak ada delapan kementerian yang diberi wewenang mengurus persoalan buruh migran, yaitu Kementerian Tenaga Kerja, Kementerian Luar Negeri, Kementerian Perhubungan, Kementerian Pendidikan Nasional, Kementerian Kesehatan, Kementerian Sosial, dan Kementerian Dalam Negeri.

Secara konseptual, penyatuan antara penempatan dan perlindungan dalam satu wadah institusi mengandung problem. 'Penempatan' mengandung makna yang berkait dengan pertimbangan ekonomi, sementara 'perlindungan' merupakan kewajiban negara terhadap warga negara yang

bersifat mutlak. Menyatukan dua hal tersebut dalam satu wadah bernama BNP2TKI seperti menyatukan air dan minyak dalam satu wadah. Secara praktik, kehadiran BNP2TKI juga belum mampu mengatasi tumpang tindih kewenangan antar lembaga dalam pemerintahan, apalagi dengan adanya kebijakan otonomi daerah dan desentralisasi di mana pemerintah daerah ikut terlibat dalam pengaturan buruh migran di daerahnya masing-masing. Pemerintah daerah di Nusa Tenggara Barat (NTB) misalnya mempunyai kebijakan daerah terkait dengan buruh migran (Tirtosudarmo, 2010), tetapi bagaimana kaitan dengan kebijakan serupa di daerah lain masih menjadi pertanyaan besar.

Buruh migran adalah warga negara, tetapi hak mereka masih banyak yang terabaikan, bahkan jika dibandingkan dengan buruh domestik. Perlindungan terhadap buruh adalah bagian dari amanat UUD 1945 Pasal 28 1 Ayat (4) UUD 1945 yang menyebutkan bahwa “perlindungan, pemajuan, penegakan, dan pemenuhan hak asasi manusia adalah tanggung jawab negara terutama pemerintah”. Sementara itu, berdasarkan pasal 11 UU No.39/2004, buruh migran hanya bisa dikirim ke negara tujuan yang telah

mempunyai perjanjian tertulis dengan Pemerintah Indonesia. Akan tetapi, klausul ini terabaikan karena dalam kenyataannya hanya beberapa negara saja yang mempunyai perjanjian tersebut, yaitu Malaysia, Korea Selatan, dan Yordania.

- **Karakteristik Pekerja Terampil dari Indonesia di Belanda**

Orang Indonesia yang tinggal dan menetap di Belanda sudah bukan hal yang asing lagi saat ini. Data statistik Belanda menyebutkan bahwa terdapat sekitar 413.000 orang Indonesia tahun 1995, tahun 2000 menurun menjadi 404.000, tahun 2001 berjumlah 403.000 dan tahun 2003 berjumlah 401.000 orang.<sup>29</sup> Hal ini berarti bahwa tenaga kerja dari Indonesia telah memberikan kontribusi dalam perekonomian Belanda. Seperti telah disebutkan sebelumnya bahwa terdapat berbagai macam alasan orang

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<sup>29</sup> Dalam data statistik pemerintah Belanda, orang Indonesia dikategorikan kedalam kelompok penduduk migrant western karena adanya keterikatan sejarah. Tidak hanya Indonesia, tetapi Jepang juga dikategorikan dalam western dengan alasan ekonomi, bukan sejarah. Keterikatan sejarah kolonialisasi ini pula yang menjadi bahan pertimbangan bagi pemerintah Belanda untuk memasukan nama etnik Indonesia dalam kategori pembagian penduduk, lihat dalam data Statistik Belanda tahun 2004 hal 33 dan 214 atau lihat lebih rinci di <http://www.cbs.nl>

untuk mencari kerja ke luar negeri termasuk ke Belanda. Dari beberapa responden yang ditemui di Belanda, mereka yang bekerja sebagai pekerja terampil maka dari motivasi kerja dapat pula diketahui proses bagaimana mereka dapat bekerja di Belanda.

Diketahui bahwa peluang kerja yang sering kali ditawarkan oleh perusahaan-perusahaan di Belanda yaitu bidang keperawatan, IT dan Perkapalan (Teknik Mesin). Menurut salah seorang responden yang bekerja di bidang IT, yang bekerja di perusahaan *Strukton Engineering*, peluang tenaga kerja Indonesia terampil sangat besar, namun pada saat sekarang kondisi perekonomian sedang menurun sehingga tingkat persaingan sangat ketat. Namun kemungkinan untuk bisa bekerja juga besar jika beberapa perusahaan IT di Indonesia aktif menjalin kerja sama dengan perusahaan IT Belanda, seperti yang dilakukan perusahaan-perusahaan IT dari India. Promosi dan kerja sama antarperusahaan ini ditujukan untuk mendapatkan sertifikasi internasional dalam keahlian khusus dan *networking* yang luas. Oleh karena itu, maka untuk membantu warga negara Indonesia yang memiliki minat

untuk bekerja di Belanda maka kelompok pekerja terampil di Belanda mendirikan organisasi PALAPA.

Organisasi PALAPA di Belanda, pada intinya mencoba untuk mengumpulkan para profesional Indonesia di segala bidang yang bekerja disini untuk bisa ikut sumbangsih positif kepada negara Indonesia.<sup>30</sup> Kemudian peran pemerintah Indonesia dalam hal ini KBRI adalah berperan aktif mencari peluang kerja sama bilateral. Tidak hanya di bidang IT saja namun hampir di semua bidang terutama kesehatan banyak dibutuhkan tenaga-tenaga terampil, negara Indonesia memilikinya. Tenaga terampil akan terus dicari, apalagi yang mempunyai pengalaman yang banyak, kemampuan bahasa asing yang terampil dan networking yang luas. Pada saat krisis global saat ini negara-negara maju, perusahaan-perusahaan internasional berusaha untuk menekan budget dengan cara mencari tenaga kerja terampil yang lebih murah. Perusahaan-perusahaan dari

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<sup>30</sup> Visi, misi dan informasi lengkap tentang organisasi PALAPA di Belanda dapat diakses di [www.palapanet.org](http://www.palapanet.org) dan juga dapat dikethai informasi tentang organisasi tenaga kesehatan Indonesia PPNI yang bekerja di Belanda. Wawancara dengan salah seorang pengurus organisasi PALAPA di Belanda pada tanggal 21 Mei 2010

negara berkembang berusaha untuk bersaing untuk mendapatkan proyek dari perusahaan di negara-negara maju. Artinya kualitas tenaga kerja dan jaringan yang sangat dibutuhkan saat ini.

