

The Effect of Remittances on Child's Work Participation Age 10-17 in Indonesia

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Abstract

The phenomenon of child labor has been a problem in Indonesia. One of the factors most often cited as the cause of child labor is poverty. The ILO revealed that one of the ways to get out of poverty is by doing a migration. Migration through remittances sent by migrants become an alternative income for households so that children don't have to enter the world of work just to meet their daily needs. Using the 2SLS method and with the help of an instrumental variable, this study found that remittance had a negative and significant effect on children's work participation.

Keywords

remittances; child labor;
instrumental variable



I. Introduction

Until now, Indonesia is still facing a serious problem regarding the phenomenon of child labor. According to 2018 Sakernas data, there are 2.6 million children or around 7.05 percent of children aged 10-17 years in Indonesia are child laborers. One of the factors that cause the emergence of child labor is poverty. In addition, it is feared that children who work at an early age will only be trapped in a “vicious cycle of poverty” (Thapa et al, 1996).

Akkaro and Mtwewe (2011) through their research, found that most child workers in Tanzania come from poor families. Poor families tend to send their children to work because their parents' wages are not sufficient to fulfill the family's living needs, so the children are forced to work to help their parents meet their family needs. This condition is not much different from the conditions in Indonesia. Through their research, Priyambada et, al (2005) revealed that poverty is closely attached to the face of child labor in Indonesia.

Under certain conditions, when a household's finance has a very limited budget or even the inability to meet the basic needs of life, the household will mobilize family resources – children are no exception, at an early age will be encouraged to enter the labor market, to help meet the needs of family life. And as the last step, when none of the methods used have succeeded in helping households move out of poverty, households can encourage family members to migrate (Hampshire, 2002). Stark and Bloom (1985) reveal that migration decisions are taken by households hoping that they might have additional income from remittances (remittances) sent by family members who migrate.

The presence of remittances in migrant families in the area of origin is proven to be able to improve the welfare of life through fulfilling the necessities of life. Adam and Chuechuecha (2010) in their research found that remittances sent to migrant families had a positive impact on increasing consumption spending, thereby reducing the likelihood of households falling into poverty by 26.7 percent. Nguyen and Purnamasari (2011) are also found in their research that the presence of remittances, which means there was an increase in the source of income in migrant households, specifically in households with only female migrants reducing the share of working children by 17 percent.

However, the influence of migration can also be present through the absence of parents or productive adult family members so in the end there is an increase in child work participation (Kusumawardhani and Warda, 2013). In other conditions when remittances receive by migrant families then it might encourage migrant families to open businesses, so it has an impact on increasing child work participation (Alcaraz et al, 2012).

The limited number of studies in Indonesia that discuss the effect of remittances on child work participation encourages this research to be important. For this reason, it is necessary to study further how the effect of remittances on child work participation and how the influence of individual characteristics, characteristics of the head of the household, and household characteristics on child work participation age 10-17 years in Indonesia. By using the 2SLS method and the help of instrumental variables, this study found that remittances have a negative and significant effect on child work participation.

II. Review of Literature

The migration theory expressed by Stark and Boom (1985), namely, the new economic theory of labor migration (NELM) states that the decision to migrate is not merely an individual decision, but is a household decision. Households tend to reduce the risk associated with total household income by diversifying the allocation of various sources owned by the household. Some family members will continue to work in their area of origin, while others will work in other areas in an effort to minimize the risk of failure due to migration. If the local labor market also does not allow households to earn adequate income, remittances sent by family members can help support the household economy (Tjiptoherijanto, 2000).

To analyze the behavior of labor supply, the economic framework used is the Neoclassical model of labor leisure choice (Emilsson, 2011). In this model, it will be known what will happen if non-labor income increases. Non-labor income is part of a person's income that is not affected by the length (number of hours) a person works. Remittance is one type of non-labor income for households receiving remittances. Meanwhile, the assumption used is that a person's satisfaction (utility) will increase when someone consumes more goods (consumption) and more time is used to relax (leisure). However, in achieving maximum satisfaction (utility), a person also faces limitations (constraints) in consuming goods and leisure time, namely the amount of income and time they have.

