

Human Capital Development and Migration Plan of Migrant Workers in Thailand

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1. Introduction

Among Southeast Asian countries, Thailand has been a major receiving country of irregular migrant workers, mostly from CLM countries. (Cambodia, Laos, and Myanmar) The magnitude of such an irregular flow of migrant workers was expected to increase more than ten times from below 10,000 persons in 1990. (Patcharawalai Wongboonsin, 2006) Due to the limited data available, defining the size of the population of foreign migrant workers uses an estimation method. The current estimation suggests that Thailand is now catering to approximately 3 – 4.5 million migrant workers both registered and non-registered. (Yongyuth Chalamwong and Raphaella Prugsamat, 2009; Jerry Huguet, Apichart Chamrathirong and Claudia Natali, 2012) The influx of those migrant workers during the past decades up to now has still been mainly to serve 3Ds jobs - - Difficult, Dangerous and Dirty - - refused by domestic workforce in labour intensive industries in the export and services sectors, along the so-called “cut cost strategy” of entrepreneurs on the workers’ pay. (Voravid Jaroenlerd, 1997; World Vision Foundation of Thailand and Asian Research Center for Migration, 2004; Sciortino, Rosalia and Punpuing, Sureeporn. 2009)

For more than 20 years, since the irregular migrant labour from Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia have been allowed to register and work legally in 1992, relevant policies and regimes are mainly of control-based management strategies in response to socio-political security concerns and the demand for those migrant workers. Both migrant workers and the Thai economy have become in traps of insecure and un-resilient socioeconomic development brought by those strategies. Exploitation of migration workers have still prevailed while development of their skills towards an appropriate standard of competences remains mostly neglected in the private sector.¹ The study expects the negative effects to maintain in the years to come. They are, not only in terms of the failure to control the invisible flows of labour migration, but also in terms of a slowing pace for Thailand towards international competitiveness at a higher plane.² The shortcomings of existing institutional intervention limited the opportunity for Thailand to capitalize on the demographic dividend to move towards a value-added and competitive industry based on identity, managerial expertise and higher technical skills of the workforce. (Patcharawalai Wongboonsin, 2006)

This study aims to explore the pattern and progress of human capital development of low-skilled migrant workers from neighboring countries after their migration to Thailand. The factors on opportunity and limitation of human capital development of the migrant laborers are taken into account. Since the knowledge on the aforementioned issues has not been studied and integrated into an education, development of work competency together with health care providing program for the migrant workers. This study represents an effort to develop a new chapter of literatures on cross-sector, cross-province mobility of cross-border migrant workers in Thailand, through an unexplored lens of

¹ Field investigation in Samutsakorn Province during October 2010; MAP Foundation, 2006. MAP’s 10 Year Book (1996-2006). Chiang Mai: Nantapun Printing.

² The 10th, 11th National Economic and Social Development Plans and the Population Plan during the 11th National Economic and Social Development Plan also reflect some concerns with regard to the impact of employing unskilled migrant workers, which would slow productivity improvement and lead to deteriorating Thailand’s global competitiveness in the long run.

human-development-mobility nexus. Importantly, the data on human capital development and migration plan of migrant workers will strengthen the migrant labour supply database which can be useful for the formulating of the strategy to improve the present migrants as well as the incoming migrants in order to utilize those resources. Apart from this, it is interesting to investigate that during the past 30 years, if a dynamic of human capital development among the migrant workers does exist, how this would help to set a policy and manage the flows of labour migration in order to turn migration into a win-win situation with capitalization on the demographic conditions for a demographic dividend.

2. Literature Review

Migration, according to the Human capital Model for Migration, is regarded as one sort of the human capital investment. Migrant workers usually expect the benefit of moving from one place to another; especially in the form of higher future income. However, not every migrant worker would be made on from this human capital investment. Once Migrant workers found out that the migration cost is higher than the expected benefit, for instance, the expected career is not available, the living cost is higher than predicted, or the psychic cost which happened when parting from family and friend is more than anticipated; the 'backflow' might occur. Once this case occur (McConnell et al., 1999). Therefore, the backflow could be defined as the failure. According to the related literature, it is found that the mentioned theory has been amplified by some research works. It is said that the difference in human capital investment or the human capital development of migrant workers might resulted from the inadequate skills of migrant workers and their decision to move in the future.