Proses perekrutan tenaga kerja asing juga tidak mudah karena harus melewati proses prioritas dahulu. Artinya, akan dicari orang Belanda dahulu kalau tidak ditemukan kemudian peluang diberikan kepada orang Eropa dan jika tidak memenuhi syarat tawarab kerja akan dibuka untuk tenaga kerja asing dari negara lainnya. Namun pada dekade belakangan ini, kebijakan pemerintah sudah mulai terbuka dan menerima tenaga kerja dari negara mana pun yang diwujudkan dalam bentuk *kennismigrant* atau *highly skilled migrant program*. Istilah '*kennismigrant*' atau *knowledge migrant* atau *expatriate* adalah mereka yang bekerja di Belanda melalui perekrutan program khusus yang dapat dilakukan di negara tempat orang itu berasal.<sup>31</sup> Program ini intinya adalah berupa kesepakatan bersama dari beberapa perusahaan untuk diberikan kemudahan dalam mencari tenaga kerja asing

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<sup>31</sup> Wawancara dengan M. Gibran bekerja di perusahaan *Marine Contractors B.V* tanggal wawancara yaitu 18 Mei 2010 di Leiden, Belanda.

dalam sektor tertentu dan batas minimum gaji tertentu. Artinya, jika tenaga asing bisa sesuai dengan kualifikasi pekerjaan dan batas minimum gaji yang telah ditetapkan dalam program ini maka akan mudah untuk bekerja dan tinggal di Belanda.<sup>32</sup>

Karakteristik dari beberapa responden yang sudah diwawancarai di Belanda memperlihatkan bahwa pada umumnya yang berani mengambil keputusan untuk bekerja ke luar negeri dan menetap lama adalah laki-laki dan masih muda (lihat tabel 2), mendapatkan kerja di luar negeri dengan kualifikasi pendidikan tinggi terutama lulusan Belanda. Persoalannya, orang Indonesia yang mampu mendapatkan akses masuk perguruan tinggi di Belanda atau universitas terkemuka di dunia masih kecil. Dengan demikian, hanya orang dari kelompok kelas menengah saja yang mampu masuk pasar kerja Eropa, terutama kelompok kerja *skilled labour*. Tantangan lain yang akan dihadapi ketika memasuki pasar kerja di Eropa adalah persaingan yang ketat dengan tenaga kerja dari Eropa sendiri yang memang menempati posisi utama dalam perekrutan.

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<sup>32</sup> Wawancara dengan Yusuf Setiono pada tanggal 20 Mei 2010 di Belanda

Meskipun demikian, bukan berarti tidak ada peluang untuk mendapatkannya. Dari internet akses dan peluang kerja akan diinformasikan dan dari sana biasanya pihak perusahaan Belanda sudah mencantumkan alamat perwakilan perusahaan yang dapat didatangi. Misalnya seperti yang sudah dijalankan oleh Rahmannanda Noor, staf ahli dalam sistem informasi yaitu bidang pengendalian sistem kerja melalui komputer pada salah satu perusahaan IT di Belanda. Dia memasuki pasar kerja Belanda dari informasi kerja pada salah satu situs lowongan kerja di internet. Test potensi akademik dan wawancara dilakukan di Indonesia dan yang bertindak sebagai wakil pihak perusahaan Belanda adalah Perusahaan Daya Dimensi Indonesia (DDI). Proses perekrutan sampai penempatan menghabiskan waktu selama 2 bulan dan semua biaya ditanggung oleh perusahaan.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Wawancara dengan Rahmananda Noor pada tanggal 21 Mei 2010 di Amsterdam, Belanda.

**Tabel 2.** Karakteristik Tenaga Kerja Terampil Asal Indonesia di Belanda

No	Bidang Pekerjaan	Jenis Kelamin	Pendidikan Awal	Usia	Motivasi	Status	Pekerjaan Orang Tu
1	Perawat	Perempuan	D3 Perawat	40 th	Mengumpulkan uang untuk sekolah lagi dan hidup mapan secara ekonomi	Kawin	PNS
2	Junior tax analyst (Finance)	Laki-laki	SMA	25 th	Mengumpulkan uang buat usaha di Indonesia	Blm kawin	Swasta
3	Programing IT	Laki-laki	Sarjana (S1) Indonesia	26 th	Mengumpulkan uang buat usaha di Indonesia dan mencari pengalaman kerja di LN	Blm kawin	Dosen
4	Konsultan IT di Perbankan	Laki-laki	Sarjana (S1) Belanda	37 th	Membantu keluarga keluarga di Indonesia	Blm kawin	PNS
5	Junior engineer (Teknik sipil bagian mekanika tanah dan geohidrologi)	Laki-laki	Sarjana (S1) Belanda	25 th	Buat mencari pengalaman kerja skala internasional	Blm kawin	PNS
6	Civil Engineer	Laki-laki	Sarjana (S1) Indonesia	24 th	Senang dengan sistem kerja di Belanda yang disiplin, kooperatif	Blm kawin	Dosen

					dan profesional		
7	Finance	Laki-laki	Hoge-school	26 th	Mengumpulkan uang buat modal usaha di tanah air	Blm kawin	Pe-dagang/wira-swasta

