



الجامعة
UNIVERSITI
TEKNOLOGI
MARA



QS COLLOQUIUM 2020

SERIES XII PROCEEDING OCT 2020 - FEB 2021

BACHELOR OF QUANTITY SURVEYING (HONS.)
Department of Built Environment Studies & Technology,
Universiti Teknologi MARA Perak

QS COLLOQUIUM 2020 SERIES XII

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA (UiTM) PERAK BRANCH
OCTOBER 2020 - FEBRUARY 2021

Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia

Editors

Sr Dr. Kartina Alauddin
Sr Puteri Sidrotul Nabihah Saarani
Noor Anisah Abdullah @ Dolah
Nur Fatihah Mohamed Yusof



Centre of Studies for Quantity Surveying
Department of Built Environment Studies & Technology
Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Perak Branch
Seri Iskandar Campus, Perak, MALAYSIA

ISBN: 978-967-19692-0-5

Copyright @ QS Colloquium Series XII

All right reserved. No part of this publication may be produced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by means electronics, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior permission in writing form the publisher.

ISSUES IN FOREIGN WORKERS MANAGEMENT IN CONSTRUCTION PROJECT

Muhammad Ashrof Arifuddin Zakaria¹ and Fairiz Miza Yop Zain²

^{1 2} Centre of Studies for Quantity Surveying, Department of Built Environment Studies & Technology, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Perak Branch, Seri Iskandar, 32610, Perak Malaysia
ashrofbakaria76@gmail.com¹, fairizmiza@gmail.com²

ABSTRACT:

Hiring foreign workers have their pros and cons toward construction team. Despite it can fulfil the construction sector needs, it leave a challenges toward contractors in managing foreign workers. Project managers and team leaders face difficulties in handling foreign workers. Project managers need to prepare sets of skilled with diversity management skill and knowledge to lead foreign workforce effectively. The main issues are foreign workers who willing to works do not really have sufficient knowledge in construction. The contractor main problem in managing foreign workers is to boost the productivity and quality of works from foreign workers. Other barrier to contractor is communication barrier which is different in languages. Therefore, the aim of this research is to manage and reduced the challenges in hiring foreign workers in construction because of many foreign workers recruited in Malaysia construction industry. The objectives of the research are to identify the contractor challenges in managing foreign workers, to study the impact of hiring foreign workers to contractors and to find the solution for the problems in managing foreign workers. A questionnaire survey has been distributed among the contractors and 38 valid data answered by the respondents were analysed. The result of this study is presented in the form of quantitative analysis which is frequency and percentages analysis. It can be concluded that contractor does have issues in managing foreign workers. It is also leaves an impact towards contractor itself. As whole, this research identify the challenges in managing foreign workers, the impact of hiring foreign workers and lastly is suggesting the solution for contractor to manage and reduced the challenges in managing foreign workers.

Keywords: *Foreign Workers, Labour Management, Construction Industry*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Malaysia's National income was contributed by many sectors. One of them is construction industry sector and therefore, government of Malaysia need to fulfil the construction industry needs. The main problem in Malaysia construction industry is labour shortages (Rahim, Hamid, Singh, Jagar, & Mazlan, 2013). In order to fulfil the needs, Malaysia government take a step to importing foreign workers to decreasing the labour shortages (Rahim et al., 2011). Hiring foreign workers has its pros and cons toward construction team. Despite it can fulfil the construction sector needs, it leaves challenges toward contractors in managing foreign workers (Achim, Rusdi, & Mohamad Amin, 2017). The challenges in managing foreign workers are to project managers and managing teams. Project managers need to prepare sets of skilled with diversity management skill and knowledge to lead foreign workforce effectively (Yng Ling, Dulaimi, & Chua, 2013).

