

FORMULATION OF THE SUSTAINABLE  
EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
FRAMEWORK (SEDF) TO IMPROVE  
MIGRANT WORKFORCE CONTRIBUTION  
IN MALAYSIA

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We hereby declare that we have checked this thesis and, in our opinion, this thesis is adequate in terms of scope and quality for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



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I hereby declare that the work in this thesis is based on my original work except for quotations and citations, which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted for any other degree at Universiti Malaysia Pahang or any other institution.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized letter 'A' with a horizontal line extending to the right, positioned above a horizontal line.

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Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements  
for the award of the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

Centre for Human Sciences  
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA PAHANG

APRIL 2023

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Glory and praise be to almighty Allah; The Creator, Sustainer, and Merciful.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude and respect to my main supervisor Dr. Rohana Binti Hamzah, for the opportunity to pursue my Ph.D. under her supervision and for the continuous guidance and supports provided throughout the years. It is indeed my pleasure to convey my heartfelt gratitude to my co-supervisor, Associate Professor Dr. Hasan Ahmad, for his kind support and advice provided throughout my Ph.D. Besides my supervisors, I would also like to thank the rest of my proposal defense committee members for their insightful comments and encouragement during my Ph.D. proposal defense. My sincere appreciation to Professor Dr. Muhammad Nubli Bin Abdul Wahab and Professor Dr. Md Mustafizur Rahman has been a source of inspiration, guidance, and encouragement throughout the years. I am grateful to Dr. Christina Andin and Dr. Siti Zanaria Satari for the advice and expert technical assistance provided during the research project.

I would like to thank all editors and reviewers for their comments and valuable suggestions on the thesis. We acknowledge the Ministry of Higher Education for providing financial support under the Fundamental Research Grant Scheme (FRGS) No. FRGS/1/2019/SS06/UMP/02/1 (University reference RDU1901175) and Universiti Malaysia Pahang for financial support under Graduate Research Assistance (GRA), memo no: UMP.05/26.12/RDU1901175/2122; date: 17/01/2020 and UMP.05/26.12/RDU1901175/3442; date: 01/09/2021. I also extend my sincere gratitude to the support of the Centre for Human Sciences and IPS, Universiti Malaysia Pahang.

I am thankful to my fellow research students of Universiti Malaysia Pahang particularly Md Fazlul Karim Khan, Zaied Bin Khalid and Ali Khatib Juma. It was also a pleasure to work with them. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to all the teachers in my life. I would like to extend my gratefulness to my friends and colleagues; Dr. Muhammad Nomani Kabir, Dr. Saiful Islam, Jahirul Islam, Md. Aminul Islam, Md. Mashior Rahman, Rajibul Islam and the rest of my fellow friends.

Finally, I would like to express my utmost gratitude and love towards my father (S. M. Abu Taher), mother (Monowara Bilkis), wife (Sumaiya Chowdhury), son (Mohammed Ibn Masud), and daughters (Halima Sadia and Humaira Shoha) for their supports, understanding, pieces of advice, encouragements and financial supports throughout my Ph.D. I dedicate this thesis to my wife, Sumaiya Chowdhury. May the blessing of Almighty Allah fulfill our lives with happiness to a greater height here and hereafter.

