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From Entrepreneurship to Social Activist: The Role of Indonesian Migrant Entrepreneurs in Taiwan and Socio-Economic Functions of Return-Migrant Entrepreneurship in Malang, East Java

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Abstract

In the case of Taiwan, Indonesian migrant entrepreneurs' active in social activities; they are linked strongly to the petty conditions of co-migrants. In various cases, entrepreneurs play the role of friends in need, acting as third-party resources, to co-migrants, who turn to the former for help and self-actualization. Their activities contribute to bridging the relations between the larger community and Indonesian migrants living as a minority and as marginal foreign newcomers in Taiwan. Meanwhile, the case study of Indonesian return-migrant entrepreneurship at the home village of Malang found that migration and returning home experiences increase socio-economic mobility and develop socio-economic activities at home villages. The migrants' experiences and enterprise activities have emerged as a critical source of sustainable livelihoods, migration knowledge of production application, self-transformation, and the economic reintegration process for return migrants in their home villages, all of which can create a new life for returnees after migration. Practically and theoretically speaking, the manner in which migrant and return-migrant entrepreneurs perform economic adaptation or social adjustment, indicates that the socio-economic function, comprising valuable ties that cut across classes, can prevent the social and economic isolation of disadvantaged entrepreneurs, co-migrants, and return migrants in the community.

Keywords: entrepreneurship, social activism, reintegration

1. Introduction

In the development of entrepreneurial activities—particularly in the migrant and return-migrant business operations that occur in places (countries) characterized by problematic co-market or living conditions—the business pattern tends to operate in two dimensions: social and economic. Anthropologist Barth [1], p. 3, regards entrepreneurship, both socially and practically, as being closely associated with general leadership and the social structures of communities. He portrays entrepreneurship practices as frequently involving the relationships of persons and institutions in one society with those in another, more economically advanced, society, in which the entrepreneur essentially becomes a broker in the context of culture contacts. In the activities of the entrepreneur and entrepreneurship, we may recognize processes that are fundamental to questions of social stability and change—or that create change in normative orders, such as those noted by Stewart [2], p. 73—that are one of concern to anyone wishing to pursue a dynamic study of society. From this perspective, the profit-seeking aspect has been generalized in a model of social organization based on transactional relations, while the entrepreneurial aspect has been promoted to the status of explaining social behavior (or change). Behavior and change can be perceived as a social function of entrepreneurship/entrepreneurs [3].

On the economic side, Drucker [4], p. 28, suggests in a study on innovation and entrepreneurship that entrepreneurs are not necessarily agents of change themselves, but rather that they are canny and committed exploiters of change (and opportunity). According to Drucker, ‘the entrepreneur always searches for change, responds to it, and exploits it as an opportunity’, a premise observed up by academicians who study migrant entrepreneurship (e.g., [5]) and identify structure and cultural opportunities—and focus on individual (entrepreneur) intentionality, agency, and willful goal-seeking and strategic behavior—as study concerns [6–8].

In this study, I discussed on some ideas from these practical concepts of entrepreneurship, to apply in the Indonesian migrant entrepreneur in Taiwan and return-migrant entrepreneurship activities in home country village (Malang, East Java). First, I consider the societal functions of entrepreneurship, such as creating stability and change, and the societal role of the entrepreneur, such as being a leader or a broker/middleman. The second idea concerns the entrepreneurial mechanism, that is, entrepreneurship as a strategy for making an economic profit and a living. However, the scope of this study is not to examine entrepreneurship as a process of developing social stability and acting as a change agent in a society’s formation. Instead, I wish to explore the roles of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship in migrant and return-migrant group, as individuals who set up a business or businesses, and who manage entrepreneurship while performing their social roles/functions. Doing so involves seeing a migrant and a return-migrant entrepreneur as someone who carries out a task with a certain degree of autonomy in a specific market; someone who organizes, manages, and assumes the risks of a business; someone who is transformed from worker to business person, someone who builds an economic institution through his/her social activities; and whose enterprise activities are connected to the local society and social situation in a number of ways.

Therefore, based on the description above, this study specifically addresses two fundamental questions regarding Indonesian migrant entrepreneurship in Taiwan:

1. How does the interaction between Indonesian co-migrants and entrepreneurs and migrant worker conditions shape the roles and social functions that Indonesian entrepreneurs play in Taiwan? How does their social-cultural entrepreneurial activity affect migrant (worker) society conditions?

In the other part, as observed cases of return-migrant entrepreneurship in Indonesia. In my research location, two villages in Malang Regency, an East Java province, recently, migrant economic empowerment (entrepreneurship) has been encouraged. I found that return-migrant entrepreneurship influences the villages' economic and social activities. It can lead to job opportunities and empower the migrant household economy, as well as establish former migrant cooperatives that financially support return migrants while they develop their businesses. To some extent, return-migrant entrepreneurs become role models for co-migrant candidates, as former successful migrant business persons.

By focusing on Indonesian return-migrant entrepreneurship activities in their home villages, this study will answer the second question:

2. How do return migrants adjust to village conditions and apply the knowledge and experience they acquired as migrants to entrepreneurial activities in their home villages? What structural and individual conditions affect entrepreneurship? How does the entrepreneur and entrepreneurial activity affect a community and their economic reintegration at home?