In this model, all consumption expenditures must be equal to the number of labor income and non-labor income, and also workers in this model do not save (workers spend all their income in the analyzed period). Labor income is influenced by the number of hours a person allocates to the labor market and the hourly wage rate, while non-labor income is not influenced by how many hours are used to work. Assuming that the hourly wage rate is constant, then there are two alternatives that a person has in using his time, namely to work or relax. With limited (constraint) budget, someone will try to maximize its utility by maximizing the combination of consumption of goods and leisure time.

By using this model, there are 2 (two) possible effects, namely the time to relax will increase or decrease according to the utility function of each individual and the way of viewing leisure as a normal good or an inferior good. When non-labor income increases and leisure is seen as a normal good, then a person will increase consumption of goods and reduce working hours (increase leisure time). Meanwhile if leisure is seen as an inferior good, when non-labor income increases, a person will continue to increase consumption of goods but also reduce his leisure time. (leisure). In general, leisure is

seen as a normal item so that when a person's wealth increases (increasingly), he will also demand more time to relax (leisure).

If the remittances received by migrant families in the area of origin are the main source of non-labor income then the effect of that income will be to reduce the supply of labor from non-migrants (including children who are forced to work to help meet household needs). The size of the effect of remittance income also depends on the close relationship with the family. How close the family relationship with the remittance sender will affect the size of the amount of remittance to be sent. If the relationship with the family in the area of origin is strong, the number of remittances that will be sent as a form of family support will be relatively larger and stable. Family support is a form of interpersonal relationship that includes attitudes, actions, and acceptance of family members, so that family members feel that someone is paying attention. (Hasibuan, S. et al. 2020). In contrast, for households without remittances, migration may increase the supply of labor because households have to replace the labor income of migrating family members (Emilsson, 2011).

Before going any further, there are differences between working child and child labor that need to be understood. The concept of working child according to the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (KPPPA, 2019) is that children carry out economic activities for at least one hour in a week where these activities are carried out to earn income in the form of money or goods. This activity also includes the activities of unpaid workers who assist in a business or economic activity.

Meanwhile, the definition of child labor according to the International Labor Organization (ILO) includes all children who work and because doing this work poses a risk of danger, exploitation and makes the child unable to get an education (BPS & ILO, 2010). Furthermore, the concept of child labor includes (1) all children aged 5-12, without minimum working hours (2) children aged 13-14 who work more than 15 hours in a week, and (3) children aged 15-17 years and work more than 40 hours per week.

III. Research Methods

To determine the effect of remittances on children's work participation, this study used the 2SLS method with the help of instrumental variables. The purpose of using this method is to overcome the problems that are often faced in research on migration and remittances, namely the potential for the emergence of selection bias, which leads to the selection of people who migrate or receive remittances because migrants usually come from households with higher income or education, so it will be difficult to find or know the effect by simply comparing migrant and non-migrant households.

The selection of the right variable in order to become an instrumental variable, it must be ensured that the instrumental variable must be correlated with the explanatory variable but not correlated with the outcome variable. In this study, the instrumental variables used are the occurrence of migration in the past and the ownership of household members on bank accounts which are considered to be correlated with remittances but not correlated with decisions on child work participation in a household.

The reason for using an instrumental variable in the form of migration in the past, is that with the occurrence of migration in the past, this has an effect on reducing or reducing the cost of current migration, both financially and informationally, thus encouraging more migration. The greater the occurrence of migration in the past, the higher the chance that remittances will be sent by migrants to families in the area of origin. The use of the migration occurrence variable in the past has been used in several previous studies, one of which was used in a study conducted by Nguyen & Purnamasari (2011). By using panel data

from IFLS in the form of historic migration in 1993 and 1997 on 2SLS regression in 2000 and 2007 where the results of this study found a negative effect resulting from migration and remittances on the supply of labor in the household.

