

---

**Research Article****Oyster Cultivation Betting on Foreign Workers:  
A Study of Indonesian Workers in Hiroshima****Muhammad Reza Rustam**

Hiroshima University, Japan

Email: [rezarustam@hiroshima-u.ac.jp](mailto:rezarustam@hiroshima-u.ac.jp)*Received: March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021; Revised: May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021; Accepted: May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021**Available online: May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021; Published regularly: June 2021***Abstract**

One of the reasons foreign workers are looking for jobs abroad is that there are not enough jobs in their home countries. Indonesia is one of the countries that send migrant workers to more developed Asian and Middle Eastern countries. The increasingly rapid flow of globalization in the world goes together with the need for new workers to fill the industry, especially in Japan. This condition has forced Japan to open doors for foreign workers from developing countries to satisfy demand. These workers usually come from developing countries, such as Indonesia, Vietnam, China, the Philippines, and others. In general, they occupy the less desirable working positions over Japanese youth, the so-called 3D work (dirty, dangerous, and demanding). Therefore, the current dynamics of these migrant workers' life in Japan becomes an exciting subject to comprehend, especially for the Indonesian migrant workers. This study aims to determine the dynamics of Indonesian worker's life while working in the Japanese fisheries sector. In particular, the study looks at those who work in oyster cultivation in Hiroshima prefecture. This research was carried out using descriptive analysis methods and field study with in-depth interviews conducted from 2016-2018. The interviews performed in this study were structured to find answers for the following questions: What problems do the workers face while living in Japan? What kind of processes did they go through before coming to Japan? While working in the Japanese fishing industry, how was their life as a Muslim minority?

**Keywords:** Ginoujishshusei; Indonesia Workers; Japan; Migrant Worker; Oyster Workers**How to cite (APA):**Rustam, M. R. (2021). Oyster Cultivation Betting on Foreign Workers: A Study of Indonesian Workers in Hiroshima. *IZUMI*, 10(1), 131–142. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.14710/izumi.10.1.131-142>**Permalink/DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.14710/izumi.10.1.131-142>**1. Introduction**

Foreigners in Japan can be divided into three groups. The first group can be called "old comers," who have lived in Japan for over three or four generations; this is most common with Korean or Chinese families. Conversely, the second group can be called "newcomers." This group comprises *Nikkeijin*, who have been officially permitted to work in Japan by the revised laws on immigration. The third group comprises Asians who are officially prohibited from working in Japan (Kajita, 1998:120-121). Japan receives millions of

tourists each year, including many Indonesian visitors. For Indonesian citizens, however, Japan is not just a place for vacation or education, but also a place where one can get a job and earn a high income. One of the reasons Indonesian migrant workers are looking for jobs abroad is that there are not enough jobs in Indonesia. Most Indonesian migrant workers go to the more developed Asian countries and the Middle East. Among them, these workers can be divided into two types: skilled workers and unskilled workers. In the Middle East, Indonesian

workers—usually female—work as domestic helpers, such as maids. They come from small towns on the island of Java, generally have a child, and go abroad for economic and family reasons (Carol, 2018:161-162).

Indonesian residents in Japan can be divided into four main groups. According to how they came to Japan: as students, skilled workers directly recruited from Indonesia, technical interns (trainees), or as spouses of Japanese nationals. The first two groups result from the Japanese government migration policy towards skilled workers. In Japan, Indonesian residents recently entered Japan as students (college or pre-college) and then decided to stay and work in Japan. The policy creates skilled workers who have also mastered the Japanese language and thus re-socialized in Japan, contributing not only to the Japanese economy but also to civil society.

Another point to note is the Japanese foreign policy for accepting foreign workers (unskilled). It is beneficial for young Indonesians to get a job in Japan as finding a job in Indonesia is difficult. It is especially true because Indonesia has a demographic bonus. A demographic bonus is a condition in which the productive age population is more than the non-productive population. According to the Badan Pusat Statistik (Statistics Indonesia, 2018), the productive age population (15-64 years old) reached 179.13 million people, or around 67.6% of Indonesia's total population. In recent years, Japan's population has begun to decline, and the proportion of working-age people also continues to decrease. The birth rate is well below the replacement level. This condition has forced Japan to open doors for foreign workers from developing countries. To satisfy the demands, technical intern trainees, also called Skilled Workers, are designed to supply the shortage in the workforce of Japan.

