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Lived Precarity: Paradoxes of Human Security among Undocumented Indonesian Migrant Workers in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the vulnerability of undocumented Indonesian migrant workers in Malaysia by highlighting the human security paradox within the migration regime. Undocumented status is not only an administrative condition but also a structural mechanism that produces systemic illegality, insecurity, and uncertainty. Drawing on Nicholas De Genova's argument that migrant illegality is socio-politically produced through state regulation, the paper argues that the logic of protection within the migration regime not only fails to reduce vulnerability but rather perpetuates it in everyday life. This paradox illustrates how the existing protection regime, rather than mitigating vulnerability, contributes to its persistence among undocumented migrant workers. Using qualitative methods and a case study approach, this research explores the lived experiences of undocumented migrant workers through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and secondary sources. The findings indicate that fear of detention and deportation constrains undocumented workers from accessing formal protection channels and compels them to rely on informal networks of solidarity. This dynamic demonstrates that illegality restricts access to rights and protections, thereby reproducing the vulnerabilities that protection frameworks are intended to address. By situating the experiences of undocumented migrant workers within a broader security framework, this research contributes to critical migration and human security studies.

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1. Introduction

Cross-border labor migration has been one of the most dominant forms of human mobility in Southeast Asia over the past few decades. Differences in economic levels, job opportunities, and wages are the primary drivers of labor migration in this region. Globalization and economic and social transformation have been ongoing in Southeast Asia for over 30 years, triggering active cross-border labor migration (Syzdykova et al., 2020). Behind the labor migration process lies an interdependent relationship between countries of origin and destination, driven by the needs and interests of both parties. On the one hand, labor migration, a unique characteristic of Southeast Asia, contributes significantly through remittances. It poses economic, social, and political implications at various levels, from the individuals to the state. These implications create both opportunities for welfare and challenges to the protection of migrant workers' rights. This reality demonstrates that labor migration in Southeast Asia is closely linked to structural issues.

Structural inequalities between countries in Southeast Asia have created labor-based intra-regional migration corridors. In this region, the most prominent migration is the transfer of labor from low-income to high-income countries and from labor-surplus to labor-scarce countries. Low-income countries, such as the Philippines, Indonesia, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos, primarily send "blue-collar" workers to high-income destination countries, including Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, and Brunei (Manning, 2018). Factors such as wage differentials, a lack of domestic job opportunities, and the perception that overseas employment is more financially rewarding have shaped migration patterns within the region. This migration typically aims to fill domestic roles in sectors such as construction, plantations, manufacturing, and services. Workers move across Southeast Asia in search of economic opportunities; the majority of migration in the region consists of low-skilled and often undocumented migrants (Testaverde et al., 2017).

In Southeast Asia, labor migration has become a significant factor in economic growth and development in both origin and destination countries, influenced by disparities in economic and social development and by demographic differences across populations (Basir, 2019). These regional dynamics drive labor migration toward countries offering easy, affordable labor opportunities: wage differences, economic disparities, and geographic factors position Malaysia as a central destination for Indonesian migrants. Additional reasons for Malaysia's appeal include cultural similarities and relatively low departure costs. Facing a shortage of local labor in labor-intensive sectors, Malaysia increasingly relies on foreign workers to meet its production needs. Many of these sectors are typically categorized as "3D": dirty, dangerous, and difficult. Although these roles are essential to the economy, they are usually deemed undesirable by local workers due to their physically demanding and high-risk nature (Saari et al., 2025). The reluctance of local workers to take up vacancies in these sectors has led to an increased reliance on foreign labor.

The shift in demand for lower-wage foreign workers has further expanded labor recruitment efforts to achieve economic stability and industrial productivity. Labor migrants and their families comprise approximately 60 percent of international migrants globally, or around 48.3 million people (ASEAN, 2024). The ILO estimated that there were 167.7 million migrant workers worldwide in 2022, accounting for 65.6 percent of all working-age migrants. There were approximately 13.9 million international migrant workers in Southeast Asia and the Pacific (ILO, 2025). As of September 30, 2024, according to statistics from the Immigration Department under the Ministry of Home Affairs, there were 2,470,781 active foreign workers in Malaysia (The Star, 2024). According to the IOM (2025), there were nearly 2.5 million migrant workers, with Bangladesh as the main country of origin (38%), followed by Indonesia (24%).

Employment opportunities in Malaysia have created a sustainable migration pattern for Indonesian workers. This trend is a response to limited job opportunities, high unemployment, and uneven economic conditions across Indonesia's regions. Higher incomes and lower unemployment drive the supply of Indonesian migrant workers to Malaysia (Djafar & Hassan, 2012). This domestic situation is increasingly encouraging people of productive age to migrate as a strategy to improve their standard of living. For those with limited resources, Malaysia is an appealing destination for labor migration, offering higher wages and a more stable job market than in their home countries. Several factors draw foreign workers to Malaysia, including political stability, economic development, reliance on foreign labor, wage differentials, high demand across sectors, available facilities for cross-border migration, and socio-cultural factors (Hamzah et al., 2020). The demand for foreign workers in Malaysia is closely tied to Indonesia's labor surplus, creating a migration dynamic that benefits the Malaysian economy while improving welfare for Indonesian workers. Several factors contribute, but financial hardship consistently remains the primary reason why Indonesians are compelled to work abroad as migrant workers (Anggara et al., 2024). Overall, the migration flow from Indonesia to Malaysia has evolved from an individual economic phenomenon into a structural dynamic rooted in regional labor market needs.

The simultaneous increase in the number of Indonesian workers migrating to Malaysia has led to various problems. IOM estimated that the number of Indonesian migrant workers in Malaysia is 2.7 million people; however, only around 1.6 million are registered through regular channels, while the rest are undocumented migrant workers (IOM, 2023). Based on data from the IOM, this means that there are around 1.1 million non-procedural migrant workers, indicating that more than 40 percent of Indonesian migrant workers in Malaysia live in irregular conditions. Although official Malaysian Immigration data sources in 2024 show approximately 2.47 million active foreign workers, this figure does not fully capture the population of undocumented migrant workers. The data illustrated that Indonesian migrant workers constitute a large share in Malaysia's migrant population. However, there is a gap between the

country's administrative system and the reality of labor migration on the ground. The disparity in figures shows that undocumented migration is an integral part of the labor migration regime in Malaysia. This condition indicates how the Malaysian labor market is structurally dependent not only on documented migrant workers but also on the availability of undocumented workers. These migrant workers play a vital role in the Malaysian economy, filling labor gaps in low-skilled jobs, particularly in the agriculture, manufacturing, and construction sectors (World Bank, 2024). These sectors rely on flexible labor arrangements, leaving undocumented workers highly vulnerable to exploitation, wage theft, and legal insecurity.

