

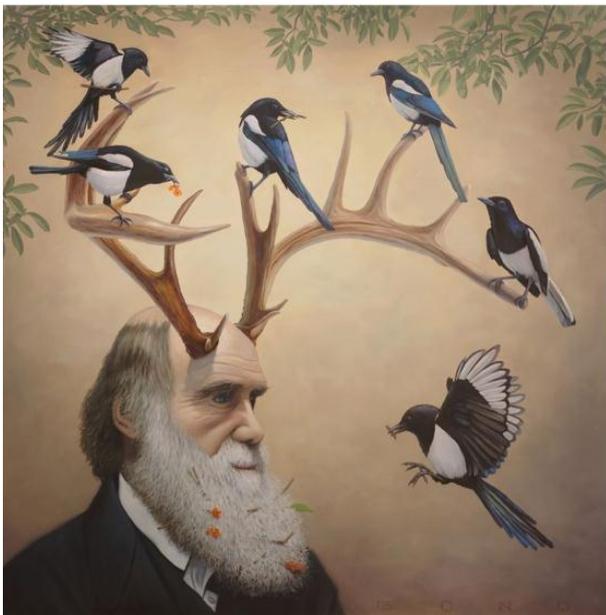
# opción

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## **Community Parenting: The Caring Of The Migrant Workers' Children In East Java, Indonesia**

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### **Abstract**

This study examines the caring of the children of migrant workers through community parenting, which is one of the pillars of Program Desa Migran Produktif (Desmigratif) or the Productive Migrant Village Program in Paringan Village, Ponorogo. This research used a qualitative approach. This research found that the parenting done through the ParingArt community has impacted positively on the children of the migrant workers in Paringan village. Specifically, the children who join the 'ParingArt Community' enjoy a different environment (and a different way of caring) which has led to different feelings, attitudes and behaviours. The children are now more focused on positive activities that can encourage them to produce a masterpiece of art, rather than juvenile children who lack a sense of care.

**Keyword: Migrant Worker, Children, Community Parenting, Desmigratif**

## **Crianza Comunitaria: El Cuidado De Los Hijos De Los Trabajadores Migrantes En Java Oriental, Indonesia**

Este estudio examina el cuidado de los hijos de los trabajadores migrantes a través de la crianza comunitaria, que es uno de los pilares del Programa Desa Migran Produktif (Desmigratif) o el Programa Productivo de la Aldea Migrante en la aldea de Paringan, Ponorogo. Esta investigación utilizó un enfoque cualitativo. Esta investigación encontró que la crianza realizada a través de la comunidad de ParingArt ha impactado positivamente en los hijos de los trabajadores migrantes en la aldea de Paringan. Específicamente, los niños que se unen a la “Comunidad ParingArt” disfrutaban de un entorno diferente (y una forma diferente de cuidar) que ha llevado a diferentes sentimientos, actitudes y comportamientos. Los niños ahora están más enfocados en actividades positivas que pueden alentarlos a producir una obra maestra de arte, en lugar de niños menores que carecen de sentido de cuidado.

Palabra clave: Trabajador migrante, Niños, Crianza comunitaria, Desmigratif

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The sending of Indonesian Migrant Workers (locally Tenaga Kerja Indonesia or TKI and Tenaga Kerja Wanita or TKW, hereafter TKI/TKW is used to refer to Indonesian Migrant Workers) overseas, which tends to increase each year, has an impact not only on the family being left but more especially, on the children that they have left in their village of origin. Indonesia has been known as one of countries that send the biggest number of migrant workers out into the world. Unfortunately, most of these migrant workers are individuals who do not have qualified skills. Thus they choose to become migrant workers abroad, filling in the need for low skilled labour overseas. The presumption is that where there are high wages that are even five to ten times higher than wages in Indonesia, sending workers abroad has often become the best alternative to maintain the families' economy and welfare. In Indonesia, sending workers abroad is dominated by female workers who work as domestic workers or low skilled office workers. From the data recorded by the National Agency for Placement and Protection of Indonesian Manpower (locally Badan Nasional Penem-

patan dan Perlindungan Tenaga Kerja Indonesia or BNP2TKI), the number of female workers is almost double that of male migrant workers. The data can be seen in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Data on sending workers by sex

