

The Job Specification and Job Description for Indonesian Workers in Malaysian Construction Industry

Abd Rahman Ahmad, Kek Siok Yee, Khairunesa Isa, Ng Kim Soon , Hairul Rizad Md Sapry

ABSTRACT--- *The construction industry is one of the major industries contributing to the growth of Malaysia's gross domestic product (GDP). Therefore, in order to overcome the shortage of local workers, Malaysia is highly dependent on the Indonesian workers to work in the construction industry. The aim of this paper is to identify the job specification and job description of the Indonesian workers in the Malaysian construction industry. A round-table discussion was carried out to obtain the valuable information. The results indicated that the most important job specification for each Indonesian worker who works in the construction industry is the need to have a Construction Personnel Card. In addition, a skilled Indonesian worker is needed to be certified and awarded a Foreign Workers Certificate (PKPA). However, in terms of job description, Indonesian workers are regulated by several sets of policies and laws.*

Keywords: Job Specification; Job Description; Indonesian Workers.

I. INTRODUCTION

The growth of gross domestic product (GDP) in each country is affected by different sectors. For example, in Singapore, the financial sector is the main contributor to the country's GDP growth. Meanwhile, construction sector is the important contributor to the growth of GDP in Malaysia and Indonesia.

In order to ensure the productivity of the construction projects as well as to resolve the shortage of local workers in the construction industry, Malaysian government has allowed the entry of a large number of Indonesian workers into Malaysia (Mohd Rahim et al., 2016). According to Adi and Ni'am (2012), in Malaysia, there are about 1,209,127 foreign workers from Indonesia where 19 per cent of the total number of Indonesian workers were worked in the construction sector. The employment of foreign workers in Malaysia is not only can enable them to acquire a job and stimulate the economy but can also help to improve the country's economic development.

Revised Manuscript Received on April 19, 2019.

Abd Rahman Ahmad, Faculty of Technology Management and Business, Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia, (Email: arahman@uthm.edu.my)

Kek Siok Yee, Faculty of Technology Management and Business, Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia, Malaysia.

Khairunesa Isa, Centre for General Studies and Co-Curricular, Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia, Malaysia.

Ng Kim Soon, Faculty of Technology Management and Business, Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia, Malaysia.

Hairul Rizad Md Sapry, Universiti Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia Institute of Industrial Technology (UniKL MITEC), Malaysia.

However, most of the Indonesian workers do not possess the skills and meet the needs of the sectors they work. Besides, about 50.1 per cent of Indonesian workers were categorised as unskilled worker (Abdul Aziz, 2001). In fact, the recruitment of foreign workers which do not have competence and in line with the current job market requirements had posed a variety of problems. For example, the Indonesian workers are unable to compete with the foreign workers from other countries, particularly from the Philippines (Ananda et al., 2016) and produce quality work that meets the standards as required by the client (CIDB, 2004). However, Ananda et al. (2016) pointed out that the competency level of Indonesian workers is not only depends on the level of skills and knowledge owned by the workers. It also influenced by several factors such as poor communication in the workplace, faced with unscrupulous employers, and inability to work. Therefore, Indonesian workers should continuously improve themselves in order to meet the current needs of the job market.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The similarities between the Indonesian language and Malaysian language have attracted a large number of Indonesians to work in Malaysia. In Malaysia, entry of Indonesian workers hosts the highest in comparison to other ASEAN countries. There were about 728,870 Indonesian workers who came to Malaysia in 2017 (Berita Harian, 2017).

However, according to Abdul Aziz (2001), most of the Indonesian workers in Malaysia do not possess the skills in the field they work. Furthermore, Indonesian workers are also unable to master the basic skills that are reading, writing and arithmetic. In his study, he also found that most of the Indonesian workers did not attend school or undergo formal schooling beyond the age of 15. They are also did not participate in any skill training programmes before coming to Malaysia. At the end, it causes Indonesian workers can only receive minimum wage in Malaysia.

A. Job Specification

Job specification is information that states the qualifications and behaviour required to be possessed by an employee which allows him to do the job well. According to Bodnarchuk (2012), job specification is a written statement that explains the characteristics required to perform the job

well, including the abilities, skills, experience, qualifications, motivation levels, and mental and physical health. In addition, characteristics required should be related to the field of work and measurable, for example, the ability to complete the work according to the specified period of time.

B. Job Description

Job description is a document that explains the job scope, functions, duties and responsibilities that need to be performed in a job. According to Bodnarchuk (2012), job description is a guide used in organising work for every position in the organisation. The purpose of this job description is to explain the purpose, job scope, tasks and responsibilities of a specific job. In addition, the job description is also used in the process of recruiting, selecting, orientating, evaluating competency and promoting.

III. METHODOLOGY

In this study, a round table discussion was employed to collect the data. The main objective of this discussion was to acquire the information and opinions regarding the job specification and job description of the Indonesian workers in the Malaysian construction industry.

The participants in this discussion were from Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB), Johor Land Berhad (JLand), Akademi Binaan Malaysia (ABM), Dynareka Sdn. Bhd., Persatuan Kontraktor Negeri Johor, and Construction Labour Exchange Centre Berhad (CLAB). When all the data are completely collected, an Interactive Model which was proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994) was used for data analysis.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

For the job specification of foreign workers, participants in the interviews pointed out that each foreign worker who enters into Malaysia to work on the construction site is compulsory to register Construction Personnel Card. This is enshrined under Subsection 33(1) of the Malaysian Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB) Act. Hence, if found guilty, liable to a fine of not exceeding RM 5000.