According to the study of Jellal (2003) which based on Chiswick and Miller (1995) found that migrants with tendency to move back would invest less in human capital than those who intend to permanently settle in the destination country. This is resulted in the difficulty in job placement for the short-term migrant workers. Moreover, within the model of migrant workers across boundary with different skills, an interesting results revealed that the workers from lower income countries were likely to invest less in the human capital, also they were likely more to move back to their countries since their incomes would became lower comparing with the local workers. Meanwhile, the migrant workers who intend to settle were likely to invest in human capital so that they can gain more and high income. The result of this study was paralleled with the study of Stark et al. (1998), indicated that the migrants who intend to populate or settle would likely to invest more in human capital.

Besides, Jellal's (2003) study indicated the importance of the communicative competency in native language, which resulted in the adjustment ability and rising of income or benefit. Nevertheless, the prior works of Chiswick in 1991, Shumway and Hall in 1996, which studied about the low-skilled migrant workers in the United States, revealed different result. It indicated that most migrant workers who likely to move back or move forward have high proficiency in English language. Moreover, Chiswick (1991) further explained that language competency is the vital tool for migrant workers in order to gain prosperous opportunities and job advancement. On the other hand, if the migrant workers could not understand the native language, then the opportunity to self-develop or even working is rare.

Considering the recent changes in migration patterns in Thailand, the mobility of migrant workers is shifting in both magnitude and pattern, according to literature review and fieldwork study. While the magnitude is increasing fast, the pattern is more of self-selection into the labor market. The migrant workers have more freedom on job searching. Most of them relocate to a new workplace where they can earn higher wages and have decent working conditions. As a result, there is a high mobility of migrant workers among agricultural, manufacturing, services, and domestic works. Each of them has a high worker turnover. Intra and inter mobility of migrant workers can be identified at the district, provincial and regional levels, average of at least 3-4 times per year. (Montakarn Chimmamee and Patcharawalai Wongboonsin., 2012)

Meanwhile, low-skilled migrant workers tend to human capitalizing themselves along a demand-driven unstructured workplace-learning approach. Given the lack of access to formal education provided by Thai government, they have therefore relied upon informal education and unstructured workplace learning to upgrade their competences, particularly the Thai language, so as to integrate

more and more in the labor market. The life cycle of migrant workers have been rapidly changing. This is due to the fact that they have earned more and more experiences in both migration and job changing, which contribute to their potentiality enhancement in job learning as well as in adjusting to and living in a new environment. This changing form of migration decision-making has an impact on their future migration plan. Therefore, it is apparent that migration originates from a combination of multiple motives, not only the push and pull factors, a dominant ideology usually referred to. (De Jong and Fawcett, 1981: 43)

3. Method

The study was carried out during July 2013 to July 2014 along multi-stage sequential mixed methods by initially reviewing relevant primary and secondary documents, followed by a qualitative pilot study, a survey of 1,207 and an in-depth qualitative research of 32 unskilled migrant workers with and without work permits in six employment sectors. They were fishery, fishery-related, agricultural/livestock, manufacturing, construction, and services sectors. To illustrate a context of an international migration together with movement of the migrant labors within Thailand, all samples of this study was defined as a person, born in Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia, aged equal to or more than 18 years old and migrated to work and resided in Thailand for more than 1 year.

The fieldwork was conducted in 6 provinces consist of Chiangmai, Samutsakorn, Rayong, Chonburi, Khon Kaen, and Nakorn Rachasima. The central areas of Thailand were purposively selected because they are economic and industrial hubs. Moreover, the concentration of migrant workers in the areas, majority from three countries; Myanmar, Laos, and Cambodia. In addition, there are large communities of migrant workers which resulted from the immigration of the migrant workers from the three mentioned countries. These statistic data are retrieved from the Office of foreign workers administration, Ministry of Labour, together with the result of the study of migrant worker community. Key informants from government and non-government again were also interviewed. Data analyses comprised multivariate analyses and qualitative research finding. Data analyses comprised multivariate analyses and qualitative research finding.

