

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background

In Southeast Asia, dating back centuries the cross-border movement of people is a natural phenomenon and connects the present populations in neighboring countries culturally and historically. The dynamic of economic integration and globalization have further supported between the populations of both sides of the border. The population in between border will more increase as the implementation of the ASEAN Free Trade Area, which began in January 2010. And not long from now the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) will begin in 2015. Thus, this two region initiative will have a significant impact on the countries in the region which is free movement of services and goods, capital and investment, and people and labor.<sup>1</sup>

The situation of international migration in various regions around the world has been growing. As mentioned above that phenomenon anxiety to the governments of many countries, especially in destination countries which are the places for many migrant workers to visit. Migrant workers interested to work abroad because of the economic and social barriers in which they cannot provide in their own country

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<sup>1</sup> Vasuprasat, Pracha(2010).” Agenda for labor migration policy in Thailand: Towards long-term competitiveness”. International Labor Organization 2010.p.10

Therefore, the evacuation of peoples from different areas seen as normal and also the movements of people nowadays are frequency and stronger than before.

In the globalization era, international migration has become the issues that were related to social, economic and cultural implications for origin and destination country. The Demographic development also included in this matter that occurred today society. Nowadays, the mobility of people is increasing. However, the movement of people in the future seems to be more complicated. Humans have always moved for the purpose conflict or environmental and to get the opportunities or to escape their poverty.

Thailand is one of the country that regional migration hub outgoing, incoming, and transiting migrants in the country. Thailand also a country that most migrant workers are looking forward to migrating because the location of the country in the center of Southeast Asia, healthy economic growth that supported by export-oriented businesses have affected in the movement of migrants into Thailand. However, Thailand is the origin and destination country for many migrant workers to transit for asylum seekers, victims of trafficking, and illegal migrant workers with dynamic economies, there is a great deal of internal migration, including seasonal and circular migrant.<sup>2</sup>

As a receiving country, the statistic of documented migrant workers from neighboring countries flows into Thailand more than a million migrant workers who live in Thailand especially from Myanmar, Cambodia, and Laos. However, the large number of migrant workers in Thailand is Myanmar which makes up proximately 80 percent of migrant workers in Thailand. The secondary is Cambodia and Lao PDR and other countries. Thus, these migrant workers are mostly

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<sup>2</sup> Jerrold W.Huguet, Aphichat Chamrathirong (2011), Migration for development in Thailand Overview and Tools for Policymakers.

migrating from their own countries in order to seek better income and good opportunities in Thailand.

A number of factors that make a large number of Myanmar migrate to Thailand. The first factor, Thailand and Myanmar have shared a long 2,401 km border which is most of Myanmar workers are accessible cross the border only by foot. Second, Internal political and social conflict between Myanmar government and ethnic minority, mainly the Chin, Karen and Mon groups which is fight along the border of Thailand since 1984 when the Ne win government took control in military coup of Myanmar have been persecute ethnic minorities groups and also enormous exclusion their population of Myanmar through its corruption, oppression, human right violation and mismanagement.

The main factor of Myanmar migrant to Thailand is lack of economic in the country which is unemployment of Myanmar population its big factors to motivate themselves looking to neighboring countries which is Thailand for seeking better employment and get the higher wage.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, hundreds of thousands Myanmar and other ethnics migrant out from their country into Thailand because of the condition internal political conflict and the economic recession caused by the way those factors are pushing forward Myanmar people who have been affected by the war and poverty to Thailand for seeker the work especially in borders area.

The increase in cross-border of Myanmar migrant workers since the late 1980s, Thailand was fastest growing economies after the announcement which used the eleventh national economic and social development to develop country Thus, during the rapid economic growth has led tightening of the labor market and make labor shortage in some part with the

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<sup>3</sup> Burmese Migrant workers 'Education (2014). Background. Retrieved from: <http://www.bmwec.org/background/>. ( Accessed on 01-11-2017)

low of level unemployment. It is obviously is a major pull factor that attracts Myanmar worker to migrate to Thailand in search of work and these include increases salary wage, better job opportunities, and better living standard. Myanmar workers are not only living in the capital city but still in the province during the agriculture season.<sup>4</sup>

