

**FACTORS INFLUENCING BURMESE MIGRANTS' DECISION
ON EMPLOYMENT IN THAILAND**

The image features a large, faint watermark of the Mahidol University logo in the background. The logo is circular, with a blue center containing a golden emblem of a traditional Thai stupa. The outer ring of the logo contains text in Thai script. Overlaid on this watermark is the author's name, MAY THINZAR SOE, in a bold, black, serif font.

MAY THINZAR SOE

**A THEMATIC PAPER SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
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**FACTOR INFLUENCING THE BURMESE MIGRANTS' DECISION
ON EMPLOYMENT IN THAILAND**

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May Thinzar Soe

FACTORS INFLUENCING BURMESE MIGRANTS' DECISION ON EMPLOYMENT IN THAILAND

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M.M. (MARKETING AND MANAGEMENT)

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the factors influencing Burmese migrants' decisions on employment in Thailand, particularly focusing on why they prefer factory labor over restaurant work, despite the latter offering more opportunities for personal development. The employment decisions of Burmese migrant workers in Thailand are examined in this qualitative study. The study attempts to provide insights into the decision-making process of ten participants (5 workers and 5 recruitment reps) through semi-structured interviews.

Key findings indicate that policy challenges, advertising effectiveness, and economic conditions in Thailand have an impact on the employment decisions of Burmese migrant workers. Social networks emerged as a significant factor, with migrants heavily relying on community ties for advice and guidance, a sentiment supported by existing literature. Policy challenges, particularly those related to obtaining work permits, were identified as critical, often pushing migrants towards factory work due to the relatively easier legal navigation. Advertising effectiveness was noted, with digital platforms like TikTok playing a pivotal role in reaching and influencing Burmese migrants. Economic stability and the promise of consistent income also drove the preference for factory work, especially in uncertain economic conditions.

Recommendations include enhancing recruitment processes, providing clear legal and job-related guidance, engaging with the community for trust-building, and creating feedback channels to improve recruitment and employment practices. By implementing these measures, the restaurant industry could better attract and retain Burmese migrant workers, offering them more rewarding and stable career paths. This research contributes valuable insights into the employment dynamics of Burmese migrants in Thailand, providing a foundation for more nuanced policy and practice interventions aimed at improving their employment conditions and opportunities.

KEY WORDS: Burmese Migrants/ Employment Decision/ Factory/ Hospitality/ Thailand

25 pages

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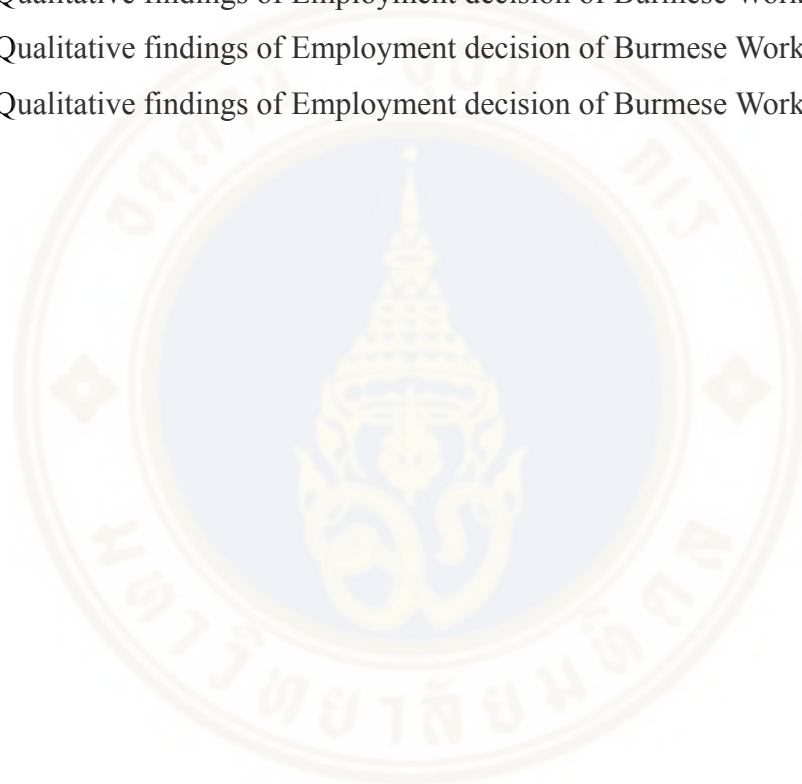
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Rationale

