



Social Impact of Illegal Immigrants on the Macro System in Malaysia: A Meta-Analysis

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Abstract

The influx of illegal immigrants, locally known as PATI (*Pendatang Asing Tanpa Izin*), has become one of the major concerns in Malaysia as its social impact could pose a threat to public and national security. Following from this, a Social Impact Assessment (SIA) study was conducted to identify its direct and indirect positive and/or negative effects on the macro system in Malaysia. The findings of the study confirmed that there were positive and negative implications towards the following aspects: health and social wellbeing; physical and environment; legislation and basic human rights; management and handling of refugee or illegal immigrants; national security; and additional commitments for government and enforcement agencies. All these have also affected the policy decision making of the government. From the study, six recommendations were suggested: 1) streamlining law enforcement via cooperation with other affected neighbouring countries, 2) organising awareness program among Malaysians regarding the impact of illegal immigrants, 3) developing a comprehensive database on immigrants, 4) identifying factors that hinder the work of enforcement agencies on illegal immigrants, 5) study and review strategies to deal with the issue of illegal immigrants, and 6) establish an action plan to achieve Tier 1 in the Trafficking in Persons Report 2020.

Keywords: illegal immigrants, macro system, national security, social impact



Introduction

In the early 1990s, Malaysia (besides Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Thailand) has been categorised as one of “the newest international system” or “newest migratory pole” in East Asia due to its increasing number of foreign workers (Athukorala, 2006). Between 1992-2001, the number of illegal immigrants in Malaysia was reported to be more than two million (Hedman, 2008), while in 2009, the number of documented foreign workers was reported to be only 1.9 million or 16.8 percent of the total workforce and the number of undocumented foreign workers or illegal foreign workers was 0.6-1.0 million (Adams Jr & Ahsan, 2014).

The Annual Report of Ministry of Home Affairs reported that in Malaysia, there were 1.85 million illegal foreign workers from 15 different countries, for example, Indonesia, Thailand, Filipina, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Kemboja, Nepal, Laos, Vietnam, Pakistan and India (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2014).

The Ministry of Human Resource in Malaysia has reported in 2015 that the highest number of foreign workers in the country came from Indonesia, followed by Nepal and Bangladesh (Intung et al., 2015). See Table 1. Majority of the Indonesian foreign workers went to work in Sabah, the second largest state in Malaysia. Kassim (2015) reported that there were more than two million registered foreign workers and about 1.3 million to four million illegal foreign workers in Malaysia in 2015.

Table 1 Statistics of active foreign worker by citizenship as of march 2015.

CITIZENSHIP	A	B	C	D	E	F	TOTAL
Indonesia	99,570	201,268	105,003	36,329	234,115	76,150	752,435
Nepal	77	16,595	365,916	100,521	6,612	18,473	508,194
Bangladesh	120	93,337	94,637	27,228	16,565	12,360	242,247
Myanmar	123	20,064	91,476	17,524	2,642	5,614	137,443
India	916	5,615	3,908	45,530	18,424	23,501	97,894
Philippines	40,506	4,048	4,278	5,064	5,803	4,721	64,420
Vietnam	883	5,030	45,680	1,754	121	585	54,053
Pakistan	57	18,703	3,308	3,748	7,599	17,012	50,427
Thailand	332	635	323	8,413	443	1,888	12,034
China	224	3,843	561	6,628	45	41	11,342
Cambodia	4,075	252	3,096	447	243	326	8,439
Others	58	837	5,554	772	259	330	7,810
Sri Lanka	1,888	171	3,258	1,016	319	253	6,905



Laos	39	3	25	7	2	4	80
Total	148,868	370,401	727,023	254,981	293,192	161,258	1,955,723
A- Domestic Helper B- Construction C- Manufacturing D- Service E- Plantation F- Agriculture							

Source: Ministry of Human Resource in Intung et al (2015).