According to 'the Japan Times, more than 345,000 foreign workers were predicted to be hired during the first five

years of a new working visa system from April. The nursing care sector is estimated to take in the most with between 50,000 to 60,000 hires of the figures, according to 14 selected industries. The restaurant industry is predicted to come second, with 41,000 to 53,000 workers, followed by 30,000 to 40,000 workers for the construction sector and building-cleaning firms taking in 28,000 to 37,000 workers. (Yoshida and Murakami, 2018).

According to Ogawa (2012:571), although Japan's most significant needs are nurses, there is concern from hospitals and residents about the level of communication and nursing skills of migrants. Furthermore, the work required of a trainee is more laborious than that of a nurse in a hospital. Moreover, several unskilled workers are working under an agreement between the Japanese and Indonesian governments since 1993. This program is called the TITP (Technical Intern Training Program) to transfer skills, technology, and knowledge from Japan to Indonesia. There is a hope that Indonesian workers who gain experience in Japan will contribute to Indonesia's development on their return. Besides Indonesia, several countries that collaborate in TITP with the Japanese government are India, Uzbekistan, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, China, Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Philippines, Vietnam, Peru, Myanmar, Mongolia, and Laos. The program is called a "training" program because it is designed as a platform for three years, wherein technological knowledge is transferred from Japan to Indonesia. However, the appropriate fields for work do not require (or provide) any skills. In this way, the TITP has been viewed as a deceitful strategy to import cheap labour (Isabella, 2016).

Based on figures from the Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (hereafter: MHLW) in 2018, the total number of registered foreign workers under the TITP (Technical Intern Training Program) is 308,000 trainees, 74 job

categories in 133 operations all over Japan. In particular, Osaka was placed first among 16.403 trainees, while Hiroshima was ranked second with 15,354 trainees. The third place in Tokyo has 15.182 trainees, and the fourth is 13.174 trainees in Ibaraki, and Saitama is coming in at fifth with 13,150 total trainees.

Table. 1 Number of Technical Intern Training Program (TITP) Japan in 2018 (by prefecture)

City	Number of TITP
Hokkaido	10,357
Aomori	1,946
Iwate	2,803
Miyagi	3,676
Akita	958
Yamagata	1,937
Fukushima	3,337
Ibaraki <sup>(4)</sup>	13,174
Tochigi	6,724
Gunma	8,201
Saitama <sup>(5)</sup>	13,150
Chiba	11,988
Tokyo	15,182 <sup>(3)</sup>
Kanagawa	9,776
Niigata	3,282
Toyama	5,206
Ishikawa	4,793
Fukui	3,908
Yamanashi	1,432
Nagano	6,357
Gifu	11,641
Shizuoka	11,989
Aichi	33,310
Mie	8,876
Shiga	4,071

Kyoto	3,773
Osaka <sup>(1)</sup>	16,403
Hyogo	9,024
Nara	1,805
Wakayama	905
Tottori	1,519
Shimane	1,934
Okayama	7,704
<b>Hiroshima <sup>(2)</sup></b>	<b>15,354</b>
Yamaguchi	3,416
Tokushima	2,869
Kagawa	5,222
Ehime	5,555
Kochi	1,534
Fukuoka	10,624
Saga	2,366
Nagasaki	2,462
Kumamoto	6,295
Oita	3,094
Miyazaki	2,800
Kagoshima	4,343
Okinawa	1,414
<b>Total</b>	<b>308,489</b>

Source: Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare Japan. 2018

As shown in table 1, there were 15,354 trainees in Hiroshima Prefecture in 2018. According to the Hiroshima Labor Bureau in 2018, there were 31,851 foreign workers in Hiroshima prefecture and 15,354 workings as technical intern trainees. The nationalities of these workers can be divided into Vietnam (7,070), China (4,028), the Philippines (2,250), Indonesia (781), amongst others. In this data, Indonesians are the fourth most significant segment of trainees in Hiroshima prefecture after Vietnam, China, and the Philippines.