Economic incentives are seen as a major driver of labor migration, but their primary impact on Malaysian society is the spread of crime, violence, and disease (Foley, 2023). This trend of cross-border labor migration has significant implications for both countries of origin and destination. Abuses in the form of deplorable working and living conditions, low wages, lack of protection and trade union rights, and violence are some of the many reasons cited in complaints regarding the treatment of migrant workers (Devadason & Meng, 2014). The reliance of migrant workers' countries of origin on remittances tends to overshadow the complex domestic problems they face, while the demand for labor in destination countries persists. The high demand for low-skilled jobs has created a labor market structure that places Indonesian workers in a subordinate position. The ongoing demand and supply between countries of origin and destination are not balanced by regulatory and oversight capacity. Consequently, the economic interests of both countries take precedence over the protection that should be prioritized.

Systematically, labor migration creates unequal power relations, from recruitment and placement to socio-political aspects in the destination country. This system fosters systemic vulnerability that manifests itself in the everyday life of migrant workers. They face numerous challenges, including unclear contracts, limited mobility, and inadequate protections. Migrant workers with temporary contracts are referred to as "precarious residents," meaning people living in another country who have few social, political, or economic rights, are highly vulnerable to deportation, and have few or no options to secure their own immigration status (Gibney, 2009: 2). This imbalance between the labor market and protection measures leads to discrimination and exploitation, placing migrant workers in a vulnerable position. The complexity of tissues arising from disproportionate labor migration illustrates that this process is anything but neutral. Various economic, social, and political interests interact unevenly, exacerbating the challenges migrant workers face.

A significant issue in the labor migration landscape of Southeast Asia is the presence of undocumented migrant workers. Most workers in low-skilled jobs generally do not require specialized formal skills, leading to informal recruitment practices. This flexibility in recruitment has led to widespread violations of the law. Undocumented Indonesian migrant workers in Malaysia demonstrate the contradiction that the immigration and employment regulations implemented

actually create vulnerability. Malaysia's strategy of tightening visa fees and procedures actually pushes migrant workers into undocumented status and discourages them from registering, despite the government imposing sanctions on employers (Wahyudi, 2017). The complexity of vulnerability is further exacerbated when migrant workers, mainly in the informal and undocumented sector, face the risk of rights violations. Undocumented migrants in Southeast Asia experience a wide range of abuses, including high fees paid to human smugglers, deception by recruitment agencies, non-payment of wages, low wages, long working hours, poor occupational safety standards, and, even worse, physical violence, illegal detention, human trafficking, and sexual harassment (Basir, 2019). Beyond limited legal status, migrant workers' vulnerability also stems from the structure of the international labor market, which often prioritizes economic considerations over workers' rights.

Migrant workers' rights protection mechanisms and the lack of bilateral cooperation between countries of origin and destination place undocumented migrant workers at ongoing risk. Undocumented status is not merely an administrative issue but is intertwined with human security issues. The security of Indonesian migrant workers extends beyond traditional security concerns to encompass human well-being. The relationship between undocumented status and human security is crucial for understanding the complexities of Indonesian migrant workers' daily lives in Malaysia. Undocumented status leaves migrant workers living in uncertainty, facing threats of deportation, arrest by authorities, and mistreatment by employers. This situation has become part of everyday life, often referred to as "insecure everyday life."

1.1 Literature Review

The study of labor migration in Southeast Asia has developed through a range of interdisciplinary approaches. In the study of international migration and interstate relations, the human security approach has become a crucial analytical lens. Since its popularization by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in its 1994 Human Development Report, human security has been positioned as an alternative to state-oriented security concepts. Over time, its focus has shifted from military threats to the vulnerabilities humans face in everyday life. The human security approach suggests that security policies and security analyses, to be convincing and legitimate, must focus on individuals as the primary reference and beneficiary (Newman, 2010).

In the context of migration, a human security approach that emphasizes the protection of individuals provides insights that cannot be fully captured through the lens of state security alone. This approach highlights how individuals experience insecurity in concrete and relational forms in everyday life. Human security is focused on the individual, distinguishing it from the goal of protecting state territory (Alkire, 2003). This perspective has the potential to shift the security discourse to a finer scale, where smaller political constituencies and less powerful groups become visible, and their freedom from fear becomes a public concern (Hyndman, 2004).

However, in the study of transnational migration, a conceptual debate has emerged between a human security approach that normatively emphasizes the protection of individuals and a migration security approach that positions the state as the dominant actor. This debate stems from the assumption that territorial boundaries determine state sovereignty, and transboundary migration is perceived as a threat to state identity and security (Tarai, 2024). This tension gives rise to a paradox: states claim responsibility for human security, yet their policies actually produce insecurity, particularly for undocumented migrant workers.

Numerous studies indicate that the insecurity of undocumented migrant workers is closely linked to the legal and illegal statuses produced by the state through migration mechanisms. While regularization offers migrants legal status, it also places them in a new asymmetrical relationship with the state, intermediaries, and employers (Bylander, 2023). The phenomenon of "illegal" migration occurs at two levels: the first is ongoing migrant worker control policies, and the second is various strategies for illegal residence that exploit gaps in the legal and human rights systems of host countries (Lee, 2022). The production of migrant illegality results in the denial of legal status, the subordination of migrant workers in the labor market, and the erosion of their political agency. The state, with its authority, denies the presence of migrants labeled illegal, acting as a powerful disciplinary tool and a highly effective mechanism of subjugation to prevent undocumented migrants from appearing in public spaces (Cámara, 2013). Migration research has provided valuable insights into how states, through immigration policies, create workplace vulnerabilities, including discrimination, harassment, wage theft, workplace raids, and the threat of deportation (Olvera, 2016). Thus, the illegality created by the state has contributed to unsafe working conditions and limited the lives of undocumented migrant workers.

