

Factors Related to Quality of life of the Foreign Workers in Surin Province

Chai Samoraphum*

Singha Jantriwong*

Abstract

This research aimed to study factors related to quality of life of foreign workers in Surin province and study the suggestions for promoting the quality of life of foreign workers in Surin province by using qualitative research. The research instrument was a structured interview. Target group was foreign workers in Surin province, choosing 60 interviewers by accidental sampling method.

The study found that factors related to quality of foreigner work life in Surin were:

Health factors of foreign workers; the health of foreign workers was healthy because foreign workers was diligent, the body was resistant to labor that appropriate to the nature of the work being employed.

Economic factors relating to foreign workers; foreign workers did not claim salary rate as well as the jobs they employed and worked tolerance more tolerance than Thai workers. Salary rates was higher than in the home country.

The social status of foreign workers depended on the culture of each country of origin that included family dimension, society, culture and traditions. The unification of foreign workers was a social phenomenon, and society was adapted to society for survival and well-being.

Factors related to information perception of migrant workers was based on the same basic knowledge, experience, inheritance, local wisdom and contemporary learning contexts with technology media.

The housing and environmental factors of foreign workers depended on the characteristics of the industry, agriculture, processing and service sectors. Good and appropriate housing would have an impact on the quality of life of foreign workers.

Welfare and safety factors were essential for foreign workers. Government agencies and NGOs had played a role in the protection of the welfare and safety of migrant workers in various dimensions

The overall data analysis showed that the key issues related to quality of work life in Surin were: physical health, mental health, economic, living, social status, information perception housing and environment, welfare and safety. These were in line with the state policy. Foreign workers who came to work in Surin province have both legal and foreign workers who work illegally. However, the suggestion in the policy of promoting quality of life was that the government needs further international cooperation.

*Faculty of humanities and social sciences, Surindra Rajabhat University

Keywords : Quality of life/ Foreign Workers

Introduction

The results of the 2007 Thailand Development Research Institute study on real labor demand and the management of foreign workers in agriculture, fisheries, the continuation of fisheries and construction found that the trend of the Thai labor market in the period from 2007 to 2012 was still on the rise. It was expected that in 2012, Thailand will had an increase in the demand for labor in the basic labor group about 300,000. Compared to the number of junior high school graduates and ready to enter the labor market only 100,000. Another reason for Thailand's shortage of Thai workers was that foreign workers had lower wages than Thai workers, especially in demand-led businesses such as agriculture, fisheries, the continuation of fisheries and construction. In addition, the factors that made foreign migrants able to live a normal life were: social services, medical treatment, residential care, life safety and property, working welfare. (Office of Foreign Workers Administration, 2014)

Institute for Population and Social Research Mahidol University (2012: 34-41) Report on the causes of international displacement, including the factors driving the displaced countries and attracting factors from migrant workers. The reasons for this shift from the migrant workers were: 1) The unemployment rate was high. Excess labor caused by unemployment and employment in the country was the result of the inability to find jobs that match their abilities. While some workers were trying to find a job in the country for a while, but if they cannot do the job right for them. It was likely that some migrants would move abroad. 2) Lower wage levels compared to foreign and similar occupations. In comparison to the wage or salary earned while working in the country. The chances of moving abroad were higher if the wages or salaries abroad were higher. 3) The lack of incentives for advancement in highly skilled workforce but unable to advance in their positions would make them feel like moving to work abroad. 4) Inappropriate manpower policy. Proper manpower planning led to systematic development of the work. However, while underdeveloped countries did not plan to develop their work force, resulting in a lack of balance between their work and their personnel that make some labor may be excess. But at the same time, some countries were demanding a surplus of these people, which make them want to move out of the country. 5) Social and political factors. Some migrants might want to migrate to foreign countries because they were not satisfied with the existing social and political conditions.

The quality of life of foreign workers is important because Thailand is a country with a lot of migrant workers coming to work both have been legally registered and smuggling is hard to verify. Therefore, the living conditions of foreign workers are more risky to the quality of life. Thailand has enacted the Working of Alien Act, B.E. 2008, which came into force on February 22, 2008. The reason for the enactment of the Act was that the provisions on the work of aliens

under the Working of Alien Act, B.E. 1978 were inconsistent with the nature of labor migration in the current global economy and by the fact that foreign workers were one of the key factors driving the country's economy. Therefore, it was necessary to improve the working system of foreigners to suit the changing circumstances. It was therefore necessary to enact this Act. However, the Foreign Workers Act of 2008 contained only provisions of the Alien Work Act, which required temporary registration of work for not more than 2 years and the fund to send aliens back out of the Kingdom only. There was no compulsory exemption for foreign workers. Although the Labor Protection Act 2008 protects the welfare and welfare of migrant workers, most migrants did not have access to and protection of such rights.