In this study, the migration occurrence variable used a proxy from out-migration data from BPS in 2015. The 2015 election was that this data was available for all regions (complete) following household data used in this study, namely the 2018 SUSENAS data. In addition, 2015 was the last migration data published by BPS so that it is the latest data regarding the occurrence of migration in Indonesia. The difference between the year studied and the migration data is because in general migrants will send remittances after 2 to 3 months of work or maybe keep it for a year and then send it to their area of origin (Buchori & Amalia, 2012).

The second instrumental variable in this study is the ownership of a bank account in a household. The remittance delivery can be distinguished formally and informally. Remittances that are sent formally are through bank transfers or by post, while remittances sent informally can be done by bringing them in physical form to their area of origin (Bachtiar, 2020). With the ownership of a bank account by household members, it can be a facility that supports the presence of remittances in households, besides that the process is easier and can be directly accepted by migrant households, this is what then affects the decision of migrants to send remittances (Matano & Ramos, 2013; Pilarova & Kandakov, 2017). The reason for choosing the variable ownership of a bank account as an instrumental variable is that this variable has a correlation with remittances but does not correlate with the decision of children to work in a household. The data regarding this variable is taken from the 2018 SUSENAS data.

As the name implies 2SLS, this method consists of two stages of regression. For the first stage of regression, it will be used to determine whether the instrumental variables in the form of migration in the past and ownership of bank accounts have a positive and significant effect on the remittance variable, written in the following equation:

$$Rem_i = \gamma_0 + \gamma_1 His_mig_i + \gamma_2 hh_bankacc_i + e_i$$

Where rem is a dummy variable whether a household receives or does not receive remittances; the instrumental variables used are the occurrence of migration in the past (his_mig) and the ownership of a bank account (hh_bankacc), e are errors. The data used as a proxy for the occurrence of migration in the past is the 2015 out-migration data published by BPS while the data on bank account ownership in a household is taken from the 2018 Susenas data.

Furthermore, after getting estimates of remittance variables with instrumental variables, the second stage of regression was carried out to determine how the effect of remittance estimates (which had been regressed on instrumental variables) on child work participation by including other control variables in the form of individual, household and community characteristics. The second stage regression model used in this study is:

$$Ch_work_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \widehat{Rem}_i + \beta_2 x_i + e_i$$

Child work participation (ch_work) in hours; rem hat is the estimation (estimate) of the remittance variable obtained from the first stage regression; x, is a control variable consisting of child's characteristics, head of the household's characteristics, household's characteristics and community characteristics that are taken from the 2018 Susenas data, e are errors.

IV. Results and Analysis

Based on the overall sample (174,709 children) the number of children in households that received remittances was 7,829 children and 166,880 children in households that did not receive remittances. From the total number of children who received remittances, there were 7,382 children did not work and the remaining 447 children worked. Meanwhile, from the number of children who did not receive remittances, 157,290 children did not work and the remaining 9,590 children worked.

Based on the respondent's data as many as 174,709 children, the number of working children is 10,037 people, of which 4,884 children are child labourers. Of the total number of working children, the average child works 26 hours per week. Meanwhile, child workers aged 10-12 years spent working for 16.6 hours per week, child workers aged 13-15 years worked for 34.1 hours per week and child workers aged 16-17 years worked for 53.9 hours per week. Meanwhile, based on employment status, on average, children work as family workers or unpaid and work in the agricultural sector.