1.1 Problem Statement

The main issues are foreign workers who willing to work do not really have sufficient knowledge in construction and they are also lack in knowledge to use tools in construction that makes the quality of works and productivity is low in certain project (Rahim et al., 2011). The contractors main problem in managing foreign workers is to increase the productivity and quality of foreign workers (Rahim et al., 2011). Other barrier to contractor is communication barrier which is different in languages where it will lead to great challenges towards contractor in order to fulfil the construction product. The problem of misunderstanding the instruction or not understand the instruction at all will arise due to language differences (Valitherm, 2014). Several of foreign workers in Malaysia have a contagious disease and pose a threat to other workers at the site. The cost of healthcare for foreign workers is high which affected contractor's budget besides giving their basic salary. It is one of challenges to contractor in order to fulfil the workers quota, contractor need to deal with high cost in healthcare for foreign workers (Nordin et al., 2018).

1.2 Research Aim

To reduces the challenges of managing foreign workers in construction project.

1.3 Research Objectives

- i. To identify the contractor challenges in managing foreign workers.
- ii. To study the impact of hiring foreign workers to contractors.
- iii. To find the solution to the problems in managing foreign workers.

1.4 Research Question

- i. What are contractor challenges in managing foreign workers?
- ii. What are the impacts of hiring foreign workers to contractor's project?
- iii. What are the solutions to the problems in managing foreign workers?

1.5 Scope of Research

The scope of this research is to identify real challenges from contractor side in managing foreign workers. The area of study in this research is Grade 7 contractors that registered with CIDB in construction industry. This research focused on construction project because foreign workers were recruited in construction project in Malaysia. A set of questionnaires will be distributed at the contractor site or office or via email to collecting the data. Different construction project will be chosen to complete this research in order to see the challenges in managing foreign workers in different project.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Issues in Managing Foreign Workers

In construction, the most important sources in order to completing a certain project are labour. Despite in Malaysia a labour shortage problem has occurred, Malaysia government take an initiative to imported foreign workers in order to meet the labour quota (Rahim et al., 2013). Importing foreign workers in Malaysia is a normal scenario and not a new issue. Basically, importing foreign workers in Malaysia is to overcome the labour shortage problem. But, some of key player in construction will be affected by incoming of foreign workers. The commonly affected by foreign workers is contractor in order to managing their foreign worker in order to finish the project (Ajis, Keling, Othman, & Shui'b, 2014). As example, many of problems occurred at the site such as accident because of communication barriers in implementing safety precautions to foreign workers (Hisham, 2005).

The main issues of employment of foreign workers are they have insufficient knowledge to follow the method of construction and using construction tools (Rahim et al., 2011). Other than that, the other main issue and challenges to contractor is communication barriers. This is because Malaysia employs foreign workers in different country such as Nepal, Myanmar and Bangladesh. Different country do speak different language and affecting contractor when workers do not understand instruction given by supervisors (Valithern, 2014). In result, the construction process will affect the time, cost and quality performance to contractor.

Rahim et al, (2011) stated that no problem that affected contractor in term of communication and health but several issues arise from foreign workers employment. Meanwhile, Valithern, (2014) insist that communication barriers do affect contractors especially in managing foreign workers. Otherwise, Mei Wei and Yazdanifard, (2015) and Yng Ling, Dulaimi and Chua, (2013) stated that communication barrier really gives an impact to contractor as foreign workers do not understand clearly the instruction given and that gives impact to quality, time and cost of the project. It defines that previous study cannot clarify whether the main problem which is communication barrier gives challenges to contractor side.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

As for the primary data, the questionnaire was carefully prepared to demonstrate that it was successful in gathering the relevant information. Questionnaire was used for informative and empirical surveys to find data, opinions and views about what is going on, which include, when, how many and how issues of contractor problems in managing foreign workers can be identified, how contractors managing foreign workers can be identified, and the effect of hiring foreign workers to the contractor's project. The questionnaire will use the Linkert Scale formed and the open ended question. The questionnaire will be distributed to the 90 respondents. The respondent is consisting of contractors' firms who currently managing highway project or have previous project involving highway project. The contractor must be certified and registered under CIDB. The approaches that been used to distribute and collect the questionnaire are through postal and electronic which is via Email, WhatsApp or Facsimile. The main objective of the questionnaire is to identify issues and challenges for the management of foreign workers in the construction industry. The questionnaire was structured in different parts to achieve the objective of the analysis.