Year	2017		Total	2018		Total
	Male	Female		Male	Female	
Total	78 258	184 641	262 899	84 644	179 448	264 092
Percentage	30%	70%		32%	68%	

Source: BNP2TKI 2018

The above data reveals that the sending of migrant workers overseas is dominated by women. This domination, in turn, has impacted on the overall welfare of not only the individual workers leaving the country for another with a new culture and environment but also as they automatically leave their families, this has an impact especially on their children.

The rise of female participation in the labour force in developing countries has created some alternatives for caring for the children who are left at home. Children who are abandoned by their mother to work will be submitted to their female relatives who can provide care or who can help to arrange care for the children. This is where their relatives are asked to help, which PENG & WONG's study (2015) is so-called surrogacy. This means that the children will grow up without the assistance of their mother and instead they are in the care of extended family, such as their grandparents, uncles and aunties, brother and sisters, or even in some cases, their neighbours or surrogate carers. The development of children begins after birth, where the children acquire skills such as buzzing, droning, controlling their necks, turning to the side, smiling, making eye contact, and thus following the usual pattern of development (PISPATI, AFRICAWA-LA, VARGHESE, 2019).

The growth of children is very important, particularly when they are accompanied by both parents who have their respective roles and who complement each other in order to shape the character of their children so they can be more independent. However, when the mother is working as a migrant worker and going abroad, nurturing and caring for the growing child is done by just one of the parties or it may become the task of another family member (DELLIOS, 2018). The children of Indonesian Workers are known as TKI/TKW's children when their parents have left to work

abroad. Where the parents work in the same country, their care will be transferred to the remaining party or to any relatives that are accommodating. This becomes quite risky in terms of shaping the character and future of the child (BOCCAGNI, 2018).

Some of the children of the workers are treated as a nurse by caring for their siblings, grandparents who are elderly, sick and disabled. The children are considered to be adults and independently they will be given a responsibility like that of their parents to keep their relatives safe. This will have an impact on the rights of the children to play. They will grow up but they will not have the rights that they should have. The rights of migrant worker children are allowed to be mobilised in order to reduce the vulnerability of the migrant worker children's rights, covering the problems in childhood and parents.

The completion of migrant parenting issues cannot be understood as simply as issues can be in the adults, as there is a process that also involves the children of migrants. Children often learn new things (language, technology, information etc.) more quickly than their parents, and their parents rely on them to help in interpreting and translating. Through the intermediary activity of language, the children talk to help to solve the problems of their parents, thus facilitating the environment within the family and the wider community to work toward the development of their new environment. (BAUER, 2015).

In most societies, the care of children is women's work and it is related to motherhood. However, there is still a need for the roles to be balanced between men and women when taking care of children. The job of parenting places more emphasis on the mother's side due to the culture that has developed in the community. The effects of transnational migration on child rearing does not only look to change the mother-child relationship and the practice of motherhood, but it is ALSO reflected in the relations between the generations and gender itself in parenting. The long-term maternal physical absence from the lives of their children makes the involvement of others in the process of childcare necessary. To compensate for their long-term physical absence from the lives of their children, the mothers use telecommunication channels and gifts to win the affection of their children (PENG & WONG, 2015).