2. Framework and research method

This study on Indonesian migrant entrepreneurship in Taiwan and return-migrant entrepreneurship in Indonesia deals with the relationships between entrepreneurs' social environment, their socio-economic adjustments, the circumstances of individual entrepreneurship, and the role/social functions of entrepreneur(ship). On the one hand, they are products of socio-economic opportunity; on the other hand, they have the potential to make a significant impact on individual economic improvements, social status elevation, and social embeddedness through their economic behaviors. The simple graph below depicts the framework underpinning the reasoning process for this thesis, which combines entrepreneurship activities in Taiwan (host) with those in Indonesia (home). In this framework, the elements of migrant and return-migrant entrepreneurship are interconnected. I define their interconnection as being the social organizations that comprise Indonesian migrant and return-migrant entrepreneurships. This approach examines how the socio-economic conditions of entrepreneurship (e.g., structural opportunities, livelihood strategies, and migrant conditions), the role of entrepreneurs (e.g., patrons, brokers, and social activists), and the entrepreneurs' conditions (e.g., social networks, knowledge, and experiences) interact within entrepreneurs' living conditions in Taiwan or in the Indonesian

villages. By examining the relational activities of entrepreneurship and the extension of migrant entrepreneurs' roles, one can hope to gain a better understanding of the social aspects and functions of migrant entrepreneurs/entrepreneurship in societies (Figure 1).

The matrix above describes the general interrelation of the elements of entrepreneurship. In the study in Taiwan, the social role of the entrepreneur is created by the elements of entrepreneurship, such as structural conditions and personal experience. Entrepreneurs' conditions (both individual and social beings), for example, their experiences as poor foreign immigrants and close relationship with their counterparts, for example, Taiwanese/Indonesian friends, family, spouses, and community, shape their entrepreneurial behavior. In a simple way, the nature and function of entrepreneurship, the profile of entrepreneurs, and basic market social conditions can create socio-economic adjustment Indonesian migrant entrepreneurs in Taiwan. This framework will be used to elaborate on various social elements, such as motivation, social networking, and a model of Indonesian migrant in the context social interactions in Taiwan.

Meanwhile, in the case of return-migrant entrepreneurship in Indonesia, the most important problems in developing entrepreneurial activities are village economic adjustment and constraints in developing a business, which become constraints for sustaining a livelihood (structural condition) upon the migrant's return to the village. Otherwise, acquiring knowledge and forming a strategy are the ways for return-migrant entrepreneurs to cope with home difficulties and entrepreneurship (individual condition). If a return migrant is to establish an entrepreneurship in the home village, the relationship between the structural and individual conditions can develop socio-economic adjustment and economic reintegration.

The present study was conducted in Taiwan and Indonesia. Generally, I used a qualitative approach, having gathered the primary data mostly through in-depth interviews concerning the entrepreneurship stories of migrants and return-migrant entrepreneurs combined with

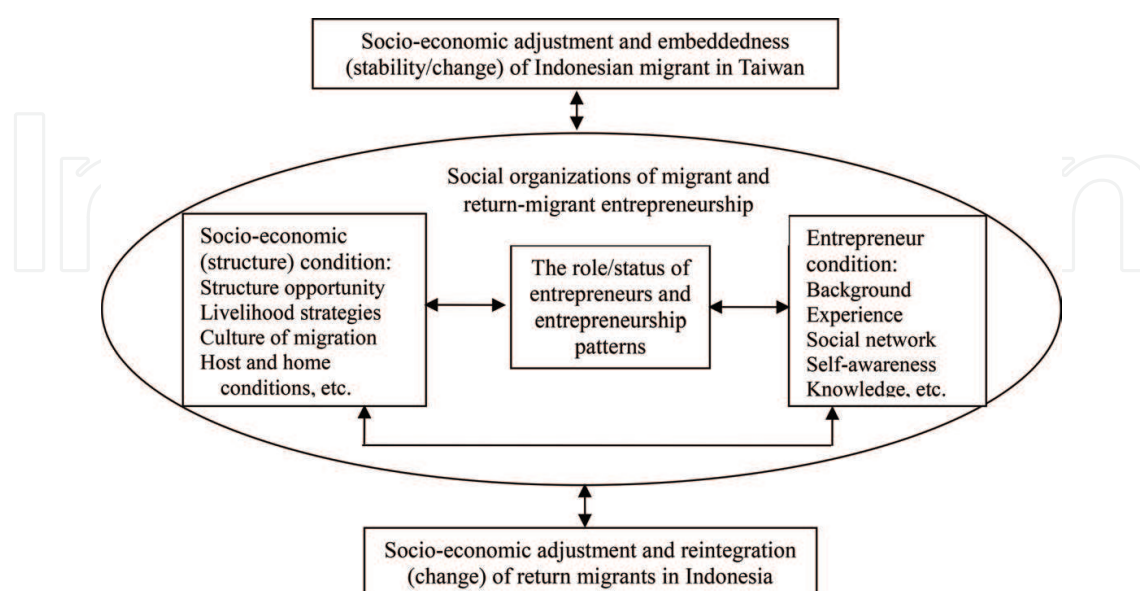


Figure 1. Framework of the reasoning process.