Surin Province is a province in the north, next to Roi Et, east adjacent to Sisaket, west adjacent to Buriram and south adjacent to the Kingdom of Cambodia. There are strategic routes from Ubon Ratchathani province that are in contact with the Lao People's Democratic Republic. Surin Province has a population of 1,374,700 (Surin Provincial Statistical Office, 2014) is the 10th largest in Thailand. The registration of the Surin Provincial Labor Office in 2014 showed that there were 1,265 foreign workers in Surin province and the trend is higher in the future. This will affect the quality of life, health, economy, information perception, housing and environment and welfare and safety (Office of Social Development and Human Security, Surin, 2014)

From this problem, the question of quality of life of foreign workers in Surin province is questioned. What is the factors related to quality of life of foreign workers in Surin province and what is the quality of life of foreign workers in Surin province? Researchers are interested in researching such issues in the hope that they will be useful to various agencies in Surin that involve foreign workers in the development of quality of foreign workers in Surin province.

Research Objectives

1. To study factors related to quality of life of foreign workers in Surin province.
2. To study the recommendations on promoting the quality of life of foreign workers in Surin province.

Research scope

1. Target groups
The target group was 60 foreign workers in Surin province. Use accidental sampling for qualitative research.
2. The area was Surin province, because it is a border province and a strategic route to neighboring Cambodia.
3. The content included the concept of quality of life of migrant workers, the Working of Alien Act, B.E. 2008, the Strategic Plan and the Foreign Labor Policy.

Research Methodology

Target Group

The target groups used in this study were foreign workers in Surin province. There was 60 accidental samples from industry, agriculture and service sectors.

Research instrument

1. Characteristics of instrument

The instrument used in qualitative research was structured interview. 6 topics related to quality of life of foreign workers as health, living economy, social status, information perception housing and environment, welfare and safety

2. Instrument Creation Process

To create an instrument to collect data, the researcher had done the following.

2.1 Studied papers, articles and research reports on the concepts and norms related to the quality of life of foreign workers in Surin province as health, living economy, social status, information perception housing and environment, welfare and safety to be used as an interview form.

2.2 The interview was created and submitted to experts for review and verification.

2.3 The interview had been revised and improved.

2.4 Interview was tried out with 10 foreign workers.

2.5 Check and update before use.

2.6 Interview was conducted with 60 target migrants working in the workplace.

Data collection

The research instrument was completed to collect data on foreign workers in Surin province. Followed these steps:

1. The interview was conducted to interview the target group by the researcher.
2. Took the interview back to check the integrity.
3. Categorized data for further analysis.

Data Quality Inspection

Researchers sought the quality of information obtained by means of triangulation to prove that the data they have obtained is accurate. The study was conducted by information source that Ngampit Satsanguan (2001: 129-130) classified as follows:

1. The time source: by which the data was received at different times examined the effect that each part of the data obtained from the collection was similar or different.
2. Place: by gathering the data collected at different locations, then check and compare the results to be similar and different in what parts.

3. Person source: The information obtained from the collection was studied and compared. When the data was collected by the change of the data provider is another person must not be the same person, the information obtained will be similar or different.

Data analysis

This research used content analysis by using descriptive methods, analyzing and summarizing the data of the research clearly and achieving the following objectives:

The data was analyzed the content. Content analysis show three distinct approaches: conventional, directed, or summative. All three approaches are used to interpret meaning from the content of text data and, hence, adhere to the naturalistic paradigm. In conventional content analysis, coding categories are derived directly from the text data. With a directed approach, analysis starts with a theory or relevant research findings as guidance for initial codes. A summative content analysis involves counting and comparisons, usually of keywords or content, followed by the interpretation of the underlying context. The result of this study was to discuss the results and develop the information for more accuracy questions.

Study Result

General information, the number of women and men was equal (50%). The age range were 25 to 34 years (41.67%), 35 to 44 years (36.67%) and the least was 15 to 24 years old. The highest level of education was in elementary school (55%), secondary education (25%) and the least was a bachelor's degree (8.33%). Most work experience in the last 1 to 4 years (56.67%), 5 to 10 years (28.33%) and 10 years or more (15 %). Most of the foreign worker were Cambodian workers (60%), Lao workers (35%) and Burmese workers (5%)

Factors related to the quality of life of foreign workers.