Women working as international workers can earn a living. However, they are still not able to change the household. Women have an important role in the upbringing of any children, although the children will live with their father. The role of female relatives such as their grandmother is still very important and this needs to be studied. Many of the children who are cared for by their father are neglected because a lot of men do not want to deal with things like parenting, as it is seen of as sentimental and imposing on women. Therefore the role of any female relatives is meaningful in the care of children abandoned by their mother when they are working abroad. In this, a program like Program Desa Migran Produktif (Desmigratif, hereafter Desmigratif) or the Productive Migrant Village Program, which one of its pillars is community parenting for TKI/TKW's children, is one of alternatives or solutions for TKI/TKW to address the problems of caring for their children. This study examines how the caring of the children of migrant workers through community parenting in Desmigratif program, has impacted on the children of migrant workers in Parangan Village, Ponorogo.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODS

This study used a qualitative descriptive approach. CRESWELL (2016) said that this approach was chosen so then the research can capture the factual, and accurate information on the facts and nature of the communities in the research area of Parangan Village. This represents one of the biggest sending villages in the Ponorogo region referring to migrant workers in Indonesia (kantong TKI/TKW). There are pockets of migrant workers in East Java who utilise community parenting. The research location selected was Parangan Village, Jenangan District, Ponorogo. The researchers chose Ponorogo as the study site because Ponorogo is the largest shipper of migrant workers in East Java, while Parangan village was chosen because it has well-developed community parenting and achievements in the arts, particularly film. The parenting community of ParingArt has already created several short films. The researchers used the snowball sampling technique to select the informants. There were 42 informants total included in this study including those from the ASN Department of Labor Ponorogo, the Village Head of Parangan, a Desmigratif Officer and members of the community consisting of parents who worked as migrant workers and prospective TKI/TKW (9 informants), Full TKI/TKW (14 informants), children of Full TKI (11 informants) and the members of ParingArt

(5 informants). The children of the workers who were interviewed were, by majority, adolescents in junior high / high school. The researchers used interviews, observations and documentation for the data collection. The researchers conducted an analysis of the data using an interactive model of the four kinds of activities involved, including the data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. The data collection was a cyclical and interactive process.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The informants were the children of migrant workers who also expressed the same as what is perceived by their children. The parents feel the weight of leaving their children unattended and not being able to give them attention. They have needs that need to be fulfilled to force them to keep working abroad for the sake of their children. Some informants, especially the mothers, admitted that they feel guilty and they cannot bear to leave their children but they have no other choice. All of the informants who are working as migrant workers are highly motivated to return to Indonesia so then they can be together with their family after getting the capital to open a business. Likewise for the informants who became Full TKI/TKW, the reason for them going abroad is because their children are already teenagers and they require their parental figure in order to develop properly. Many parents choose to give in and open up a small business in their home rather than having to go back to work overseas, even though the revenues are not the same as those from working abroad. At least they can live with their families. The whole informant who become parents aware if their child needs not only depend on the material that they provide, but also the love and attention they needed more children.

The parents are not the only ones who nurture and care for the children. In some instances, this activity is done by several informants. Children can also be a caregiver, replacing their parents by caring for relatives in need. TKI//TKW children are required to be independent and responsible. This has also become one of the reasons why the parents feel guilty for leaving their children.

Some researchers assert that the children can learn the responsibility of caring in the development of 'success' en-route to becoming an adult. The study of children as 'young governesses' was mostly analysed from

the perspective of 'the vulnerability of children' (BECKER, 2007; WU, 2016). This is because most of the studies have addressed the treatment of low-income families and families who are economically disadvantaged. In such families, the children usually help their siblings, parents or people with disabilities; these are people who need to be treated. These children become emotional trust for his parents could do the maintenance work. However, some researchers claim that maintenance activities such as this can endanger the children's social and academic development (BAUER, 2015).