The questionnaire analysis is based on the approach that has been used. A questionnaire is intended to achieve the goal of the analysis. The problem facing the contractor in the management of the foreign employees should be identified and solutions suggested in Malaysia for solving the problems facing the contractor. The questionnaire is randomly distributed to the contractor of Grade 7 registered with CIDB Malaysia. After distributed randomly to contractors companies in Malaysia, a total of thirty eight (38) sets of questionnaires were collected. It takes only a few months from July 2020 to distribute the questionnaire. The methods used for the distribution and collection of the questionnaire are online (mail, WhatsApp, Facsimile), as we have a pandemic Covid-19 and our government has given the Movement Control Order (MCO). The data are analysed and depicted in the table and diagram from the feedback that been gathered.

4.0 ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1 Challenges in Managing Foreign Workers

From the data analysed, it can be concluded that the main problem in managing foreign workers are language problem contribute 68% from the total respondents which create communication barrier within contractor and foreign workers. Other challenges are also safety at the sites which can contributes to fatal accidents at site.

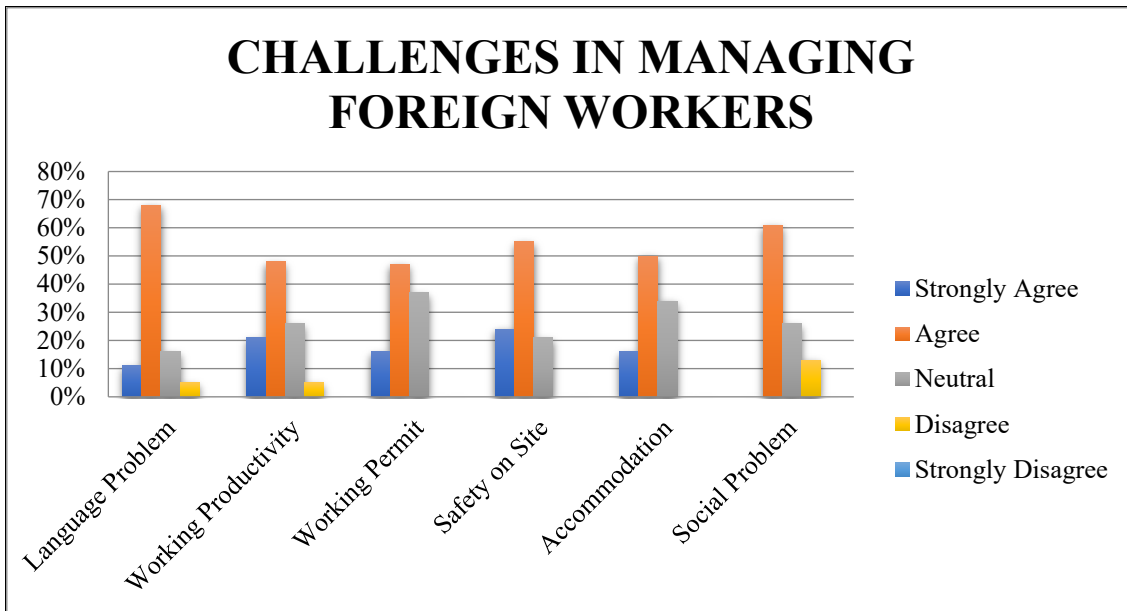


Figure 1: Challenges in Managing Foreign Workers

4.2 Impact of Hiring Foreign Workers

Based on the respondent’s questionnaire survey, it can be concluded that the main impact of hiring foreign workers to contractor is safety of workers at the site which is 51% from total respondents. This is because foreign workers do not have working experience and safety training that will cause accidents at the site. Other main impact is workers productivity which referred as lack of experience and knowledge of foreign workers. Some of foreign workers are unable to execute the work according to supervisor order or specification given which lead to delay in construction.