The phenomenon of migration, characterised by the movement of populations across national borders, has witnessed a significant upsurge on a global scale, with Thailand emerging as a pivotal destination within this trend. In recent years, particularly in 2019, the global migrant population reached an estimated 277 million individuals, with approximately 60% originating from various Asian countries, according to the International Organization for Migration. This migration movement is predominantly within Asia itself, driven by various socio-economic factors. As a significant host nation, Thailand harboured around 3.9 million migrants in 2019, comprising both documented and undocumented workers from neighbouring countries such as Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, and Vietnam, thus underscoring its role as a major hub for labour migration within the Southeast Asian region. The Thai labour ministry's data by the end of 2020 showed that 2.5 million migrant workers were officially registered, with over one million from Myanmar alone, highlighting Thailand as hosting the largest community of Burmese expatriates globally. This reflects the socio-economic dynamics and labour market demands that facilitate such extensive population movements in Thailand (Phoonphongphiphat, 2021).

1.2 Problem Statement

While Thailand serves as a significant destination for Burmese migrants seeking employment, a notable preference for factory work has been observed, despite the potential personal growth opportunities within the restaurant industry. This tendency raises critical questions about the decision-making processes of Burmese migrant workers. This study seeks to understand the marketing influences that affect Burmese migrants' employment decisions to explore the underlying reasons for this

trend, focusing on the non-monetary value propositions and marketing communication efforts that could better align with migrants' aspirations.

1.3 Research Objective

- To analyse the factors contributing to the preference for factory work over the restaurant industry among Burmese migrants, despite the higher potential for personal growth in restaurants
- To identify marketing and communication gaps that may affect the advertising effectiveness of the restaurant industry to consider for potential Burmese migrant workers.

1.4 Expected Outcome

- Service Enhancement Insights: The study is anticipated to reveal critical insights into how employment services can be improved to align with the needs and values of Burmese migrants for their better opportunities.
- Effective Communication Strategies: Determining the most impactful channels and messaging for communication that effectively reach and would promote better living conditions for Burmese migrants.

The research outcomes are designed to benefit Burmese migrant workers by providing them with improved employment opportunities and by addressing issues in job presentation and communication, potentially leading to better employment conditions.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Dependent Variable

2.1.1 Employment decision of Migrants Workers

The employment decision is a critical juncture in an individual's professional journey, particularly for migrants. It involves a deliberate process where one assesses various employment options, weighing the industry sector, job role, work environment, and the specific conditions of employment. (Constant & Zimmermann, 2005; Dustmann & Fabbri, 2005; Kalleberg, 2009). This decision-making process is fundamental to understanding labour economics and migration studies, capturing how a blend of individual preferences, economic necessities, and the array of opportunities and limitations present in the labour market converge to influence choice (Constant & Zimmermann, 2005; Dustmann & Fabbri, 2005; Kalleberg, 2009).

For Burmese migrant workers in Thailand, the employment decision serves as the dependent variable in this research. It represents a spectrum of employment-related choices, extending from the preference for working in factories as opposed to the hospitality sector, to the pursuit of different job roles, and the negotiation of employment terms. Such decisions are informed by a mosaic of factors: personal and family needs, the level of job security they anticipate, the strength and reach of their social networks, and the efficacy of job advertising they are exposed to (Carrillo, 2008; Ryan, 2011). Consequently, these employment decisions are a product of the migrant workers' own labour market assessments, their needs, and goals within the social and economic landscape of the host country, and the complex legal backdrop that frames their opportunities (Castles & Miller, 2009; Vertovec, 2007).

2.2 Independent variable

2.2.1 Social Networks

Social networks are defined as the web of social relationships that surround individuals, including friendships, family ties, and professional connections, which can provide support, information, and access to resources (Rainie & Wellman, 2012). Social networks are instrumental in shaping the migration experience and employment decisions of Burmese migrants in Thailand. These networks, composed of family ties, friendships, and community linkages, serve as conduits for information and resources critical to the migrants' livelihood strategies. Ryan (2011) emphasises the significance of these networks in reducing the costs and risks associated with migration, thus facilitating the decision-making processes of potential unskilled migrants (Ryan, 2011).