Sumber: data yang diolah

### 1. Motivasi Bekerja

Salah satu hal penting dan sering kali dibahas adalah tentang alasan orang untuk bekerja ke luar negeri, dalam kasus ini adalah alasan orang Indonesia bekerja di Belanda. Alasan atau motivasi merupakan kebutuhan atau keinginan yang hendak dicapai dari putusan yang diambil atau tujuan melakukan tindakan tersebut. Secara umum motivasi orang bekerja ke luar negeri terkait dengan motivasi ekonomi, yaitu mencari upah atau gaji yang besar dan pengalaman kerja di luar negeri. Namun tujuan untuk mendapatkan gaji besar tersebut untuk masing-masing orang pasti berbeda-beda. Terjadinya perbedaan dalam pemenuhan kebutuhan tersebut disebabkan karena pemikiran rasional dari seorang individu ketika memutuskan bermigrasi, bukan karena sebab-sebab diambilnya putusan migrasi. Antara sebab dan alasan pemikiran rasional tidaklah sama. Ini

merupakan dua hal yang nyaris mirip, tetapi berbeda dampaknya.

Ada beberapa tujuan atau rencana yang dilakukan terkait dengan uang gaji atau upah kerja yang diperoleh, antara lain:

1. Membantu perekonomian keluarga di Indonesia.
2. Mengumpulkan uang untuk modal membuka usaha setelah kembali ke tanah air, biasanya terjadi karena masa kontrak kerja di Belanda sudah berakhir.
3. Mengumpulkan uang untuk bisa melanjutkan sekolah di Belanda sehingga ketika kembali ke Indonesia. Peluang kerja akan diperoleh dengan mudah.
4. Mendapatkan uang banyak, menetap dan membeli rumah di Belanda.

Kalaupun ada perbedaan dalam tujuan memanfaatkan uang gaji tersebut, namun sebagian besar mereka yang bekerja di Belanda masih ingin untuk kembali ke tanah air dan bekerja di negaranya sendiri. Mereka yang berprofesi perawat memiliki sedikit minat untuk kembali bekerja di

tanah air karena khawatir tidak mendapatkan fasilitas yang sama baiknya dengan yang mereka dapatkan di Belanda. Kalaupun ada keinginan untuk pulang ke Indonesia, barangkali setelah sekolah lagi di Belanda atau sudah pensiun.

Keputusan untuk menetap lama bagi banyak orang Indonesia yang bekerja di Belanda ini biasanya terkait dengan persoalan akses untuk mendapatkan hak yang sama dengan warga negara Belanda. Untuk mendapatkan visa bekerja permanen maka harus memiliki izin tinggal, minimal 5 tahun. Ketika seorang pekerja asing memasuki dunia kerja di Belanda maka pada periode 1 tahun kerja akan mendapatkan *kontrak/probation* 1 tahun, kemudian berlanjut pada tahap *probation either* 1 tahun atau 2 tahun. Ketika melewati masa kerja 3 tahun, perusahaan harus menjadikan pegawai tersebut sebagai pegawai tetap. Dengan demikian, ketika terjadi pemberhentian kerja maka sudah berhak atas uang pesangon, kalau sudah permanen

maka minimal mendapatkan uang pesangon sebesar 3 bulan gaji.<sup>34</sup>

Klaus F Zimmermann dan Amilie Constant mengatakan bahwa keputusan individu atau kelompok untuk bermigrasi kemudian menetap sering kali dikategorikan sebagai sebuah hubungan yang positif dan keputusan migrasi seringkali dipengaruhi oleh perbedaan pada tingkat kesejahteraan, perbedaan dalam pendapatan atau upah, tingkat pengangguran yang ada di negara asal dan negara tujuan, dan biaya hidup dari negara tujuan. Bagaimanapun upah yang tinggi itu diharapkan dapat mengatasi persoalan ekonomi yang dihadapi pekerja. Kemungkinan mendapatkan penghasilan yang tinggi maka kemungkinan *remittance* yang dikirim ke daerah asal juga besar. Menurut (Connel,1980) dan Hugo (1978), sifat migrasi dari pekerja adalah memiliki hubungan dengan tingkat kesadaran pengiriman *remittance*. Bagi migran yang permanen, pekerja profesional atau *skilled labour* kecenderungan yang terjadi adalah bahwa mereka tidak terlalu sering mengirimkan uang ke negara asalnya

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<sup>34</sup> Wawancara dengan Halim pada tanggal 17 Mei 2010 di Amsterdam

sehingga remitannya lebih kecil dibandingkan dengan yang bersifat sementara (sirkuler). Hal yang sama juga dikatakan oleh Lucas dkk. (1985). Ia mengemukakan bahwa semakin lama migran menetap di daerah tujuan maka akan semakin kecil *remittance* yang dikirimkan ke daerah asal. Pengaruh yang negatif ini disebabkan oleh semakin berkurangnya beban tanggungan migran di daerah asal. Misalnya karena pekerja dan keluarga sudah menetap di tempat yang baru atau faktor keluarga yang memang sudah termasuk memiliki atau berkecukupan dalam pendapatan.