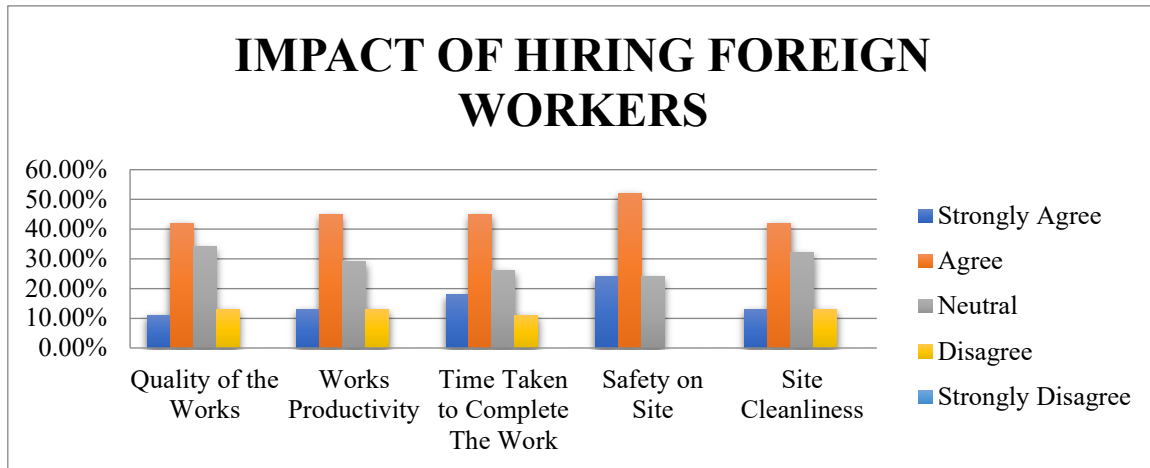


Figure 2: Impact of Hiring Foreign Workers

4.3 Solution in Managing Foreign Workers

Based on figure 3, it can be concluded that the solutions to manage foreign workers are varies according to its own challenges. To increase working productivity, the best solution is to give skills training to increase foreign workers quality and productivity of works. For communication barriers, the solution are gives basic language class and using variety of sign and images language to easier the communication between foreign workers and other staff.

