

LEGAL PROTECTION OF FEMALE MIGRANT WORKERS TO ACHIEVE THE PRINCIPLES OF DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH IN THE SDGS

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Abstract

Background - Poverty in Indonesia remains a significant issue, with over 28 million individuals affected in 2016, particularly in rural areas. Employment is a cornerstone for economic and social stability, as stated in Article 27(2) of the Indonesian Constitution. Migrant workers, especially women who comprise over 70% of Indonesian migrant labor, face unique challenges, including exploitation, low wages, and abuse. Despite their substantial contributions to the economy through remittances, female migrant workers experience inadequate legal protections and gender-specific vulnerabilities.

Purpose - This research explores the intersection of legal protections for female migrant workers and the principles of decent work and sustainable economic growth as outlined in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It aims to evaluate the effectiveness of current legal frameworks and propose improvements to align with SDG targets related to gender equality and economic growth.

methodology - A normative juridical approach was utilized, analyzing primary legal materials, including laws like the Migrant Worker Protection Act and Employment Creation Law, alongside secondary sources such as academic journals, government reports, and international conventions. Empirical insights were gathered through interviews with key stakeholders, including policymakers, migrant workers, and labor agency officials. Data were analyzed qualitatively to identify gaps between legal frameworks and their implementation.

Findings - The study found that the Migrant Worker Protection Act provides a robust legal foundation but suffers from implementation challenges due to bureaucratic inefficiencies, lack of monitoring, and limited access to legal education for female migrant workers. Women in domestic roles are particularly vulnerable to exploitation, aligning with the concept of feminized labor migration. Despite these issues, remittances from migrant workers significantly contribute to national income, supporting local economies and reducing household poverty. However, these benefits are counterbalanced by social costs such as family separation and workplace abuse. The findings emphasize the need for gender-sensitive legal reforms, international cooperation, and enhanced education initiatives to improve the protection of female migrant workers and align national policies with SDG principles.

Originality - Intersection of Gender, Migration, and SDGs: This research provides a unique intersectional analysis of gender, migration, and legal protections within the context of Indonesia's labor migration policies. By integrating the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into the discussion, it offers a fresh perspective on the need for gender-sensitive legal reforms that promote decent work and sustainable economic growth. Empirical Insights into Legal Implementation: Through interviews with key stakeholders, this study provides empirical insights into the practical challenges faced in implementing legal protections for female migrant workers. These insights are valuable for policymakers and practitioners seeking to enhance the effectiveness of legal frameworks in protecting vulnerable migrant workers. Contribution to Policy and Legal Reform: The findings underscore the critical need for legal reforms that account for the gender-specific vulnerabilities of female migrant workers. This research offers practical recommendations for improving legal protections, monitoring systems, and access to legal education, which can inform future policy debates and contribute to more effective labor migration management. Policy Relevance to National and International Audiences: By aligning the findings with the SDGs, the study highlights the importance of global cooperation in addressing issues related to labor migration and gender inequality. This makes the research relevant not only to Indonesian policymakers but also to international organizations, NGOs and labor rights advocates working in similar contexts worldwide.

Keywords: Decent Work, Sustainable Development Goals, Female Migrant Workers, Gender Equality, Indonesia, Legal Protection.