## **2. Pendidikan**

Dimensi lain dari selektivitas mendapatkan kerja di luar negeri adalah kualifikasi pendidikan. Kesempatan dan peluang kerja yang sering kali ditawarkan oleh perusahaan di Belanda adalah sarjana. Dari beberapa responden, diketahui bahwa mereka yang bekerja di bidang IT pada umumnya adalah sarjana S1 dan S2. Mereka ada yang lulusan universitas di Belanda, namun ada juga yang hanya magang atau *training* selama beberapa bulan di Belanda. Kalaupun ada di antara mereka yang bekerja di Belanda hanya lulusan D3 atau sederajat, hanya untuk profesi

perawat. Namun ada juga yang selevel dengan D3, yaitu mereka yang lulusan *Hogeschool*. Jika lulus dari *Hogeschool* maka peluang kerja cukup besar karena sekolah ini termasuk salah satu sekolah yang medidik muridnya untuk siap bekerja. Lihat kutipan wawancara berikut ini:

*"Belanda ini kan seperti Singapura jadi financial center dan legal centre. Jadi yang paling banyak dibutuhkan sebenarnya finance dan IT. Peluang untuk bekerja di sini sangat besar, yang penting syarat untuk ijin tinggal itu bisa terpenuhi. Jujur sebenarnya bagi orang Indonesia yang lulusan sekolah dari universitas Indonesia apalagi hanya tamatan SMA agak susah untuk mendapatkan kerja di Belanda karena mereka dianggap hitungannya sebagai ekspatriat. Misalnya gaji per tahun di sini rata-rata orang 26.000 euro, tapi kalau ekspatriat dia harus mendapatkan 40.000 euro per tahun di bawah 30 tahun. Bayangkan itu hampir 80 persen lebih tinggi dari gaji orang Belanda. Perusahaan Belanda yang mau merekrut ekspatriat pun juga harus menunjukkan kalau dia sudah mencari orang Belanda berbulan-bulan dan tidak menemukan pegawai yang cocok maka baru bisa outsource"*<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Wawancara dengan Halim dan Hendri pada tanggal 17 Mei 2010 di Amsterdam.

Jika dianalisis lebih lanjut maka bekerja sebagai ekspatriat kecil kemungkinan untuk menetap lama, apalagi jika perekrutan dilakukan dari Indonesia. Para ekspatriat ini tidak dikenakan pajak penghasilan ataupun potongan pajak kesehatan. Kerugiannya adalah biaya kesehatan harus ditanggung sendiri, dan biayanya mahal. Biasanya para ekspatriat yang bekerja secara temporer ini mendapatkan keuntungan secara keilmuan. Bekerja secara temporer berarti mendapatkan transfer teknologi. Hanya saja belakangan ini pekerja yang tinggal secara temporer ini tidak lagi memikirkan tentang mengumpulkan uang atau mendapatkan ilmu pengetahuan, tetapi adalah berpikir tentang karir yang akan menjadi lebih baik (maju). Dengan demikian, maka kesejahteraan dan pendapatan keluarga juga akan menjadi baik pula. Memutuskan untuk berhenti kerja sebelum masa kerja berakhir juga bukan pilihan yang benar karena hanya akan mendapatkan kegagalan (Kuznetsov. Yevgeny, 2006: 29).

- **Daya Saing dan Prospek TKI Di Belanda**

Globalisasi telah meningkatkan mobilitas orang, baik dari negara berkembang menuju ke negara maju maupun

sebaliknya. Terutama, mobilitas internasional atas pekerja-pekerja terampil yang berasal dari negara-negara berkembang ke negara-negara maju semakin meningkat. Di antara negara-negara berkembang pada tahun 2000, Filipina merupakan pengirim tenaga kerja yang lulusan perguruan tingginya paling banyak yaitu 1.126.260 kemudian diikuti oleh India sebesar 1.037.626, dan Meksiko sebanyak 922.964 serta Cina sebesar 816.824 orang (dikutip dari Kuznetsov dan Sabel, 2006: 3).

Berdasarkan hasil dari penelitian lapangan, para tenaga kerja Indonesia yang kami wawancara pada umumnya masuk melalui jalur sebagai mahasiswa. Seperti yang dikatakan oleh Vertovec (2002, hal 5-6) sekolah dan universitas merupakan jalur utama bagi direkrutnya para tenaga kerja terampil, terutama setelah mereka lulus dari bangku perkuliahan. Banyak studi yang telah memperlihatkan bahwa semakin banyaknya mahasiswa yang sekolah di luar negeri semakin besar pula kemungkinan mereka menjadi migran terampil pada tahap selanjutnya. Mereka pulalah yang menjadi saluran bagi para kolega maupun kawan-kawannya di dalam negeri.

Khususnya untuk negara Indonesia, meningkatnya kesejahteraan telah mengantarkan generasi-generasi muda Indonesia mengenyam pendidikan di luar negeri, khususnya Belanda. Beberapa informan menyatakan bahwa bersekolah di Belanda lebih murah dibanding sekolah swasta di Indonesia. Ditambah lagi mereka memiliki kesempatan untuk mendapatkan uang dengan cara bekerja paruh waktu. Kondisi ini tentunya tidak dapat dimiliki bila bersekolah di dalam negeri. Jalur beasiswa yang ditawarkan oleh pemerintah Belanda bagi mahasiswa-mahasiswa Indonesia juga menjadi pintu utama bagi orang-orang Indonesia untuk dapat bekerja di Belanda sebagai tenaga kerja terampil. Menurut data yang dilansir oleh NESO, jumlah mahasiswa Indonesia yang belajar di negeri Belanda pada tahun akademik 2007/2008 adalah sebanyak 1.450 orang sehingga Indonesia menempati urutan kelima sebagai mahasiswa asing yang belajar di negeri kincir angin tersebut. Urutan pertama ditempati oleh mahasiswa Jerman sebanyak 16.750, kemudian Cina sebanyak 4.750 mahasiswa, Belgia sebanyak 2.450 mahasiswa, dan Prancis menduduki urutan keempat, yaitu sebanyak 1.650 mahasiswa (Kompas online: 31-01-09).

Negeri Belanda walaupun negeri yang tidak terlalu besar dari segi wilayahnya, namun letaknya sangatlah strategis di benua Eropa. Ditambah lagi, Belanda memiliki sistem hukum yang sangat bagus dan juga memiliki *treaties-treaties* dengan negara-negara lain sehingga memudahkan perusahaan-perusahaan multinasional untuk dapat bergerak secara efektif dan efisien. Kelebihan inilah yang biasanya dimanfaatkan oleh perusahaan-perusahaan multinasional untuk mendirikan perusahaannya di negeri Belanda. Banyaknya perusahaan multinasional yang ada di Belanda tentunya juga membutuhkan sumber daya manusia yang unggul di bidangnya.