The researcher met with Nikita, one of the daughters of the workers who left to work abroad. Nikita had to stay and take care of her grandparents who are elderly and ailing. When her mother works as a migrant worker, Nikita lives with her grandparents. Her father and mother have long been divorced, which gives Nikita a more independent life. Nikita feels pressured by the circumstances that must be lived in, but Nikita has always tried to accept the situation by remembering her mother's struggle to seek a fortune. Up until now, her mother was still working in Hong Kong, leaving her with her grandparents. Nikita has grown into a girl who is friendly and courteous. Even in a healthy environment, Nikita feels lonely. Her close relatives help to meeting her needs and they also seek to provide affection, although it is not the same as that given by her mother. At least Nikita is always grateful for the presence of her relatives. Although she is far from her mother, Nikita managed to complete her education at the undergraduate level in the Department of Communication, University of Muhammadiyah Ponorogo. This shows that not all of the children of migrant workers left behind by their parent's work show there to be adverse effects on their children's education and psychosocial. There are also children who succeed as Nikita has in their education, although a bit difficult and full of mental stress.

Childcare is regarded as the main task of women. Many cultures still hold this opinion. However, the parenting role of the men is also needed and it is as big of a role as that of the mother. It cannot be denied that a mother has more influence on the child's development. A father often prefers to discipline their children to be more independent by giving priority to their masculinity rather than showing attention and affection like a mother. The attention and care of a mother is more necessary because the children can be treated with compassion, whereas the father teaches the children to be

independent and disciplined. Both parents love their children in their own way. Fathers love their children and care for them without lessening their masculinity.

There are differences in parenting between the father and mother. This was felt by Fortuna, the child of one of the workers who left to work as a migrant worker in Taiwan, Fortuna lives with her father. Fortuna is currently at the high school level as a kid. When she was a teenager, Fortuna began to feel different and envy for her friends. Fortuna is often late for school because they do not have a motherly figure who wakes her up for school. This was the highlight of the sadness that she felt. She wants the presence of her mother. Fortuna tried to be independent in order to understand their mother who has to work a lot in order to make ends meet. Fortuna feels sorry for the state of the mother to be far behind him and work hard for their needs. Fortuna hopes that in the future, he can be proud of her accomplishments. Fortuna also wants to be successful in order to replace their parents when it comes to earning a living.

Family parenting issues on migrant workers is very varied and diverse. From the research conducted in the village of Paringan, the researchers were able to see that almost all of the TKI/TKW children want the presence of their parents, particularly their mother. The majority of children have been abandoned. When they are small, they are abandoned by their working parents. They do not feel anything because they do not understand anything. When this happens in adolescence and once they understand the meaning of their mother's presence, they begin to feel lonely and they expect the presence of a mother figure. Many children of the workers strive to be more mature and independent in order to try and appreciate the efforts of their parents who are trying to meet their needs.

The present government has brought in a program that was implemented in Paringan in order to be a solution to the problem of childcare experienced by the workers. The central government launched the Migrant Rural Productive Village program in Paringan to resolve the problems that the migrant workers encounter, ranging from the Prospective TKI/TKW, TKIs/TKWs who are active, full migrant workers and workers who abandon their family, especially the rights of children who do not get care.

The Productive Rural Migrant Program (Desmigratif) is one of the inno-

ventions initiated by the Ministry of Labour (Kemnaker) to seek protection and to improve the well-being not only of Indonesian Workers (ho work abroad but also full migrant workers and their families. Prospective workers or active TKI/TKW who work abroad are given protection so then they can still go overseas. They are protected until they return to their homeland safely. The Productive Migrant Village Program is a program designed by the original village workers to improve the service and protection of prospective migrant workers going abroad, thus increasing their economic independence and the prosperity of the migrant workers and their families. Not does the government have an active role in the program but they also encourage the participation of the public and relevant stakeholders so then they are more active in running the program in accordance with the objectives for which it was designed. This program is based on four main pillars namely information services migration, cultivating the SME community, which is community childcare cooperative parenting and the formation of people's businesses. This study discusses the third pillar, which is the community of parenting and child development (community parenting) in the village of Parangan.