participant observation of their daily activities. During my fieldwork, most participant observation data were recorded through field notes, while interviewed records were recorded in a transcript verbatim. Most of the interviews and observations were conducted at their places of work or their homes. Since most informant entrepreneurs use social media—for example, LINE or Facebook—observation of their social media was also used as a research method to identify selected potential entrepreneurs and their entrepreneurial activities. Moreover, personal or social networking between the entrepreneurs can be observed. The history of migration and the entrepreneurship process was also employed in order to discover historical and chronological information about the entrepreneurs while they developed their entrepreneurship.

In Taiwan, fieldwork was conducted from June through December of 2014 and divided into two stages, the first from June until August, and the second from October until December. In total, I interviewed 48 business owners, 20 migrant workers, 8 migrant associations and their members, 7 researchers/lecturers, and 2 Indonesian government officials. I also search secondary data that were collected from the Internet and an academic library. Using local Indonesian migrant tabloid, magazine, and newspaper advertisements, listings in business directories, and personal contacts with and knowledge of migrant entrepreneurs, I was able to identify more than 300 active Indonesian-owned businesses that had been licensed and operated within Taiwan since 2000. There are probably more Indonesian entrepreneurs operating in the local informal economy.

The AJ and DW villages (or *Kampung*) in Southern Malang, situated in East Java, Indonesia, was chosen as the study site following three reasons; first, I followed some returnee migrants that I came to know while they worked in Taiwan; second, since they could guide me as I observed return-migrant entrepreneurship in their home villages; and third reason was the accessibility to reach the location. The interviews completed at this field site consisted of the following: (1) 7 official staff in charge of the migrant empowerment program in Surabaya and Malang City; (2) 10 return-migrant entrepreneurs who had at least one current business in AJ village; and (3) 11 return-migrant entrepreneurs who had at least one current business in DW. I also interviewed some formal and informal community leaders included the village heads, educators, religious leaders, and other influential personalities in the community (known as *tokoh masyarakat*) whose advice is sought and respected by village members.

3. Findings and discussions

3.1. Indonesian entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship in Taiwan

3.1.1. Practice and pattern

The trend of entrepreneurship as a popular career choice among Indonesian migrants has been spreading through the cities of Taiwan, especially since 2010. Most of the Indonesian migrant businesses in Taiwan are small and medium-sized enterprises. They are based on

co-ethnic networks and dominating sectors, such as the beginning of immigrant business activities in the food sector and the facilitation of the basic needs of immigrants. As observed in Indonesian entrepreneurial practices, business patterns based on the growth of consumer acceptance of a local product and effective demand for foreign products (home romanticism) and their economic activities apply migrant cultural norms; this is the initial step to migrant self-employment (entrepreneurship). The following factors, among others, must be emphasized in the migrant environment and opportunity conditions: (1) the increasing number of Indonesian migrant workers in Taiwan, (2) entrepreneurs' assets (networking, business skills, education, language, and marriage status), (3) the living and working conditions of Indonesian migrant workers in Taiwan, (4) the growth of Indonesian migrant associations and promotion of religious events and activities, (5) the ease of finding jobs in trading/service companies, and (6) the ease of establishing foreign businesses in Taiwan. Indonesians entering entrepreneurship and targeting individual motivation consider entrepreneurship activity as a means of escaping from the challenges posed by the labor market. Indonesian migrant entrepreneurs utilize the opportunity to make profits, and it seems possible that entrepreneurship can fulfill their expectations. Rather than being employees under local supervision, they prefer to enter the entrepreneurship world to obtain better opportunities and earn higher incomes.

Indonesian migrants turn to entrepreneurship because of their individual motivation and the opportunity structure; furthermore, entrepreneurship is followed by sociocultural adjustments to the business strategy. This practice can be categorized into four types of activities: social, religious, group, and national activities. Social activity is related to migrant workplace conditions, such as the absence of work-related holidays, migrant captivity, and an unconditional living space. Religious activities are related to the support shown by entrepreneurs to ritual activities, including Muslim organizations or associations, both inside and outside the business location. Usually, a group activity is associated with the relationship between firms and the migrant community in terms of sociocultural activities. In a group activity, support is shown in the form of money, donations, facilities, food, goods or supplies, and connections to migrants in need. Finally, national activities involve a migrant workers' event or an Indonesian national holiday, held by Taiwanese or Indonesian governments in cooperation with skilled and established entrepreneurs who work as event organizers to disseminate information and promote wide support.