The massive of Myanmar workers cross-border flows into Thailand have created impacts in both positively and negatively impacts. It is indisputable that Myanmar migrate into Thailand has produced positive impact to the country in term of economic growth in the country which is their impact on the economy is important in contribute the national output in order to produce item for export on many factors such as construction sector, fisheries sector, agriculture sector, and domestic sector. Mostly these sectors are the type of jobs that Myanmar workers have taken up, and also Myanmar workers fulfill important gaps in the shortage of labor with these type of jobs that local Thai workers avoid or fewer that local Thai workers are willing to work because these type jobs are commonly known as dangerous, dirty, and difficult (the so-called 3D jobs) and it is evident that most of the employers are being able to hire Myanmar workers for such jobs.<sup>5</sup>

Moreover, Myanmar worker will get opportunities which exchange knowledge and information while they work in Thailand. Thus, these include new working process, specialized skills, and a working method. These Myanmar workers are a positive impact to ensuring Thai economic well-being and

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<sup>4</sup> Jinnavaso, Kasemsan (1995). "Foreign Migrant Workers: Facts, Problem Identification and Recommendations." P.2

<sup>5</sup> Yongyuth Chalamwong(2009), The economic role of migrant labor migration in Thailand: Recent trends and implications for development. P.7

strengthen the Thai economy because of Myanmar worker as part of driving economic development in Thailand.

The negative impact is often linked with social problems which are large numbers of Myanmar migrant workers entering the country by do not hold the necessary documentation and can be defined as illegal worker. Generally, Myanmar workers migrant to Thailand are divided into two main groups which are document migrant workers and undocumented migrant workers but most of Myanmar migrant workers are undocumented workers.

Consequently, Thai employers can take this advantage of undocumented workers by forcing them to enter a trafficking activity, trafficking involves force, deception, and coercion on the part of the trafficker, perhaps some migrant who enter into agreements with smuggler are unaware that they will end up being trafficked. It may also result in the transmission of a dangerous disease which is HIV/AIDS infection and unregisters workers lose out the benefit that can help protect them.

Moreover, some troubling aspect of cross-border migrant into Thailand which is the children who are born of a parent entering Thailand illegal according to Thai law, a child born to illegal migrant is illegal. Thus, those children will become stateless and expose difficulties in the future. The illegal of their parents make these migrant children less chance to access public services like health care, education, and treatment. Some of the children migrate with friends who come to Thailand for selling their labor. Some of the children come to Thailand by themselves while those children persuade or were lured by Thai agents to seek work in Thailand. Moreover, these children groups are vulnerable to various forms of exploitation such as being victims of trafficking and forced labor.

## **B. Research Question**

Based on the background and the identification of the problem, the research question is formulated as follows:

**How does Thailand policy manage Myanmar migrant workers in Thailand?**

## **C. Theoretical Framework**

### **1. International migration theory**

In the context of migration is a multifaceted phenomenon and it is described as a move from one area to another area or a move specified minimum distance that involves a change of residence. Moreover, the international migration is described as a type of spatial mobility of people which is substance lies in the movement of people cross-borders with the purpose to spend a certain period of time in the target country. The international migration is referred to changes the worker's location of both across a set of jobs which is occupational mobility and across physical space which is geographical mobility but international migration understood as a type of geographical mobility of workers to others countries.

In the absence of governmental actions, the size and composition of international migratory flows would be determined solely by the foregoing factors. Structural factors at origin and destination, the strategic behavior of migrants acting on particular motivations, and the emergence of transnational structures to mediate the flows but in the present day all nations seek to influence the number and characteristics of foreign arrivals. State policies thus act as a filter affecting how the various macro-level forces and micro-level motivations are expressed in practice to yield concrete populations of immigrants with specific characteristics. A full statistical

treatment of international migration thus needs to model the behavior of states as they evolve in response to domestic and international conditions. However, migration theory is usefully in term of that can provide theoretical advice or guidance to understand the movement of people in a wider perspective.

According to Douglas S. Massey, have developed the main ideas of this theory was state policies affecting immigration are the outcome of a political process in which competing interests interact within bureaucratic, legislative, judicial, and public arenas to develop and implement policies that influence flow and characteristics of immigrants. Recent theoretical and empirical research yields several conclusions about the determinants of immigration policy in migrant receiving societies. Thus, the policies that government implement in response to these forces and how they function in practice to shape the numbers and characteristics of the migrants who enter and exit a country.<sup>6</sup>

In relation to the case, due to large of Myanmar migrant workers crosses to Thailand for seeking job opportunity. Thus, Thai government has implemented to policies. The policies as important for Thai government to manage these Myanmar migrant workers who live in Thailand because of some of Myanmar migrant workers who got issues while they work in Thailand and Thai government has ability to solves the problem of these Myanmar migrant workers in process of Thai government policies. Moreover, this implemented policy also interacts with Thai bureaucratic, legislative, judicial, and public arenas to control and mange of Myanmar migrant workers.