This research offers an analysis of human security approaches and critical perspectives in migration studies, particularly through the concept of illegality. Unlike studies that position illegality as a legal status or the impact of migration policies, this research views illegality as a process that reproduces insecurity in the realities of migrant workers, both structurally and relationally. This framework is used to understand how undocumented Indonesian migrant workers in Malaysia experience vulnerability in their relationships with the power relations established by the state. The lived reality of undocumented migrant workers demonstrates the paradox of protection and security produced by the state. Policies intended to guarantee security actually reproduce insecurity. In this case, illegality is understood not only as a legal issue and structural condition, but also as the insecurity experienced materially and relationally by migrant workers in their daily lives.

1.2 Theoretical Framework

This study uses a crisis migration perspective to analyze multidimensional issues related to the experiences of undocumented Indonesian migrant workers in

Malaysia. The framework in this study combines the concepts of human security and illegality, which create precarity and insecurity. These concepts are utilized to explain how the migration regime produces insecurity and vulnerability in the daily lives of migrant workers.

The Legal Production of Migrant Illegality

One of the most prominent forms of undocumented migration is labor migration (De Genova, 2002). The term "undocumented status" refers to an administrative condition resulting from the absence of legal documents, such as entry permits to the destination country for work, expired residence permits, overstaying the permitted time, or the lack of a valid visa. In migration studies, undocumented status refers to migrants whose presence or work falls outside the legal framework of the destination country. Undocumented status should not be understood merely as an individual condition resulting from the absence of documents, but also a mechanism used by states to create illegality. Legality is a status resulting from the state's political decisions, as evidenced by being a legal immigrant, a legal worker, or a legal guest of a particular type (Ngai, 2014). Migrants remain essentially the same, regardless of whether they are deemed legal or illegal by the destination country. However, members of the receiving society often underestimate undocumented immigrants, and the legal system further complicates their lives (Chavez, 2007).

The concept of "migrant illegality," as developed by Nicholas de Genova, serves as the theoretical foundation for this research. Migrant illegality goes beyond the mere possession of legal documents and is a manifestation of socio-political status shaped by state practices and policies. Illegality encompasses not only legal standing but also socio-political conditions and lived experiences that shape emotions, bodies, and perspectives on the world (Willen, 2007). De Genova highlights that understanding "illegality" in the context of undocumented migration requires more than simply examining its consequences; it requires a historical account of the socio-political processes that lead to "illegalization" itself, which can be understood as the legal construction of migrant "illegality" (de Genova, 2002).

Furthermore, "illegality" serves to maintain migrants' vulnerability as labor (de Genova, 2005). It is crucial to recognize that this concept extends beyond legal issues to encompass the power dynamics that states use to regulate and limit migrant workers' mobility and bargaining power. The conditions of illegality create deportable circumstances, making migrants easily controlled, vulnerable to exploitation, and a disposable labor force (de Genova, 2024). Illegality provides a conceptual foundation that supports the logic of how the state, through its regulation and production of illegality, acts as a mechanism of power, creating uncertainty and insecurity for Indonesian migrant workers in Malaysia. In the context of migrant worker destination countries, including Malaysia, illegality operates as a mechanism of power through the implementation of several ambiguous migration policies. Terms such as "illegal," "irregular," "undocumented," or "illegible" are not merely technical

categories but reflect political positions, state interests, and societal views of migrants (Anderson & Ruhs, 2010). De Genova calls this ambiguity in migrant worker recruitment procedures the "legal production of illegality." The function of illegality is to act as a socio-economic control over undocumented migrant workers, who face low bargaining power and insecure living conditions.

When states label migrant workers as "illegal" due to a lack of documentation, they are defining and treating that lack of documentation as "undocumented status," which is actually a trigger that leads to illegality. The absence of documents alone does not make migrant workers illegal; rather, it is the state's interpretation that defines this absence as a law violation that actually causes their illegality. This phenomenon is what De Genova describes as the legal production of migrant illegality. In Malaysia, for instance, migrant workers are accepted at low cost while enforcing strict regulations, complicating their legal status. De Genova argues that this is a mechanism that allows the state to exploit migrant workers by continuing to use them as labor while keeping them in a vulnerable and precarious position. As a result of this process, migrant workers remain available as labor while they are placed in an uncertain position with limited rights and the threat of deportation.

State Mandate for Human Security in the Migration

Human security is an approach to security that emphasizes protecting individuals rather than just states. Traditionally, the concept of security focused on the potential for inter-state conflict, equating it with threats to a country's borders (UNDP, 1994). However, the understanding of human security has evolved to encompass the feeling of freedom from anxiety and worry in everyday life. From a human security perspective, security encompasses personal integrity, such as protection from violence, environmental security, economic stability, and access to healthcare. Essentially, human security is a manifestation of freedom from fear and freedom from want (UNDP, 1994). According to the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in Resolution 66/290, the notion of human security includes the following:

1) The right of people to live in freedom and dignity, free from poverty and despair. All individuals, in particular vulnerable people, are entitled to freedom from fear and freedom from want, with an equal opportunity to enjoy all their rights and fully develop their human potential;
2) Human security calls for people-centered, comprehensive, context-specific, and intervention-oriented responses that strengthen the protection and empowerment of all people and all communities;
3) Human security recognizes the interlinkages between peace, development, and human rights, and equally considers civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights.

Indonesia has not ratified the concept of human security in UNGA 66/290, as UN General Assembly resolutions are not legally binding treaties. However, its

substantive principles are reflected in Indonesia's constitutional framework, namely the 1945 Constitution. The resolution affirms that "Governments retain the primary role and responsibility for ensuring the survival, livelihood, and dignity of their citizens. The role of the international community is to complement and provide the necessary support to Governments, upon their request, to strengthen their capacity to respond to current and emerging threats. Human security requires greater collaboration and partnership among Governments, international and regional organizations, and civil society" (UNGA, 2012). The resolution's statement underscores that human security is the responsibility of governments towards their citizens. This statement underscores that human security is the responsibility of governments towards their citizens.

In the context of labor migration, this responsibility extends to both the country of origin (Indonesia) and the country of destination (Malaysia). The resolution also emphasizes the role of the international community in providing necessary support, including Malaysia, the destination country for migrant workers from Indonesia. However, the state is normatively mandated to guarantee human security, but the reality of labor migration shows that this mandate is declarative. In cross-border labor migration, state interests are fragmented, with administrative, economic, and state security interests taking precedence. Indonesia-Malaysia labor migration, shaped by these interests, treats human security as mere discourse rather than a guiding principle for subsequent implementation.