In order to increase their business products and partners, entrepreneurs develop social networks. Indonesian migrant entrepreneurs are no exception. They have their own methods of obtaining information, capital, and employees. This study indicated that such networks can be relatively personal, comprising one's family, relatives (people from the same hometown/ethnic group), and colleagues or classmates, or extensive, including other networks of people with whom the entrepreneur interacts directly or indirectly, such as Taiwanese spouses, friends, partners, company distributors, and migrant group associations. In some cases, we should consider the relationship between Indonesian entrepreneurs and the host community in Taiwan, as well, since the socio-economic success of the former is the result of their interactions with the Taiwanese people. In practice, the levels of such networks often overlap. For instance, social and business networking, based on vertical business partners or

company-to-company relationships, involves horizontal connections with Taiwanese partners, friends, or spouses, as well, which provide financial resources, networks, and information that are valuable to the development of entrepreneurial businesses. The above aspects are representative of an Indonesian migrant entrepreneur's strategy network. An Indonesian entrepreneur is an actor who maintains a particular type of relationship with the intent of benefitting from it (Figure 2).

3.1.2. The social role of entrepreneurs

From many restrictions on foreign worker access to urban space in Taiwan, the initial assessment might be that foreign workers have little chance of realizing their quest for associational life in the city. In attempting to engage in social life, the plight of foreign workers begins at the point of employment. Cheap and disposable, foreign workers are subject to the overarching



Specialist halal food/restaurant



Grocery and restaurant



'Dangdutan' karaoke room



One-stop shopping and relaxation

Figure 2. Typical Indonesian migrant entrepreneurships in Taiwan. Photo source: Fieldwork in Taiwan, June–December 2014, Rudolf.

power of their employers in ways that extend working hours and severely diminish time available outside of the workplace. Further, foreign workers face systematic discrimination in access to housing, services, and social resources needed to enjoy the fruits of their labor in the host country. In sum, building a life in the city is exceptionally restricted in both time and access to urban space [9], pp. 51–52.

There is no support, no regulations, funds, or organizations, from Indonesian or Taiwan that helps or improves the migrants' situation. Considering this migrant situation and condition, I took action to help. Jointly with the Filipino NGO, Stella Marris International Seafarers Center, I handled Indonesian migrant cases, such as fixing salary deductions by agencies, visiting employers that underpaid seafarer, asking agencies to give their employees their personal identity documents, donating food and money to seafarer in need, and sending letter to the Indonesian government in Taipei. As an Indonesian entrepreneur, I shared his experiences and information with other entrepreneurs in Taiwan, building national solidarity among Indonesian migrants who visit his stores so they can find strength in togetherness and help each other. As a result, some migrant group forums were formed as institutions to meet and help each other, for example, Indonesian Muslim Community in Taiwan (IWAMIT), the Indonesian Seafarer Family in Kaohsiung (FKPIT), the association of Migrant Worker according to their home-based in Indonesia (Interview with Mr. Z in Kaoshiung, January 2015).

The Indonesian entrepreneurs have social mobility irrespective of the conditions of migrants and can connect directly with Indonesian migrant workers living in Taiwan, they have the opportunity to understand better the dynamics of the social lives of the Indonesian migrants. These entrepreneurs engage socially in business relationships with their fellow immigrants; however, this is not the full extent of their interactions. They play the role of friends, acting as third-party resources to co-migrants and as patrons and brokers to those in need, as well. On the other hand, some Indonesian entrepreneurs introduce religion and altruism into their entrepreneurship practices, thereby connecting with the migrant life conditions that determine entrepreneurial behavior. Typically, social activism, patronage, brokerage, and religious and altruistic entrepreneurships are the activities performed by entrepreneurs to improve the social conditions of Indonesian workers who continue to face difficult situations as part of working and living in Taiwan. Indonesian entrepreneurs combine these activities, which then become the foundation of an emergent bond of solidarity that promotes humanistic values throughout the Indonesian migrant community. This in-group feeling ('we'-ness) has the potential for exploring how migrant networks and, in this case, Indonesian migrant communities and entrepreneurs' social relationships come into existence.

As described above, the roles and social activities of entrepreneurs demonstrate their function (pattern) of connecting people; the entrepreneurs perform the crucial task of being a 'cultural broker' or an 'invisible agent' who bridges the gap between the discrimination and marginalization of 'inferior' Indonesian migrants and the outside world in order to accommodate and promote the migrant public. This study finding reveals that Indonesian entrepreneurs in Taiwan function as an economic presence that connects people, someone who bridges the gap between immigrants and the larger society, and the middlemen in the minority group.

By performing these roles, Indonesian entrepreneurs and social entrepreneurial activities become one of the important actors aiming the improvement of migrant conditions and promoting social adjustment processes in the Taiwanese migration situation. Therefore, the practice and pattern of entrepreneurship followed by the Indonesians has developed a conceptual practice of migrant entrepreneurship in Taiwan; they have become the faces of social entrepreneurs, who function as patrons and brokers, disseminators of information, primary donors, and contributors and finally become leaders and middlemen within their migrant societies. In addition, entrepreneurs provide social services and perform social transactions for co-ethnic migrants, such as spaces for religious worship, education, entertainment, administrative help, and dedicated spaces for counseling and other facilities.

For discussion, the Indonesian entrepreneur's activity and migrant society in Taiwan serve as the bases for the analyses performed to support this study's framework that entrepreneurs have both social and functional roles. On the one hand, they are economic agents having the knowledge and experience required to identify opportunities (structural elements) and risk-taking situations (individual elements) in the pursuit of profit; on the other, they are social agents who significantly affect the community in which they are active.