Para informan yang kami wawancarai pada umumnya bekerja di perusahaan-perusahaan multinasional. Bagi mereka, bekerja di perusahaan multinasional merupakan hal yang sangat menguntungkan karena mereka bekerja dengan berbagai macam orang, baik itu orang Belanda itu sendiri, Amerika, Cina, Jepang ataupun orang Eropa lainnya. Tentunya kemampuan bahasa Inggris menjadi persyaratan mutlak untuk dapat bekerja di Belanda. Sementara kemampuan berbahasa Belanda tidaklah menjadi persyaratan utama untuk dapat bekerja di Belanda. Selain

itu, kompetensi yang harus dimiliki tentunya adalah kompetensi bidang pekerjaan. Apakah seseorang itu kompeten atau tidak, perusahaan akan melakukan interview dengan calon pekerja seperti yang digambarkan oleh informan Ha:

*Satu hal di sini orang kalau diinterview tidak pernah ditanyakan daftar nilai tapi disuruh jelaskan apa yang telah dipelajari selama kuliah. Di kantor ada 4 orang Indonesia dan saya yang paling senior di sana. Semuanya masuk lewat kuliah dari Belanda. Di sini sebenarnya yang paling penting adalah attitude: disiplin, pekerja keras, fleksibel. Pekerja keras ini sebenarnya agak missing di kalangan pekerja orang Belanda khususnya di bagian finance. Makanya Belanda membutuhkan banyak orang Asia untuk bekerja di bagian finance karena mereka umumnya tidak suka untuk bekerja di finance (wawancara dengan Ha).*

Salah satu keunggulan bersekolah di Belanda adalah mereka memiliki sistem yang sudah sangat mapan sehingga para mahasiswa yang kuliah di Belanda pada tahun ketiga telah memiliki kesempatan untuk mempraktikkan teori-teori yang telah didapat di bangku sekolah dengan kenyataan-kenyataan yang ada di lapangan. Sistem ini membuat mahasiswa menjadi lebih memahami teori dan

praktik dan juga dapat memecahkan permasalahan-permasalahan yang ada, seperti yang digambarkan oleh informan He:

*Di sekolah kan banyak teori, jadi pas di tempat kerja kita ngga tau mesti ngapain. Apa yang dipelajari di sekolah kan berbeda dengan di tempat kerja, jadi Belanda punya aturan kalau tahun ketiga mahasiswa harus magang. Jadi di situ, kita belajar bekerja, jadi nanti pas lulus ngga kagok lagi bekerja (wawancara dengan He).*

Beberapa informan menyatakan bahwadari magang inilah mereka mendapatkan pekerjaan yang ada saat ini. Program magang sangatlah bermanfaat, tidak hanya dalam mempraktikkan ilmu yang telah didapat, namun juga menjadi sebuah jaringan untuk mendapatkan pekerjaan di Belanda.

#### ▪ **Daya Saing Tenaga Perawat Indonesia di Belanda**

Kekurangan tenaga kerja di bidang kesehatan sudah menjadi isu di Belanda sejak akhir tahun 1990-an, khususnya pada tenaga perawat dan pelayanan. Untuk mengatasi hal tersebut, institusi pelayanan kesehatan atau agen-agen perekrutan di Belanda mengambil inisiatif dengan merekrut tenaga perawat dari luar Belanda, namun

pemerintah Belanda tidaklah ikut terlibat dalam hal ini. Akan tetapi, langkah ini ternyata memicu perdebatan politik dan sosial terutama yang menyangkut perekrutan tenaga asing di luar wilayah ekonomi Eropa (European Economic Area) terutama pada tahun 2001 dan 2002 di mana terjadi perdebatan politik di parlemen. Banyak perdebatan yang muncul menentang kebijakan pemerintah Belanda yang terlalu membatasi imigran dan termasuk di dalamnya tenaga kerja asing. Institusi-institusi di bidang kesehatan dan pelayanan meminta pemerintah Belanda untuk memikirkan kembali kebijakan migrasi yang ketat mengingat negara Belanda mengalami kekurangan tenaga kerja yang parah, terutama di bidang kesehatan akibat dari tingginya populasi manula. Namun di sisi lain menurunnya jumlah populasi yang muda (persentase anak-anak yang berumur antara 0 hingga 5 tahun). Ditambah lagi, profesi perawat dan tenaga pelengkap lainnya bukanlah profesi yang kompetitif dibanding dengan profesi-profesi tenaga lainnya akibat dari tenaga fisik yang dibutuhkan, tingginya tekanan kerja dan rendahnya promosi. Hal tersebut senada dengan yang diungkapkan oleh salah satu perawat Indonesian di Belanda:

*Orang Belanda sendiri sebenarnya pemalas, kurang ulet dan mereka anak-anak mudanya kurang berminat menjadi perawat. Oleh karena itu, jumlah mahasiswa yang ada tidaklah mencukupi permintaan yang ada.*

Sebaliknya, banyak juga kritik yang menentang atas perekrutan tenaga asing, terutama partai-partai politik dan organisasi sosial yang melihat *pertama*, bahwa masih banyaknya tenaga kerja di dalam negeri yang belum dimanfaatkan (banyak orang yang secara ekonomi tidaklah aktif) dan *kedua*, pengalaman memiliki tenaga medis asing tidaklah selalu baik mengingat mereka berasal dari negara-negara yang bukan berbicara dalam bahasa Inggris serta *ketiga*, isu *brain drain* pun ikut muncul dalam perdebatan tersebut.