Table 1. Percentage of Child Work Participation by Age in 2018

Characteristics	Work Participation (Percentage)			Total
	Max. 15 hours per week	16 – 40 hours per week	>40 hours per week	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Age				
10-12 yo	61.07	33.90	5.03	100.00
13-15 yo	44.95	39.07	15.98	100.00
16-17 yo	28.86	39.95	31.19	100.00

Source: Susenas 2018, results of data analysis

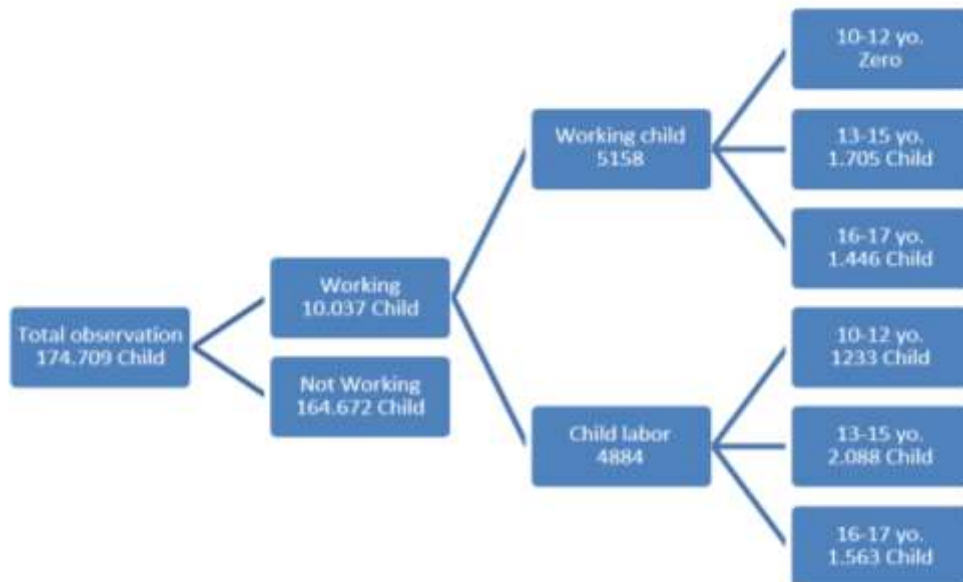


Figure 1. Child Work Participation Based On Working Hours and Child Age

The estimation results using the 2SLS method and using instrumental variable assistance in the form of past migration rates (migrt_out) and bank account ownership (hh_bankacc) in seeing the effect of remittances on child work participation are presented in table 2.

In the first-stage estimation results for the past out-migration variable and the account ownership variable at the bank, both have a consistent and significant effect on child work participation. As for the occurrence of out-migration in the past, it indirectly causes the cost of migrating in the present to be relatively cheaper, this is what then encourages more migration to occur in the area. With more migration, the chance of remittances in a household also increases. However, the effect of migration is not always through the remittance mechanism but also through the influence of the absence of parents (or adult household members) which directly or indirectly affects child work participation. This effect is called the net migration effect (Ebeke, 2012). While remittances reduce the likelihood of children working, the absence of parents (or adult household members) can directly or indirectly increase the likelihood of child work participation (Banzak & Chezum, 2009).

Table 2. Estimated Result of IV2SLS

Variable	IV	IV	IV	IV
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Migration Out	4.37e-08 *** (2.11e-09)	4.37e-08 *** (2.11e-09)	4.12e-08 *** (2.30e-09)	3.96e-08*** (2.34e-09)
Account Ownership at Bank	0.0031 *** (0.0012)	0.0030*** (0.0012)	0.0031** (0.0012)	0.0031** (0.0012)
Number of Observations	174.709	174.709	155990	155990
Rsquare	-0.9262	-0.5313	-0.1343	-0.0744
Sargan (p-value)		0.6397	0.4834	0.5487

***p<0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1

Source: BPS Statistics 2019 & Susenas 2018, result of data analysis

The regression results show that remittances have a significant negative effect on child work participation by 0.62 which means that an increase in remittances acceptance of 1% reduces the emergence of child work participation by 0.62. This result is in line with the results of previous studies (Binci & Gianelli, 2016; Menaca & Gaduh, 2020) which found a negative effect on receipt of remittances on child work participation. Menaca & Gaduh (2020) found that an increase of US\$ 1 received by households reduced the incidence of child work by 0.022.