## ABSTRAK

Malaysia telah menyaksikan kemasukan pekerja asing sejak merdeka disebabkan oleh keperluan ekonominya yang berkembang pesat. Pekerja asing berkemahiran rendah atau tidak bersekolah membentuk satu pertiga daripada tenaga kerja asing di Malaysia. Lebih tenaga kerja berkemahiran rendah memberi tekanan besar kepada ekonomi dan mengurangkan kebarangkalian transformasi ekonomi berteraskan automasi dan teknologi tinggi, sedangkan Malaysia telah menetapkan visinya untuk menjadi sebuah negara berpendapatan tinggi. Oleh itu ia memerlukan pekerja berkemahiran tinggi untuk mencapai visi tersebut. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk merekabentuk semula beberapa faktor penting dalam fasa pengambilan, penempatan, pekerjaan dan penghantaran pulang pekerja asing di Malaysia dengan mengambil kira kelayakan pendidikan, ujian kemahiran, jenis latihan dan perkongsian pengetahuan bagi meningkatkan kemampanan pendidikan pekerja asing di Malaysia. Kajian ini menggunakan reka bentuk kaedah campuran penerokaan berurutan dengan mengabungkan pengumpulan dan analisis data kualitatif (temu bual mendalam) dan kuantitatif (tinjauan bersemuka). Secara keseluruhan, sembilan pakar dari sektor berbeza dalam pengurusan tenaga buruh asing telah di temubual dan tiga ratus pekerja asing telah terlibat sebagai responden dalam kajian kualitatif. Data kualitatif dianalisis dengan kaedah tematik menggunakan perisian NVIVO (versi 1.6). Manakala, data kuantitatif dianalisis menggunakan SPSS 25. Keputusan menunjukkan terdapat keperluan untuk menilai semula faktor-faktor penting dan isu-isu dalam fasa pengambilan, penempatan, pekerjaan dan penghantaran pulang pekerja asing. Dalam fasa pengambilan terdapat keperluan untuk mewujudkan kelayakan pendidikan minimum, ujian kemahiran mandatori, mewujudkan pusat pembelajaran Bahasa Melayu di negara asal, dan mewajibkan latihan pra-berlepas untuk pekerja terpilih. Pada fasa penempatan pula terdapat keperluan untuk mengesahkan program orientasi pertama selepas tiba di Malaysia. Manakala, fasa ketiga iaitu fasa pekerjaan, terdapat keperluan penambahbaikan dalam kemahiran dan kepakaran pekerja asing. Akhirnya, fasa penghantaran pulang terdapat keperluan untuk menyediakan pelbagai program latihan dan maklumat tentang pekerjaan selanjutnya dan juga perkongsian kisah kejayaan integrasi semula. Oleh itu, kajian telah berjaya merumuskan rangka kerja pembangunan pendidikan mampan berdasarkan penemuan semua fasa pekerja asing di Malaysia. Penilaian semula ini akan menjamin hak pekerja asing dan seterusnya meningkatkan kemampanan mereka. Penemuan ini mempunyai implikasi untuk membentuk semula polisi pengurusan pekerja asing untuk meningkatkan sumbangan mereka kepada ekonomi dan masyarakat di Malaysia.

## ABSTRACT

Malaysia has witnessed an influx of foreign workers since independence, chiefly owing to its rapidly expanding economic opportunities. Low-skilled or unschooled migrants are prevalent in the labour market and constitute one-third of the national workforce. Excess low-skilled labour imposes immense pressure on the Malaysian economy, which reduces the probability of economic transformation through automation. Malaysia has the vision to be a high-income nation, and it needs a high ratio of skilled workers to achieve the target. Focusing on educational qualifications, skill testing, different kinds of training, and sharing knowledge, this study aimed to redesign some crucial factors in the recruitment, placement, employment and repatriation phases of foreign workers in Malaysia that would enhance sustainability. This study adopted a sequential exploratory mixed methods design, characterized by qualitative (in-depth interviews) and quantitative (face-to-face survey) data collection and analysis, respectively. In total, nine experts (qualitative phase) from different sectors in labour migration management and three hundred migrant workers (quantitative phase) in Malaysia were interviewed. For qualitative data, the analysis was done through the thematic analysis method taking assistance from the qualitative data analysis software NVIVO (version 1.6). Whereas the survey data analysis method is practised here with the help of SPSS 25. The results highlighted the need to re-evaluate the following crucial factors with some other issues – firstly in recruitment phase- establishing minimum educational qualifications, mandatory skill testing, establishing Malay learning centres in the country of origin, and ensuring compulsory pre-departure training for selected workers; secondly in deployment stage- confirming first orientation program after arrival in Malaysia; thirdly, in employment level of foreign workers- improvements in foreign workers’ skills and expertise, and finally, in repatriation phase- providing various training programs and information about further employment, sharing success stories of reintegration. Thus the study formulated a sustainable educational development framework (SEDF) based on the findings of all phases of foreign workers in Malaysia. This re-evaluation will secure foreign workers’ right to recruitment, deployment, employment and repatriation phases and thereby increase their sustainability. These findings have implications for reshaping policies around foreign workers’ management and for increasing foreign workers’ contribution to the Malaysian society and economy.

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