Walaupun demikian, kebijakan yang pada akhirnya merekrut tenaga kerja asing disetujui oleh para tenaga kerja, para majikan dan Kementrian Kesehatan, Kesejahteraan dan Olahraga pada tahun 2000 dalam 'Convenant Arbeidsmarktbeleid Zorgsector (CAZ) (Convenant on the Labour Market Policy for the Care Sector) yang efektif diberlakukan dari 1 Juli 2000 hingga 1 Juli 2004 (European Migration Network: 2006). Walaupun

demikian, Menteri Sosial dan Ketenagakerjaan (Ministry van Sociale Zaken en Werkgelegenheid (SZW) dan Serikat Pekerja tidaklah sepenuhnya setuju terhadap keputusan tersebut mengingat mereka lebih mengutamakan para pekerja Belanda terlebih dulu. Ada dua proyek yang mendapat dukungan dari pemerintah pusat, yaitu

1. The International Healthcare Training Program (IHTP) yang diprakarsai oleh Belanda dan Kementerian Kesehatan Indonesia untuk membawa tenaga-tenaga perawat Indonesia ke Belanda dengan tujuan untuk mendapatkan pendidikan dan pengalaman di bidang pelayanan kesehatan di Belanda. Tujuan dari program ini adalah para perawat Indonesia dapat mentransfer kembali ilmu-ilmu yang telah diperoleh dari Belanda untuk dapat diterapkan di negerinya ketika mereka kembali ke Indonesia.
2. Proyek pelopor diprakarsai oleh lima institusi untuk pelayanan manula pada tahun 2000 dengan merekrut perawat-perawat dari Polandia. Menteri Kesehatan, Kesejahteraan dan Olahraga Belanda menganggap bahwa ini merupakan solusi terbaik

untuk sementara dalam mengatasi kelangkaan tenaga pelayanan kesehatan. Negara Polandia dipilih mengingat mereka memiliki *surplus* tenaga perawat dan juga kemungkinan negara Polandia akan menjadi negara Uni Eropa. Bersama-sama dengan Menteri Kesehatan Polandia dan Menteri Kesehatan, Kesejahteraan dan Olahraga Belanda menandatangani *letter of intent* untuk membawa tenaga perawat Polandia ke negara Belanda. Sayangnya, dalam kenyataan hal ini tidak pernah terjadi mengingat masih banyaknya tekanan-tekanan politik dan sosial.

Dari program IHTP, inilah para perawat Indonesia yang ada saat ini berasal. Walaupun, pada awalnya mereka datang ke Belanda hanya untuk magang selama 27 bulan dan harus kembali lagi ke Indonesia untuk mentransfer ilmu yang telah didapat, namun beberapa perawat Indonesia memilih untuk tinggal dan bekerja di Belanda. Para perawat ini dipilih dan diseleksi melalui beberapa kali tes sehingga dapat dipastikan bahwa mereka memiliki kompetensi di bidangnya walaupun tentu saja standar

kompetensi yang diberlakukan di Belanda berbeda dengan di Indonesia seperti yang digambarkan oleh informan Z:

*Dari awal perekrutan, kita memang dituntut memiliki kemampuan bahasa Inggris dan bahasa Belanda juga. Secara kompetensi profesi, perawat Indonesia memiliki kemampuan yang tidak kalah dibanding dengan perawat-perawat di Belanda. Perawat Indonesia sudah pasti memiliki kemampuan memasang infus dan menyuntik, namun di sini sistem kompetensinya berbeda. Di sini kita tidak boleh sembarangan memasang infus bila kita belum lulus ujian dan itu harus diulangi setiap tahun. Misalnya selama enam bulan, saya tidak pernah memasang infus maka saya berhak menolak untuk memasang infus dan perusahaan tempat saya bekerja wajib memberikan training untuk memasang infus (wawancara dengan informan Z).*

Profesi perawat yang ada di Belanda memiliki standar kompetensi yang sangat rinci, tidak seperti di Indonesia di mana perawat melakukan tugasnya semuanya. Dari tingkatan pekerjaan yang paling rendah seperti mengganti sprei, memandikan pasien hingga yang paling tinggi seperti menyuntik ataupun memberikan infus semuanya harus

dilakukan oleh tenaga yang kompeten. Bahkan bila pun seorang perawat itu memiliki keahlian menginfus namun tidak pernah dipraktikkan maka perusahaan tempat ia bekerja harus memberikan *training* lagi dan melakukan ujian terhadap personel tenaga medis tersebut. Kompetensi ini akan dievaluasi kembali setiap tahunnya.

### **1. Prospek Tenaga Kerja Indonesia**

Berdasarkan hasil penelitian lapangan, ada dua cara yang dapat ditempuh untuk dapat bekerja di Belanda. Pertama, adalah calon-calon tenaga kerja Indonesia yang belajar di perguruan-perguruan tinggi Belanda dan kemudian setelah lulus mereka melamar pekerjaan di Belanda. Dengan melalui jalur ini, kesempatan untuk mendapatkan pekerjaan di Belanda sangatlah besar mengingat Belanda mengalami kekurangan tenaga kerja yang ahli di bidangnya. Umumnya tenaga kerja Indonesia yang bekerja di Belanda melalui jalur ini. Para tenaga kerja Indonesia yang sebelumnya berstatus sebagai mahasiswa di universitas-universitas Belanda memilih untuk bekerja di Belanda sebagai salah satu cara untuk mengumpulkan uang dan modal buat kembali ke Indonesia. Terutama bagi para

mahasiswa yang membiayai kuliahnya sendiri tanpa beasiswa, ini merupakan salah satu cara untuk mengembalikan modal dalam membiayai kuliah mereka selama ini. Sementara untuk jalur beasiswa dari pemerintah Belanda, tawaran untuk bekerja di Belanda tidaklah banyak dipergunakan mengingat kebanyakan dari mereka terikat dengan ikatan dinas di mana mereka bekerja.