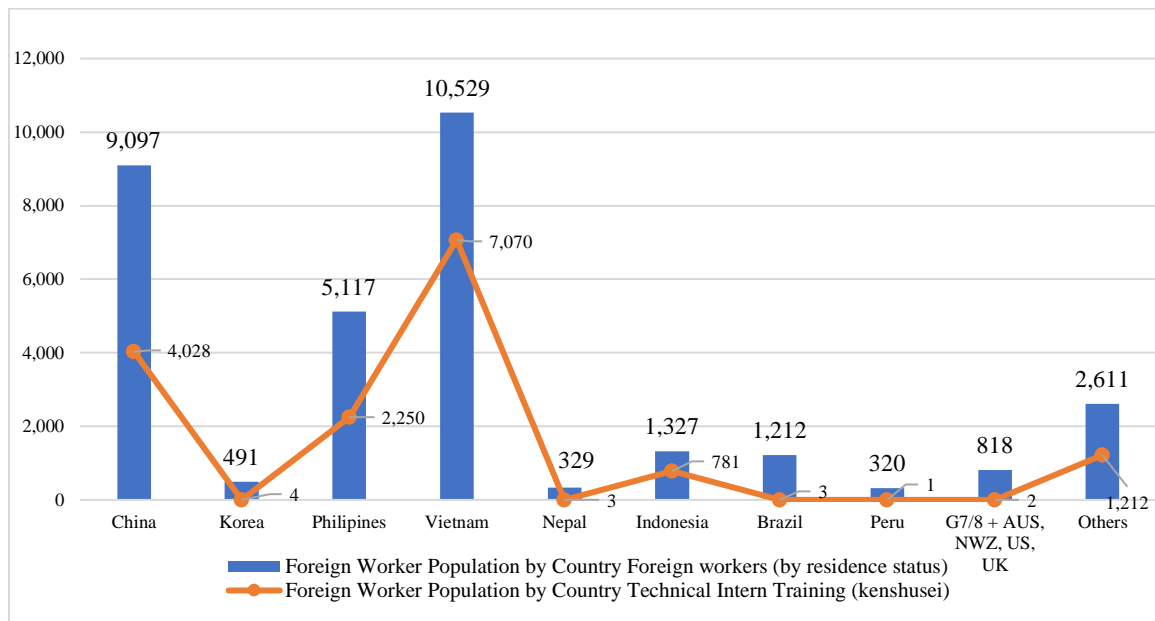


Chart 1. Foreign Worker Population by Country 2018 in Hiroshima compare with TITP (edited by author)

Source: Hiroshima Labour Bureau 2018.

Table 2. Enterprises and Workers Engaged in the Marine Fishery/Aquaculture Industry

Year	Enterprises			Workers		
	Total	Individual households	Corporate entities	Total	Self-employed	Hired
2005	126,020	118,930	7,090	222,170	...	...
2010	103,740	98,300	5,440	202,880	128,270	74,610
2015	85,210	80,570	4,640	166,610	100,520	66,100
2016	81,880	77,370	4,500	160,020	95,740	64,280
2017	78,890	74,470	4,420	153,490	91,950	61,530

Source: Statistics Bureau, Japan. Statistical handbook of Japan 2018.

From the data described in chart 1, the dynamics of foreign workers living in Japan (as trainees) is interesting to comprehend, especially the Indonesian workers in Hiroshima prefecture. One leading sector of concern by the Japanese government is the fishing sector because of decreased labourers. This sector will be targeted for employment by foreign workers, including Indonesian workers.

According to Hennings and Mintz's (2017a, 2019b) argument, the MHLW's annually published reports on foreign

workers are not an official, complete or reliable source of data on Japan's foreign workforce. The reports are not even drawn from a database of employees but rather from a compilation of notifications submitted by employers whose participation in the notification system is irregular or inconsistent. Moreover, due to its lack of enforcement, the nature, and rules of the reporting system, we can assume that their workplaces do not report some employees. In contrast, others who hold several jobs are reported multiple times. For these reasons,

we conclude that the MHLW's reports are not reliable sources of information about the number of foreign workers in Japan and should not be cited by journalists, researchers, or policy-makers.

According to the Statistical Handbook of Japan (2018:60-61), as shown in table 2, the number of marine fisheries has continuously decreased. In 2017, there was a 4.1 per cent decrease from the previous year, bringing the count to 153,490 workers. The number of workers in the marine fishing industry decreased from the previous year in every age group. The Japanese government's response to labour shortages in the fisheries industry has been to accept foreign workers and amend the Fisheries Basic Act (Act No.89 of 29 Jun 2001). Amend article to promote women, as seen in Article 28 (Promotion of Women's Participation in Fisheries) and older people in Article 29 (Promotion of Activities by Elderly People).