Malaysia has become a favourite destination due to its strategic geographical location among the ASEAN countries, and its political and economic stability. Moreover, critical economic sectors, such as manufacturing, service, agricultural and construction, demand the need for foreign workers. (Narayanan & Lai 2005; Kassim, 2014; Intung, et al., 2015). See Table 2.

Table 2 The Existence of Labour Force by Sector, 10th Malaysia Plan, 2011-2015.

Labour Sector	Need of Labour Force
Construction	11.1%
Service	6.3%
Manufacturing	4.8%
Agriculture	2.4%
Mining & Quarrying	0.8%

Source: Economic Planning Unit in Rovina Intung et al. 2015.

The Department of Statistics Malaysia reported in 2015 that Malaysia's Gross Domestic Product grew by around 5.3% and had created 1.8 million new jobs; 1.3 million or 71.5% of these new jobs were in the service sector, 431,000 or 23.6% were in the manufacturing sector, 78,000 were in the construction sector and 11,000 were in the agricultural sector. By the first quarter of 2017, the Malaysian economy remained stable at 5.6% (Department of Statistics, 2017). All economic sectors registered growth except for the mining and quarrying sector. This brought about a high demand for foreign workers by employers in these critical sectors. This also became a pull factor for both registered and illegal migrant workers. As such, the management of migrant workers, especially those who are illegal or having refugee status, become more crucial and relevant as the matter could give rise to different forms of problems, particularly social problems. Following from this, SIA exercise needs to be carried out to gauge the positive and negative, as well as direct and indirect, impacts of an influx of registered and illegal migrant workers in Malaysia.

The Malaysian Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development (2008) defined SIA as the process for identifying, evaluating, predicting, and communicating information concerning the possible social impact arising from the implementation of certain societal policies, plans, programs and projects. Following from these, SIA will provide recommendations to reduce any negative impact that



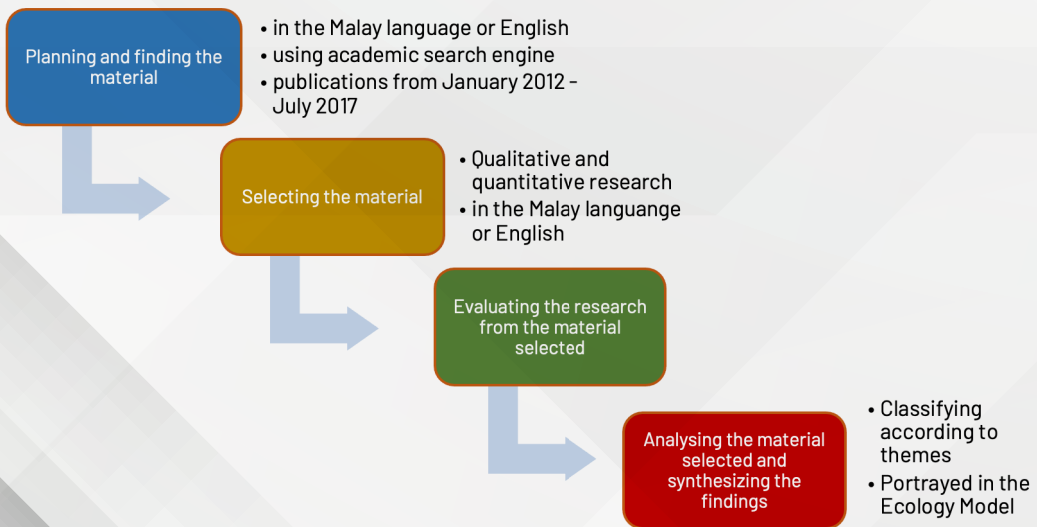
could arise before the implementation of these activities. Becker (2001) said that these macro social impacts should be considered at the individual, organizational and social system levels, and that the social system level should be considered nationally and internationally. The SIA of these three levels should be carried out via the three steps of “analysing, monitoring and managing” to identify the positive and negative impacts of the activity.