This study argues that undocumented status should not be understood solely as the result of individual decisions driven by poverty, limited information, and/or deception. Based on De Genova's concept of migrant illegality, this study views illegality as a socio-political condition produced through the governance of labor migration. The production of illegality limits migrant workers' access to rights, protection, and mobility, thereby creating conditions of human precarity and insecurity. Consequently, the analytical focus of this study is not why migrants become undocumented, but how the state's migration regime produces undocumented status. Additionally, it investigates how this status affects the everyday insecurities experienced by Indonesian migrant workers in Malaysia.

2. Methods

This research utilizes a qualitative case study approach to explore the lived experiences of undocumented Indonesian migrant workers in Malaysia. A qualitative approach is relevant for understanding subjective experiences, social relations, everyday insecurities, and the embeddedness of social interactions among migrant workers. This research focuses on how undocumented migrant workers experience, negotiate, and interpret insecurities within the migration regime. Malaysia was chosen as the research location because it is one of the largest destinations for migrant workers, particularly those employed in the informal sector. By

concentrating on undocumented migrant workers, this study aims to capture forms of insecurity that are hidden and difficult to observe through official institutions.

In qualitative studies, conclusions are based on non-comparable observational fragments that address different aspects of a problem and are traditionally analyzed informally (Gerring, 2017). By using this approach to delve deeper into subjective meanings and relational dynamics, research can go beyond capturing surface-level phenomena. In qualitative research, these stories can be helpful in two key analytical purposes. First, researchers can examine how these narratives shape social worlds. Second, they can be analyzed in terms of how they construct personal worlds (Denscombe, 2017).

This research aims to uncover hidden, invisible practices, emotionally charged lived experiences, and constructed vulnerabilities among migrant workers. Everyday life, which involves human security, can only be fully understood through direct interaction. Adopting an interpretive approach, this study emphasizes the importance of participatory observation to gather in-depth narratives. An interpretive perspective is relevant to qualitative methods, as it seeks to capture individuals' experiences, understandings, and perceptions as data to uncover reality, rather than relying on statistical figures (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). This approach is rooted in individuals' everyday life experiences, which are used to construct an understanding and interpretation of reality. Interpretivism works by understanding specific contexts, based on the belief that reality is socially constructed (Willis et al., 2007).

The primary data for the study were gathered through interviews and participant observation with Indonesian migrant workers in Malaysia. These observations were conducted by participating in several activities held by migrant worker communities across various sectors. Participant observation involves researchers observing people in their daily lives and participating in their activities to understand their behavior better (Kawulich, 2005). This data collection method, which requires direct interaction with individuals and groups within the community, can be utilized by various disciplines.

Secondary sources were used to complement data collection through a literature review, drawing on books, academic journals, research reports, mass-media articles, community social media, and publications from civil society organizations. Secondary data analysis is a viable method for the research process, not simply "using someone else's data" (Johnston, 2014). Searching through various secondary data sources strengthens the research context by identifying previous research.

3. Results and Discussion

Field observations and interviews reveal that undocumented Indonesian migrant workers in Malaysia live in uncertainty. Their daily experiences illustrate

that human security often exists within a fragile environment. Under the watchful eye of a repressive state, migrant workers experience various forms of insecurity, including legal status and economic challenges, exacerbated by limited mobility. This situations presents a contradiction: while the state relies on migrant workers for its economic contribution, it simultaneously perpetuates their illegality. This situation creates a negotiation between the state's economic needs, the policies and regulations that govern and control them, and the migrant workers' survival. Human security for undocumented migrant workers is relational; it relies on interactions among state policies, labor-market demands, and migrant workers' agency.

Human security is not a given; it is shaped and negotiated in the context of inadequate protection of migrant workers' rights and the intertwined economic and social issues. Importantly, regularization is not only considered in terms of the complete legalization of immigration status, although usually temporary, depending on certain conditions, but also to describe the formal inclusion of illegal migrants in more specific subsystems of society (Schweitzer, 2024). Protection, in the context of human security, encompasses migrant workers' ability to navigate daily life amidst structural inequalities, making physical threats a secondary priority for protection. Starting from the initial recruitment process, even undocumented migrants are at the bottom of the list for desired jobs, are even excluded from formal employment, and become the first choice for informal work (Salihoğlu & Vargas-Silva, 2024). This situation illustrates that undocumented migrant workers exist within Malaysia's social, economic, and political spaces, where they are present but unrecognized and unprotected.

This section expands the analysis of the relationship between the state, transnational labor markets, and the lived experiences of migrant workers. The discussion emphasizes that the insecurity experienced by migrant workers does not stand alone as an individual experience, but rather a structural configuration that systematically produces vulnerability. The daily realities of migrant workers are the product of a regime that actively shapes insecurity as part of the governance of labor migration. Human insecurity in the context of migration is not seen as a failure of state policy, but rather as a logical consequence of a system that integrates economic needs with security controls.

Producing Illegality: A Contradiction between State Security and Human Security

In this section, findings indicate that undocumented migrant workers should not be understood solely as an administrative violation at the individual level. Malaysia lacks a comprehensive migration policy framework, leading to varying degrees of insecurity and vulnerability for both documented and undocumented migrants (Verghis, 2023). Rather, illegality is structurally generated by migration governance mechanisms, including restrictive immigration procedures, costly legalization processes, reliance on labor brokers, and employer control. Several

informants described living under constant fear of immigration raids, detention, and deportation, due to following an unofficial process. A domestic migrant worker, Palupi, explained that an intermediary instructed her on how to respond if she were to arrive at Malaysian Immigration checkpoints and be asked by immigration officers:

> "The intermediary told me that if I reached the immigration counter and was asked about my purpose in Malaysia, I should say I was visiting a relative, such as my uncle. They pressured me not to say I wasn't coming to this country to find work. Essentially, I was forbidden from speaking, let alone knowing that I was going to work as a domestic worker here." (Interview with Palupi, December 2024).