Cara kedua adalah calon-calon tenaga kerja Indonesia melamar pekerjaan yang ada di Belanda, baik melalui jalur elektronik maupun melalui agen perekrutan dan kemudian setelah lolos mendapatkan pekerjaan, mereka baru datang ke Belanda. Jalur ini merupakan jalur yang dikenal sebagai ekspatriat atau 'kennismigran' di mana para tenaga kerja asing yang datang ke Belanda akan memiliki standar gaji yang telah ditetapkan oleh pemerintah Belanda. Dari hasil penelitian lapangan menunjukkan bahwa tenaga kerja Indonesia yang datang ke Belanda melalui jalur ini masih belum banyak. Mengingat, pemerintah Belanda dan Uni Eropa memberlakukan kepada perusahaan-perusahaan untuk memprioritaskan warga negara Belanda terlebih dahulu dan kemudian Uni Eropa. Bila perusahaan belum

menemukan kandidat yang tepat, barulah mereka dapat merekrut tenaga kerja asing di luar Uni Eropa. Walaupun nampak lebih sulit untuk mendapatkan pekerjaan tersebut, namun kesempatan untuk bekerja di Belanda masih sangat besar seperti yang dikatakan oleh informan G:

jika kita punya skills yang memadai dan sangat di butuhkan oleh sebuah perusahaan maka akan mudah bagi kita untuk bekerja di belanda.

Memang dengan adanya regionalisme Uni Eropa di mana Belanda juga ikut tergabung di dalamnya, persaingan kerja di Belanda menjadi semakin sulit, namun tidak menutup kemungkinan bagi orang Indonesia dapat bekerja di Belanda. Berdasarkan pendapat para informan mengenai kemungkinan orang Indonesia bekerja di Belanda, mereka melihat bahwa orang Indonesia punya potensi besar untuk dapat bekerja di Belanda. Beberapa informan menyatakan seperti di bawah ini:

*Orang Indonesia cenderung lebih cerdas, level pendidikan sampai bergelar Doktor, serius, dan suka bekerja keras. Tapi kalau berbicara tentang ketrampilan kerja, kebanyakan orang eropa lebih baik. Misalnya dalam hal komunikasi, menentukan kebijakan, rasionalitas dan estimasi suatu perencanaan, mereka cenderung lebih baik.*

Mereka lebih menguasai hal makro atau skenario utama daripada hal mikro dan spesifik. Lebih jauh lagi, saat mereka duduk di bangku kuliah mereka banyak melakukan studi kasus, kerja praktek, magang di perusahaan, belajar berdiplomasi dengan stakeholder terkait. Hal-hal semacam inilah yang tidak pernah kita dapatkan di bangku kuliah di Indonesia; porsi pembelajaran teori jauh lebih banyak daripada kerja praktek dan studi kasus. Saya kira pembelajaran seperti di atas patut diadopsi ke Indonesia.”“Hal inilah yang membuat tenaga kerja Eropa terlihat lebih unggul dibandingkan tenaga kerja yang lain (wawancara dengan G).

Secara kualitas, kita tidak kalah dengan orang-orang Belanda dan internasional lainnya. Hanya saja orang Indonesia itu kelemahannya adalah suka merasa insecure. Jadi walaupun mereka merasa benar, mereka takut untuk bicara. Sementara kita di sini dididik untuk mengungkapkan ide-ide kita sehingga bos itu tahu kalau kita itu mengerti persoalan dan tahu bagaimana memecahkannya (wawancara dengan Ha).

Tenaga perawat Indonesia tidak kalah dengan tenaga perawat lainnya seperti dari Filipina. Tetapi kita kalah di bahasa Inggris. Orang Filipina jauh lebih unggul dalam berkomunikasi dalam bahasa Inggris sementara kita masih memiliki kendala bahasa asing. Namun, umumnya orang Belanda sangat senang dengan

*perawat Indonesia mungkin karena kita memiliki ikatan historis dengan pemerintah Belanda. Orang Indonesia juga dikenal sangat ramah, sopan santun dan pekerja keras. Terutama sopan santun, orang-orang tua Belanda sangat menyukainya. Lagi, kita kurang banyak complain tidak seperti tenaga kesehatan dari Negara lain seperti dari Polandia dll (wawancara dengan Z).*

### **3. Revitalisasi Peranan TKI Terampil**

Saat ini jumlah tenaga kerja terampil yang bekerja di Belanda semakin meningkat walaupun pemerintah Indonesia baik itu Kedutaan Besar Indonesia di Belanda maupun Departemen Tenaga Kerja dan Transmigrasi tidaklah, memiliki data seberapa besar jumlah TKI terampil yang bekerja di Belanda mengingat mereka bekerja tidak melalui tangan pemerintah namun mendapatkan pekerjaan dengan usahanya sendiri. Namun sebenarnya, kedutaan besar Republik Indonesia justru dapat berperan untuk dapat mengetahui kehadiran mereka. Sayangnya, hal ini belum dilakukan oleh kedutaan besar RI di Belanda. Berdasarkan pengakuan para informan, jumlah tenaga kerja terampil Indonesia yang bekerja di Belanda saat ini meningkat dibanding sepuluh tahun yang lalu. Ketiadaan data statistik menunjukkan bahwa potensi besar yang ada

di para tangan TKI terampil masih belum banyak dimanfaatkan oleh pemerintah Indonesia.

Padahal Cina, negara yang saat ini menjadi raksasa ekonomi dunia, menunjukkan bahwa diaspora Cina menjadi aktor utama dalam pembangunan di negeri asalnya. Tujuh puluh persen penanaman modal asing di Cina berasal dari orang-orang Cina yang hidup dan tinggal di luar negaranya, seperti Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, Filipina, Singapura, Taiwan, Thailand dan sejumlah negara-negara maju (Devane, 2006: 61). Investasi diaspora Cina lebih banyak pada sektor-sektor manufaktur dengan upah-upah yang rendah. Studi yang dilakukan oleh Huang (2002 dikutip dari Devane, 2006) menunjukkan bahwa investasi yang dilakukan oleh diaspora Cina umumnya sangat beragam dan pada skala yang kecil dengan kisaran investasi 2,4 miliar dolar pada tahun 1997 dalam berbagai sektor manufaktur. Investasi yang dilakukan oleh para diaspora Cina tidaklah untuk pengembangan bisnis yang tinggi teknologi seperti yang dilakukan oleh diaspora India mengingat diaspora Cina pada saat itu masih belum banyak yang berprofesi sebagai ilmuwan seperti halnya diaspora India.