It should be noted that, thus far, studies carried out in Malaysia concentrated mainly on certain identified issues of illegal immigrants. As such it is not holistic. It is the intention of this paper to give a more holistic picture of the social impact of illegal immigrants on the macro system of Malaysia.

Methods

This study on the social impact of illegal immigrants on the Malaysian society was carried out using the qualitative method of meta-analysis. Davis et al (2014) mentioned that the popular method of combining systematic evaluation and meta-analysis would synthesize study findings to determine the impact or effect that could happen to the population. This method involved in-depth and detail interpretation of past studies. Schreiber et al (1997) said that meta-analysis could be used in three ways, i.e., theory building, describing and explaining the theory, and as a basis for induction and interpretation of the theory. Meta-analysis is normally used to synthesize qualitative studies. However, recently meta-analysis has been used to synthesize qualitative as well as quantitative studies. As such, this research will use both qualitative and quantitative research for its analysis. The research process is adopted from Walsh and Downe (2005) as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1 Research process





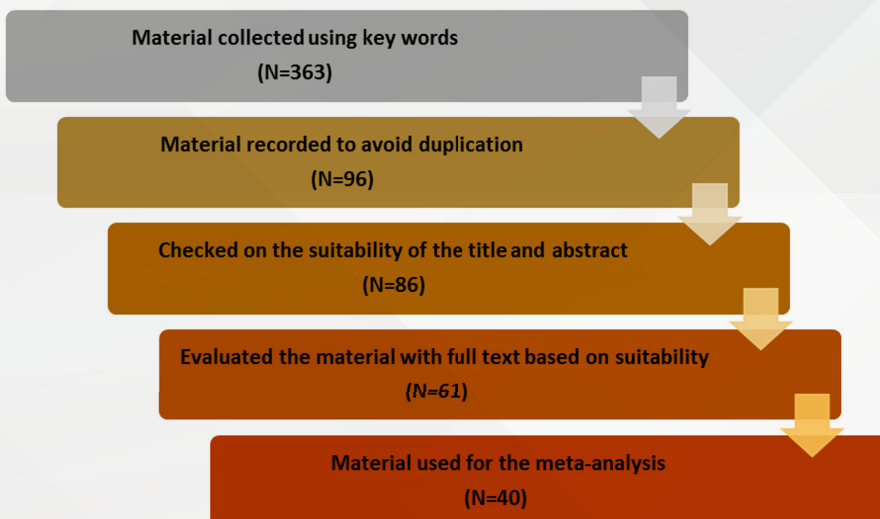
Meta-analysis involves four stages which are: (i) planning and finding the relevant material such as articles, books and report, (ii) selecting the material, (iii) evaluating the research from the material selected, and (iv) analysing the material selected and synthesizing the findings.

Stage 1: Planning and finding the relevant material

The research team came up with a list of keywords in both the Malay language and English in order to source for material relating to the study on illegal immigrants in the internet search engine. Some of the keywords that were used are *irregular immigrants, illegal immigrants, illegal employment, illegal migrants, immigrant worker, migrant worker, illegal immigration, stateless migrants, and undocumented migrants*. The internet search engine employed were Google Scholar, Microsoft Academic Search, JURN, Internet Public Library, JSTOR, AcademicIndex, iSEEK Education, Digital Library of the Commons Repository, Virtual LRC, RefSeek, OAlster, Infomine, CiteuLike and Infotopia. The initial search using Google's academic search engine resulted in 1.1 million items. The results were then fine-tuned by using the Google Scholar search engine which resulted in only 363 articles. These 363 articles were then carefully evaluated and selected for the meta-analysis of this research.

Besides using the internet search engine, material such as books, articles, reports and theses published from January 2012 to July 2017 in the Malay language and English were sourced from libraries in both public and private universities. The proses of selection is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2 Meta-analysis search results.





The process of selection of articles for the meta-analysis of the research involved three main stages as discussed below:

1. Decision on inclusion

Only articles containing qualitative and quantitative research on illegal immigrants in Malaysia in both the Malay language and English were chosen.

