

# Are Intercultural Situations a Problem? A Strenght and Self Readiness Provisioning in Penang, Malaysia

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**Abstract:** Population growth is very high and is not balanced with the availability of jobs, resulting in uncontrolled poverty. Until now, unemployment is still a crucial problem for the Indonesian government. With minimal levels of education and skills, these job seekers have to compete with each other. This condition ultimately became the trigger for mass labor mobilization between countries carried out by the government. To alleviate poverty, the government implemented a program to place Indonesian Migrant Workers (TKI) abroad. The government's role in this program is focused on aspects of training, protection and providing various conveniences to related parties, especially TKI and Indonesian Migrant Worker Placement Services Companies (PJTKI). The aim of this community service is to empower informal workers and learning sector facilitators by strengthening the individual potential of the Indonesian Community Association (PERMAI) Pulau Pinang with a differentiated learning approach that favors the informal sector workers themselves, as well as an effort to adapt the adjustment process to the work community which exists. In Malaysia, adjustment includes interest, strengthening one's potential, and individual readiness to achieve increased productivity results. The solution is to strengthen individuals and/or facilitators in differentiated learning with a learning pattern approach that focuses on increasing productivity levels, through several stages. Stage 1: Map and collect data on initial partner conditions; Stage 2, Socialization through discussions with partners regarding implementation preparations, implementation time, members involved and service topics at Partners; Stage 3: Training and empowerment of differentiated learning and learning pattern approaches that focus on increasing productivity levels; Stage 4: Assistance in implementing learning approaches to learning patterns that favor increasing productivity levels; Stage 5: monitor and evaluate all partner activities; Stage 6: Follow-up on program implementation.

**Keywords:** Mental; Personality; Self confidence; Indonesia migrant care; Permai Penang Malaysia

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Prior to Indonesian independence, the Dutch East Indies government facilitated the migration of Indonesian laborers (TKI) by deploying contract workers to Suriname, a Dutch province located in South America. Starting in 1890, the Dutch government initiated the mass migration of contract

laborers from Java, as well as those from Madura, Sunda, and Batak, to work on plantations in Suriname (Hidayah et al., 2015). The objective was to supplant the responsibilities of African slaves who were emancipated on July 1, 1863, as a means of implementing the abolition of slavery policy (Badan Pelayanan Pelindungan Pekerja Migran Indonesia DKI Jakarta, 2024).

This allowed these former slaves to transition into different occupations and exercise their freedom to select their desired field of work. The agreement had a profound effect on the enslaved population, leading to the abandonment of estates in Suriname and a significant decline in the country's economy, which became heavily reliant on the dwindling yields of the remaining planters. The Dutch government's decision to select migrant workers from Java was primarily motivated by the impoverished economic conditions of the indigenous Javanese population, which were exacerbated by the eruption of Mount Merapi and the high population density on the island of Java. The initial cohort of laborers dispatched by the Dutch embarked from Batavia (Jakarta) on 21 May 1890 aboard the SS *Koningin Emma*. This transcontinental journey made a stop in the Netherlands before reaching Suriname on August 9, 1890. The initial group of migrant laborers consisted of 94 individuals, comprising 61 adult males, 31 females, and 2 children. Between 1890 and 1939, a total of 32,986 individuals were sent as migrant workers to Suriname. This was accomplished through the use of 77 ships. BNP2TKI was established.

In 2004, Law Number 39 of 2004 was enacted to address the placement and protection of Indonesian workers abroad. This law specifically required the establishment of the National Agency for the Placement and Protection of Indonesian Workers (BNP2TKI), as stated in article 94, paragraphs (1) and (2). Subsequently, Presidential Regulation (Perpres) Number 81 of 2006 was issued to establish BNP2TKI. The operational structure of BNP2TKI includes various central government agencies responsible for TKI services, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Transportation, Ministry of Labor and Transmigration, Police, Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of National Education, Ministry of Health, Immigration (Kemenhukam), Secretary of State, and others. In 2006, the South Korean government initiated a TKI placement program, also known as a government-to-government (G to G) program. This program is facilitated by the Directorate of Placement and Protection of Overseas Workers (PPTKLN), which operates under the Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration. Moh Jumhur Hidayat assumed the position of Head of BNP2TKI in 2007, following Presidential Decree Number 02 of 2007. As the Head, he is accountable to and reports directly to the president. Shortly after the Presidential Decree was approved, Moh Jumhur Hidayat was inaugurated as the Head of BNP2TKI. Following this, Head of BNP2TKI Regulation No. 01 of 2007 was issued, which outlines the organizational structure of BNP2TKI and includes the various elements of central government agencies involved in TKI services. The primary rule is Presidential Instruction (Inpres) No. 6 of 2006, which pertains to the reform policy for the placement and protection system for Indonesian workers.