### 3.1. Parenting children through community parenting

Parenting and childcare is done through the three circles of care relationship, which is the primary relationship that is the relationship between the child and their parents, the secondary relationship with their relatives, friends, neighbours and teachers and then the tertiary care relationship, which is a relationship from working in solidarity as part of an organisation (MCGOVERN, & DEVINE, 2015).

In this study, in the village of Parangan, the care of the children is conducted through the community parenting provided. This helped to create the ParingArt community as a place of care. Community parenting is part of the Desmigratif program related to the third pillar of community care and child development. TKI families get childcare assistance, especially those who live at home. They are given training on how to raise or care for the child properly in order to develop the creativity of the children properly. Other people are also given guidance on how to educate, nurture and guide the children properly (JIANG, 2016). Through these activities, the children of the migrant workers will be raised jointly by the public.

The surrounding environmental factors will greatly influence the development of the child. The positive factors in the developmental environment can help the children to explore their surroundings and to engage in learning activities. The negative environmental factors can have an adverse influence on the risk of psychosocial and biological risk if the surrounding environment is not healthy for the child (PISPATI, AFRICAWALA, VARGHESE, 2019).

This study was conducted in the village of Paringan where the conducting of the parenting community is a little bit different, because it is more focused on the empowerment of adolescent age children than young children who are still in elementary school. The majority of community parenting performed on small children left parents work and strive to meet their needs. In the village parenting community of Paringan, there is more emphasis on teenagers who are vulnerable and who are easily influenced to do things that are beyond their control because they have a high state of curiosity. Moreover, the absence of strict supervision from their parents means that the children will be free to follow their curiosity. It is not a secret that sending workers abroad will have an impact on the children left behind. In the village of Paringan, many children who are victims of a broken home are walking in the wrong direction before they realise that their behaviour is not correct and they seek to get back on the right track. The parenting community formed in Paringan strives to create a healthy environment for the children, especially the teenagers of the migrant workers who have particular vulnerabilities.

In general, the cultural and social processes of the intermediary language in a child's environment affects the child's development. We need to know about the process of the development of children. The characters and relationships formed by the children are a part of how they practice their culture and language, and how their activities contribute socially and economically in a significant manner for their families and communities. (BAUER, 2015)

Several informants who were TKI/TKW children admitted that they might fall into the wrong crowd. There are associations that do a lot of activities that are not clear and they are very fond of wandering without direction. This occurs because no attention is paid to them even though they live with one parent or a parent surrogate. They are not noticed by anyone and they

try to attract the attention of people to bring more attention to themselves, especially from the parents who are working away in foreign countries. There are times when they are aware and when they have to try to understand the circumstances of their parents who are willing to work far away in a foreign land to finance their needs.

From this phenomenon, Desmigratif officers had the idea of making a centre for the children of TKI/TKW in order to make them to be productive and positive rather than falling into the wrong crowd. At that time, the trend in the village of Paringan among teenagers is to have a DSLR camera. This was used by the officers of Desmigratif to make an appropriate centre for the children of migrant workers, which they refer to as the Community ParingArt.

The parenting relationship is very important in the transition of children through the school system. This builds character, ranging from self-esteem, awareness, resilience and through to self-confidence into a soul that mediates the experience and transitional changes. This is not only done through schools but also through study groups and playgroups. The children can learn from their surroundings with their friends his age who they share interests and passions with (MCGOVERN & DEVINE, 2015).

ParingArt community is a community walk in the arts, particularly at the present time on the film. ParingArt formed a year before the program is implemented in the village Desmigratif Paringan. The ParingArt members are mostly made up of the children of migrant workers, but this does not rule out the possibility that children who are not from a family of migrant workers have also joined. Currently, ParingArt has about twenty active members while other members have their own busy lives such as with religious school which requires them to stay in the hostel. A year later, the Desmigratif Program was launched and the third pillar fits perfectly with ParingArt. Thus this creates a real parenting community and it allows the children to be active in the village Paringan.