2. Evaluation of studies

After the first round of selection of articles was carried out, the chosen articles would then be recorded to avoid any duplicate of articles found by the search engine to be used in the meta-analysis. The recording is also to check on the suitability of the title and abstract of the articles. Once the articles have been recorded, they would then be evaluated based on criteria such as the suitability of their research protocol, the sample size of their research, and the reliability and validity of their research. The articles which were fulfilled the criteria would then be used for the meta-analysis.

3. Analytical technique and synthesis of findings

The contents of the chosen articles were then analysed using the meta-analysis technique. Results generated from the meta-analysis would then be classified according to their related themes. Based on these themes, the discussion and conclusion of the impact of illegal immigrants on the macro system in Malaysia would be carried out.

Results and Discussion

The meta-analysis study conducted has identified positive and negative effects brought by illegal immigrants. The results will be discussed within the following nine topics: health and social well-being; physical and environmental aspects; expenses to the government; national security threats; increased productivity of the country; impact to national economy; legislative and human rights aspects; management of illegal immigrants and refugees; and enforcement.

Health and social well-being

One of the issues often associated with illegal immigrants is infectious diseases, such as tuberculosis, malaria, hepatitis B, HIV as well as leprosy, as illegal immigrants entering the country does not necessarily undergo health screening tests (Ajis et al., 2014; Tajari & Affendi 2015; Kassim, 2015; Abdullah et al., 2015; Hamzah & Daud, 2016). The increase of PATI has had an impact on the increase of tuberculosis that is between 12 to 13 percent (Idris & Othman, 2015).

In 2013, the then Deputy Ministry of Health of Malaysia stated that the screening of 30,000 illegal immigrants found that only one-third passed the test and could be temporarily employed, while the rest were ordered to be deported (Kassim 2015).



In addition, infectious diseases such as AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases were also detected by illegal immigrants (Intung et al., 2015). Studies also found that 84 percent of immigrants from Nepal and India were exposed to infectious parasitic parasites (parasites that are harmful and can cause various diseases including anaemia) (Abdullah et al., 2015). Health problems of the illegal immigrants also affected hospital services, especially public hospitals where majority of them received their treatment. For example, in Likas Hospital, 80 percent of the beds in the maternity ward were occupied by illegal immigrants (Tajari & Affendi, 2015). This increase in number of patients has inconvenienced the locals as the waiting time to receive treatment has become much longer. As a number of the illegal immigrants carry infectious diseases with them, this has caused local hospitals to be more vigilante in preventing any epidemic from infecting the local population (Sahimin et al., 2016). Also, the locals were not comfortable with the illegal immigrants using their hospitals because of fear of the spread of infectious diseases carried by them (Abdullah et al., 2015).

Physical and environmental aspects

Most employers do not provide accommodation to illegal immigrants whom they hire as they do not want to be responsible for their well-being and actions. As the number of illegal immigrants increased, it has led to a number of problems, such as the mushrooming of illegal settlements in urban areas and forests known as squatter areas which lack basic facilities such water, and sewage and sewage water. This could lead to pollution and threats of disease (Azmi Latip 2012; Ahmad et al., 2015; Intung et al., 2015). As these squatter areas are illegal, the occupants are also vulnerable to social problems such as crimes against them.

Expenses incurred by the government

The flooding of illegal immigrants into the country brings imminent implications to the government. Uncontrolled entry will be a critical issue for the government to bear the associated costs (for example: the provision of placement/protection) which indirectly bans the government to fulfill all 'claims' from the illegal immigrants. A study by Intung and colleagues (2015) confirms that refugees who receive refugee cards provide economic and social burden to Malaysia. The Malaysian government is 'forced' to provide facilities to meet human rights demands relating to the need and protection of illegal immigrants. Government agencies are forced to work harder to combat illegal logging by raising costs by increasing the number of detainees (Intung et al., 2015). The financial burden incurred by the government involves a considerable amount due to the high incidence of immigrants. Whereas if such expenditure is not required, the allocation can be channelled to the needs of the locals. Malaysia is known as a country that cares for humanitarian issues. Thus, Malaysia is one of the countries where refugees and foreigners are looking for jobs.