The intricate web of social connections provides migrants with practical information about job opportunities, insights into the workings of the labour market, and advice on navigating the bureaucratic hurdles of employment in a foreign country. Furthermore, these networks often extend into the destination country, offering a sense of community and belonging that can ease the transition into a new society (Ryan et al., 2008).

In the context of Thailand, where a considerable number of migrants from Myanmar seek employment, these social networks can influence the preference for certain types of jobs, such as factory work. This inclination may be guided by established networks that funnel new migrants into specific sectors where previous migrants have found employment (Curran and Rivero- Fuent, 2003).

2.2.2 The Role Of Migration Policies

Migration policies serve as a pivotal framework within which the employment decisions of migrants in Thailand are made. Wickramasekara (2011) has illuminated the dual forces at play in migration: not only the pull and push of market dynamics but also the guiding hand of policy decisions. In Thailand, the government's policies towards migrant workers, particularly from neighbouring countries such as Myanmar, are instrumental in shaping the labour market. These policies can determine the

sectors in which migrants are able to find work, often channelling unskilled labour towards industries like manufacturing and construction, which traditionally rely on migrant labour (Wickramasekara, 2011).

However, the restrictive policies may compel migrants to seek employment through informal channels, which can expose them to a host of vulnerabilities and less favourable working conditions (Castles & Miller, 2003). The Thai government's approach to managing migrant labour, through mechanisms such as the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with neighbouring countries, reflects an attempt to balance these forces and manage the flow and employment of migrants within its borders (Huguet & Chamrathirong, 2011).

Furthermore, the prevalence of informal networks and the role of brokers in the migration process can also be seen as a response to the regulatory environment, guiding migrants into sectors where their labour is in demand, albeit sometimes under less formal arrangements (Martin, 2007). This underscores the complex interplay between policy, market needs, and individual decision-making that characterises the employment landscape for migrants in Thailand.

2.2.3 Job Securities

Job security is defined as the likelihood of an individual maintaining their employment over a period without the threat of unemployment, signifying a stable and predictable work environment (Sverke, Hellgren, & Näswall, 2019). It entails a continuity in one's employment role and protection against unsolicited job termination (Hofäcker & König, 2013). This construct is fundamental to the notion of employment quality and plays an integral role in determining job satisfaction. It imbues employees with a sense of safety and consistency in their career, which is crucial for their overall well-being and motivation (Sverke, Hellgren, & Näswall, 2002). In the context of migrant workers, the assurance of job security is especially significant, as it impacts their social and economic integration within the host country (Chiswick, Lee, & Miller, 2005).

In Thailand, where many migrants work in sectors prone to fluctuations, such as agriculture or construction, the promise of job security can be a significant draw. Migrants may favour industries or employers that offer more stable employment conditions, even if this means accepting lower wages. This predilection for job

security can lead migrants to prioritise longer-term contracts or positions that promise continuity over those that offer higher immediate returns but less stability. The significance of job security is further emphasised in studies such as those by Constant and Zimmermann (2005), who found that job security ranks highly among migrants' concerns, affecting not only their choice of employment but also their geographic mobility within the host country (Constant & Zimmermann, 2005).

Moreover, the International Labor Organization (ILO) has highlighted the importance of job security for migrant workers, suggesting that secure employment can improve not only their well-being but also their productivity and the overall stability of the labour market (International Labour Organization, 2016). Therefore, in the context of Thai labour markets, initiatives that enhance job security could be effective in attracting and retaining migrant workers and ensuring their integration into the workforce.

2.2.4 Advertising Effectiveness

Advertising effectiveness refers to the ability of promotional strategies to successfully inform, persuade, and influence the job choices and behaviour of the target audience, which in the context of labour migration, includes potential migrant workers (Tellis, 2004). The effectiveness of advertising is measured by how well it can inform, engage, and influence the decisions and behaviours of these workers regarding job opportunities (Tellis, 2004; Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). When done effectively, advertising has the capacity to shape the perceptions of migrants about various sectors and the opportunities they present, subsequently impacting their employment decisions (Schultz & Block, 2015).