Concurrent with the broader labour shortage in Japan, Hiroshima prefecture also has had problems in the fishery sector. The total number of Japanese workers in 2015 was 3,440 persons and 573 foreign workers in the fishery sector and decrease year by year. By comparison, one foreign worker for every six Japanese workers (Todōfuku Kenkyūkai, 2019:82). Based on the author's survey in 2018, Hiroshima prefecture had 110 Indonesian workers join the oyster industry under the Technical Intern Training Program. By regional division, Aki Aga has ten workers, Onocho has 57 workers. Etajima has 22 workers, Miyajima has three workers, Akitsucho has eight workers, Niho Minami has one worker, and Yanocho has nine workers. The number of Indonesian oyster workers in Hiroshima is the second largest after workers from China.

Furthermore, the oyster industry is dirty, dangerous, and demanding work. Besides, that has violations in the Technical Intern Training Program system. Such as violence and have a different salary

payment in winter and summer. Therefore, the current dynamics of Indonesian oyster worker's lives in Japan becomes an exciting subject to comprehend.

## 2. Methods

This research uses a qualitative methodology to analyze Indonesian workers in Japan. According to Denzin dan Lincoln (2005:45), qualitative research is a method of inquiry employed in many different academic disciplines, traditionally in the social sciences, and in market research and further contexts. Qualitative researchers aim to gather an in-depth understanding of human behaviour and the reasons that govern such behaviour. The qualitative method investigates the why and how of decision making, not just what, where, when. Hence, smaller but focused samples are more often needed than large samples.

Furthermore, according to Professor Cees Smit Sibinga (2018:180), qualitative research methods give a rich and complete understanding of social reality. The data and interpretation provided are not accessible by other methods. Qualitative research studies social processes and actions in a contextual setting and reflects the subjective reality of the participants.

Moreover, qualitative researchers typically ask questions of those participating in a study. While not denying the potential for subliminal or subconscious processes, qualitative researchers use directive means of finding what people are thinking, feeling, and doing. In other words, if researchers want to know what is occurring with people, they ask them. Words are of utmost importance to qualitative researchers. Not only are the general ideas salient, but also the richness in word choices, metaphors, and even slang is salient.

Consequently, simply taking notes most often does not suffice for rigorous qualitative data collection. Instead, researchers record (audio or video) their

participants. Following this practice has multiple benefits (Given, 2018:190).

In this study, the author conducted observations with 44 Indonesian workers employed by oyster companies in Hiroshima. Of these 44 workers, the author distributed questions to 32 workers and interviewed 12 workers. The author interviewed the 12 oyster workers represented eight oyster companies in Hiroshima, used as the primary data. In comparison, the 44 Oyster workers whom the author distributed were used as supporting data in this study. Research locations were Aki-Aga, Ondocho, Etajima, Miyajima, Akitsucho, Nihominami, and Yanocho in Hiroshima Prefecture. This research began in 2017 with a preliminary survey conducted by the author in the Kure area. Subsequently, the author surveyed workers in Aki-Aga. When handling observations in Aki Aga, the author found a more positive response from its workers. It is different from previous research locations. In Aki Aga, the author also met with one owner of an oyster company in the area. The owner made time for an appointment in November 2017 for the author to visit and document the workers' processes during harvest time. Following this, the author made several observations in the Ondocho, Etajima, Miyajima, Akitsucho, Niho Minami, and Yanocho areas every weekend until February 2018.

While there were many data collected in this research by interviews and questionnaires, there were also some difficulties. The workers from the areas of Etajima and Miyajima were not friendly towards the authors' survey. This attitude may come from fear of being fired by their boss when they provide information to the author in answering research questions. Despite this, the author was invited to participate in activities and meetings held by oyster workers in Hiroshima. One such activity is called "*pengajian*," and is done quite frequently in Indonesia. Workers gather from various areas such as Miyajima,

Etajima, Yano, and others for this activity. *Pengajian* content is sharing knowledge about Islam, reading the Quran together, sharing about "how to be a good Muslim," and sharing their problems or conditions in their company. For the author conducting this study, *pengajian* is a powerful approach for collecting data, especially for the cases of Indonesian workers. Workers always rejected the author before participating in *pengajian*, and after the study was able to collect a significant amount of data.

### 3. Result and Discussion

In this part, the author will discuss the problems experienced by oyster workers in Hiroshima. Some of the problems include 1) interpersonal relationships between the workers, 2) departure process from Indonesia to Japan, and 3) working in Japan as a Muslim.