This incident is evidence that undocumented status arises from the very beginning of the migration process, through a migration system that places migrant workers in a dependent and highly vulnerable position. While relying on readily available, low-cost labor is economically necessary, it is also vulnerable to exploitation and illegality. Mechanisms such as complex immigration procedures, cumbersome visa extensions, high legalization costs, and arrests and raids actually increase the likelihood of migrant workers becoming undocumented rather than maintaining legality. In this case, human security is not only weakened by the lack of documents; the documents themselves serve as a means of control that reproduces vulnerability. Migrant workers are treated badly, and raids on undocumented migrants continue despite objections from civil society organizations (Michael, 2024). Insecurity then becomes internalized in migrant workers' daily lives, further normalizing fear as part of the migration experience. Dian, a domestic migrant worker who arrived in Malaysia via the sea crossing route, had a similar experience:

> "My passports and those of my friends who traveled with me were confiscated by the middleman. We complied with everything the middleman instructed us to do because we didn't understand and didn't dare refuse their orders. So we didn't bring any official documents upon arriving in Malaysia, just resigned ourselves to it, not knowing what to do. But I took a photo of my passport and sent it to my relatives back home, just in case something happened to me. But now I can attend meetings with fellow migrant workers, albeit secretly for fear of arrest." (Interview with Dian, December 2024).

Power structures play a crucial role in shaping migrant workers' human security. Malaysia's migration policies and regulations simultaneously undermine the human security of undocumented migrant workers. Undocumented status is not merely an individual violation but a consequence of state-designed mechanisms. The state plays a dual role: relying on migrant workers to fill domestic labor gaps while controlling migration regulations that are often vulnerable to exploitation. Instead of protecting life and security, stakeholders violate them, causing further insecurity (Pandey, 2010). The fundamental contradiction lies in the fact that migrant workers,

who contribute economically, are managed as a readily available, cheap, and disposable labor force. As noted by Yudi, an IOM consultant:

> "The main problem with legality is that they depart illegally. After arriving in their destination country, they then attempt to obtain legal documents through various means, usually by exploiting their existing social networks. However, the process of documenting or legalizing their status often presents problems. In practice, fraud and document manipulation often occur. For example, work permits are manipulated, where a single permit is used by several people alternately by changing the identity or photo on the document. This kind of practice is quite common." (Interview with Yudi, January 2026).

As long as the state prioritizes economic needs over human security, it will remain unmet. The migration regime imposes numerous restrictive measures beyond the control of migrant workers themselves. At the same time, the way(s) in which migrant irregularity is being perceived and treated have been shown to vary significantly across different nationalities. However, also regional and local contexts (Schweitzer, 2024: 5). This contradiction is manifested in the experiences of undocumented migrant workers, forcing them into a difficult and often informal documentation process. The problems faced by undocumented migrant workers do not end upon arrival in their destination countries; restrictive migration regulations prevent them from legalizing their status through formal channels. Consequently, undocumented migrant workers rely on informal networks and alternative documentation strategies for survival. These survival strategies are not simply individual violations, but rather responses to structural constraints in migration governance. This dynamic was highlighted by Yudi, who described how undocumented workers navigate the legalization process:

> "The main problem with legality is that they depart illegally. After arriving in their destination country, they then attempt to obtain legal documents through various means, usually by exploiting their existing social networks. However, the process of documenting or legalizing their status often presents problems. In practice, fraud and document manipulation often occur. For example, work permits are manipulated, where a single permit is used by several people alternately by changing the identity or photo on the document. This kind of practice is quite common." (Interview with Yudi, January 2026).

The conflict between state security and human security becomes increasingly apparent when migration is viewed as a potential threat to national stability. States tend to prioritize border surveillance, mobility control, and law enforcement in their security agendas. These measures construct undocumented migrant workers as risks, rather than individuals to be protected. This contradiction demonstrates the fundamental incompatibility of state security and human security in migration practices. Rather than being aligned, the contradiction between state security and

human security positions migrant workers as subjects caught between two conflicting logics, protected on paper but marginalized in reality. Consequently, undocumented migrants occupy a vulnerable position within the migration regime, which is politically structured as objects of control. The experiences presented in this study illustrate the imbalance between state-centered security priorities and the everyday security needs of migrant workers.

The Human Security Paradox in the Production of Migrant Workers' Precarity

Labor migration from Indonesia to Malaysia is shaped by a state-centric security approach that prioritizes state security and establishes a systematic power structure. In this approach, the state operates control mechanisms that create conditions of vulnerability. As a result, precarity arises from the state's regulation and control over labor migration. The migration system is designed to combine the fulfillment of economic needs with state control, thereby producing precarity. Raids, official document checks, and police operations contribute to an unsafe environment for migrant workers in public spaces. Immigration control is not limited to borders; it also occurs within urban areas, at roadblocks, and during identity checks, all of which are irregular, invisible, and unpredictable (Franck, 2019). Access to public spaces, characterized by limited daily mobility, is marked by insecurity and fear. According to Nasrikah, a migrant worker advocate involved with Pertimig, cases of illegality are not solely the fault of migrant workers:

> "The numerous cases of illegality or lack of documentation are not solely the fault of migrant workers. Female domestic migrant workers, in particular, are deceived by intermediaries, both before departing from Indonesia and upon arrival in Malaysia. Many female domestic migrant workers lack understanding of employment contracts and the necessary documentation. However, legally, they are in a weak position because employment contracts are only between workers and employers, and many lack work permits." (Interview with Nasrikah, December 2024).

These practices illustrate how migrant workers develop survival strategies amid the uncertainty inherent in the migration regime's control mechanisms. Fear of stringent permit regulations, document checks, and immigration raids limits migrant workers' access to mobility, legal protection, and social services. Human security for undocumented migrant workers is relational and negotiated within unequal power structures involving the state, labor markets, employers, and labor brokers. Migrant workers' insecurity stems not only from the lack of legal documentation but also from exploitative employment relationships fueled by weak bargaining power, resulting in limited access to formal protection mechanisms. The multidimensional and overlapping processes of job insecurity and immigration can exacerbate the uncertainty surrounding forced labor, trapping migrants in a highly precarious situation (Lewis et al., 2015). As explained by Yudi, the high cost of procedural migration encourages some Indonesian migrant workers to choose non-procedural routes to work in Malaysia:

> "The Indonesia-Malaysia migration corridor can be explained by push and pull factors. Push factors in Indonesia include limited job opportunities, skills or certification requirements, and wage differences compared to Malaysia. Meanwhile, pull factors include geographical and cultural proximity, as well as increasingly convenient transportation options. This combination of factors encourages Indonesians to migrate to Malaysia, with some even bypassing official procedures due to the perceived high cost of legal migration." (Interview with Yudi, January 2026).