4. Results

Background Characteristics of Respondents

This study was conducted of total of 1,207 low-skilled migrant workers from neighboring countries consisting of Myanmar migrant workers for 38.8 percent (468), Cambodian migrant workers for 37.1 percent (448), and Laotian migrant workers for 24.5 percent (291) respectively. A number of female and male workers are nearly the same across Laotian and Myanmar workers, whilst a number of Cambodian male workers are higher than the female. This is because more than a half of Cambodian workers are in the fishery industry. In term of age, most samples are under 29 years old. The Laotian workers' age is lower than the average, between 20 – 24 years old. Regarding the marital status, it indicates that most Laotians are single. Single and married status are relatively equal among Myanmar. Most Cambodians are married. It also finds that their spouses either live with them in Thailand, or still stay in the origin countries. The human capital that workers holds before moving to Thailand can be evaluated by the highest level of education they obtained from the origin country. The finding reveals that most Cambodians finished the elementary school, whilst Laotians and Myanmar had higher degrees. They mostly finished secondary schools.

In term of migrant workers' legal status, it is significantly different across samples. Cambodian workers hold the highest number of illegal status. It is because the research was conducted before the coup d'état erupted. After that the junta government has ordered to establish One Stop Service Centres to register migrant workers. Apart from this, the employers themselves did not concern about migrant worker registration and national verification, especially in the fishery industries. Half of Laotian workers hold a legal status. It is also more likely to be a greater number in the future because of the MOU which encourages the Laotian to work in Thailand, especially in

industrial sectors. Myanmar migrant workers are the most registered and completed the national verification process. Since there are many One Stop Service Centres, especially in Samut Sakorn and Chiang Mai where this research took place.

Background Characteristics of Respondents	Country of Origin		
	Myanmar (n=468)	Laos (n=291)	Cambodia (n=448)
Gender			
Male	57.05	48.80	76.34
Females	42.95	51.20	23.66
Age			
18-19	8.97	17.87	7.81
20-24	29.70	31.96	24.11
25-29	20.51	25.77	21.21
30-34	15.38	8.59	21.43
35-39	8.97	8.93	10.04
40-44	6.20	3.44	8.26
Over 45	10.26	3.44	7.14
Education			
Under primary school	3.89	1.25	6.53
Primary school	29.04	42.50	51.01
Secondary school	45.51	50.83	40.45
High school	15.57	5.42	1.26
Diploma	0.60	0.00	0.75
College/university	2.10	0.00	0.00
Other	3.29	0.00	0.00
Marital status			
Single/Unmarried	40.17	63.92	33.71
Married and living together	49.79	28.18	38.17
Married but spouse live in hometown	1.28	3.78	26.12
Married but spouse live in other province in Thailand	1.50	0.00	0.22
Married but spouse live in other country	0.85	0.00	0.00
Widowed/Divorced/Separated	6.41	4.12	1.79
Legal status			
Illegal	10.26	51.55	81.92
Registered and work permit	0.43	37.80	3.57
In national verification process	1.07	0.00	1.56
Temporary passport and work permit	79.06	6.19	4.24
MOU	6.62	3.09	0.22
Don't know	0.21	0.00	7.81

Background Characteristics of Respondents	Country of Origin		
	Myanmar (n=468)	Laos (n=291)	Cambodia (n=448)
No response	2.35	1.37	0.67

[Table 1: Background Characteristics of Respondents (n=1,207)]

Human Capital Development after Migrating to Thailand

The study of human capital development of migrant workers from neighboring countries, including three nationals of Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia, developed from the results of the pilot study on "Perception of a Better Life of Myanmar Migrant Workers in Thailand". This reflects the role of human capital development of low-skilled migrants. Moreover, this also led to the migration based on an assessment of their human capital, with the use of social networks to enter into the labour market in the Thailand. The finding of this research is revealed that current migration is more self-selected because of the accumulation of human capital by migrant workers themselves. Resulting in the development of better working conditions, as well as higher wage income. It also found that migrant workers have used their own social capital as a key tool through the creation and expansion of social networks, including the development of human capital in various forms in destination areas.