ParingArt first had the opportunity to show itself by making a movie about the migrant workers. The children of the migrant workers who are members of ParingArt are empowered to be more productive and they are better able to socialise with their friends. The children are invited to produce a short film by utilising the facilities provided as a positive activity. Parin-

gArt's formation is one of the reasons why the children can spare time for a vacation for productive purposes rather than just sitting in the house with no activity.

The productivity of the labour migrants' children in ParingArt is coming to fruition. Their spirit and motivation make them more motivated. ParingArt is trying to maintain their spirit so then they can continue to be productive in other works. In 2018, ParingArt produced a short film titled "Kelingan", in which their publications on their Youtube channel spoke of the experience of being left by their mother who was a labourer working abroad, while they lived alone with their father. The idea of a deep story was inspired by the story of one of its members.

The ParingArt community is a community focused on child care activities for the empowerment of migrant worker children in the context and field of art. ParingArt members itself consists of children who are attending junior-high school. This community provides children who have an interest in art, film, graphic design, videography and photography with something to occupy themselves with. ParingArt try to attract the children of other migrant workers to support each other and to create a community in various fields.

The routine that is usually done in ParingArt is spin on a film. It is intended that the resulting film quality will be better. There are several classes conducted in ParingArt; there is a film class, classroom scenarios, design class and editing classes. All of the members of ParingArt learn together, although not routinely every day. ParingArt has targets to continue discussing the future of the community.

ParingArt is always open to the community and other groups who wish to learn and develop common interests. ParingArt is also shadowed by KOF-PI (Ponorogo Indie Film Community) as a support to exchange thoughts on movies. One of the barriers to productivity in ParingArt is funding. ParingArt is funded through the contributions of its members and donations from the public, while also trying to find sponsors. The government has not provided a specific budget for film production in ParingArt, while the work of ParingArt in the community has the potential to be developed better. Another obstacle comes from the limited ability of children in the ParingArt community to work in a foreign language, thereby making the

production of the film on an international level be slightly delayed.

Paringan village is trying to continue to develop a more diverse community in various other fields. Because there are many children, they seek to channel their interests and talents into a more production activity that is beneficial. This is done so then the children of migrant workers who are in their teens still have a great spirit, great enthusiasm and great curiosity that can be directed to activities that are beneficial and productive. This is so as to reduce the negative social effects.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Children need a role model and at least one parental figure to nurture and guide them in their everyday live so that they do not to fall into negative behaviours. Many parents who work as migrant workers worry about their children being socially unattended, and therefore they often arrange the parenting of their children by their relatives. A father's role in parenting is needed by the children of the migrant workers, but sometimes masculinity means that the children feel that they are not being considered properly. As this research has found, TKI/TKW children often feel lost and can easily become jealous of their friends who have a complete family. These children often strive to be more mature and self-sufficient by trying to understand that the work done by their parents is a form of compassion in order to meet their needs. This research also has highlighted that such government initiative as Desmigratif program, is one of an answer for many problems that often arise relating to TKI/TKW and their impacted families.

Indeed, Desmigratif programs are in existence not only to protect TKI/TKW but also to protect the welfare of the TKI/TKW family that is left behind, especially their children. The Government, through the third pillar, seeks to give children the right to care by creating a community with the intention of parenting. In the village community, parenting is accomplished through the ParingArt community whose members are children in their teens or in junior-high school level. ParingArt become a place for kids to gain and channel their hobby and find their talent in the right place. ParingArt is a community engaged in the arts, especially cinema, which has made the children who join enjoy a different environment and different way of caring, which has led to different lives (feelings, attitudes and behaviours) of TKI/TKW children. The children are now more fo-

cused on positive activities, and further has resulted in the production of a masterpiece of art, rather than juvenile children who lack a sense of care. Yet, this research also observed that ParingArt needs further development in order to be more productive for the future, especially as the funding is still lacking.

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