In addressing the issue of illegal immigrants, the Malaysian government has taken the necessary steps to enforce the law. This is to reduce the burden on the government from the emergence of problems arising in the illegal migration management. Recent research findings suggest that the government should introduce comprehensive legislation on migration, strengthen enforcement agencies' control, and enforce appropriate penalties for cases involving discrimination (Badarulzaman et al., 2016).

The burden on the government becomes a major issue when the involved agencies need to regulate all procedures from the entry of illegal immigrants into the country until repatriation of piracy to the country of origin. The role of the government in managing the return of illegal immigrants to their home country involves high financial allocation. However, all previous studies did not state the total cost involved and should be issued by the government but studies by Sukimi and Sarifin (2014) support that the role of the government in regulating and controlling foreign workers especially those who do not have documents through the 6P Program (*Pendaftaran, Pemutihan, Pengampunan, Pemantauan, Penguatkuasaan and Pengusiran*) have implications for the Malaysian government. Indeed, various strategies, efforts and measures have been taken by the government to deal with the issue of immigrants. However, in terms of implementation there is still room to be taken into consideration including abuse of power, regulatory misunderstanding or procedures among the executives.

The inclusion of illegal immigrants also makes the facilities available to Malaysians/locals also adopted by the immigrants (Abdullah et al., 2015). When illegal immigrants have a health problem, this group will concentrate on using government hospital services. Similarly, in the field of education, the government should provide access to education as a fulfilment of the child's basic needs (Lumayag, 2016; Allerton, 2018) for basic education such as other children in the country. This will result in competition between locals and foreigners when the services offered by the institution are limited.

National security threats

The existing problems related to national security threats are more on issues such as the misuse of refugee cards among refugees/illegal immigrants. In addition, other issues related to security threats are that when diplomatic relations with refugee/illegal immigrants' countries are slightly affected, especially when there is no conflict of resolution; increased crime rate and social problems among refugees/illegal immigrants. All aspects of this security threat are discussed in detail in the study conducted by Mohd Don and Lee (2014), Hoffstaedter (2017), Azmi Latip (2012), Ahmad et al., (2014), Hamzah and Daud (2016) and research by Dollah and Abdullah (2017).



The most critical threat is about human trafficking crimes which has been much concern of previous researchers such as Kassim (2014) and Ajis et al (2017). In this context, Malaysia was identified as a transit location from Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran and Myanmar before being sent to Australia. Smuggling turns into trafficking when exploitation and abuse among refugees/illegal immigrants (Ajis et al., 2017). Meta analysis under the theme of this security threat also reveals that the concept of Transnationality which is human trafficking involves various countries in the same period of time. Human trafficking does not necessarily cross the country but it can happen either in the country of origin, during travel or destination country. The relatively critical implications discussed by previous research findings are the presence of international terrorism threats and threats (Ahmad et al., 2015).

The result of this meta-analysis shows that the most critical security threats are human trafficking crime. As a country that is regarded as one of the world's destinations, transit and trafficking sources, Malaysia has to acknowledge and adhere to the challenges and threats resulting from crimes illegal immigrants across the border. In this context, Malaysia has fulfilled its seriousness in handling this crime through the enactment of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act 2007 (Act 670). This is also in line with the agreements and agreements that Malaysia has signed internationally. In Malaysia, the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act 2007 came into force on 28 February 2008.

Human trafficking is a complex crime involving organized syndicates and organizations with a sound network of cooperation. Hence, a consistent and comprehensive approach is indispensable in our efforts to address this crime. In addition, collaboration and collaboration at national, regional and international levels is crucial in ensuring success. With the proactive measures taken by the Government, especially the Royal Malaysian Police (PDRM), has shown a positive change towards curbing and preventing this global activity.