This study employs the human capital development index as a tool to measure the human capital development of migrant workers after migrating to Thailand. It also adopts frameworks and methods from both World Economic Forum's Human Capital Index and UNDP's Human Development Index. Ultimately, the human capital development index for the migrant workers used in this research comprises of three composite indexes as following:

1. *Thai language proficiency*: Language proficiency: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing
2. *Skill development*: Training, Working learning and Skill self-assessment
3. *Health care and promotion*: Health insurance, Health self-assessment and Health behavior

A composite human capital development index indicating the level of human capital development revealed the highest proportion of high level of human capital development among Laotian migrants, followed by Myanmar and Cambodian. The reason is because Laotian is capable of Thai language and their level of education is higher when comparing to the other two nationalities. Moreover, most Laotian workers work in the manufacturing industry, which provide training together with better working conditions. With these factors Laotian migrant workers are able to develop more human capital, after migrating to Thailand, than Myanmar and Cambodian migrant workers.

On the contrary, Cambodian migrant workers were ranked at the lowest level of human capital development, concerning on the Human Capital Development Index, both comprehended and separated. Thai language proficiency, especially, was marked as problematic, even they were able to develop at least one level, however, and they still lack of proficiency. Myanmar migrant workers were ranked at average level comparing to the other two nationalities. The human capital development in support and promote health care, as well as, the working development were ranked as a similarly high. However, the Thai language proficiency was ranked at low level when comparing to the other human capital development factors. However, Myanmar migrant workers were considered as a high potential group because there are many contributions factors. For instance, school for migrant workers, as well as, supporting from public and private sectors. Plus, the most important factor is the attitude. Myanmar migrant workers have good attitude toward themselves. The in-depth interview revealed that some Myanmar migrant workers wanted to improve themselves so that they could reach their goals, to save money and return home.

Future Migration Plan of Migrant Workers

The study of cross-border migration from neighboring countries has entered the era of exploring factor which is a mechanism to sustain the ongoing migration flows (cumulative causation of

migration). Concerning with the related studies, it is found that the social capital and human capital are the significant factors for the international migration, internal migration, and destination country. These results are related with the result of this present study, which is to create and expand social capital simultaneously.

Regarding the migration plan over the next 5-10 years, this study found that most of migrant workers have not decided their future migration plans. While considering by their nationalities, it is displayed in the same direction for about one in three of migrants of each nationality, still not decided on the future migration, especially Myanmar migrant workers because of the unrest situations and political conflict in the origin country. However, the proportion of Myanmar migrant workers who has not decided their future migration plans was declined comparing with the migration plan before traveling to Thailand. (see Table 2)

It clearly shows that there are factors that affect the decision to migrate after working and living in Thailand, especially, the development of human capital and creating social capital of migrants themselves. While Laotian and Cambodian migrant workers, who have not decided their future migration plans; explained their main reason is economic. They do not know where they are going to live at any point in the next 5-10 years, therefore, they need to work and collect money before deciding to emigrate. This reason is seen in all nationalities; also it is related with previous research on migration. However, this present study provided more explanation that changes of these migrants depending on how they use their "human capital and social capital," which they use to create opportunities to get the better job and gain higher wages. So that, they would achieve their goal in collecting money and return home quickly or decide to settle in Thailand. Therefore, the human capital and social capital can generate more income and a better quality of life than in the destination areas.

In addition, migrant workers who already have migration plans that nearly two in three of Myanmar migrant workers decided to return to their home country. The key reason is to live with their family. While the rest of Myanmar migrant workers plan to settle in Thailand, their reason is the family as well. As most of their family members have already moved and lived in Thailand and no relatives left in their country. Therefore, their reasons of migrating are changed from economic to family. In the future, Myanmar workers' migration pattern tend to mainly relied on how family migrates. Family then becomes a main influence for forthcoming migration. This factor also affects where migrants will move to. Consequently, any future policies on migration with these workers need to consider how to cope with workers' families.