3.1.3. Bridging the immigrant community

One Indonesian migrant gathering place (niche), I observed when conducting fieldwork in the mid of 2014 in Taiwan was 'Warung Pondok', an Indonesian neighborhood shop behind the Zhongli railway station. The owner served ethnic products such instant food, national beer, snacks, and dried foods to migrant customers. The second floor of this building was open for karaoke, the third floor was used as the owner's residence, and the fourth floor was a general room for migrant activities. As observed, migrant workers were the main customers; they gathered on the first and second floors of the shop, where they formed groups and sat on the floor chatting, napping, eating, taking photos, or using the free Internet access with their smartphones. On the fourth floor, some of the Indonesian migrant workers who are members of the Indonesian Muslim Organization Forum in Taiwan (FOSMIT) prepared wedding rituals for Indonesian migrant couples and weekly worship. While managing the shop, the owner also served as a consultant for migrant workers needing information or advice about employment, or even private relationships.

This shop, which was established in 1996, is a well-known meeting place for Indonesian migrants to gather and conduct activities. The owner's name is Ms. ML. She called her shop '*Rumah Indonesia*' (meaning Indonesian House). The name was meant to evoke a place where Indonesians in Taiwan would be able to gather, talk, live, and conduct activities freely. As she said, 'this shop is like a "terminal" (such as a bus station) where many people come from various places, and we all go together to one destination: to be happy, to [engage in] activit[ies], and to be together. Whatever you want.' Besides migrant workers, Indonesian government workers or students gather at the shop to socialize while talking about their memories of home. It is a gathering place for fellow nationals, creating an Indonesian community in a faraway country, and promoting nationalism among sojourners. Migrant empowerment

activities are also developed here, such as migrant counseling programs, training in entrepreneurship, and religious activities. She described her experience as follows:

[...] I made my business place not only for commercial reasons but to make this place for keeping memories about Indonesia, social activity, and helping Indonesian workers in trouble. We have mutual benefits. On the one hand, my shop is crowded by customers, and I get economic profit from their visit; but on the other hand, I feel blessed that I can help or facilitate Indonesians while they are living and working in Taiwan (Interview with Ms. ML in Zhongli, June 2014).

Indonesian migrant entrepreneurship is a by-product of the interplay of opportunity structures (structural entrepreneurship), social solidarity (cultural entrepreneurship), and socio-cultural inclination (strategies for adapting to the business and social environment). As a result, the interplay of each entrepreneurship element discussed above shows us how immigrant businesses, their social activities, and their relations (optionally) lead the Indonesian marginal migrant worker to adapt to and assimilate into the host society—making migrant stability situation in simple manner—characterized by a group's social cohesion or solidarity (*kesetiakawanan sosial*) practices. The Indonesian migrant entrepreneurship in Taiwan has been shown to be an efficient means of socio-economic integration of the migrants themselves and an effective response to their marginalization as foreign workers. Following Barth's [1] conception of the entrepreneur/entrepreneurship social function and social stability, here Indonesian migrant entrepreneurs act as a bridge to stabilize the living conditions of co-migrants in the migration industry of Taiwan.

The group adaptation and integration of Indonesian migrant workers in Taiwan can be realized through the facilitation efforts of entrepreneurs who provide social activities that are related to both the contexts of migrants' needs (need for local products, socialization, and life expression, i.e., the bridge function) and migrants' problems (workplace difficulties, marginalization, societal non-acceptance, and discrimination, i.e., the condition in a migration capitalist model). As shown by the practice of Indonesian migrant entrepreneurship in Taiwan, Indonesian workers often face difficulties and even discrimination in their everyday lives. In this sense, social activities and networks facilitated by entrepreneurs promote the adaptation and integration of migrant workers and entrepreneurs. For those migrants (workers and entrepreneurs) arriving at a country for the specific purposes of working and leading sustainable lives, these social entrepreneurial activities play a role in the migrant adaptation process. This condition is a stepping stone for the social adaptation, and to some extent, for integration of Indonesian migrants into the Taiwanese society, at the group/individual level.

Furthermore, the functions of entrepreneurship and relations of entrepreneurs shape the social embeddedness of entrepreneurs within the Indonesian migrant communities in Taiwan. Social embeddedness involvement enables Indonesian entrepreneurs to determine the needs of the migrant community in the migrant niche and serve those needs. Indonesian migrant entrepreneurship and social embeddedness have a strong relationship with the four social conditions that are common to co-migrant minorities, that is, nostalgic feelings about home, identity, marginality, and solidarity. The practice of migrant entrepreneurship and social embeddedness increases the pattern level of entrepreneurial practices, such as individual or social activities. Entrepreneurial social activities and social embeddedness mediate

variables in the relationship between both the structural and relational conditions of migrants within the broader Taiwanese society and the Indonesian community itself. Entrepreneurs can achieve this through social activities and by acting as patrons or brokers, as well as religious and altruistic leaders, in their entrepreneurial efforts.