BNP2TKI is responsible for all aspects related to the placement and protection of TKI. It operates under the coordination of the Minister of Manpower and Transmigration, with the ultimate duty lying with the president. Due to the establishment of BNP2TKI, the Directorate General of PPTKLN and the Directorate of PPTKLN were immediately dissolved since their functions were transferred to BNP2TKI. BNP2TKI also continued the G to G TKI placement program in Korea. This program involved numerous BNP2TKI agencies that helped the Japanese government in placing G to G TKI nurses in 2008, including both hospital nurses and senior nurses.

BNP2TKI has been renamed as BP2MI. In 2017, Law Number 18 of 2017 was enacted to protect Indonesian migrant workers. This was subsequently followed by Presidential Regulation Number 90 of 2019, which established the Indonesian Migrant Worker Protection Agency (BP2MI) by transforming BNP2TKI. The BP2MI is responsible for implementing comprehensive policies to provide services and ensure the protection of Indonesian migrant workers. Under the current BP2MI period, the policy orientation of BP2MI focuses heavily on protecting PMI, namely by targeting the elimination of unauthorized PMI distribution syndicates. Our strategic objectives are to enhance the safeguarding and well-being of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and their families, while also promoting better governance practices. The objective is to safeguard the interests of PMI by deploying competent and experienced PMI personnel to enhance the well-

being of PMI and their families as valuable national resources, while also enhancing organizational governance that is efficient, effective, and transparent.

Migration can be defined as the movement of people from one place to another, whether permanent (staying in a new place for at least 340 days) or semi-permanent (only staying for 15 days calculated from the start of their move to that place), which crosses administrative boundaries or internal boundaries of a country or region or also beyond political boundaries or state boundaries (Mas'ad et al., 2016). There are several reasons why migrant workers migrate, namely: a. The job opportunities available in Indonesia are very minimal (Syahrain, 2019). This is the biggest reason why people choose to become migrant workers abroad. B. Increasing demands on the cost of living. For example, to send children to school, improve family life, and buy other life necessities (Qomariya et al., 2021). C. The salary received when becoming a migrant worker is quite large compared to the salary when working domestically (Anggara et al., 2024). Let's just say the salary of being a housemaid. Salaries in Indonesia range from 500 thousand to 750 thousand rupiah. Even though abroad they are paid twice as much, maybe even more. D. Invite family members who have become migrant workers first. The family can be a liaison and person who can be trusted to look after other family members who intend to migrate abroad. e. A residential environment where people have been migrant workers for several generations. (Ama, 2024). The problems of migrant workers abroad never stop. Some of the problems often faced by migrant workers in Malaysia include the large number of illegal immigrants, sexual openness, torture by employers, not getting salaries according to the agreement, and not getting a decent life, some even die. This is due to the government's lack of role in controlling Indonesian workers. Even though the contribution of TKI is very large, their fate has not improved. Most migrant workers are recruited by individuals or brokers who promise jobs with high salaries. The fact is that currently there are still many illegal immigrants. This can trigger problems that will be experienced by migrant workers, because the increasing number of illegal migrant workers working in Malaysia will cause various kinds of problems, including the migrant of illegal migrant workers by the Malaysian government. Apart from that, it will also cause migrant workers to become targets of human trafficking carried out by several individuals. TKI have handed over the largest amount of foreign exchange to the country, but the problem of legal protection for TKI from before leaving, working, until returning to their homeland is that criminal occurs (Situmorang et al., 2021).

Through increasing this understanding and skills, we can help create an environment that supports optimal growth and development for them. As an educational institution, Mercu Buana University organizes service activities for the international community, especially for Indonesian citizens who work in Malaysia on Penang through the Permai NGO, which is one of the applications of the Tridharma of Higher Education activities. Target Partners Permai Pulau Pinang, a non-governmental organization (NGO) that engages in social education and culture, is the target partner of this activity. Partner have worked with Mercu Buana University to improve quality activities, skills, and unique skills for Indonesians working abroad, especially in Malaysia (Soelton et al., 2023; Vizano et al., 2023).

It is hoped that with the collaboration of Universitas Mercu Buana and PERMAI, they will be able to synergize and share knowledge in the areas of e-Commerce, fintech, and digital technology, among other special skills that are necessary for establishing socio-cultural cooperation relations between Indonesian and Malaysian people (Kurniawan et al., 2023). Expanding is a communication intervention that is organized to cause voluntary behavior changes for the welfare of the community.