Within the Thai labour market, the influence of advertising effectiveness could play a crucial role in determining why Burmese migrants might prefer factory work over employment in the restaurant industry. Advertisements that clearly communicate the benefits of factory jobs, like consistent income, regular hours, and employment stability, tend to resonate more with individuals in search of dependable work (Banerjee, 2008; Kroeber-Riel & Gröppel-Klein, 2013). The impact of these advertisements extends beyond their prevalence; it's their content, cultural relevance, and the mediums through which they're delivered that determine how well they connect with the Burmese migrant community (King & Wood, 2016).

On the other hand, less effective marketing from the restaurant industry, whether due to poor visibility, unclear messaging, or inappropriate mediums of communication, may leave potential employees in the dark about the career growth and skill development opportunities available in that sector (Barrett & Weinstein, 2015; Chelladurai & Kerwin, 2018). This discrepancy in advertising efficacy has the potential to disproportionately funnel the migrant workforce towards sectors that more effectively publicise their openings, thereby impacting the labour market distribution (Zhang & Centers, 2014; Smith, 2012).

In this study, understanding the nuances of advertising effectiveness will be key to explaining the employment patterns observed among Burmese migrants in Thailand and to identify opportunities for the restaurant industry to better market itself to this workforce.

2.2.5 Economy of Host Country

The economy of the host country encompasses the prevailing economic conditions, including the labour market demand, unemployment rates, economic growth, and the sectoral composition of the economy, which collectively can impact migrants' employment opportunities and decisions to more favourable employment terms and a wider selection of sectors for migrants to choose from (Borjas, 2001; Dustmann & Fabbri, 2005). In contrast, an economy facing a downturn might constrain employment opportunities, leading migrants to accept suboptimal work conditions or seek employment in informal sectors (Constant & Massey, 2003).

For Burmese migrants in Thailand, the economic landscape of the host country determines the availability of jobs, particularly in sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing, and services that traditionally employ migrant workers. The economic health of Thailand affects the demand for migrant labour and consequently shapes the employment patterns within the migrant community (Martin, 1999; Pajunen, 2008). On the flip side, economic stagnation or contraction could push Burmese migrants into less secure, lower-paid positions, or even out of the formal labour market entirely (Martin, 1999; Pajunen, 2008). Thus, by examining Thailand's economic condition, we can better understand the employment patterns and preferences observed among Burmese migrants.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study employs a qualitative research design to explore the employment decisions of Burmese migrant workers in Thailand. The choice of qualitative methods is driven by the need to gain in-depth understanding of the participants' experiences, perceptions, and the complex social processes influencing their employment choices.

3.2 Data Collection

Data was collected through semi-structured interviews, which allowed for the collection of rich, detailed data while providing the flexibility to explore new topics or themes as they emerge during the interviews. The interview protocol consisted of open-ended questions designed to elicit narratives and perspectives from the participants.

3.3 Participants

The study involved a total of ten participants, comprising two distinct groups: five Burmese migrant workers currently employed in Thailand and five recruitment representatives who have direct experience with the employment of Burmese migrants. The inclusion of both groups is intended to provide a holistic view of the employment decision-making process from the standpoint of the employees and the employers.

3.4 Sampling Strategy

Participants were selected using purposive sampling to ensure that they possess experiences or roles relevant to the research questions. For migrant workers, the criteria included a variety of employment histories in Thailand, preferably those who have worked in both the factory and restaurant sectors. Recruitment representatives were selected based on their involvement in hiring or policy-making processes related to migrant employment.



CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS & ANALYSIS

4. Qualitative Finding

Setting up interviews for 10 individuals, consisting of five migrant workers employed in various sectors and five recruitment employees who specialise in the placement of migrant labour. This approach will allow us to extract themes from the transcription coding, categorised into five distinct themes reflective of the diverse experiences and perspectives within the labour market. Thus, this study was able to identify the theme from transcription coding separated into 5 themes.

