

Cross Cultural Study on Migrant Worker's Communication and Learning Malay Language while Working in Malaysia.

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- **Abstract:** Malaysia is one of largest Migrant Workers' (MWs) receiving countries in Southeast Asia, its economic development highly depends on workers from Bangladesh, Indonesia Nepal, Philippines and Pakistan. MWs experience various social issues and language barriers. Thus, the purpose of this study is to explore MW's experience about learning Malay language while working in Malaysia from three countries Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan. By applying qualitative methodology and using phenomenological approach, online interviews were conducted with 15 MWs, (five per nationality) living in Malaysia for 5 years. Three themes 1)-Language training prior/after arrival, 2)-Language learning methods via experiential learning, 3)-Duration, were analysed by using Nvivo. Scope of Malay language comprehension was classified into four levels a)-Speaking, b)-Reading, c)-Writing and d)-Understanding language. Results indicate that 96.67% respondents had no language training. For learning methods 84% learnt from friends, colleagues and 16% used Google Translator. 80% respondents took minimum six months to one-year and 20% learnt basic language after a year and above. In-terms of speaking findings reveals that 16.67% has fluency, 76.66% has minimal speaking skill and 6.67% felt difficult to speak Malay. In-terms of reading 70% has partial fluency and 30% are not able to read Malay. Only 10% can write with excellence, 66.67% can write only short words/sentence and text messages and 23.33% face difficulty in writing Malay. 53.33% respondents have moderate level of understanding, 46.67 % either has poor or no understanding of language. In conclusion there is significant gap in Malay language comprehension among MWs without language training.
- **Keywords:** Malaysia, largest Migrant Workers' (MWs), Malay language