Policies and regulations implemented by the state, intended to strengthen human security, often reproduce insecurity. Migration infrastructure created by regulatory and commercial actors, supposedly intended to facilitate migration and benefit migrant workers, actually creates and exacerbates migrant uncertainty (Sunam, 2023). The contradiction between the protection of rights and their neglect ultimately triggers multiple layers of insecurity. In this case, the more the state enforces the law, the greater the insecurity migrant workers experience within that space. Rather than serving the purpose of national security, legality presents itself as a paradox in human security. As the state increasingly enforces a strong legal regime, such as aggressive immigration checks and strict document management, it creates a sense of insecurity for individuals within the system. The legality paradox emerges when procedural migration is perceived as expensive and burdensome for prospective migrant workers. In this context, social networks in the destination country often mitigate the perceived risk of irregular migration, but ultimately place migrants in undocumented and unsafe situations. According to Yudi, bureaucratic chains and the involvement of multiple actors can increase migration costs, pushing migrants to seek quick and cheap routes:

> "The cost of procedural migration is relatively high due to the lengthy bureaucratic chain and the numerous actors involved in the migration process. From a rational-choice perspective, migrants tend to choose the options they perceive as more advantageous, leading some to take shorter routes without following formal procedures. Furthermore, the existence of strong social networks in the destination country helps them overcome various obstacles, including documentation and legal issues. However, this choice also risks placing them in an undocumented or illegal status." (Interview with Yudi, January 2026).

Precarity refers to the lived experience of individuals who exist and survive in a state of vulnerability, experiencing, feeling, negotiating, and responding to these vulnerable conditions in their daily lives. The uncertainty experienced by migrant workers is not short-lived or temporary, but relatively permanent. The primary focus of human security protection for migrant workers is safeguarding fundamental rights and individual well-being, rather than relying on legality as a rigid filtering mechanism. The state exists not merely as a control mechanism but as an actor that ensures human security within its territory. Repressive legal regimes generate insecurity not only due to structural conditions but also due to the everyday experiences of undocumented migrant workers, who are highly vulnerable in their

social positions. Migrants are identified as a particularly vulnerable group of workers due to their uncertain legal status and residency, as well as their position in the international division of labor, where they perform unregulated work (Piper, 2017). Thus, human security is no longer a universal right, but rather a privilege granted to those who meet the legal requirements. Herman, a migrant worker active in the Serantau community, explained that the situation encourages migrant workers to choose unofficial routes, which are perceived as easier and cheaper, despite the greater risks:

> "Many migrant workers still depart through undocumented channels. This route is relatively easier to penetrate because it does not always require air travel. Departure through undocumented channels involves intermediaries, or brokers, who are suspected of collaborating with certain parties to facilitate the departure process. However, most migrant workers who use this route are victims of fraud and lack proper procedures. Migrant workers arrive in Malaysia without the appropriate work visas due to the high costs of document processing and official recruitment processes." (Interview with Herman, December 2024).

These workers find themselves in a situation where no choice can eliminate risk, leading to a constant shift in security decisions and the creation of new insecurities. Human security becomes a paradox when official institutions, in this case, the state, supported by policies and protective mechanisms, actually become a trigger for insecurity for individuals. For insane, while the Malaysia government claims to protect foreign nationals residing in its country, the protective measures implemented actually create insecurity. In the process of labor migration, it is clear that the logic of state security and human security maneuver in opposite directions. The human security paradox occurs when mechanisms created to provide protection actually become sources of insecurity and vulnerability. It is contradictory that, while the state encourages labor migration to meet economic needs, it fails to ensure basic protections for migrant workers.

The Normalization of Precarity: The Reality of Everyday Life of Migrant Workers'

Precarity emerges as a consequence of a migration regime entrenched for years, reproduced through regulations and policies, labor markets, and hierarchical social relations. The increasing mobility of precarious work, driven by neoliberal development, nationalist citizenship regimes, and state power practices, has long been part of a regime of control and exploitation (Tappe & Nguyen, 2019). This condition is normalized as a practice of structural inequality that perpetuates the marginalization of migrant workers. This normalization reveals that precarity is a recurring, everyday experience that demands resilience from migrant workers. Their ability to maintain resilience is continually tested when insecurity is used as a tool to control them. Fajar, an advocate for migrant workers who is active in Tenaganita, explains:

> "In Malaysia, migrant workers are often viewed simply as a means of production, regardless of the sector in which they work. They are not fully recognized as human beings with other dimensions to their lives, such as social, family, and personal needs. Public perception sometimes suggests that they compete with local workers, stealing job opportunities. Even worse, they are considered a social ill." (Interview with Fajar, January 2025).

The precarity experienced by migrant workers extends beyond the superficial and accumulates into psychosocial dimensions. Prolonged insecurity leaves deep stress on migrant workers' emotional well-being. Lived precarity, in this case, is produced through everyday experiences and is considered a regular part of migrant workers' lives. The insecurity that becomes part of migrant workers' lives interferes with their orientation in their responses, shaping their behavioral patterns. Migrants' responses to these adverse working conditions range from concerns about harassment and exploitation to fears of wage reductions or termination (Banaś et al., 2024). The experience of uncertainty results in feelings of insecurity and stress, as reflected in Palupi's story:

> "Upon arriving in Malaysia and going through immigration, the broker asked for the passport and cell phone. Then, the broker took me directly to the prospective employer. I was not aware that the workplace was in Kuala Lumpur and was not expecting to be assigned to such a distant location, but I accepted the assignment. During my time at work, I experienced mistreatment by the employer. Eventually, I could not stand it anymore, so I decided to return to my hometown." (interview with Palupi, December 2024).

Palupi's story reveals that she entered Malaysia on a tourist visa, unaware that it did not allow her to work. Her case automatically made Palupi an undocumented migrant worker because of her visa. While illegality refers to the legal status inherent in an individual, it is not an inherent characteristic of that individual. Political and legal interests construct illegality through the process of illegalization. Illegality as a constructed and operating category exclusively produced by immigration policies and laws that aim to "illegalize" mobility flows (Gazzotti, 2021). The strategy of illegality used to produce precarity involves limiting an individual's access to formal protection. The illegal status assigned to an individual is a form of construction that ultimately limits even the fundamental rights of migrant workers. Illegality is more than just a status outside the law; it is a condition that triggers insecurity for migrant workers. The process of illegalization pushes migrant workers into political, economic, and social control. Nova's experience illustrates that undocumented status becomes a control mechanism that makes migrant workers vulnerable to intimidation:

> "I came to Malaysia at my relative's initiative, hoping to improve my life. He took care of everything, and I just followed along, as I did not understand. After starting work, I faced an even worse fate. The employer confiscated my documents and cell phone. I was threatened with a police

> report because I did not have a work permit." (Interview with Nova, January 2025).