4.1 Theme: Social Influence

Theme	Coding	Quotation
Social Influence	social trust & networks	"Yes, it could be an essential resource to build trust" We do use migrants' social networks in our recruitment strategies. Word-of-mouth is powerful, and many Burmese migrants trust recommendations from friends and family
	Support from Community	When I first arrived, it was the people from our local Burmese community center who guided me. They had workshops on how to apply for jobs and helped us understand our rights as workers here. An experienced member from our community became my mentor. He's been here for years and guided me through not just finding a job, but also how to advance in it. His advice on professional development has been invaluable
	Peer recommendation	Yes, I received specific advice from my social network, especially from those who had experience working in both sectors. "My friends and family played a significant role in my decision to work in Thailand. They recommended that I seek work in the factory sector due to the availability of jobs and the possibility of earning a steady income." My family and friends back in Myanmar told me there are many jobs in Thailand. They said working in a restaurant is good because I can learn to cook and maybe one day open my own place.

Table 4.1: Qualitative findings of Employment decision of Burmese Workers

The theme of "Social Influence" encapsulates the significant impact that social structures and interpersonal connections have on Burmese migrants' employment decisions in Thailand. The coding "social trust & networks" emphasizes the importance of migrants' social networks in recruitment, where the strong tradition of

word-of-mouth plays a pivotal role. Migrants place considerable trust in the recommendations from their friends and family, highlighting the power of established relationships in making employment decisions.

"Support from Community" reveals how local community centres and experienced community members act as navigators and mentors for new migrants. These centres provide workshops on job applications and rights as workers, while mentors offer guidance and advice on professional growth, demonstrating the essential role that community support systems play in the adaptation and success of migrants in the workplace.

Finally, "Peer recommendation" underscores the value of advice from personal social networks. Friends and family provide insights into various sectors, influencing decisions towards jobs that offer stability or align with personal aspirations, such as culinary skills with the potential for future business opportunities.

4.2 Theme: Policy Challenge & Compliance

Theme	Coding	Quotation
Policy Challenges and Compliance	Cost of documentation	"The visas and employer transfer process are usually too expensive for migrant workers. Our company is fairly knowledgeable about the legal processes."
	Documentation process	<u>There was concern about making a change of boss document</u> "Yes, it affects us. Since, the employee needs to have valid document to work in Thailand. So, it's a big effect on us."
	Limits from Migrant Policy	"There are some limitation of Thai government. If they limit making work permit for blue-collar worker. Then, we can't recruit any staffs in restaurant industry anymore."
	Visa Regulation	Strict visa regulations and work permit requirements can make it a lengthy and sometimes unpredictable process.
	Effect on sector choice, Policy Awareness	It was hard to get the right papers to work. Some people said it's easier in factories, but I found a restaurant job first. The restaurant owner helped me with my papers.
	Policy Awareness	"My understanding of Thailand's migration policies is basic but practical... These policies affected my choice to a degree, I chose factory work because it seemed easier to find formal employment opportunities." I know a bit about the policies because the MOU process explains them. You have to have a contract and can't just change jobs or you might get in trouble. It made me pick factory work because that's where I could get a contract first. I understand about 60% of immigration laws and those policies affect my career choices

Table 4.2: Qualitative findings of Employment decision of Burmese Workers

The theme "Policy Challenges and Compliance" deals with the complexities and obstacles that arise from the regulatory framework governing migrant workers in Thailand. Under the coding "Cost of documentation," the financial burden of securing visas and employer transfer processes is underscored. The costs are indicated as being prohibitively high for migrant workers, despite the company's fair knowledge of the legal requirements. The "Documentation process" coding reveals the significant impact that the necessity for valid documentation has on employers, affecting their ability to recruit and retain staff within the legal bounds of Thai labour laws. "Limits from Migrant Policy" addresses the restrictions set by the Thai government on work permits, particularly for blue-collar workers, which have a direct consequence on staffing capabilities in industries such as the restaurant sector.

In terms of "Visa Regulation," the coding points to the rigorous and often unpredictable nature of visa and work permit requirements. This bureaucracy can lead to delays and uncertainties in the employment process for migrants. The coding "Effect on sector choice, Policy Awareness" sheds light on the decision-making process of migrant workers, where policies have a tangible effect on their employment choices. The difficulty in obtaining the necessary paperwork influences some migrants to pursue sectors like factory work where help with documentation is more readily available.