#### 3.1 Interpersonal Relationship

The emotional relationship formed between Indonesian workers and the company's owner or between the workers themselves differs depending on their traits. According to the interview conducted with the Indonesian workers, they felt that the emotional relationships built among the people around them were adequately well-established. When it came to unpleasant situations, the situations would meet a reasonable conclusion, so it would not disrupt their work. However, some of the situations found a violent end, either physically or verbally. Such an unpleasant event might lead to some of the workers running away from the company, finding comfort in being illegal workers. The author found this answer while interviewing one of the Indonesian workers in Ondo Machi. The worker testified that they and five of their friends ran away not long after arriving in Japan. They had only been working for three months in the company at that time. What made our informant eventually run away was the mistreatment from the company owner.

One example was that the boss always shouted "*baka omaera*" (You are stupid). Another reason that made the interviewee and their friends run away was that they were not given any allowance for the first month they lived in Japan. In contrast, their signed contract promised 20,000 yen upon they arrived, which would have been used to cover at the very least their meal expenses for the first month.

The author then asked an Indonesian worker in another company located in Yano Machi the same question. The second interviewee told us that their boss—the owner of their company—was lovely. However, one of their friends took a hit from someone in the owner's family in Mukainada Machi. The simple reason behind this violence was because they did not understand what was asked of them. Said violence had gone on three times, which made our interviewee, who personally knew a member of the Union assigned to their welfare, tell the Union of this occurrence. Everything resolved on good terms, and an assailant was let off with a warning from the company and a doing apology.

The same question was also asked the workers working in Akiaga Machi and Kure City. The workers explained that there is no apparent problem with either their workmates or the owner of their company. The owner is very kind towards them and his wife and sister, who also work in the company. During off time, the owner would often bring fish to their apartments for them to eat together. They live in provided housing, where up to eight people live together. The owner's mother also works in the same place as the interviewee, and she too is very kind towards them, so all in all, they have no problem working in the company at all. A new rule in 2017 stated that workers might stay in the contract for up to five years, and even then, the owner offered for them to stay. Female Indonesian workers can return to Indonesia for two

months because there is no oyster-work in the summer, and thus no pay.

The author makes his conclusion according to statements from workers of various companies in Hiroshima. Within this interview, Indonesian workers' physical and verbal violence is likely due to a poor understanding of the Japanese language. When commands are given by either their Japanese workmates or the company's owner, Indonesian workers can sometimes misunderstand them. To overcome acts of violence in this apprenticeship, generally, the workers do nothing. They prefer to remain silent and also do not report the incident to the authorities. Based on the interview results, the authors were more afraid when reporting this incident due to being fired by the company. They also consider the number of costs they paid before leaving for work in Japan until they must repay debt in a bank or pawn his parent's field.

On the other hand, the emotional relationship built between Indonesian workers in Hiroshima is formed not only because of the same culture and religion but also their home region in Indonesia. It was apparent when the author observed that almost all the oyster workers working in Hiroshima come from the island of Java in Indonesia. That is precisely why the most-used language while communicating is the Javanese language.

In this research, interviews were conducted when Indonesian workers from cities in Hiroshima were gathered in a "*pengajian*" (Quran recitation) in one of the worker's apartments in Akiaga and Kure. "*Pengajian*" is a general term used by the Indonesian Muslim for a specific gathering. Participants will recite the Quran and listen to religious lectures to be better Muslims. According to the interview, this activity is held twice every month, with the venue rotating between workers' residences every time. The primary purpose of the "*pengajian*" is to tighten the bonds between workers to keep them from engaging in

fighters with each other, which may cause them to be deported from Japan. One of the questions in the interview was about the kind of incident which may set off workers to engage in fights among each other. One worker answered that it was most often set off by one worker throwing a joke too offensive and too frequently at another, although it did not escalate into a fight, once caused great quarrelling between those workers.

### 3.2 Departure Cost

After receiving clearance from the organization, one of the essential aspects for a worker before departing to Japan is the ability to cover their cost of departure. According to the results gathered from a questionnaire distributed to workers departing to Hiroshima, the departure cost expended varies depending on their sending organization, or Lembaga Pelatihan Kerja (LPK), with different payment schemes, implemented. The data gathered can be found below:

From the results of questionnaires distributed to 32 Indonesian oyster workers in Hiroshima regarding their departure cost, 43.8 per cent answered that they paid 35 million rupiahs (330.000 in yen). Three per cent answered that they paid 32 million rupiahs (300.000 in yen), and 41 per cent answered that they paid 28 million rupiahs (260.000 in yen). Lastly, 12 per cent answered that they paid 18 million rupiahs (170.000 in yen). Next, the author also interviewed workers regarding their departure costs to have a more detailed explanation of their preferred payment method. The question was about the payment method used to pay for their departure cost expended by LPK. The answer contained the explanation that before departing, they were obliged to pay the amount declared by LPK. However, if they did not have enough money to pay, LPK would make it easier for them to pay by lending money to cover their departure costs. Naturally, the amount they owe

would be higher than the initial cost of departure expensed to them. They benefit from paying their departure cost in a monthly instalment from a part of their salary every month to LPK for a year.