Table 3. Estimated Result of IV2SLS

Variable	IV	IV	IV	IV
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Remittance	-1.2653*** (0.0868)	-1.108*** (0.0775)	-0.7001*** (0.7116)	-0.6224*** (0.0768)
Child's age		0.0095*** (0.0003)	0.0091*** (0.0002)	0.0092*** (0.0003)
Child gender		0.0235*** (0.0013)	0.0223*** (0.0012)	0.0223*** (0.0012)
Child's school status		0.3702*** (0.0030)	0.3578*** (0.0029)	0.3578*** (0.0028)
HH gender			0.0115*** (0.0034)	0.0112*** (0.0033)
HH marriage			0.0090*** (0.0032)	0.0094*** (0.0031)

HH Education			
	1	-0.0201*** (0.0019)	-0.0200*** (0.0018)
	2	-0.0163*** (0.0021)	-0.0158*** (0.0021)
	3	-0.0178*** (0.0020)	-0.0169*** (0.0020)
	4	-0.0239*** (0.0028)	-0.0227*** (0.0027)
HH work status		0.0170*** (0.0014)	0.0166*** (0.0014)
HH work sector		0.0167*** (0.0014)	0.0150*** (0.0014)
Number of household members		-0.0008** (0.0004)	-0.0008** (0.0004)
Household pov. stat		0.0083** (0.0034)	0.0088*** (0.0034)
Household land stat.		-0.1439*** (0.0027)	-0.0129*** (0.0027)
Area			0.0080*** (0.0016)

Several variables related to the characteristics of children also appear to have a significant influence on children's work participation including the child's age, gender, and school status of the child. Children's age has a positive and significant influence on children's work participation. This means that the older a child gets, the greater the risk of children being involved in work. This result was also found in a study conducted by Binci & Giannelli (2016) where older children are more likely to be involved in work activities. Another variable is the sex of the child which also has a positive and significant effect on child work participation. The regression results found that boys are more likely to work (or work longer hours) than girls.

The next characteristic of children is the child's school status which has a positive and significant effect on children's work participation. This result is in line with the descriptive analysis which shows that the proportion of children who work is greater in the group of children who are not in school. The school status of children is indeed closely related to the problem of working children because normally, children's activities are generally filled with school activities. Meanwhile, if a child does not go to school, it will be very vulnerable for the child to work. On the other hand, working children will also be very vulnerable to dropping out of school. Another variable, namely the main job status of the head of household as an informal worker, has a positive and significant effect on child work participation. These results are in line with research conducted by Winasis (2013) and Usman (2002) which revealed that the participation of working children is influenced by the status of workers from the main job of the household head, namely informal, because of the characteristics inherent in the informal sector so it is likely that children participate in work starting from just helping or replacing head of household under certain conditions. The next variable, namely the type of main occupation of the head of household in the form of the agricultural sector also has a positive and significant influence on child work participation. This means that children living in households with household heads who work in the agricultural sector tend to be workers compared to children living in households with

household heads who work in the non-agricultural sector (Usman, 2002; Winasis, 2013; Fithriansyah, 2009). Meanwhile, for the education variable of a head of household, for all levels of education the household head has a negative and significant effect on children's work participation. Based on household characteristics, the variable that has a positive and significant effect on child work participation is poverty status. This result is in line with the results of descriptive statistical analysis which found that the percentage of children living in households with poor status was higher than that of children living in non-poor households. In addition, these results are also in line with research conducted by Akkaro and Mtwewe (2011) which found a tendency for poor families to send their children to work when compared to wealth families, with the intention that children help their parents in meeting the needs of family life.