Lastly, "Policy Awareness" captures the varying degrees of understanding among migrants regarding immigration laws. While some have a basic but practical knowledge influenced by processes like the MOU (Memorandum of Understanding), others claim a more extensive understanding, with 60% awareness of immigration laws, which actively shapes their career decisions. This analysis illustrates how the interplay of policy, awareness, and the accompanying regulatory challenges directly shapes the employment landscape for migrant workers. It affects not only their job choices but also the operational capabilities of their employers within the Thai economy.

4.3 Theme: Fundamental Employment Criteria for Burmese Migrants

Theme	Coding	Quotation
Fundamental Employment Criteria for Burmese Migrants	Salary	"They value financial security the most... The salary is naturally the biggest factor that influences their decision to accept a job offer."
	Job Security	"I perceive greater job stability in the factory sector, primarily because of the larger scale of operations." Burmese migrants value job security highly, as many are supporting families back home.
	Stability	with my contract, factory has to keep me or pay me until it's finished. That made me pick factory work over a restaurant.
	Steady Income for contract period	Sometimes I worry if the restaurant will keep me for a long time. When it's not busy, I get scared they might let me go. This worry made me think maybe factory work is more steady, but I like cooking more.

Table 4.3: Qualitative findings of Employment decision of Burmese Workers

The theme "Fundamental Employment Criteria for Burmese Migrants" is concerned with the primary factors that influence the employment decisions of Burmese migrants. Under the coding "Salary," the significance of financial security is highlighted as the primary motivator in the decision-making process for accepting job offers. Salary is seen as the most crucial factor, illustrating the weight of economic stability in the lives of migrants.

The "Job Security" coding further emphasises the need for stable employment, with the perception of greater job stability in the factory sector being particularly valued. This perception is attributed to the larger scale of operations in factories, which is presumed to offer more reliable employment. Under "Stability," the preference for contractual security is expressed. Migrants tend to choose factory work over other sectors such as the restaurant industry because of the contractual obligation for factories to retain workers or pay them until the contract's end.

Lastly, the "Steady Income for contract period" coding encapsulates the concerns over job continuity in sectors susceptible to economic fluctuations, like the hospitality industry. The preference is again for factory work, where income is perceived to be more stable, even if personal interests may lie elsewhere, such as in

cooking. The analysis of this theme suggests that for Burmese migrants, the decision to accept a job is primarily driven by the need for a steady and secure income that can support themselves and their families. This need for economic stability influences them to favour jobs that offer more predictable and contractually secured employment.

4.4 Theme: Advertising Effectiveness

Theme	Coding	Quotation
Advertising Effectiveness	Engagement and Transparency	"We've found that video content and sharing real stories have been effective. Facebook Ads have been quite effective."
	Online connectivity	"Mostly, we can connect them TikTok rather than phone. Most of them do not have phone balance money. So, it's better to connect them via online."
		I look at job ads on my phone, the ones with clear information about pay and if the employer helps with documents. I don't have much time to look at community boards.
		We find that using online job portals and social media channels like Facebook and TikTok, where many Burmese are active, are most effective.
	Community Events	A successful campaign we ran involved partnering with a Burmese community leader. We created a video series featuring current Burmese employees sharing their positive experiences
Attention-catching caption	Job advertisements that clearly outline job requirements, wages, and benefits catch my attention the most. Advertisements from the factory sector often emphasize stability and benefits.	
	I notice job ads that say "no experience needed" and "will train." I like ads with pictures showing the team or the place.	

Table 4.4: Qualitative findings of Employment decision of Burmese Workers

The theme "Advertising Effectiveness" revolves around the strategies that increase the impact of job advertisements, particularly for the Burmese community. The coding "Engagement and Transparency" discusses the success of using real-life narratives and video content in advertisements, specifically noting the effectiveness of Facebook Ads. These methods are praised for their ability to authentically engage potential job applicants by providing transparent insight into the employment experience.

Under "Online connectivity," the preference for TikTok over traditional communication methods like phone calls is mentioned, underscoring the digital shift in job-seeking behaviours and the importance of online platforms for connectivity,

especially for those who may not have the means for phone credit. The same coding also includes a personal testimony about the convenience and necessity of online job ads that provide clear information regarding pay and document assistance, indicating the practical needs of job seekers who may not have the time to engage with community boards. Additionally, "Community Events" captures a strategic approach to advertising that leverages community leaders and the positive testimonials of current Burmese employees. By creating a video series around these experiences, companies can foster trust and a sense of community amongst potential employees.

