

Indonesian Foreign Workers in Taiwan: Experiences of Risk and Uncertainty

Abstract

Temporary Indonesian migrant workers flows to Taiwan reached unprecedented number in the past decade, which has begun to attract heated debate. By using the lens of sociology of risk and uncertainty, this paper aimed exploring one dimension often absent from the public discussion regarding the presence of temporary migrant workers that is the narrative experiences and perspectives of the temporary migrants themselves. This study of migrant workers with temporary visas indicates that temporary migrants experience a high degree of risk and uncertainty, linked in particularly with dependence on their employers and governmental policies. As studies of precarious migrant status suggest, much of this uncertainty is anchored in the legal regulation of their migrant status. I use foreign workers' experiences of risk and uncertainty in order to ground an analysis that seeks to explore three interrelated dimensions and how they negotiate with those situation: first, migrant status on different dimensions in Taiwan; second, the influence of employers; and third, the effect of government policies.

Keywords: Indonesian foreign workers, risk, uncertainty, narrative experiences