According to the results from questionnaires and interviews regarding the amount of departure cost expensed and its payment methods, the author deduces that having an internship in Japan has shifted from the primary goal: transferring technology from a developed country to a developing country. The reasoning behind the author's deduction is that the sheer amount of departure costs expensed to the workers has become their most significant motivation for working for them to return the money they owe. These findings conclude that their primary motivation for working in Japan is to make money.

### 3.3 Working in Japan as a Muslim (religious life)

For Muslims, working overseas in another country as a minority is not an easy task. One of the most prevalent factors contributing to this issue is found in the fact that almost every time a Muslim consumes food or beverages, they must check the contents beforehand. For example: does it contain pork? Does it contain animal emulsifiers, especially ones made from pork? Furthermore, not all oyster companies provide the necessary facilities for *Shalat* (prayers) and other related activities. However, with the increasing openness of the Japanese government towards foreigners, especially Muslims, there has been an increase in *halal* food service providers and facilities where Muslims can carry out their religious needs. For example, in Hiroshima prefecture, workers must order food through online *halal* shops in Hiroshima, Inoushima, and Saijo City. Other sources include but are not limited to Facebook online shopping, speciality websites providing *halal* products, and supermarkets providing foods



with *halal* labels. Based on the points above, the author will explain empirical facts following the results gathered from various interviews conducted throughout the research.

### 3.3.1 *Halal* Food and *Haram* Food

*Haram* and *halal* in Islam can be perceived very broadly in terms of their definition. However, in this research, the author focuses on "*halal*" and "*haram*" in the context of *halal* food and *haram* food. For Muslims, the food needs to be *halal*. Commonly, the definition of *halal* is "allowed", whereas the definition of *haram* is "not allowed". Pork for Muslims is categorized as *haram* or "not allowed" to be consumed. Muslims are not only prohibited from consuming pork but also from consuming anything that contains pork extract.

In the cases of chicken and beef, these two are considered *halal* and therefore allowed to be consumed. However, in Muslim teachings itself, there are also different perspectives on consuming chicken and beef. This livestock will be *haram* or not allowed to be consumed if they are slaughtered in ways that violate the recommended procedure, as stated in the Quran.

Seeing how stringent Muslim teachings are inevitably bringing forth problems and challenges to Indonesian Muslim workers in Japan. The author's interview with the workers posed the question of whether they have ever accidentally consumed pork? The author found out that almost all of the oyster workers admitted having consumed pork accidentally. However, consuming pork accidentally is not considered an infringement under Muslim teachings, even though Muslim teachings prohibit pork consumption. In this case, the apprentices who almost consumed pork were caused by the food usually given out by the company owner or co-workers who did not know that the worker was a Muslim or Indonesian

worker join at the company party. The number of apprentices whom the author interviewed almost ate pork, as many as nine people from whom the author interviewed. In comparison, the author distributed the questionnaire to as many as 37 workers.

### 3.3.2 *Shalat* (Prayer) Time

*Shalat* refers to prayer activity. As a Muslim, *shalat* must be done five times per day. As a worker in Japan, prayer time is one of the obstacles that will be experienced because prayer times for Muslims do not use allocated times but instead follow the sun's rotation. For example, for the dawn prayer during winter in Japan, the time will be faster because the sun rises to become slower, at 3:30 in the morning. However, during summer, it can be slower, around 6:30 in the morning. This situation is very different from the situation in Indonesia, which is around the year between 4:30 - 5:00 in the morning. From the interview results of the author to the Indonesian workers in Hiroshima prefecture, "does the company give you time to *shalat*?" the answer from trainees varies greatly. They answered, "it depends on the company." Why is this so? Because there are companies that understand Indonesian Muslim activity. So, there are company owners who give time for *shalat*. There is also a worker who answered, "not given, because it is [your] business with [your] god." Some answer, "prayer is difficult because it coincides with work time."