Fear and anxiety become a new habitus amidst the experience of precarity, becoming part of how migrant workers feel, think, and act. The fear shaped by this precarity seems to be a natural part of migrant workers' lives. Jobs characterized by insecurity, low wages, limited bargaining power, and labor protections contribute to conditions of uncertainty that affect workers' physical and psychological health (Sambajee & Scholarios, 2023). Insecurity is no longer a conscious choice, but a response to long-entrenched structural inequalities. Living with uncertainty has gradually shaped how migrant workers perceive the world and navigate daily life. Precarity is not a separate external event, but rather a recurring set of experiences. This process has become internalized, governing migrant workers' lifestyles and behaviors and exerting control over the individual. Therefore, precarity not only regulates their mobility formally but also controls migrant workers' emotions and bodies. Insecurity can be seen in Nova's experience, where fear has shaped her response to violence:

> "When I arrived in Malaysia, the employer immediately asked me to start working. I had taken on significant debt covering my travel expenses. I could not stand my employer's treatment anymore, when I told want to return to Indonesia, he slapped and pulled me. Once, he even hit me with a rattan cane and hit my head until I bled. I had to get away. I devised a strategy, and finally, fled with no money, just the clothes I was wearing, not even sandals. After an extraordinary efforts, I escaped and was rescued by the Indonesian domestic migrant worker community in Malaysia or Pertimig." (Interview with Nova, January 2025).

Lived precarity is a state characterized by life uncertainty, social vulnerability, minimal access to basic services, and the absence of welfare guarantees. In the context of migration, precarity is associated with illegality, which intersects with migrant workers' legal status. Precarious legal status, in turn, goes hand in hand with precarious employment and livelihood; in short, migrants' lives are often precarious in a variety of ways, including vulnerability to deportation, exclusion from public services, and basic state protections (Paret & Gleeson, 2016). Migration regimes, with their strict controls that limit individual access, actually reproduce precarity. Precarious conditions further reinforce illegality, even triggering individuals to persist beyond legal boundaries. Therefore, precarity and illegality cannot be understood separately; they are intertwined, shaping migrant workers' social experiences. This situation is closely related to the regulation of labor migration. In many destination countries, migration management involves more than just labor governance and migrant protection, but is also framed through the lens of state security. As Fajar explained:

> "Immigration is not just about regulating the entry and stay of people in a country, but also relates to the state's efforts to limit and control inflows from a security perspective. In Malaysia, the management of migrant

> worker immigration often conflates worker protection interests with the state's security interests. As a result, issues that are actually related to human security are often understood and managed within the framework of state security." (Interview with Fajar, January 2025).

Conversely, under specific circumstances, precarity can reinforce illegality. The precarious lives of migrant workers often prompt decisions to act outside of legal provisions. This precarity can be experienced before labor migration for various reasons, such as poverty, conflict, and climate change. In these resource-poor conditions, migrant workers choose to become undocumented. The complicated, time-consuming, and expensive paperwork process is one reason migrant workers choose to become illegal. The desire to improve their lives in another country overrides economic pressures and instability in their home country.

These few cases of Indonesian migrant workers represent a small fraction of the many that occur. Illegality significantly impacts the daily lives of migrant workers, who are highly vulnerable to mistreatment by their employers. They persist in risky conditions because they seek to escape the economic constraints of their countries of origin. They believe Malaysia offers a chance for a better life, even though they must work as migrant workers who do not meet the requirements for legal status.

Navigating Safe Spaces: Migrant Workers' Survival Strategies in Precarity

The survival strategies used by undocumented migrant workers showcase their agency within oppressive structures. The solidarity built within communities serves as an informal safeguard, compensating for the lack of formal protection from the state. Migrant workers develop adaptive strategies to cope with insecurity by navigating emerging risks as they arise. These adaptive strategies do not eliminate risk; instead, they are temporary and shift other forms of insecurity. Adaptive strategies encompass the individual and collective responses migrant workers employ to navigate prevailing socio-political structures. Surrounded by uncertainty, migrant workers employ various survival strategies. These strategies reflect their efforts to create safe spaces within structures that reproduce vulnerability.

One survival strategy is building solidarity networks with fellow migrant workers. These solidarity networks are built on shared origins, religions, occupations, and migration experiences. Compared to local workers and foreign professionals, they receive less social support from society, which can leave them in a "social quarantine", unable to engage in normal social life (Chin, 2019). The solidarity among migrant workers serves as a source of moral support. Migrant workers' solidarity, rooted in their migration experiences, is fostered in their daily lives through living with friends from the same region or profession. They rent shared accommodations, not only to save costs but also to provide a collective space and maintain solidarity. Herman explained that for migrant workers, these shared accommodations serve as a social hub during emergencies, such as legal issues, work-related accidents, or illnesses:

> "Many migrant workers rent accommodation with colleagues based on their hometowns in Indonesia. Most of them share the same profession, such as working in plantations, construction, or the service sector. This shared space not only saves on rent but also facilitates communication and coordination between colleagues, especially when important information is needed. The relatively complex life of living away from home is perceived as less stressful when experienced with friends." (Interview with Herman, December 2024).

Social networks are also formed through communities of similar professions, such as the Indonesian Migrant Domestic Workers Association (Pertimig). This community provides a platform for domestic migrant workers, primarily women, to share information and provide emotional support. Pertimig's five missions are: organizing Indonesian migrant domestic workers; launching campaigns to ratify Conventions 189 and 190 to realize decent work for domestic workers; eliminating discrimination against domestic workers; advocating for policy change; and empowering and strengthening the capacity of our members (Pertimig, 2022). The experiences of Pertimig members demonstrate how solidarity networks operate in practice, providing collective advocacy and emotional support for migrant domestic workers. Nasrikah described this process as follows:

> "Pertimig was founded by migrant domestic workers in Malaysia. Our organization is independent and advocates for the rights of migrant domestic workers. We help our friends, especially migrant workers, who experience problems while working in Malaysia. We hold regular meetings so we do not feel alone; we have many friends here. If there are issues involving migrant domestic workers, Pertimig involves other parties, such as NGOs, to jointly resolve the cases." (Interview with Nasrikah, December 2024).