For the variable of land ownership, in contrast to the results of previous studies, this study found that the variable of land ownership was negatively correlated with child work participation. This result is in line with the statistical descriptive analysis which shows that households with land ownership have a higher percentage of working children percent compared to households without land ownership. The last variable, namely the area where children live has a positive and significant influence on children's labor participation. This shows that children who live in rural areas are more likely to work than children who live in urban areas. This is in line with the results found in several previous studies that a working child is a child who lives in rural areas (Binci & Gianneli, 2016; Milligan & Bohara, 2007).

To test the durability of the model in this study, a robustness test is used which is differentiated into based on the employed status of the child's main occupation (whether as unpaid workers – family workers or paid workers – as laborers/employees/employees); based on the business sector of the child's main occupation; and based on children's working hours.

Based on the results of the robustness test in table 4, it shows that children who live in households receiving remittances and work as family workers or unpaid workers have a lower chance of participating in work compared to children in households who are not recipients of remittances and work as family workers or unpaid workers. paid. Meanwhile, wage workers (laborers or employees) have a higher chance of participating in work compared to children in households who are not recipients of remittances and work as wage workers (labourers or employees).

Table 4. Robustness Test Results of Worker Status

Variable	Try Alone	Labor/Employee	Free Worker	Family Worker
	(1)	(2)		(1)
Remittance	-4.14e-13 (2.99e-13)	5.84e-14*** (1.24e-14)	1.75e-13 (1.26e-13)	-4.78e-13** (1.88e-13)
Control Variable				
Individual	√	√	√	√
Household	√	√	√	√
Community	√	√	√	√
Number of Observations	508	1751	666	5487

***p<0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1

Source: Susenas 2018, results of data analysis

The Robustness test for the business sector is divided into two, namely the agricultural and non-agricultural sectors. Table 5 shows that children who live in remittance-receiving households and work in the non-agricultural sector have a lower chance of participating in work compared to children who live in non-remittance-receiving households and work in the non-agricultural sector. Meanwhile, children who live in remittance-receiving households and work in the agricultural sector have a higher chance of participating in work compared to children who live in households that do not receive remittances and work in the agricultural sector.

Table 5. Robustness Test Result of Bussiness Sector

Variable	Agriculture	Non-Farm
	(1)	(2)
Remittance	1.83e-13*** (3.88e-14)	-1.12e-12* (5.90e-13)
Control Variable		
Individual	√	√
Household	√	√
Community	√	√
Number of Observations	4681	3731

***p<0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1
Source: Susenas 2018, results of data analysis

Robustness test on child's working hours regardless of the child's age, if averaged a maximum of 3 hours per day to work, it is divided into two, namely children working a maximum of 21 hours per week and children working more than 21 hours per week. The results of the robustness test in table 6 show that children who live in remittance households and work a maximum of 21 hours per week and work more than 21 hours per week both have a lower chance of participating in work compared to children who live in non-recipient households. Remittances and work a maximum of 21 hours per week or work more than 21 hours per week.

Table 6. Robustness Test Result of Child's Working Hour

Variable	working a maximum of 21 hours/week	working more than 21 hours/week
	(1)	(2)
Remittance	-4.83e-13** (1.97e-13)	-6.22e-14*** (1.62e-14)
Control Variable		
Individual	√	√
Household	√	√
Community	√	√
Number of Observations	4647	3765

***p<0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1
Source: Susenas 2018, results of data analysis

V. Conclusion

Using Susenas 2018 data, this research was conducted to see the effect of receiving remittances on child work participation by using instrumental variables in the form of past migration rates and account ownership at banks. Based on the results of the regression in this study, it was found that remittances had a negative and significant effect on children's labor participation.

The characteristics that affect child work participation include male children, older age, not participating in school, living with a head of household who works as an informal worker, living with a head of household who work in the agricultural sector, living in households with many household members. Other characteristic such as living in poor households and live in villages also have a positive and significant effect on child work participation. Meanwhile, the variables of household head education and land ownership have a negative and significant effect on children's labor participation.

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