3.2. Indonesian return-migrant entrepreneurship

The second part of this paper discusses the return migrant (from Taiwan) entrepreneurship in home villages. In order to alleviate the economic problems that arise following their return, return-migrant workers maximize revenues, save money, and use their money and social remittances for entrepreneurship associated with self-transformation and changes in their home villages. This part explains Indonesian return migrants undergo 'rebirth' by acquiring new knowledge and following new occupations, utilizing their economic experiences and mobility, and reintegrating themselves into the society both socially and economically.

3.2.1. From entrepreneurship to self-transformation

In DW village, I met KA (female, age 39), a former migrant worker from Taiwan who returned in 2011. On the day of my visit, she prepared food and decorated the living room for her monthly routine Muslim prayer group (*kelompok pengajian*), which was initiated in 2014. After returning from four periods of contract work in Taiwan (1998–2011, 3 years for each contract), she starts developed social activities at home while trying to establish her self-employment. Historically, she became a migrant worker when the 1998 economic crisis hit Indonesia, wherein the prices of foods and other living expenses underwent inflation that was insurmountable because she only worked as a part-time playgroup teacher with a monthly salary of RP 100,000 (US\$5.50 at the time). She graduated from junior high school but did not continue her schooling at a higher education institution. She had to help her mother sell fried food around the school and agricultural products at DW's traditional market. To help her family economically, she saved money from each contract period to send home. Her savings from the first contract renovated the family house; from the second contract, she bought land and built a house for herself and her family (husband and daughter); from the third contract, she built a neighborhood shop (*warung/toko*) and bought a used car; and she used the savings from her last contract for the Hajj (Muslim pilgrimage).

While working in Taiwan, she did part-time jobs for additional income. In 2005, when Indonesian neighborhood shops in Taiwan were not as prevalent as they are today, she was already working as a retail trader for a Taipei-based Indonesian company who sold phone vouchers, Indonesian food, and clothing and who owned a money-changing business. To learn from the business activities in Taiwan, she willingly became an undocumented worker. The bulk of the salaries that she earned were spent buying home property, sending her children to school, developing her business, and saving to participate in the Hajj. For most villagers, owning property (house, car, and land), having a successful business, and becoming a Haji (Indonesian term attached to Hajj to indicate someone who has completed the pilgrimage to Mecca) categorize them as successful individuals, especially for people with backgrounds as TKIs—most Indonesian people still look down on these workers. Many people respected

her achievements. As noted by the village chief of DW, only three village members who were former migrant workers (TKI) had ever become Haji before; few residents can travel to Mecca because of the very expensive fees, which may amount to as high as RP 40,000,000 (>US\$2718) per individual in Indonesia.

From her achievement, in the past 2 years she has often been invited to seminars for migrant candidates and returnees as a resource to provide information on how to become a successful TKI and entrepreneur. She was also asked to be an organizational leader in the *kampung*, the chief of an *arisan* group, and the head of a women's Muslim prayer group. As she described her social activities today, she said that it began with the BNP2TKI (National Agency for the Protection and Placement of International Migrant Workers) office's 2012 publication of the third edition of a book, *100 TKI Sukses (100 successful migrants)*, and she became more famous after returning from Haji. Now she is *kelurahan* activist as well as the coordinator for Friday morning gymnastics, the coordinator of local events in *kelurahan*, and a donor for the *kelurahan* women's welfare program. What she has achieved makes her an ideal figure what most Indonesian migrant workers desire, that is, economic well-being, a successful return, and received respect social status.

As can be deduced from KA's story, successful migration and entrepreneurship can enhance self-status and transform one from migrant worker to entrepreneur and local activist. The benefits gained from migration and success in business can be used to access resources, enhance social standing, and facilitate symbolic resistance to unfair practices, thus improving the conditions of migrant workers and their families. Some successful returnees to AJ and DW also assume the role of social activist in their communities. For another example, the case of MD (the Head of the AJ ex-migrant Happy Heart Cooperatives) is another similar case with KA and illustrates this point. His experience as a TKI earned him an invitation to speak at the BNP2TKI offices in Surabaya and Jakarta about how people can participate in positive activism as TKIs while they work abroad and when they return home. As he stated in the interview, migrants return with an awareness of their rights as migrants; they realize as well that overseas employment is difficult, often fraught with risks, and therefore requires numerous preparations. If individuals who intend to work abroad understand the risks and problems associated with overseas employment, these challenges can be reduced. Improving understanding and awareness of these issues can be achieved through information dissemination and discussions regarding the experiences of successful or unsuccessful return migrants. Mr. KS (head of AJ village) observed that returnees feel ashamed when they fail to bring back huge amounts of money to their home villages; a feeling of anxiety and sadness pervades among those who see themselves as failures (*TKI gagal*). Over time, they may accept this failed condition by attributing it to 'bad destiny' (*nasib buruk*). Thus, MD stated the following:

The ultimate goal of working at abroad is to be one's own master (independent) at home. I think the key point from my invited speech is that migrant workers can successfully return, bring much money, and create a business at home (sukses di rantau, mandiri di kampung). Migrants could become anything they want to be, but should think about and manage especially their remittance. Before deciding to work abroad, know your work and plan your future. In other words, migrants who set goals can be expected to attain them.