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<sup>6</sup> Massey, Douglas ( 2012 ), Towards an integrated model of international migration. Eastern Journal of European Studies, P. 18

## 2. Concept of Labour Welfare

The concept of “Labour welfare” is dynamic, resilient and changes only with times, regions, country, industry, social values, the extent of industrialization, the wide-ranging socio-economic development of population and political ideologies established at meticulous moments.

Labour welfare is an inclusive and comprehensive term with diverse benefits and facilitates given to labourer by employer. The amenities for labour welfare are in addition to normal remuneration and rewards available for employees as per the company policies and legal provisions. Labour welfare is process of improving the health, safety, general well-being and the development of skills and efficiency of the workers than the minimum set standards Labour Welfare measures can also be extended by the government, trade unions and non-government agencies in addition to the management or employer.<sup>7</sup>

The accomplishment of these labour welfare measures depend on the mechanism which has been employed in providing such facilities to workers. Welfare programmed should be guided by idealistic morale principles and human value. These welfare measures include the provision of health facilities, sanitation and the housing facility for workers, amenities and social security measures, education facilities and counseling services. According to Morwabe (2009) working condition should comprise of aspect such as the working hours, employment policy, workers health issues, workplace premises and the conduct of workers at the workplace. Labour welfare measures in both developed and developing countries have

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<sup>7</sup> Varma, Akshaya (2011) Concept, Theory and Models of Labor Welfare and Social Security. P. 39-40

implications not only on the workforce but also on all facets of the society.<sup>8</sup>

In relation to the case, Thai government implemented the policy for Myanmar migrant workers has standard living in Thailand, safety life, and justified. Thai government conducting the policies which are protection of Labor right and social welfare to provide the facility for Myanmar migrant workers such as established migrant workers assistance center to assist migrant workers in providing receive advice, health care services to Myanmar migrant workers, the right to education for migrant children and provide the shelter for Myanmar migrant workers who got an issues. Since, Thai government implemented the policy has impact to Myanmar migrant workers have a standard living and also reduce the issues of Myanmar migrant workers.

#### **D. Hypothesis**

From the explanation above, and supported by theoretical framework, finally the writer finishes on hypothesis that, the actions of Thailand government policy towards Myanmar migrant workers in Thailand is:

Thailand policy to manage Myanmar migrant workers is by protection labour right and social welfare with International organization partnership.

#### **E. Method of Data Collection**

This writing used several ways to collect the data in order to discuss the problem they were as follows:

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid

1. Media research, collecting the data from media like the internet in order to find the reference and sources to accomplish the explanation of the problem.

2. The data of this research would be collected by doing library research, this method was used to study the relevant sources in order to discuss the problem.

3. Data analysis, the data are collecting from the books, journal, and newspaper and gained from the website in order to be used as the sources in the final paper arrangement.

4. Proving hypothesis, it was derived from the meaning of the title, the discussion of the problem and data analysis.

## **F. Objective of Research**

This undergraduate thesis has several purposes, these are:

1. As a requirement to fulfill one of the subjects in International Relations studies.
2. Explaining the current condition of Myanmar migrant workers in Thailand.
3. Explaining Thai government policy to manage Myanmar migrant worker in Thailand.

## **G. Scope of research**

Focusing more on the topic research which the research has conducted the scope of discussion started from the beginning of Myanmar migration to Thailand and the impact of Myanmar migrant workers on the economy in Thailand. This time limitation showed that the Thai government policy toward Myanmar migrant workers in Thailand.

## **H. System of Writing**

The writer divided this paper into some chapters, and each of the chapters is connected and related to one and another, so it becomes one unit.

CHAPTER I, this chapter covered discussions of the background, research question, research purposes, theoretical framework, hypothesis, research methodology, research range and system of writing.

CHAPTER II, this chapter will discuss about the dynamic of migrant workers in Thailand.

CHAPTER III, this chapter will discuss and analyze about the significant of Myanmar migrant workers in Thailand.

CHAPTER IV, this chapter will discuss and analyze about Thailand government policies to manage Myanmar migrant workers in Thailand.

CHAPTER V, consist of the closing and conclusion of the entire paper as a whole.