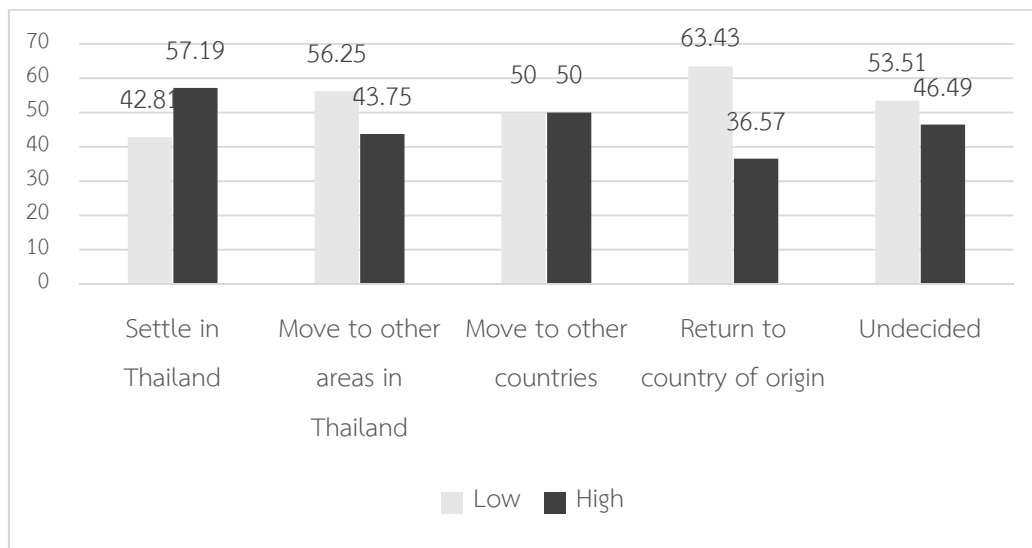
Meanwhile, half of Cambodian workers plan to move back to their country of origin. They express their longing to reunite with their family or clans lived in Cambodia. In contrast, more than half of the Laotians are the only group of workers who overtly express their intention to obtain permanent residence in Thailand in the future. This is because they consider having a better life in term of economy and quality of life comparing to their former lives in countries of origin.

Future Migration Plan	Total	Country of Origin		
		Myanmar	Laos	Cambodia
Settle in Thailand	24.77	21.15	54.98	8.93
Move to other areas in Thailand	1.33	1.50	2.75	0.22
Move to other country	0.50	0.85	0.69	0.00
Return to country of origin	33.31	36.54	7.56	46.65
Undecided	40.10	39.96	34.02	44.20

[Table 2: Future Migration Plan of Migrant Workers by Country of Origin (n=1,207)]

Human Capital Development and Future Migration Plan of Migrant Workers

To explain relations of human capital development and future plan of migrant workers, it will begin with explaining relations by a Figure 1 and Table 3. Next, this will bring to an analysis of relations of both factors with an analysis of multivariate analysis. In general, a result from Figure 1, which displays a level of human capital development and future migration plan of migrant workers without nationality classification, indicates that migrant workers with a high level of human capital development will choose to settle down in Thailand (57.19%), whereas a group of worker with a low level of human capital development plans to return to their country of origin (63.43%).



[Figure 1: Level of Human Capital Development and Future Migration Plan (n=1,207)]

Note: Low means migrant workers who have HCDI scores lower than average of all nationalities' HCDI scores.

High means migrant workers who have HCDI scores higher than average of all nationalities' HCDI scores.

With regard to relations of a level of human capital development and a future plan of migrant workers classified by nationality, the result is remarkably different. On average, Laotian workers have a higher degree of human capital development than Myanmar workers and Cambodian workers, respectively. Also, when looking at an average degree of human capital development with a future plan of migrant workers, migrant workers with a high level of human capital development tend to settle down. On the contrary, migrant workers with a relatively low level of human capital development plan to return to their country of origin (see Table 3).

When looking at an average level of human capital development classified by migrants' nationality, it clearly demonstrates that an ability to develop human capital relates to a future plan of migrant workers. Across Laotian workers, those who plan to settle down have the highest level of human capital development. Likewise, Cambodian workers who plan to return to their country of origin have a lower level of human capital development than other Cambodians. However, a result from Myanmar workers has a different outcome. Those who aim to settle down have a lower level of human capital development than other Cambodian workers.

By putting together a level of human capital development and a future plan of migrant workers, it will evidently demonstrates that those who are going to settle down in Thailand gain a higher level of human capital development than others except Myanmar workers. This latter workers will, instead, take their skills back to their country.