Increasing productivity of the country

The presence of illegal immigrants was found to have had a positive impact on the improvement of national productivity. Malaysia's economic growth has led to the importation of foreign workers to meet the needs of certain industries such as manufacturing, plantation, construction and services, including as maids. In fact, it is also closely linked to the Malaysian government policy which allows labour migration as one of the measures to address the shortage of labour in the critical sector. This situation has opened the opportunity for the entry of foreign workers and is no exception of the illegal immigrants. This has led some to practice "door-to-door policy" (Kaur, 2014; Ajis et al., 2014; Narayanan & Lai, 2014; Dollah & Abdullah, 2015). Foreign workers including illegal immigrants contribute substantially to providing a workforce that can accommodate certain sectors, especially industrial and construction needs. This can be seen by the rapid economic and productivity



for example in Sabah, which relying heavily on foreign workers (Abdullah et al., 2015; Dollah & Abdullah, 2015).

Employers were also more likely to employ foreign workers, including illegal immigrants because of cheaper wages than locals. It can certainly save the employer's financial costs. However, at the same time it affects the competition for local residents. Indirectly, it can contribute to the unemployment rate among local residents (Ahmad et al., 2015; Intung et al. 2015). Skilled and semi-skilled foreign workers have a positive and significant impact on the country's economic growth for both the short and long-term periods (Ismail & Yuliyusman 2014, Ismail et al., 2014). However, positive and significant impacts are only from professional or skilled foreign workers. For semi-skilled and unskilled foreign workers, it shows the impact of negative wage rates, as well as they do not perform good performance or quality (Ismail et al., 2014; Ismail & Yuliyusman 2014).

It is clear that even if illegal immigrants has a positive impact in terms of increasing productivity of the country, long-term impacts can be seen from the negative impact of affecting the country's economy, affecting the health and social well-being of the community, as well as negative effects on physical and environmental aspects.

The effect on the country's economy

Most of the illegal immigrants only spend part of their salary in Malaysia. Some will be brought or sent to their home country. This is because the main purpose of the illegal immigrant's arrival to Malaysia is to work and improve their lives and family, and to ensure their future. The outflow of Malaysian currencies has an impact on the Malaysian economy.

In addition, the government also has to cover the cost of managing illegal immigrants' arrival, even up to their cost of living if they are imprisoned and burial costs if illegal immigrants die. Most illegal immigrants also live in illegal settlement/squatter or in a shared home provided by the employer. Indirectly, they stay free without paying for water and electricity. The outflow of foreign currency transfers, the cost of illegal immigrants' management, covers the cost of losses for illegal settlements, illegal businesses among unpaid illegal immigrants and illegal water and electricity and licenses and supplies (Abdullah et al., 2015).

Unskilled foreign labour is also likely to affect output growth for either short or long term (Ismail & Yuliyusman, 2014; Ismail et al., 2014). Thus, the outflow of the national currency to the home country of illegal immigrants has had a devastating effect on the country's economy. The arrival of illegal immigrants to Malaysia also has a long-term impact on the economy of the country with various costs that the government has to bear as previously described. It is therefore important for the government to control the presence of foreign workers and to combat the emergence of illegal immigrants from time to time.



Legislative and human rights viewpoint

Other main issues emerged from the studies of macro impact of social impact assessment of illegal immigrants: (1) legislative and human right viewpoint, (2) managing and handling issues of PATI/refugees, and (3) enforcement. The review from the meta-analysis found that issue of national identity card among illegal immigrant (PATI/refugees) caused many immigrants working illegally in Malaysia particularly among their children. As a result, their right as children has raises concern among Non-Government Organisations and other stakeholders. They argued that undocumented children have the same right to attend and access to education (Lumayag, 2016; Allerton, 2018; Ajis et al., 2015; Hoffstaedter, 2017).