At the same time, "Friday *Shalat*" is special worship conducted once a week on Fridays. For Muslims, especially for males, Friday *Shalat* must be done and cannot be abandoned. If a male Muslim abandons Friday *Shalat* three times in his life, he is said to have left Islam and must restate the oath to Islamize himself again. Interview with the workers about whether or not they are given time for Friday *Shalat*, their answers were no, except for Friday as a day off or in summer where workers do not

work. The workers do not get permission for doing Friday *Shalat* from a company. Because based on Muslim perspective, Friday *Shalat* is performed in mosques. Also, there are no mosques near companies. To get permission for Friday *Shalat* from the company means that the workers will not come to work on that Friday.

Nevertheless, in another perspective, Friday *Shalat* does not seem to have any problems; this is because Friday *Shalat* usually occurs at noon year-round in Japan, from approximately 12:00 to 13:00. Between this time, companies in Hiroshima would typically be having a break time, so there would not be any significant problem. It means workers can do Friday *shalat* but not do it in a mosque with another Muslim together but by themselves. However, still, this can be a consideration when recruiting the workforce from Indonesia, especially those fitting in the segmentation of a male Muslim. According to the author, issues related to *Shalat* need to be considered by the company that wants to recruit Indonesian labourers. *Shalat* is essential for a Muslim, and any disturbance can reduce the worker's enthusiasm.

### 3.3.3 Fasting Time

The third problem concerns fasting time. Ramadhan is a holy time for Muslims all around the world. During this festival, it becomes imperative for every Moslem to fast. According to God's orders, fasting must be for 30 days or a whole month. The orders for fasting in Ramadhan are written in the Al-Quran. It makes it an obligation to be done, and if one wishes not to do fasting during Ramadhan, there are reasons they must abide by and specific requirements. For example, if they are sick or go through a menstruation cycle, they cannot do fasting. Fasting is intended to teach people about self-control and restraint. It asks people to keep from eating and drinking, as well as any doings that may nullify their fasting, such as lying, stealing, having sex, et cetera. Fasting is done from sunrise to

sunset to increase one's piety as a Muslim, their health, as well as their sympathy to the less fortunate who must withstand hunger in their daily lives.

As a Muslim in Japan, most notably those working as oyster workers in Hiroshima, fasting is with no doubt a must. The predicament which comes up then is the restriction on fasting from companies in Ondo and Kure. From interviews in which the author asked about their fasting in 2017, workers in these areas explained that they would not be able to fast within a said year because the company had let out a warning as many as three times regarding their restriction on fasting. The companies reasoning was in fear that the workers would be too tired to the point of dehydration and blacking out during work. The workers also voiced out their concern on what they should do regarding that condition, for when the owner announced the restriction effective in May, it also coincided with the last working season. Naturally, the workload will increase, and on the other side, the workers must do fasting—to whom should they complain? It was not without reason that the workers felt they have no place to complain. When the owner stated that they would not be able to do fasting that year, the representative of LPK, who happened to visit Japan to monitor them, was right in front of the owner and did not give any defensive comment at all.

On another occasion, the author interviewed an Indonesian interpreter who regularly accompanies workers that get into trouble at their worksites in Hiroshima. The translator mentioned a relatively identical response regarding the fasting prohibition case. The author started by letting him know that they have previously interviewed workers around Ondo and Kure and found out that in 2017, the owner forbade 5 of its employees to do fasting. Then, the author asked the interpreter whether a similar case also occurred in the previous year. According to the interpreter, such an exact

case also occurred in the previous year. During that time, a worker came and talked to the interpreter, saying that their company—the name of which the interviewee could not disclose—also prohibited fasting.

They explained that the workers were prohibited from doing fasting during 2016 because it was summertime. Hence, the company was afraid that the workers might experience dehydration and that work accidents would become much higher due to fasting. Is that not in itself the risk of working in Japan? The interpreter stated they believe the workers may still be able to work as usual, even while fasting. They thought it was weird and sad at the same time because the workers are forced to eat during lunchtime and are constantly checked to see whether they have eaten. From the author's perspective, the fasting prohibition case should become part of a company's consideration of Indonesian workers working in Japan. Although, not all workers in Japan experience such prohibitions. This incident has only occurred in two companies; one is located around Ondo and another around Kure with five Muslim workers from Indonesia.

#### 4. Conclusion

The Technical Intern Training Program's primary objective is to transfer skills, technology, or knowledge from Japan to Indonesia. With hope, Indonesian workers who have experience in Japan when returning to Indonesia will contribute to Indonesia's development. Moreover, after returning to Indonesia, they may also have a chance to become entrepreneurs to set up a similar business with their knowledge and experience in Japan. Unfortunately, it is difficult to transfer technology in oyster cultivation to Indonesia because Indonesia is a tropical country, while oyster cultivation requires lower temperatures of 15 degrees Celsius to cultivate.