Finally, the coding "Attention-catching caption" reflects the elements in job advertisements that are most likely to capture attention. Ads that promise training and do not require previous experience are highlighted, as well as those that include images of the workplace or team, as they help to paint a vivid picture of the working environment and culture. The analysis of "Advertising Effectiveness" suggests that authenticity, clarity, community engagement, and visual storytelling are critical components in creating successful job advertisements.

4.5 Theme: Dependency of Labour Market Demand

Theme	Coding	Quotation
Dependency of Labour Market	Labor Market Adaptation	"Thailand has a growing tourism industry, so naturally, there's a growing number of jobs in F&B and hospitality... In growing economies, the demand for blue-collar jobs naturally rises."
	Hospitality Job Risk	"Yes, absolutely. Mostly, our company is hiring staff for restaurant industry jobs and the sector really depends on the hospitality & tourism. If Thailand's tourism down, then it might be a big effect for us as well."
	Sector_shift Challenges	I haven't changed jobs yet, but I know some friends who had to. They worked in places that closed when not enough tourists came. It made me think about learning as much as I can, so I have more options.
	Downtun management	During economic growth, we ramp up recruitment to meet higher demands in the sectors we serve.
	Adapting to Economic	When I hear the economy is not so good, I save more money. I don't change what work I do because I can't with my contract, but I'm more careful with my money. "Yes, I have had to change jobs due to economic shifts in Thailand. Decrease in demand for products manufacturing led to reduced hours and layoffs at the factory where I worked. This experience prompted me to seek more stable employment in a different sector"

Table 4.5: Qualitative findings of Employment decision of Burmese Workers

The theme "Dependency on Labour Market Demand" explores the interplay between economic conditions and employment within various sectors in Thailand.

The "Labour Market Adaptation" coding describes the direct correlation between the growth of Thailand's tourism industry and the rising demand for jobs in the food and beverage (F&B) and hospitality sectors, suggesting that blue-collar job opportunities are closely tied to the performance of the economy.

Under "Hospitality Job Risk," the precarious nature of employment in the hospitality sector is highlighted. The reliance of this sector on the flux of tourism means that any downturn can have significant repercussions for job security in these areas, underscoring the sector's vulnerability to external economic factors. "Sector shift Challenges" captures the adaptive measures individuals consider when faced with economic instability. It conveys the importance of skill acquisition as a means of enhancing employability across different sectors, especially considering job risks associated with economic downturns. The coding "Downturn Management" reflects a proactive approach by companies in managing workforce needs in response to economic cycles. It indicates that recruitment is scaled up during times of economic growth to meet the increased labour demands of the sectors served by these companies.

Finally, "Adapting to Economic" shifts highlight the personal strategies workers employ in response to economic downturns. These strategies include saving more money and changing jobs to seek more stable employment when faced with layoffs or reduced hours, as seen in the manufacturing sector. This analysis sheds light on the necessity for both individuals and businesses to remain flexible and responsive to the ever-changing economic landscape, which directly affects labour market demand and job security.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

5.1 Discussion

While conducting qualitative research, the first independent variable, social networks, was consistently mentioned by interviewees as critical in their decision-making process. For example, a participant noted, "Yes, I received specific advice from my social network, especially from those who had experience working in both sectors." This emphasis on social advice reveals how community ties, an independent variable, significantly guide employment choices, echoing the sentiments found in the work of Ryan (2011). Aligning with the research objective, these social networks are the first touchpoint that informs migrants' perceptions and ultimately their employment decisions within the Thai labour market.

Policy Challenges and Compliance is highlighted as a critical factor influencing Burmese migrants' employment decisions in findings. From the testimony of a recruitment representative, "There are some limitations of Thai government. If they limit making work permit for blue-collar worker. Then, we can't recruit any staffs in the restaurant industry anymore." This quote underscores the impact that policy decisions on work permits have on employment sectors, often driving migrants to choose factory work due to the relative ease of obtaining necessary legal documentation and the substantial support in navigating these processes which is linked to Migrant Policy as a key independent variable, not only reflect the literature, such as Wickramasekara (2011) which discusses the profound impact of migration policies on labour market trends, but also align with the study's objectives.