Despite to ensure in fulfilling international provisions, Malaysia government is also subjected to the implementation of the law enforcement in Malaysia. These legal and human rights aspects are governed by Malaysian law such as the Immigration Act 1959/63 (Act 155); Passports Act 1966; Prison Act 1995 (Act 537), Prisons Regulations 2000; Immigration Regulations 2003 (Administration & Depot Management) and Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act 2007. The provision of the law in Malaysia does not directly affect the granting of special protection for asylum/refugee/trafficking applicants including children and women. However, there is an exceptional to the UNHCR cardholder, for example, the tolerance of immigration or discretion by the minister (Ahmad et al., 2014).

The situation of human rights among immigrant/foreign workers includes discrimination on in education, health, housing, social security as well as violence and justice. The privilege/rights of foreign immigrants claimed by these illegal immigrants' raises the conflict between citizens (Badarulzaman et al., 2016; Ahmad et al., 2015). The claim of the right by illegal immigrants or refugees has caused problems to Malaysia and the government has to bear this responsibility to safeguard the integrity of the domestic legal aspects (Ajis et al., 2017).

The confusion between refugees (especially Rohingya) and PATI is identified as a consolidation element under the theme of legal and human rights. In 2015, the Malaysia government agreed to place the Rohingya refugees at the Belantik Immigration Detention Center in Kedah. However, this 'facility' has been misused by some groups of PATI (not Rohingya). The relevant authorities should act accordingly to identify the actual status or their actual category either Rohingya refugees or other illegal immigrant (Hamzah et al., 2016).

Managing and handling illegal immigrants/refugees

Other themes underlying on macro impact/implication were managing and handling illegal immigrant. Kaur (2014) has debated in his study that management and handling of refugees/immigrants in terms of the procedure is still ambiguous and there is no uniformity among law enforcement agencies involved in this matter. Kaur's



study is strongly supported by the study by Supaat (2015) which revealed a misconduct in managing and handling illegal immigrant involving four phases: (i) upon arrival, (ii) during the application process or during the determination of refugee status, (iii) resettlement and deportation phase and (iv) over a period of time with local integration. Therefore, their studies suggested that improvement in terms of the policy related to illegal immigrant should be taken into consideration. For instance, the presence of PATI should be recorded through a systematic approach. The foreign immigrants need to use a biometric ID to control entry into Malaysia and be permitted to stay based on the designated visa duration.

The management and handling aspects of illegal immigrant are also linked with their status as an employee in Malaysia. Studies by Ismail et al (2014) emphasized that the government should control the admission of unskilled foreign workers to prevent failure to national productivity as well as they are also involved with social problems. In addition, it is the employer's responsibility of foreign workers such as providing terms and conditions of employment, insurance coverage, transportation, protection, housing and incurring burial expenses and repatriation of foreign workers who have been in the working contract period. The roles of the government in regulating and controlling foreign workers, clearly documented within the 6P Programme (Pendaftaran - registration, Pemutihan - cleaning, Pengampunan - forgiveness, Pemantauan - monitoring, Penguatkuasaan - enforcement and Pengusiran - deportation). This includes managing the deporting of an illegal immigrant to their respective country of origin. The specific management programme for the illegal immigrant involved the deceased employer's issue during the 6P programme (Sukimi & Sarifin, 2014). Furthermore, effective foreign workers management, clearer policy, recruitment, placement, monitoring and repatriation of migrant workers to their homeland are key elements to ensure that migration management issues in Malaysia are managed and administered appropriately.

Enforcement

Previous studies have reported the issues of enforcement among the policy maker level. The meta analysis findings showed that the policy failure and development of ad hoc policy in relations to illegal immigrants matters. Findings from Devadason and Meng (2014) supported the themes identified as their findings also showed that lack of enforcement and misused of power among the stakeholders involved in this matter. Studies has shown that policy maker play an important role in helping to ensure that immigration law is effectively enforced.