Future migration plan	Total (n=1,207)	Country of Origin		
		Myanmar (n=468)	Laos (n=291)	Cambodia (n=448)
Settle in Thailand	0.4871 (0.1677)	0.3879 (0.1083)	0.5918 (0.1357)	0.3136 (0.0972)
Move to other areas in Thailand	0.4637 (0.1718)	0.5107 (0.1898)	0.4373 (0.1654)	0.3458 (0.000)
Move to other country	0.4924 (0.1526)	0.4898 (0.1286)	0.4978 (0.2583)	-
Return to country of origin	0.3718 (0.1503)	0.4668 (0.1257)	0.4805 (0.1248)	0.2827 (0.0963)
Undecided	0.4189 (0.1247)	0.4583 (0.1293)	0.4609 (0.1211)	0.3607 (0.0963)

[Table 3: The Average of Human Capital Development Index Scores by Future Migration Plan and Country of Origin (n=1,207)]

Based on multivariate and content analyses, below are the major findings. Results from this study are primary data illustrating the level of human capital development migrant workers in Thailand. Laotian migrant workers with the highest proportion of a high human capital development index, which is a composite statistic of Thai language proficiency, working capacity, and care and health promotion. This is followed by Myanmar and Cambodian migrant workers, respectively. There was a similarity between Myanmar and Cambodian migrant workers regarding future migration plans: about forty percent of them still undecided; the rest being a plan to return home, and to settle in Thailand, respectively. Meanwhile, more than half of Laotian migrant workers planned to settle in Thailand, followed by undecided and those to return to their home country, respectively.

A multinomial logistic regression model confirmed human capital development as an important factor affecting a future migration plan among the migrant workers. Model that control for demographic characteristics, migration factors, working factors and immigration policies factors are shown. The Laotian migrant workers with high human capital development would rather plan to settle in Thailand than to return home and to be indecisive at a significance level of 0.05 (Pseudo $R^2=0.392$). High human capital development Myanmar migrant workers would rather return to their home country than other options at a significance level of 0.05 (Pseudo $R^2=0.190$). Meanwhile, Cambodian migrant workers with high human capital development tended to belong to the undecided option than to return home at the 0.05 level of statistical significance (Pseudo $R^2=0.151$), reflecting the possibility to settle in Thailand in a longer term. (see Table 4)

	Myanmar		Laos		Cambodia	
	Return	Settle	Return	Settle	Return	Settle
Human Capital Development Index	1.746*	0.250*	0.600	3.989*	0.297**	0.864
Demographic characteristics						
Male (d)	0.964	0.647	0.480	1.094	0.402	0.779
Age	1.026	1.069*	1.023	1.036	0.951	1.038
Single/Unmarried (d)	0.628	2.636*	0.289	1.124	1.243	2.453
Primary school or below (d)	1.573	1.030	0.137	0.269*	1.194	1.604
Secondary school and above (d)	1.585	1.991	1.437	1.515	1.753	2.665
Number of child	1.115	0.699	1.828	1.312	0.952	1.045
Migration factors						
Length of stay in Thailand	0.970	1.120*	1.066	1.004	0.958	1.042
Number of movement	0.903	0.875	0.154	0.046*	1.477*	1.686*
Social network in country of destination (d)	1.150	0.805	0.186*	1.314	1.226	0.516
Legal status (d)	3.566*	0.667	9.770*	8.239**	0.717	0.963
Working factors						
Income	0.613	0.122*	1.590	3.220	1.226	0.915
Number of changing job	0.828	0.502	3.029	1.075*	1.187	0.483
Job satisfaction	0.589*	0.426*	1.098	0.318	1.180	0.494*
Having Thai co-worker (d)	1.397	4.849*	0.243	2.697	3.433	1.631
Immigration policies factors						
Knowledge and understanding toward policies and laws for migrant workers in Thailand	0.990	1.616**	1.460	1.566*	1.011	1.213
Number of respondents	468		291		448	
LR Chi-Square statistic	182.263**		194.558**		108.727**	
McFadden's Pseudo R2	0.190		0.392		0.151	