Social solidarity, formed around shared beliefs, is also an organized network, namely the Indonesian Muslim Workers Union (Sarbumusi), a community grounded in Islamic values. Sarbumusi is an organization affiliated with Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), whose administrators are NU cadres, meaning they come from various backgrounds within NU-affiliated organizations (Dewanto, 2024). Beyond providing religious activities, Sarbumusi also serves as a support network for migrant workers facing employment and social problems while working in Malaysia. According to Farhan, Sarbumusi shows how religion-based social solidarity serves as support for migrant workers:

> "Sarbumusi's presence is to solve problems, not to be the source of them. As a Muslim community, Sarbumusi will advocate for the rights of migrant workers, particularly those related to religion, in addressing migration and employment issues." (interview with Farhah Rohim, Januari 2025).

This statement shows that Sarbumusi not only provides religious activities but also carries out advocacy and protection functions for migrant workers. The significance of Sarbumusi lies not only in its organizational existence but also in its role as an alternative support mechanism for migrant workers. In a context where

state protection is limited, Sarbumusi, as a non-state actor, functions as an intermediary, filling the protection gap. Migrant workers' well-being is not solely secured by formal mechanisms such as the state, but also through community-based solidarity networks that emerge in response to protection issues.

Facing illegality is not simply a matter of administrative compliance but of survival. Within the migration regime, undocumented migrant workers avoid immigration authorities as a strategy to minimize the risk of detention and deportation. This situation forces them to limit their mobility and to avoid public spaces, which are no longer perceived as neutral and safe but as spaces of detection. The fear of detention not only restricts migrant workers' social and economic activities but also hinders their access to basic services. Information about raid locations and document checks is generally obtained through social networks of fellow migrant workers. Thus, the insecurity experienced by migrant workers is not solely a result of their lack of documentation, but rather a consequence of the migration regime. In this context, illegality is a control mechanism that results in deportability, a situation where the constant threat of arrest and deportation shapes migrant workers' choices, behavior, and everyday life.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study demonstrates that undocumented Indonesian migrant workers in Malaysia experience insecurity not only due to their lack of legal documentation, but also that migration governance itself systematically generates uncertainty. Undocumented status is not merely an administrative consequence but a socio-political mechanism that shapes migrant workers' everyday vulnerabilities, reproduced by the state, the labor market, and social relations. These findings suggest that migrant workers face fear, limited mobility, and limited access to formal protection, while at the same time remaining part of the Malaysian economy.

As a result, migrant workers experience fear, restricted mobility, and limited access to formal protection, while simultaneously remaining part of the Malaysian economy. Legal mechanisms such as immigration operations, document checks, and raids fuel feelings of insecurity and create unstable social situations for migrant workers. The state, which is normatively obligated to guarantee human security, instead encourages the fragmentation of protection that relies on legal status.

The originality of this research lies in its integrates concepts of human security, migrant illegality, deportation, and uncertainty into a coherent analytical framework. This framework aims to explain the lived experiences of undocumented Indonesian migrant workers in Malaysia. Unlike previous studies, which have mostly examined undocumented migration through legal, economic, or policy perspectives, this research conceptualizes undocumented status as a production of illegality and insecurity in labor migration. By combining critical migration studies and human security approaches, this research demonstrates how the state simultaneously relies

on migrant labor while reproducing migrant vulnerability through mechanisms of control.

Migrant workers contribute significantly to the economies of both their countries of origin and destination, yet they live in social precarity due to unequal power relations. This inequality makes precarity an integral part of the migration system. Precarity, systemically produced by migration regulations, labor market mechanisms, and hierarchical social relations, is inseparable from legality. Both shape the lived reality of migrant workers, with precarity providing the material conditions that push people into legal gray areas. At the same time, the state responds with bureaucratic mechanisms that further reproduce illegal status. The reality of migrant workers demonstrates how human security can transform into systemic insecurity.

For further progress, several recommendations are needed to support the legality, security, and welfare of migrant workers. Strengthening bilateral cooperation between Malaysia and Indonesia is essential, with a primary focus on protection and regulating mobility. The agreement between the two countries was made with a commitment to simplify legal pathways and reduce costs, to reduce illegality. As a destination country, Malaysia needs to review its repressive migration policies and adopt a pro-migrant approach. Indonesia, as the country of origin, should prepare pre-departure measures, including adequate skills training, transparent information, coordination among relevant institutions, and oversight by labor agencies. These steps are appropriate to the needs and can strengthen migrant workers' bargaining position.

A significant change in the approach to migrant worker security is essential, shifting from a state-centered to a human-centered one. Achieving human security requires that both countries of origin and destination focus on protecting individuals rather than state interests. This shift involves providing both administrative and substantive protections for migrant workers. To facilitate this change, this effort requires transforming regulatory structures and migration policies from control mechanisms to legal and rights-based protections. Policies must consider the lived precarity experienced by migrant workers, particularly those without proper documentation. Without this paradigm shift, the challenges and vulnerabilities migrant workers face will persist.

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6. Declarations

6.1. Ethical considerations

"Not applicable"

6.2. Use of artificial intelligence (AI)

Authors must select one of the following statements:

"The authors declare that the generative artificial intelligence (AI) tool [Grammarly, Scispace] was used exclusively for language editing and/or grammatical improvement. The use of AI did not influence the scientific content, study design, data analysis, data interpretation, results, or conclusions of the manuscript. Full responsibility for the content remains with the authors."

6.3. Conflict of Interest

"The authors declare no conflicts of interest".

6.4. Funding

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6.5 Data Availability Statement
The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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Interview, Farhah Rohim, Coordinator of Sarbumusi, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, January 2025.

Interview with Nova, Migrant Domestic Worker, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, January 2025

Interview with Palupi, Migrant Domestic Worker, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, December 2024.

Interview with Dian, Migrant Domestic Worker, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, December 2024.

Interview with Nasrikah, Advocate for Domestic Migrant Workers involved with Pertimig, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, December 2024.

Interview with Herman Opoy, Migrant Worker and Coordinator of Serantau, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, December 2024.