Mr. MD is a former migrant worker who went to South Korea and was active in migrant organizations while working there. Most migrant activities in South Korea demonstrate how migrant domestic worker activists are advocating for rights on behalf of, and in dialog with, civil society organizations. This was significant experience for him in the South Korean context given that the spaces for public (migrant) dialog and the opportunities for workers to express (voice) their concerns directly and without fear are limited. This experience made him confident about speaking from his own perspective about migrant work abroad can be beneficial when he returns. This labor experience illustrates the rise of MD activism at home and shows how such participation is personally meaningful to him, how it influences his individual transformations and the emergence of a former migrant grassroots leader from among those in the village.

The successful development of entrepreneurial activities by return migrants has three implications. They are as follows: self-transformation, economic change, and the shift in profession from migrant worker to entrepreneur through self-empowered business activities that both bring economic benefits to their lives and facilitate their economic reintegration into their home villages.

There is evidence of positive interlinking between successful migration and entrepreneurship, such as the positive outcome of return migrants becoming village entrepreneurs. Return-migrant entrepreneurship has an economic stimulation effect on the community, evidencing positive benefits such as the transfer of business expertise, social activism, the exchange of information through the development of local cooperatives, and the exchange of knowledge and experience at migrant community events. Migration, entrepreneurship, and return-migrant activities are the sources or parts of self-transformation, facilitating the exchange of information, and learning tools; hence, individual- or family-level economic improvement, which occurs as a part of the above-mentioned transfer experiences, can increase in return-migrant societies. Finally, similar with Bachtiar and Prasetyo [10] research conclusion on return-migrant reintegration process, the successful economic (entrepreneurial) and migration experiences abroad become incentives for fast and efficient socio-economic reintegration in home villages.

3.2.2. Return-migrant entrepreneurship and social activism

Most return-migrant entrepreneurs acknowledge that they are happy to be back, even though their confidence is low with regard to starting a business because they always compare the living and working conditions in their villages to those abroad. The appeal of a fixed monthly salary and the ability to send money to family left behind sometimes drives remigration. As noted by all of the informants, however, after they set up and established economic activity, they preferred to live in their home villages. As early as they could, they launched businesses rather than work until they earned a substantial amount of money because the latter results in unsuccessful business ventures. Starting a business from the bottom and following through with this process are common approaches to entrepreneurship, excepting those who have access to considerable financial support.

With respect to the improvement of economic status through remittances, the frequency with which money is sent to home village shows irregularity in delivery periods. Sometimes, remittances are sent twice a year, and other times, money is sent three or four times annually. At the moment, village members need huge amounts of money for various items. These include celebrations for *Eid al Fitr*, a Muslim holiday; weddings and circumcision parties; and back-to-school activities. These are common events for which migrants send money. During my fieldwork, I was frequently told that the first overseas employment contract that villagers obtain is for building houses, and the second contract is for equipping the constructed houses with furniture. Only after the third contract, migrants can begin to consider investing the money that they earn in investment activities or a small business.

When asked about the economic effects of remittances and entrepreneurship activities at home, most of the community members immediately pointed to the proliferation of *rumah batu* (literally, stone houses), which are modern homes with a concrete foundation. These are slowly replacing *rumah panggung* (literally, stage houses), which are traditional homes built on wood platforms. A *rumah batu* serves as a cosmetic identifier of those who have success worked abroad and establish economic living at return. According to both migrants and non-migrants, upgrading one's home is generally the priority of return migrants. Earnings from overseas employment make home ownership possible. Most newly built or renovated houses, which differ from traditional Javanese houses, are perceived as symbols of the owners' improved economic conditions. In Javanese society, a house stands for many things. It is, for example, a *payung hidup* (umbrella of life) that provides protection and comfort to its inhabitants and bestows self-identity and prestige upon the family [11], p. 8. In this regard, a house explains why migrants accord high priority to housing.

Besides creating individual success, international migration and economic successful returns also increase the economic participation of women's organizations. Women's cooperatives (*Koperasi Wanita* [Kopwan]) have been established with financial resources originating from the money left over from remittances. The year 2011 in DW village saw the establishment of the '*Koperasi Wanita Sri Makmur*' (Prosperous Women Cooperatives) by a group of ex-migrant women. Its main purpose is to serve as the local village institutional bank, intended to empower village women. As observed, this is the only institution that is regarded as effectively offering economic protection. In situations where remittances need to be sent to families, vulnerabilities exist. Given the history of unfavorable experiences with sending money to family members, migrant women workers have resorted to transferring remittances through *Koperasi* institutions. In one study in Malang Regency, failures were found to have occurred because of the dominant husband underlying financial institutions, the disempowerment confronting assertive husbands, and the mismanagement of funds by husbands. The formation of migrants' cooperatives could be another viable alternative for obtaining funds to defray placement expenses, apart from other services such as savings and money transfers [12, 13]. In my research observation, cooperatives were found to be promising institutions that could offer viable financial options to migrants and their families as well as a social net for former migrants (and village women in general) that facilitates discussion of shared experiences, life problems, and future prospects. Ms. WG, from DW village, the head of *Koperasi Wanita Sri Makmur* said the following:

As a former migrant worker, I know how it feels returning home without knowing what to do next, how to use your savings wisely, or even how to invest them, especially for women who are mostly dependent on their husbands or families. Some of them get divorced after migration. If they do not have any economic activity, most likely they will continue to be a migrant worker. Through this cooperative, we would like to offer the most important thing in our lives; we still have hope. Besides running cooperative activities (e.g., savings and loan), we also provide information and assistance needed to former (women) migrant workers about how to save, invest, and start their own businesses, at least to the members of the cooperative (25 members).