The results of this study revealed that the skilled foreign workers are needed to be awarded Foreign Workers Certificate (PKPA) by the CIDB. This is mentioned under Subsection 33A(1) of the Malaysian Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB) Act that all skilled foreign workers should be accredited and certified by the CIDB.

In addition, the foreign workers need to have working experience in the construction industry. Furthermore, the foreign workers are required to master the basic skills that are reading, writing and arithmetic. Then, the ability to speak the Malay language is necessary as two-way communication is important to ensure a smooth working environment.

Besides, the foreign workers should be able to work at a height of more than two metres even though this depends on the scope of their services to the company. However, the participants stated that the foreign workers are required to sit

for the test and get a license issued by the IRATEC prior to work in high places.

Data from this study revealed that the foreign workers are required to be more creative. This is due to the fact that their opinions and ideas will help them work more effectively on the construction site. It is also interesting to note that the foreign workers are now required to read and interpret construction plans. The skilled foreign workers will be able to fulfil their employers as the construction plan will be followed through to produce outcomes as expected by their employers. Additionally, these skills helped the foreign workers develop a better understanding of the construction progress thus making them a preferred worker.

For the job description of foreign workers, the evidence in this study indicates that employers usually determine the job description for foreign workers based on the knowledge and skills that they show on the construction site. Typically, general job description is used for taking on foreign workers. In the meantime, the job description is also depends on the contractor's current needs. However, employers are bound by policies and laws in appointing foreign workers that state that the foreign workers, for example, cannot be a site supervisor, welder and machine operator. Furthermore, participants also stated that the policy on recruitment of foreign workers prohibits foreign workers from working in the front line.

V. CONCLUSION

Recruitment and selection of foreign workers in the construction industry are based on the Malaysian Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB) Act. Employers are obliged to refer to this Act during the recruitment and management of foreign workers on construction sites. The findings of the study indicated that a foreign worker should match their skills to the job specification as follows:

- a) Construction Personnel Card
- b) Foreign Workers Certificate (PKPA)
- c) Mastery of writing, reading and arithmetic
- d) Able to speak the Malay language
- e) Have working experience in the construction industry
- f) Able to work in high places
- g) Think creatively
- h) Able to read and interpret construction plans

The feedback provided from the round-table discussion indicated that Construction Personnel Card and Foreign Workers Certificate (PKPA) are among the most important job specification. Construction Personnel Card is the most important job specification for the Malaysian construction industry. All foreign workers are obliged to have a Construction Personnel Card prior to work on construction sites in Malaysia, regardless they are categorised as unskilled, semi-skilled or skilled workers. A person who does not comply with this specification can be liable to a fine of not exceeding RM 5000.

In addition, accredited and certified by the CIDB is

also very important especially for the skilled workers. All skilled workers are required to be awarded Foreign Workers Certificate (PKPA) if they wish to perform the jobs as listed under the Third Schedule of Section 2 and Subsection 33A(2) of the Malaysian Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB) Act. Failure to comply with the regulations will result in action taken against the person who carried out the jobs without the certificate. Furthermore, for job description of the foreign workers in the Malaysian construction industry, the participants stated that the employers will determine the job description for foreign workers based on the knowledge and skills of foreign workers as well as through the monitoring carried out at the construction sites. However, the taking on foreign workers is bound by the policies and laws of Malaysia.

VI. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to thank Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia for supporting this research under the UTHM Contract Research Grant scheme. In addition, the authors also thank the respondents for their fully supported in this research.

REFERENCES

1. Abdul Aziz, A. R. (2001). Foreign workers and labour segmentation in Malaysia's construction industry. *Construction Management and Economics*, 19(8), pp. 789-798.
2. Adi, H. P. & Ni'am, M. F. (2012). Improving skill's strategies of Indonesian construction labours to have global competitiveness. *International Journal of Civil and Structural Engineering*, 3(1), pp. 150-157.
3. Ananda, M. S., Sukmawati, A., Syamsun, M., & Ali, N. A. (2016). Pengembangan model peningkatan kompetensi pekerja domestik Indonesia di Malaysia. *Jurnal Manajemen Teknologi*, 15(3), pp. 262-278.
4. Berita Harian (2017). Lebih 1.7j pekerja asing sah di Malaysia. *Berita Harian*, 27 Julai 2017.
5. Bodnarchuk, M. (2012). *The Role of Job Descriptions and Competencies in an International Organisation. Case: Foster Wheeler Energia Oy*. Savonia University of Applied Sciences: Bachelor's Thesis.
6. CIDB (2004). *Tinjauan Industri Pembinaan 2001-2002*. Kuala Lumpur: CIDB.
7. Miles, M. B. & Huberman, M. A. (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook*. 2nd ed. Sage: Beverley Hills.
8. Mohd Rahim, F. A., Mohd Yusoff, N. S., Wang, C., Zainon, N., Yusoff, S., & Deraman, R. (2016). The challenge of labour shortage for sustainable construction. *Planning Malaysia: Journal of the Malaysian Institute of Planner (Special Issue V)*, pp.77-88