### 3. METHOD

The Community Partnership Program provides many strategies to address the issues that arise in partner communities, as mentioned earlier. These include implementing counseling and training techniques to assist participants in finding solutions to their current challenges. The event took place offline at the Dewan Perahan Rakyat Kampung Tuk Subuh, Bukit Minyak, Pulau Penang - Malaysia on January 28, 2024. The event was conducted in an engaging and interactive manner. The event commences at 09:00 and concludes at 14:00. There were almost 70 participants. This

demonstrates the participants' strong interest in acquiring knowledge regarding the expansion of product innovation development for MSME groups. Participants can easily comprehend the material presented by the resource person due to its methodical and well-structured delivery. Based on the outcomes of this training activity's implementation, it can be inferred that it successfully fulfills the expectations and requirements of the participants. The event was widely regarded as excellent and fulfilling by most participants.

The Community Partnership Program Implementation Activities are categorized into three distinct stages: preparation, implementation, and monitoring. The forthcoming information outlines the specifics of each stage that will be executed. Preliminary Phase The preliminary step conducted before to the activity and communicated to the partner group is:

- a. Development of extension and training work programs
- b. Developing outreach programs and training work programs to enhance the organization and focus of activities. This program encompasses all technical, management, and scheduling aspects.
- c. Development of training modules
- d. The management module encompasses continuous support, therapy, and counseling methods.
- e. Setting up training facilities and infrastructure. These preparations involve the provision of training and counseling facilities and infrastructure.
- f. Coordination of field activities. The Team will conduct field coordination. The implementation program is socialized to the community at the designated activity place, in accordance with the agreed-upon area. This socialization activity will be conducted twice to ensure a comprehensive grasp and shared view of the objectives of this implementation endeavor. The initial interaction took place in an informal manner with representatives from Permai.

### 3.1. Implementation Phase

Socialization of mental preparation for entrepreneurship, The second socialization aims to explain in more detail about the goals and benefits of entrepreneurship as well as providing an explanation of the training material (opening a strong mental mindset). This socialization is facilitated by the distribution of training modules. This activity will be attended by the Chairman of Permai NGO (Mr. Khoseini bin Rahmat), the migrant association community in Pulau Pinang, the Mercu Buana University Community Service Team, and students taking part in the program.

Business Project Opening Training, This training is a follow-up to the socialization activities that have been carried out. This training uses direct practical methods in the field. Partners who have been given theory in the module then immediately practice entrepreneurship. This activity will be guided by instructors who have been trained to carry out training. It is hoped that this training can be carried out comprehensively and continuously to ensure that the partner communities truly understand and master the training independently and this group is the parent/core group who will then carry out cadre formation in their respective areas.

### 3.2. Evaluation Phase

Phase of monitoring and evaluation. The implementation team conducts rigorous monitoring of each activity to ensure that the activities are executed according to plan. Assessment is conducted in accordance with monitoring to promptly address any difficulties that may arise. Assessment is conducted at every phase of the activities, with the evaluation design outlining the methodology, timing, criteria, goal attainment indicators, and benchmarks used to determine the success of the activities.

## 4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The community service implementation was carried out on January 28 2024 in Dewan Perahan Rakyat Kampung Tuk Subuh, Bukit Minyak, Pulau Penang – Malaysia, with 70 participants consisting of members of the NGO Permai. The activity uses the material exposition method

through presentations delivered by resource persons, namely lecturers at Mercu Buana University, Faculty of Economics and Business, Management program. Each resource person explained the material according to their respective fields.



**Figure 1.** Delivery of material session

The socialization process involves engaging in active interaction with participants through questioning, answering, and discussing. This interaction is crucial for developing a focused professional attitude within the community, which can subsequently be utilized to demonstrate the significance of Extension Assistance in ensuring business sustainability. The team took into account variations in individuals' educational backgrounds and made efforts to elucidate them using plain language, all the while striving to establish an emotional connection in order to effectively convey the information. To address this issue, it is necessary to offer counseling sessions that prioritize practical experience and demonstrate the effective application of concepts during lectures (Kurniawan et al., 2023).



**Figure 2.** Photo session with participants

Collaboration with PERMAI was carried out starting from discussions to find the problems faced by MSME entrepreneurs in Pulau Pinang and under the guidance of PEMAI. PERMAI also helps register PKM participants related to the field of Management science. PERMAI also helped prepare the activity location to bring together participants with material presenters from UMB. PKM activities require funds. Mercuru Buana University funds this PKM activity. PERMAI as a partner also contributes funding so that activities can be carried out smoothly. During the implementation of the community service activity, the execution proceeded smoothly and punctually in accordance with the predetermined schedule. The presenters successfully delivered their presentations, and the participants showed great enthusiasm in following them, resulting in a highly dynamic activity.