Cooperatives, especially the successful ones, are powerful agents of change through collective projects, which offer distinct economic advantages rather than individual pursuits. In my observation at another village, a women's cooperative called *Koperasi Citra Kartini* (KCK) in a sub-district of Malang (Sumberpucung village, 20 km from AJ village), has set up a One-Stop Shop offering its member's pre-departure loans, savings, and money transfers. Members who desire to work overseas are allowed to retain their membership but have to maintain their savings accounts and loan payments religiously. Loan repayments are at rates lower than those charged by informal lenders or recruitment agencies, and they are made through bank transfers to the cooperative's account at a commercial bank. To minimize remittance costs, the cooperative allows migrant workers to send loan payments and remittances to beneficiaries in a single transaction. As reported by local migrant NGOs, KCK had 1457 members, about 250 of which were either returned or active migrant workers [14].

Therefore, return-migrant entrepreneurship is a strategy followed by migrants to return to their homelands and resettle both economically and socially. According to Barth [1] and Stewart [2], entrepreneurship gives rise to positive effects (changes) through entrepreneurial activities. In the context of return-migrant entrepreneurship, such as developing migrant cooperation, social relationships between return migrants and their families, and local people or migrant associations. These effects (changes) demonstrate the role of return migrants in developing self-employment opportunities, empowering entrepreneurship in ex-migrant communities, broadening the social basis for access to loans, and establishing new links for the transfer of information. The combined social and economic activities developed by return migrants have enabled them to be considered as heroes by their families and neighbors. The formation of social solidarity in migrant communities is a very positive result, as well. Moreover, a long-term consequence of successful return-migrant entrepreneurship at home is the reduction of remigration, since migrants who are unemployed after returning home are more likely to consider migrating again.

The return migration, entrepreneurship, and socio-economic activities of Indonesian former migrants in their home villages by using three patterns—the three Rs, return, remittance, and rebirth—as crucial elements in the process of understanding how Indonesian migrant mobility creates economic sustainability in home villages. In this case, return migrants are the actors because they provide the remittances of working abroad. Besides sending money, they remit new patterns of values, behaviors, and practices from their overseas experiences. They have the competency and capacity to perceive how international labor migration may affect other people, viewing it from a wider context other than merely its contribution to the national economy. Within this international migration sequential process, small enterprises have emerged as critical sources of livelihood for return migrants in home villages, compared

to other job opportunities. Hence, a returnee can literally experience rebirth. By taking into account the situation before departure, overseas experiences, return, and post-return conditions, the three Rs of migration are shown as a dynamic social process comprising the individual development of migrants, their significant role in bringing about social and economic changes, and their successful reintegration into society.

4. Conclusion

Indonesian migrant entrepreneurship in Taiwan has developed via structural opportunities in migrant communities [15]. These opportunities include the sale of typical migrant products such as food (i.e., national foods) and other products (i.e., second-hand or specialized commodities). Aside from structural opportunities, social embeddedness has also contributed to the development of Indonesian migrant entrepreneurship [1, 2, 16] this is evident from the shared social and economic activities (linkages) of entrepreneurs and their fellow migrants. In Taiwan, Indonesian migrant niches and entrepreneurial activities are microcosms of migrant life and conditions abroad, where Indonesian people from different backgrounds share their interests, and co-ethnic migrant workers can engage in social activities and collaboration, to mutual advantage. I saw two interesting phenomena among Indonesian migrants and entrepreneurship in Taiwan. First, regarding the sociocultural aspect, migrant entrepreneurship and the entrepreneur are seemingly adaptive, making cultural and social adjustments to immigrant social life (or the co-ethnic migrant market)—that is, communication, socialization, and organization. Second, regarding the socio-economic aspect, the economic aspect of Indonesian migrant entrepreneurship is no longer considered to be on the ‘sidelines’, transitional, or traditional in the context of economic opportunities; rather, in practice, it is centered on cultural engagement, solidarity formation, and social relationships in the Indonesian migrant community.

In the return-migrant entrepreneurship in Indonesia cases. In my research location, two villages in Malang Regency, an East Java province, recently, migrant economic empowerment (entrepreneurship) has been encouraged. I found that return-migrant entrepreneurship influences the villages’ economic and social activities. It can lead to job opportunities and empower the migrant household economy, as well as establish former migrant cooperatives that financially support return migrants while they develop their businesses. To some extent, return-migrant entrepreneurs as theoretically can become role models for co-migrant candidates, as former successful migrant businesspersons [10].

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