Sementara di India, para ilmuwan yang telah bermigrasi ke negara-negara maju melakukan pengembangan industri teknologi tinggi terutama di bidang industri *software*. India merupakan contoh bagi negara berkembang lainnya di mana industri *software* berkembang pesat pada saat dimana infrastruktur dalam negerinya masih sangat rendah, peraturan dan hukum lingkungan masih suram serta tidak adanya kebijakan pemerintah dalam investasi teknologi tinggi (Devane, 2006: 61).

Industri *software* di India berkembang sangat pesat yaitu sebesar 40 persen per tahunnya pada era 1990-an. Pendapatan yang dihasilkan mencapai 10,2 miliar dollar pada tahun 2002 dan 7,7 miliar dollar berasal dari ekspor (Kuznetsov dan Sabel, 2006: 15). Pada periode yang sama, lapangan kerja berkembang dari 56.000 menjadi 360.000 yang menyerap 75.000 lulusan IT India setiap tahunnya. Jumlah perusahaan di bidang *software* India tumbuh sangat pesat dari 700-an lebih menjadi 2.800 dan bahkan perusahaan besar seperti Wipro dan Infosys semakin mendapatkan proyek-proyek yang nilainya lebih besar dan kompleks. Peranan para ekspatriat India yang bekerja di luar negeri sangatlah vital.

Cina dan India merupakan dua contoh negara berkembang yang berhasil memanfaatkan potensi warga negaranya yang bermukim di luar negeri demi kemajuan negerinya. Demikian pula para tenaga kerja Indonesia yang bekerja di Belanda. Mereka pun memiliki impian untuk dapat berkontribusi lebih banyak bagi negerinya walaupun sayangnya, potensi ini masih belum didukung oleh negara.

#### ▪ **Rekomendasi untuk Pemerintah Indonesia**

Berdasarkan hasil penelitian lapangan, kesempatan untuk dapat bekerja di Belanda bagi orang Indonesia masih sangat terbuka lebar melalui studi di Belanda, baik melalui jalur beasiswa maupun biaya pribadi ataupun langsung bekerja sebagai ekspatriat. Bahkan, para penerima beasiswa dari pemerintah Belanda seperti STUNED (dan jenis beasiswa lainnya) akan mendapatkan kesempatan emas untuk dapat mempraktikkan ilmunya selama satu tahun setelah lulus studi. Hal ini tidak didapat dari beasiswa lain misalnya dari pemerintah Australia. Kesempatan untuk bekerja di Belanda pun diberikan bagi orang-orang asing yang kuliah di Belanda dengan biaya sendiri. Oleh karena itu, privilese tersebut dapat menjadi

sebuah pintu masuk ke dalam sistem pasar tenaga kerja di Belanda.

Secara perlahan namun pasti, jumlah tenaga kerja Indonesia yang bekerja di Belanda sebagai migran terampil terus mengalami peningkatan dan tentunya akan dapat mendominasi pasar tenaga kerja di tingkat dunia seperti para tenaga kerja dari India dan Cina. Oleh karena itu, orang-orang Indonesia yang telah bekerja di Belanda dapat dimanfaatkan untuk menjadi jaringan dalam meningkatkan tenaga kerja Indonesia di Belanda. Saat ini sudah ada tiga organisasi yang menaungi para tenaga kerja Indonesia di Belanda yaitu Perhimpunan Profesional Indonesia di Belanda (PALAPA) dan Jaringan Kerja Indonesia (JKI) dan Perhimpunan Perawat Nasional Indonesia (PPNI) cabang Belanda. Ketiga organisasi tersebut memiliki visi yang kurang lebih mirip, yaitu dapat memberikan kontribusi terhadap pembangunan di Indonesia. Sayangnya, pemerintah Indonesia, dalam hal ini Kedutaan Besar Republik Indonesia, masih belum memanfaatkan jaringan yang sudah terbentuk di Belanda. Oleh karena itu, pada masa mendatang diharapkan pemerintah Indonesia dapat membuat biro khusus untuk mengelola dan memanfaatkan

orang-orang Indonesia yang tinggal dan bekerja di luar negeri untuk pembangunan seperti halnya yang dilakukan oleh diaspora Cina dan India.

Selain itu, pemerintah Indonesia dapat membuat kerjasama kembali dengan pemerintah Belanda, terutama pada penempatan perawat Indonesia di Belanda sebagai yang pernah terjadi melalui program International House Training Program. Seperti yang kita lihat, Belanda sedang menghadapi kekurangan tenaga perawat, sementara Indonesia memiliki persediaan yang cukup di sektor kesehatan. Selain itu, para perawat Indonesia memiliki keunggulan kompetitif yaitu memiliki ikatan historis dengan orang-orang Belanda, dikenal ramah, pekerja keras, dan juga sopan. Jika kerja sama antara pemerintah tidak dimungkinkan, masih ada cara lain untuk bisa menempatkan perawat Indonesia ke Belanda, yaitu dengan dengan cara mengembangkan kerjasama dengan pihak swasta. Peran ini dapat dimainkan oleh kedutaan Indonesia di Belanda untuk mencari peluang dan kesempatan dalam menempatkan tenaga perawat Indonesia di Belanda. Ini merupakan salah satu cara terbaik dalam mengurangi pengangguran di kalangan pekerja terampil di Indonesia.