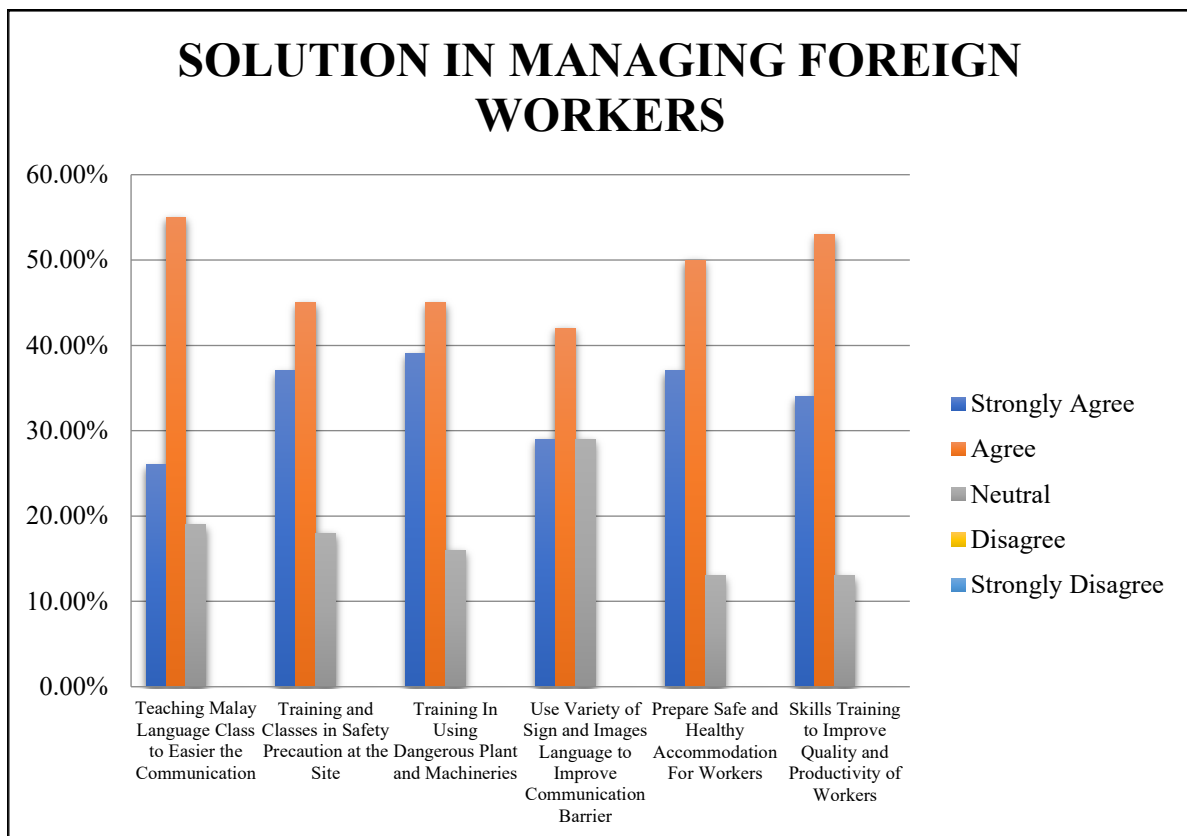


Figure 3: Solution in Managing Foreign Workers

5.0 CONCLUSION

In managing foreign workers, there are lots of challenges can occur that can leave a big impact to contractor. These challenges need to be solved either eliminate the challenges or reduce to make the construction process run smoothly. The finding of the study can be significant solution that can be used to improve in managing foreign workers.

6.0 REFERENCES

- Achim, N. ain, Rusdi, S. D., & Mohamad Amin, S. N. (2017). *The Employment of Foreign Workers : Issues and Implications towards The Employment Of Foreign Workers : Issues And Implications Towards Organization*. (December).
- Ajis, M. N., Keling, M. F., Othman, Z., & Shui'b, M. S. (2014). The dilemma of managing foreign workers in Malaysia: Opportunities and challenges. *Global Journal of Human-Social Science (F)*, 14(4), 43–53. Retrieved from <https://globaljournals.org/journals/human-social-science/f-political-science>
- Hisham, H. (2005). Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Malaysia. *Amalan Pengurusan Keselamatan Di Tapak Bina*, 195–198. https://doi.org/10.1007/0-306-47231-7_19
- Mei Wei, W., & Yazdanifard, R. (2015). The Review of Challenges Foreign Workers Face in Construction Industry of Malaysia. *Global Journal Inc*, 15(4), 2–4. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11274-007-9551-z>
- Nordin, R., Abd Razak, M. F., Shapiee, R., Tengku Zainiddin, T. N. A., Md Auzair, S., & Jaffar, R. (2018). *Health Insurance for Foreign Workers in Malaysia And Singapore : A Comparative Study*. 19, 400–413.
- Rahim, A., Hamid, A., Singh, B., Jagar, B., & Mazlan, M. S. (2013). *The Construction Labour Shortage In Johor Bahru , Malaysia*. 508–512.
- Rahim, A., Hamid, A., Singh, B., Zulkifli, W., Yusof, W., & Yusof, A. (2011). *Problems Faced By Contractors in Managing Foreign Workers On Construction Sites*. (August 2014).
- Valitherm, A. (2014). Communication Barrier in Malaysia Construction Sites. *International Journal of Education and Research*, 2(1), 1–10.
- Yng Ling, F. Y., Dulaimi, M. F., & Chua, M. (2013). *Strategies for Managing Migrant Construction Workers from China , India , and the Philippines*. (January), 19–27. [https://doi.org/10.1061/\(ASCE\)EI](https://doi.org/10.1061/(ASCE)EI)