Note: * = $p < 0.05$ ** = $p < 0.001$

(d) indicates dummy variables

[Table 4: Estimate Relative Risk Ratio for Future Migration Plan among Myanmar, Laotian and Cambodian Migrant Workers (Multinomial Logit Regression) (n=1,207)]

A likelihood ratio test also confirmed an increasing capacity of the human capital development variable in explaining the future migration plan at a significance level of 0.05. Such findings showed an additional important mechanism to economic factors in pushing further international migration was led to the human capital which migrants obtained in destination areas. Both origin and destination countries should cooperate in managing the flows of labour migration by promoting regional human capital circulation, so all parties could benefit from the international migration.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

During recent years, most Southeast Asian countries have been provided with a potential demographic dividend. However, the dominating strategies in labor migration management have not reaped the potential benefits from this potentiality. In the case of Thailand and CLM countries (Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Myanmar), an economic opportunity has been provided from the increasing proportion of workforce age comparing to other age groups. Such an opportunity has not been efficiently utilized due partly to the self-defeating strategies in labour migration, and partly to a relatively poor development of their domestic human resources as well as those from elsewhere in

their labor market. Among key questions remained unknown and kept resulting in discrepancy between government policies and performance in policy implementation is the mobility of those migrant workers.

This study reflects human capital development of migrant workers to be an important factor for policy makers to consider besides economic factors in transnational migration management in cooperation with the sending countries. This is particularly from the perspective of a win-win regional human-capital circulation approach. Furthermore, according to the recent changes in migration patterns and the adjustment process of the migrant workers, one would expect the relevant policy regimes to be more proactive in migration management so that Thailand can move from a labour to human capital intensive economy

In Thailand, the window of opportunity is now past as the age profile is aging rapidly. The neighboring countries of Myanmar, Cambodia, and Laos, meanwhile, will still enjoy a long period when the proportion of population in the working age is greater than those in young and elderly age ranges. The economies of both the host and home countries of labor migration will benefit if the human capital of migrant labour is enhanced by a formal and appropriate approach, rather than the informal self-help approach adopted by the migrant workers themselves. Additionally, new cooperation among origin countries in order to develop human capital of workers before their movement to destination countries, as a result, safe migration and human-capital development can be promoted.

Recommendations for Thailand's Policies

1. Results from this study are primary data illustrating the level of human-capital development or human capital stock of foreign workers in Thailand's lower labor markets. Thai government, therefore, should set up policies and plans that can gain full benefits from those workers without being caught in the intensive-labor industries trap.

Thailand should promote workers' rights protection based on Thai labor protection laws and international standard and ACMW in order to provide conditions to support human-capital development among workers. In addition, the policies should pay attention to the importance of skill development with a concrete and continuous conduct in all areas that need foreign workers.

2. Compared with Myanmar and Cambodian workers, Laotian workers possessed the highest human capital development and more frequently reported the plan to settle in Thailand. However, during the field work, it was found that they were the most difficult group to reach and were neglected by concerned authorities; policies or strategies focusing on human capital development for Laos should be implemented through workplace training, information dissemination in their residential communities, and building up the cooperation between government and non-government agencies in the areas.

3. Cambodian workers possessed the lowest human-capital development and planned to stay in Thailand; therefore, policies or strategies to promote Thai language proficiency and work skill should be enhanced. These can be conducted through the cooperation of government and non-government agencies as well as employers.

Recommendations for Origin and ASEAN Countries

1. The number of Laotian workers who came to work in Thailand legally through the MOU has been increasing; Lao government should formulate policies to promote the ease of remittance sending and use such money effectively.

2. Myanmar workers who possessed high human-capital development had a tendency to return home; Myanmar government should formulate policies to support those who returned as well as policies to use these workers effectively by creating jobs and promoting working skill and ability from one generation to the next generation of Myanmar workers.

3. Most of Cambodian workers who were more likely to plan to return home possessed low human capital development; therefore, Cambodia and Thailand should initiate the cooperation to push forward all types of human capital development at both prior to and post migration. They can bring

their human capital to improve their quality of life and families as well as participate in economic development.

4. In the future there will be more movement among lower level of workers in the region; new cooperation among origin countries in order to protect and develop human capital of workers before their movement to destination countries; as a result, safe migration and human-capital development can be promoted.

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