1. Health

The physical and mental health of most foreign workers is strong as they were of working age, so it was essential to create jobs for employers with similar needs. Some foreign workers had mental health problems that were not related to physical health due to the decline of the body, disease and disability. Economic problems, which were important to living conditions, were the basic factors of living and social adjustment. While some foreign workers lacked of the opportunity to promote their own mental health and could not control emotions and often stress. Loneliness makes the mental state deteriorate.

2. Economic and Living Condition Factors

The economy was associated with foreign workers because of its economic status as an indicator of living conditions and the way of life of foreign workers with good, moderate and bad economic status. There was a clear difference in living conditions, economic status, income and expenses. It also involves spending and living for the needs. Especially, the 4 basic human needs,

which was related to the quality of life of foreign workers. The economic status of foreign workers with good quality of life came from the economic foundation of a stable family and the savings. Foreign workers who had a moderate economic status can be self-sufficient. In contrast, foreign workers with poor quality of life were mostly poor, when social conditions change, nature loses balance and with unfavorable physical conditions to worked to support their own status and family.

3. Social Status

The social conditions of foreign workers depended on the cultural traditions of each of their ethnic origins, including their family, social and cultural backgrounds. Even in the sense of different names and practices, the goal of the practice of the ancestral culture is to bring happiness, prosperity, and rebirth in the next world. Such happiness was due to interactions between the behavior of foreign workers and the social roles that have been practiced all along.

The social status of foreign workers reflected their unique social status due to the belief and merit, the tradition is a long heritage of the ancestors. When societies changed over time, they blended in with the national and technological advances that influence the culture of belief. It would change the style of the era. However, culture, beliefs and traditions were important to foreign workers and adaptation because culture was the way of life of the people in order to live happily by seeking 4 basic human needs that was the basic of living is food, clothing, housing and medicines. Communication was the key to understanding, collaborating, loving, engaging, and engaging. Behavior, values, traditions, as well as religions and beliefs that had long been inherited from the ancestors, helped shape the family and society as a happy person by expressing their creativity. They also sought their own pleasure, such as singing and dancing. Leisurely play Invention, carving, etc. and social regulation in order to control the order in society make the living together happy and secure. It was considered a belief and social culture was very important for foreign workers.

4. Information Access

The information perception of foreign workers in Surin province was based on knowledge, experience, and inheritance. The context of current learning had learning media that includes nature and the environment, technology, communication and interpersonal learning. These enabled workers to adjust themselves and to get information and readiness for international policy situations. Foreign workers could adapt and learn to use new technology media such as mobile phones, television, internet, amplifiers in factories or establishments. Therefore, it was considered that foreign workers were knowledgeable and constantly aware of new things.

5. Housing and Environment

Housing and environment characteristics of foreign workers depended on the nature of work in the industry, agriculture and processing. Some establishments might have

accommodation for workers, but some workplaces must provide housing. The condition of the residence and the environment were both hygienic and unhygienic. The housing was a total housing type for industrial establishments, farmer's lodgings, rental housing and had a modest home facility. Organizing the shelter was simple and secure. Some of the groups together to rent accommodation would be crowded. This condition reflected the behavior of foreign workers living in the middle class adapt from a traditional way of life to a modern way of life, lived in a modern setting and environment that makes them happy, secure, free from illness.

6. Welfare and Safety

It found that foreign workers were entitled to legal and welfare benefits because employers were aware of the care they received for their work. This reflected the fact that foreign workers were well protected by the labor law as well as the benefits received by employers. Ensure that migrant workers were secure in their lives and property, had morale and resilient to various dangers. The employer cared for the knowledge, advice. Foreign workers lived in negligence within the framework of the law and the protection of the law, got information from the television. Telling from a friend made it possible to have experience and lived happily.

Discussion

1. The health of foreign workers was healthy according to the ABAC Poll (2006: 8). Because foreign workers were industrious and tolerant, their bodies tolerant of labor, appropriate to their jobs. However the study of Suthat Sriwilai (2013: 10), which examines the impact of foreign workers on the health system and costs of Thailand. Unlawful foreign worker would not pass the health check process or outside the health insurance system had risky and public health problems to the private and public.

2. Economic factors relating to foreign workers; foreign workers did not claim salary rate as well as the jobs they employed and worked tolerance more than Thai workers because salary rates were higher than in the home country. This was consistent with the research conducted by Pakarida Picharn and Jongrak Hongngam (2016: 58-59) about factors affecting migration decision of foreign workers. It was found that the most attractive factor for foreign workers to move to the highest level was the higher income-earning variables in which their income in the destination country was greater than that in their home country.