Recommendation

Based on the results obtained from the analyses made, there were numerous suggestions put forward to mitigate the impact of influx of illegal immigrants into the country. Measures to be taken however are not exclusive to the government agencies alone but would require the awareness, involvement and cooperation at individual and agency levels. Measures identified in tackling this issue would include:

1. Law enforcement

There is a requirement to periodically review the existing laws to cater for the ever changing development and situation. In terms of their implementation, the laws needs to be strictly enforced especially as regards the punishments for illegal entry, documentation procedure for the screening of legal immigrants, border control and other related laws.

2. Cooperation with neighbouring countries

Immigration control measures should not be restricted to just within the country. Malaysia needs to establish good cooperation with countries that are known to have regular flow of immigrants into the country such as Indonesia, Bangladesh, Philippines, Nepal, India, Myanmar and other countries. Good bilateral relations with these countries would facilitate measures to reduce the number of illegal immigrants coming into the country. It also would enable the countries concerned to exercise better immigration control of their citizens. Toward this end, the establishment of bilateral immigration agreements with these countries are worth considering.

3. Awareness campaign among malaysians

The effort to reduce the flow of illegal immigrants into the country is not the responsibility of the government alone (Intung et al., 2015). The local population should also be responsible enough to report to the relevance authorities the presence of illegal immigrants in their areas. The people should also cooperate with the government by not getting themselves involved in the process of bringing in illegal immigrants into the country and to refrain from employing them.

4. The establishment of a comprehensive database

At operational level the management of refugee is entrusted to mainly the Royal Malaysian Police and the Immigration Department assisted by other government agencies. The operations of these agencies would be more efficient if a comprehensive data base could be made available. The database made available to these agencies should include details such as their entry-exit record, medical record and other relevant records. This data base would be the main source of reference to these agencies.



5. **Evaluating the factors that prevent effective implementation of policies**

Malaysia has been plagued by illegal immigration issue for a considerable period of time. According to the statistical data released by the Immigration Department, the number of illegal immigrants in Malaysia has now approaching two million people. Malaysia is the destination of choice by immigrants from poorer, politically unstable and densely populated neighbouring countries where employment opportunities are limited. This factor contributed to the growing number of illegal immigrants entering the country despite the various measures introduced by the government. Despite the introduction of measures by the government such as stricter border control regulation, visa application procedure for foreign workers and more stringent conditions for the employment of foreign workers, it appears that there might be factors that prevent the effective implementation of these policies. As such, a follow up study to look specifically into this problem needs to be conducted.

6. **Measures and action plan to elevate Malaysia to tier 1 status by the year 2020**

In line with the Malaysian government objective of achieving Tier 1 status in the anti-human trafficking index by 2020, National Action Plan in the Prevention of Human Trafficking 2016-2020 was launched the Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia in 2016. The blueprint outlined five guiding principles related to the handling of illegal immigrants such as government responsibility, civil society involvement, humanitarian treatment to the victims, inter agency coordination, and sustainability. The blueprint also outlined nine strategic objectives supported by nine different programs such as the strengthening of legal mechanism, coordination of effort by the enforcement agencies, public awareness and prevention measures, protection and rehabilitation, eradication of labour trade, capacity building, information management, smart partnership and performance and resilience benchmarking. Malaysia has been placed under Tier 2 in the annual report published by the US State Department. To be elevated to Tier 1 a detail study needs to be conducted by the various agencies involved in the handling of immigration, security and human trafficking.



Conclusion

The perception that Malaysia has a stable political and economic climate has attracted massive inflow of immigrants into the country including those who came in illegally. Undoubtedly, their presence has created a positive impact to the country especially in terms of labour supply and national productivity. It also appears that some economic sectors are totally reliant on the supply of foreign labour. However, research has also indicated that the influx of foreign immigrants into the country brought with it some negative impact affecting national security, societal relations, the peoples' well-being, economy, and changes in lifestyles. A comprehensive and coordinated effort coupled with stringent implementation measures must be instituted to address and curb this problem in order to ensure that national security is not compromised.

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