The platforms like TikTok & other online platforms have been identified as pivotal in reaching Burmese migrants and influencing their employment decisions, serving as a practical application of the independent variable of advertising effectiveness. A recruitment representative's insights reveal a shift to digital engagement, supporting Tellis's (2004) assertion of the power of targeted marketing. This alignment with our research objective demonstrates the crucial role that tailored advertising strategies play in shaping the job preferences of migrants, suggesting that

the hospitality sector could better attract this workforce by adapting its outreach to the digital habits and needs of the community.

The Fundamental Employment Criteria for Burmese Migrants reflecting the significance of salary, and stable income, links closely to the independent variables of economic stability of host country in the decision-making process of Burmese migrants. These preferences for secure and consistent income are driven by a need for stability, aligning with the research objective to understand employment choices within the Thai labour market. The migrants' lean towards factory work, despite other interests, highlights how contractual assurances and perceived job continuity influence their employment trajectory, offering insights essential for tailoring supportive policies and practices.

The dependency of the labour market on Thailand's economic health was underscored as a significant influence on job availability for Burmese migrants in findings. This dependency aligns with the independent variable of the host country's economic conditions, clearly impacting employment opportunities as migrants adjust their financial behaviours in response to economic shifts. Such a dependency is critical to our research objectives, as it elucidates the reasons behind the preference for factory work, which often provides more stability in uncertain economic times, aligning with Borjas's (2001) findings. Understanding this labour market dependency is crucial in analysing the economic factors that steer Burmese migrants' employment choices within the Thai labour market.

5.2 Conclusion

In conclusion, the qualitative research involving a targeted sample of Burmese migrants & recruitment representatives have shed light on the multifaceted nature of Migrant's employment decisions within the Thai labour market. From the findings of the participants, the four central factors social networks, policy challenges, advertising effectiveness, and economic conditions of host country are particularly influential. Each factor aligns with the independent variables identified at the outset and directly connects to our research objectives, providing a clearer picture of the intricate interplay between personal choices and systemic constraints. The insights from this study, drawn from a thoughtfully selected sample, underscore the complexity of migrant employment and contribute valuable perspectives to the field,

highlighting the pathways and barriers to employment that migrants face and offering a foundation for more nuanced policy and practice interventions.

CHAPTER VI

RECOMMENDATION & LIMITATION

6.1 Recommendation

Based on the insights from this study, several recommendations can be put forward to address the challenges faced by Burmese migrants in Thailand's labour market. Recruitment representatives can enhance support for Burmese migrants by streamlining application processes by making survey for the requirements of migrants, providing clear guidance on job and legal details through informative sessions by recruitment companies & community leaders, engaging with the community for trust-building, and creating feedback channels by creating line official account online group for migrants to improvement in recruitment and employment practices. By forging deeper connections within the community and proactively responding to migrant feedback, all sectors can open doors to more rewarding and enriching career paths, ultimately contributing to an enhanced quality of life for these workers. Such proactive measures could ensure a mutually beneficial relationship between the industry and the migrant workforce.

6.2. Limitation

The study's constraints are notably linked to the modest sample size of ten participants and the condensed two-week period allocated for qualitative data collection. This narrow window for engagement with Burmese migrant workers & reposes a challenge in capturing the full spectrum of experiences, potentially leading to an incomplete portrayal of the diverse migrant narratives. The limited timeframe and small sample size together increase the risk of an overrepresentation of views that may not be indicative of the broader population. Another limitation includes the possibility of response biases, where participants might inadvertently emphasize certain aspects of their experience over others. The brevity of engagement with each

participant might also restrict the complexity of the data, as longer-term observations and follow-ups could yield richer, more nuanced narratives. Another limitation is the potential impact of seasonal labour demands, which the short data collection window cannot account for. This could skew the findings if certain types of work or industries are overrepresented during the data collection period.

Overall, the study's ability to fully reflect the experiences of Burmese migrant workers is constrained by the small sample size and the limited duration for data collection, potentially leading to a narrower understanding of their diverse stories and an amplification of specific perspectives not necessarily shared by all.



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