3. The social status of foreign workers depended on the culture of each country of origin that included family dimension, society, culture and traditions. The unification of foreign workers is a social phenomenon, and society was adapted to society for survival and well-being. In accordance with Apichart Jumratthamrong's study (2014: 67) study that the study was carried out by the survey of foreign workers in Thailand in 2014 and the survey on the socio-cultural and mental health status of the Thai people in 2014. The results show that foreign workers from Lao

and those with employee would have social integration. It was better to work with Thai than other countries and other occupation.

4. The information perception of foreign workers were that they are based on the same basic that were knowledge, experience, inheritance, local wisdom and contemporary learning contexts with technology media. In accordance with Sanit Sattayasopa's study (2019: 203) studies on foreign migrants and social security found that foreign workers were sensitive to their studies, which enabled them to communicate in Thai and to know the current society.

5. The housing and environmental factors according to the results of the group discussion, the factors related to the quality of life of migrant workers were as follows: workers depended on the characteristics of the industry, agriculture, processing and service sectors. Good and appropriate housing would have an impact on the quality of life of foreign workers. In accordance with Sanit Sattayasopa's study (2019: 203 - 204), which studies on foreign workers and social security. The foreign workers who came to Chiang Mai will adjust their housing based on their job description.

6. Welfare and safety factors were essential for foreign workers. Government agencies and NGOs had played a role in the protection of the welfare and safety of foreign workers in various dimensions. Such as the Labor Protection Act, which allows foreign workers to work with employers to provide welfare benefits through the role of the welfare committee in the establishment to ensure that the welfare was appropriate and consistent with the way of life. This would create morale in the work and improve the quality of life for foreign workers. (News Department of Labor Protection and Welfare, 2017)

Suggestion

According to the results, the factors related to the quality of life of foreign workers were as follows: health (mental health, mental health), economy and living, social status, information perception, housing and environment, welfare and safety. These factors could be considered as suggestions for improving the quality of life of foreign workers.

1. Proper housing and environment should be provided to migrant workers.
2. Promote healthy foreign workers to have a healthy body without disease and disability.
3. It should encourage foreign workers to have sufficient economic and self-sufficiency.
4. Promote Mental Health of foreign workers have a positive attitude, can control their emotions and adapt to changes in the body.
5. Policies should be formulated to promote the welfare and safety of foreign workers.

Conclusion

The results of qualitative data analysis. Overall, it showed that the key issues related to the quality of life of foreign workers in Surin province including health, physical health, mental health, economy, living conditions, social status, information perception, housing and environment, welfare and safety. This was in line with government policy. Foreign workers who came to work in Surin province had both legally registered foreign workers and illegal migrants. This research was limited to the extent to which legitimate foreign workers may reflect limited information. However, the suggestion in the policy of promoting quality of life is that the government needs further international cooperation.

Reference

- ABAC Poll. (2006). *Comments on foreign workers / foreign workers who come to work / work in Thailand*. (online). Retrieved from <https://www.ryt9.com/s/abcp/58416>
- Apichart Jumratthamrong et al. (2014). *The Typology of Social Integration of Cross border Migrant Workers in Thailand*. Institute for Population and Social Research Mahidol University Bangkok.
- Department of Labor Protection and Welfare News. (2017). *Workers' rights to work in foreign countries*. Department of Labour Protection and Welfare.
- Institute for Population and Social Research. (2012). *Mahidol University Population Projections for Thailand, 2005-2025*. Institute for Population and Social Research Mahidol University Bangkok.
- Ngampit Satsanguan. (2006). *Anthropological Research*. 7th edition. Chulalongkorn Publisher Bangkok.
- Office of Foreign Workers Administration. (2014). *Employment regulations on the criteria for the granting of work permits to aliens No.2 2014*. Department of Employment Ministry of Labour Bangkok Thailand.
- Pakarida Picharn and Jongrak Hongngam. (2016). Migration Factors of Migrants Workers: Empirical Study of Khon Kaen Province, Thailand. *MBA-KKU Journal*, 9(1), 58-59.
- Royal Thai Government Gazette. (2008, February). *Working of Alien Act, B.E. 2008*. Government Gazette page 24 Booklet 125, Part 37.
- Sanit Sattayasopa. (2019). Trans – Border Workforce and Social Security. *Journal of Graduate Research*, 7(1), 203-204.
- Surin Provincial Statistical Office. (2014). *Population data for 2014*. Surin Provincial Statistical Office Surin.
- Suthat Sriwilai. (2013). *Impact of foreign workers on health system and expenditure of Thailand*. Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Thailand Development Research Institute. (2007). *A Study of an Effective Demand for and Management of Alien Workers in Agriculture, Fisheries and Related Sectors and Construction Sect.* Ministry of Labour. Bangkok.

The Office of Social Development and Human Security, Surin Province. (2014). *Solving illegal foreign workers: study in Surin.*