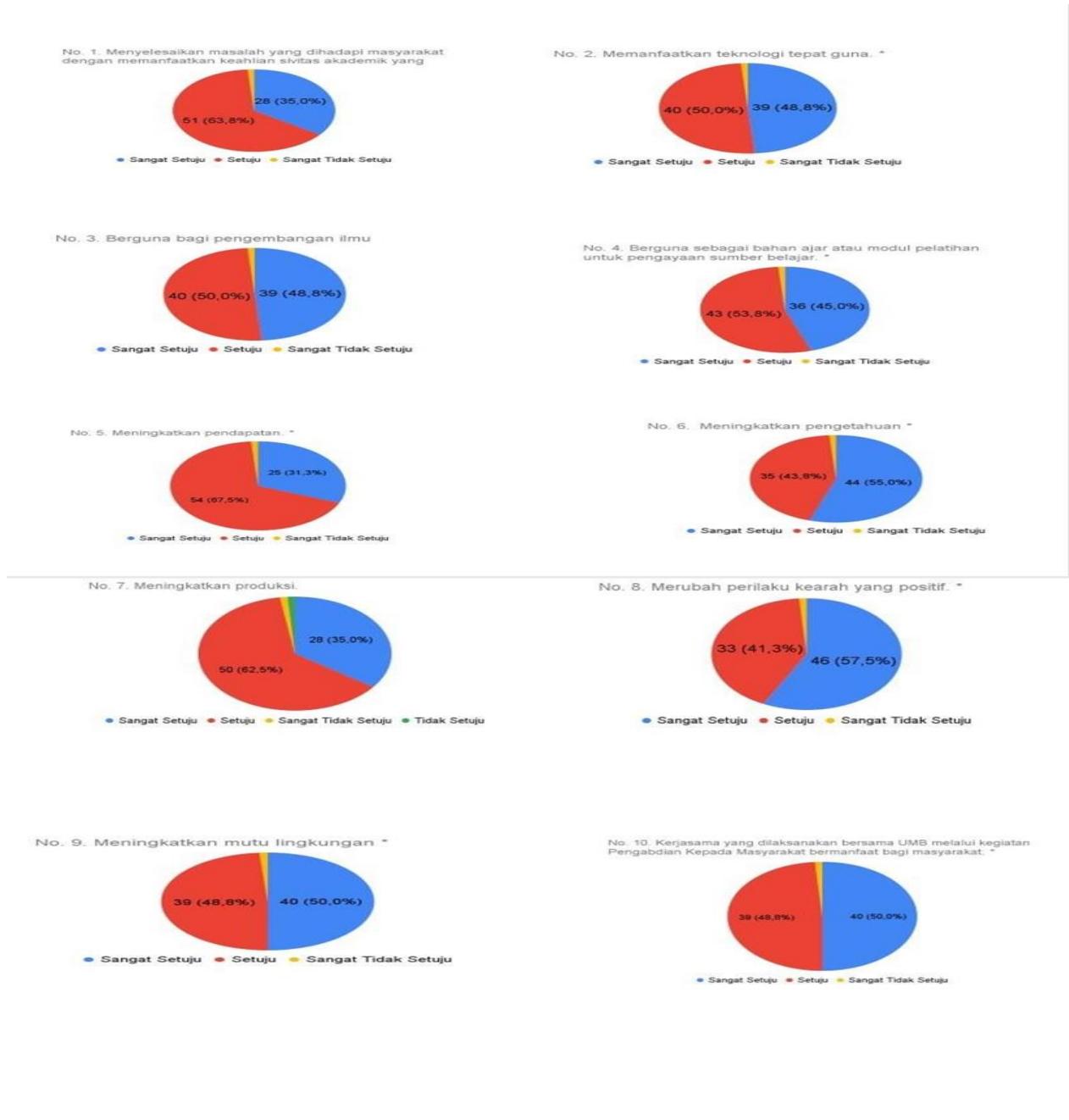


Figure 3. Evaluation Results

In this diagram, various questions from the speaker presentation evaluation questionnaire are represented in the form of graphs or tables to facilitate understanding and analysis of the questionnaire results. The questionnaire items given to all participants with very good overall

results, the question items consist of solving problems faced by the community; useful for the development of science; increasing opinions; increasing production; increasing environmental quality; utilization of appropriate technology; useful as training module material for enriching learning resources; increasing science; changing behavior towards positive; cooperation between UMB and Mitra.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

The conclusion of this communities service activities is that it can enhance participants mental power and resilience, hence augmenting their skills in MSME entrepreneurial business planning. Enhances communal values, particularly by improving members' skills and capacities. This activities can enhance the MSMEs of the Permai NGO community by bolstering the mindset, drive, and passion of MSME participants, while also imparting knowledge and expertise in cultivating mental resilience and emotional management for business operations.

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