Indonesian candidates also should be prepared to learn the Japanese language

before leaving for Japan. Because communication is the first factor in physical and verbal violence that occur misunderstandings of instructions occur. Therefore, Indonesian organizations must ensure that hired candidates sent to Japan are skilled enough. In the process of accepting trainees, there may be insufficient and unclear parts of information given in advance in terms of Japanese life. Some trainees did not receive pre-training and did not understand the laws and duties related to labour. It is also necessary for the Japanese and Indonesian governments to cooperate to improve the employment and working conditions of the trainees. Specifically, it is necessary to thoroughly manage and supervise the dispatching agency on the Indonesian side and the accepting agency on the Japanese side. For example, they correct the acceptance of trainees in non-professional occupations and identify the difficulties they experience during their stay through close communication with the trainees and providing the necessary support. From this research, the author hopes that companies that think of accepting Indonesian trainees in Japan can understand Muslim life so that restrictions on their religious freedom are enacted.

#### References

- Chan, C. (2018). Follow the Maid: Domestic worker migration in and from Indonesia by Olivia Killias. *Indonesia*, 106(1), 161-164. <https://doi.org/10.1353/ind.2018.0020>
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). (2005). *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Sage.
- Given, L. M. (2008). *The SAGE encyclopedia of qualitative research methods* (Vols. 1-0). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

- <http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781412963909>
- Hennings, M., & Mintz, S. (2017). Toward a comprehensive estimate of the number of foreign workers in Japan. *Social Science Japan Journal*, 21(1), 103-115.  
<https://doi.org/10.1093/ssjj/jyx045>
- Hennings, M., & Mintz, S. (2018). Is Japan's Foreign Workforce Really Growing Rapidly? Understanding the Government Statistics Behind the Myth. *The Asia-Pacific Journal | Japan Focus*, 16(24).
- Hiroshima Labour Bureau. (2018, 25 Jan) Gaikoku jin no koyō jōkyō no todokede jōkyō (Heisei 30-nen 10 gatsumatsu genzai) Available from URL:  
<https://jsite.mhlw.go.jp/hiroshima-roudoukyoku/content/contents/000390954.pdf>.
- Indonesia, B. P. S. (2018). Statistik Indonesia 2018. *Jakarta: Badan Pusat Statistik Indonesia*
- Isabella, Brigitta. (2016). The Production of Shared Space: Notes on Indonesian Migrant Workers in Hong Kong and Japan. *Kyoto Review of Southeast Asia*, 19. [Cited 28 Sept 2019.] Available from URL:  
<https://kyotoreview.org/yav/indonesian-migrant-workers-hong-kong-japan/>
- Kajita, T. (1998). The challenge of incorporating foreigners in Japan: "Ethnic Japanese" and "Sociological Japanese". *Temporary Workers or Future Citizens?*, 120-147.  
[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-14418-1\\_5](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-14418-1_5)
- Lincoln, D. &. (2005). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research*. SAGE.
- MHLW, Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare. 2009-2018. *Gaikokujinkoyō jōkyō no todokede jōkyō ni tsuite* (Status of notifications on employed foreigners). Available from URL:  
<https://www.mhlw.go.jp/content/11655000/000472893.pdf>
- Ogawa, R. (2012). Globalization of care and the context of reception of Southeast Asian care workers in Japan. *Japanese Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 49(4), 570-593.
- Reiji Yoshida, Sakura Murakami, Japan Times, More than 345,000 foreign workers predicted to come to Japan under new visas: government. Available from URL:  
<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2018/11/14/national/politics-diplomacy/345000-foreign-workers-predicted-come-japan-new-visas-government/#.Xe-wpi17E1J>
- SBJ. Statistical Handbook of Japan. 2018. Available from URL:  
<https://www.stat.go.jp/english/data/handbook/pdf/2018all.pdf>
- Sibinga, C. T. (Ed.). (2018). *Ensuring research integrity and the ethical management of data*. IGI Global.
- Suisankihonhō, Fisheries Basic Act (Act No.89 of 29 Jun, 2001) Available from URL:  
[http://www.cas.go.jp/jp/seisaku/hour ei/data/fba\\_2.pdf](http://www.cas.go.jp/jp/seisaku/hour ei/data/fba_2.pdf)
- Todōfuken kenkyūkai. (2019) Chizu de tanoshimu sugoi Hiroshima. Yoshensha