

# EXPLORING THE CONTRIBUTION OF FAITH-BASED ORGANISATIONS TO THE RESILIENCE OF MIGRANT FAMILIES IN INDONESIA AND TAIWAN

**Yuherina Gusman**

Universitas Al-Azhar Indonesia,  
yuherina.gusman@uai.ac.id

**Ramdhan Muhamin**

Universitas Al-Azhar Indonesia,  
ramdhan.muhamin@uai.ac.id

**Riki Rahman**

Universiti Tun Hussein Onn  
Malaysia,  
riki@uthm.edu.my

**Syuan-yuan Chiou**

National Chengchi University, Taiwan  
schiou@nccu.edu.tw

**DOI:**

<https://doi.org/10.31330/penamas.v38i2.1012>

**Corresponding Author:**

**Yuherina Gusman**

Universitas Al-Azhar Indonesia  
yuherina.gusman@uai.ac.id

**Dates:**

Received: October, 25<sup>th</sup> 2025

Revised: November, 27<sup>th</sup> 2025

Published: December, 30<sup>th</sup> 2025

## Abstract

*This study examines the role of faith-based organizations (FBOs) as a social infrastructure that supports the resilience of Indonesian migrant families in Indonesia and Taiwan. Data were collected qualitatively from 15 migrant workers, 15 left-behind children, 15 caregivers, 4 FBOs in Indonesia, and 5 FBOs in Taiwan. Data were collected in 2024 and 2025 using semi-structured, in-depth interviews. This study used an interpretivist paradigm to examine how FBOs strengthen the resilience of Indonesian migrant families. The participants were selected with purposive and snowball sampling. The findings show that at the micro level, faith provides emotional endurance and moral guidance for migrant workers but not for their children and caregivers; at the meso level, FBOs such as Dompet Dhuafa, Mandiri Amal Insani, Rumah Edukasi Kenanga, Majelis Taklim Parenting Nabawiyah, and Salimah Taiwan institutionalize care through religious education, parenting training, and psychosocial support. At the macro level, transnational faith networks supplement formal policy frameworks by providing moral and psychosocial protection. The study broadens the concept of social infrastructure to include religious and moral systems as key components of family resilience. It also integrates resilience theory with faith and migration studies and provides empirical evidence that FBOs can help develop more inclusive, culturally grounded transnational social policies.*

**Keywords:** *faith-based organization; social infrastructure; family resilience, migrant workers, Taiwan*

## Abstrak

Studi ini meneliti peran organisasi berbasis keagamaan (*Faith-Based Organizations/FBOs*) sebagai infrastruktur sosial yang mendukung ketahanan keluarga migran Indonesia di Indonesia dan Taiwan. Data diperoleh secara kualitatif dari 15 pekerja migran, 15 anak pekerja migran, 15 pengasuh, empat FBO di Indonesia, dan lima FBO di Taiwan. Data dikumpulkan pada tahun 2024 dan 2025 menggunakan wawancara mendalam semi-terstruktur. Penelitian ini menggunakan paradigma interpretif untuk menelusuri bagaimana FBO memperkuat ketahanan keluarga migran Indonesia. Partisipan dipilih melalui teknik purposive dan snowball sampling. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa pada tingkat mikro, iman memberikan ketahanan emosional dan panduan moral bagi pekerja migran, namun tidak bagi anak-anak dan pengasuh mereka. Pada tingkat meso, FBO seperti Dompet Dhuafa, Mandiri Amal Insani, Rumah Edukasi Kenanga, Majelis Taklim Parenting Nabawiyah, dan Salimah Taiwan menginstitusionalisasikan kepedulian melalui pendidikan agama, pelatihan pengasuhan, dan dukungan psikososial. Pada tingkat makro, jejaring keagamaan transnasional melengkapi kerangka kebijakan formal dengan menyediakan perlindungan moral dan psikososial. Studi ini memperluas konsep infrastruktur sosial dengan memasukkan sistem keagamaan dan moral sebagai komponen kunci ketahanan keluarga. Studi ini juga mengintegrasikan teori ketahanan dengan studi agama dan migrasi, serta memberikan bukti empiris bahwa *FBO* dapat mendukung kebijakan sosial transnasional yang lebih inklusif dan berlandaskan budaya.

**Kata Kunci:** organisasi keagamaan; infrastruktur sosial, ketahanan keluarga, kebijakan sosial transnasional; Taiwan



This work is licensed under a Creative  
Commons Attribution-  
NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0  
International License.

## INTRODUCTION

Labor migration remains one of the most prominent social and economic variables influencing Indonesian family life. According to the International Organization for Migration (2024), over 4.5 million Indonesians work overseas, with the majority in Malaysia, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the Middle East. Scholars have long emphasized that the economic potential of migration comes with societal disruption and psychological strain for left-behind families. For example, left-behind children of migrant workers face anxiety and discontinuity, while caregivers bear the burden of parenting, finances, and social expectations (Fauk et al., 2024, 2025; Lam & Yeoh, 2019). Such long-distance separation alters family relations, necessitating new forms of resilience and community support.

Recent studies in migration and community emphasize the relevance of social infrastructure, which includes networks, institutions, and relationships that support collective existence. Tomaney et al. (2024) define social infrastructure as the fabric through which sociality is organized and reproduced, especially in underserved or resource-constrained areas. Religious congregations and faith-based organizations (FBOs) are viewed through this lens as infrastructural actors who keep communities together through moral authority, volunteer labor, and local legitimacy rather than as peripheral charities. They provide both concrete services (food, housing, counselling) and intangible goods (belonging, purpose, and trust), serving as social infrastructure for vulnerable families. Migrant families are considered vulnerable families, as said by Bryceson (2019), who states that migrant families are at risk, dissatisfied, and broken. This happens because they face many challenges in maintaining their “familyhood” while living apart.

Indonesia provides a good ground for investigating these dynamics. Large-scale migration has left many families behind, especially children. According to the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI), 11.2 million children have been left behind by migrant parents (KPAI, 2016); however, this figure may be underreported. UNICEF (2021) indicates that research on this topic in Indonesia has received less attention. In comparison, Taiwan has one of the largest Indonesian migrant populations abroad. FBOs such as mosques, *majelis taklim* (Islamic study circle), Muhammadiyah and NU charities, and transnational Muslim organizations play a variety of roles in these settings, including spiritual counseling, remittance education, youth mentoring programs, and facilitating communication between migrants and government agencies. Despite their prevalence, empirical research rarely examines these organizations as social infrastructure or investigates how their activities lead to migrant families’ resilience.

At the policy level, both the Ministry of Social Affairs (Kemensos) and the Agency for the Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers (BP2MI) encourage family resilience (Mindarti & Nabil, 2019). However, official initiatives remain essentially secular, focusing on economic reintegration and skill training rather than psychosocial and spiritual well-being. Furthermore, a lack of funding and human resources results in the government’s programs for migrant families falling short of expectations (Asmorowati et al., 2019). Although the government has implemented programs targeted explicitly at left behind children of migrant workers, these programs have not been given priority. This gap underscores the importance of understanding how faith-based infrastructures complement formal welfare systems and shape migrant families’ everyday resilience across borders.

Based on these developments, this study conceptualizes faith as social infrastructure, a relational system of meaning, care, and organization that maintains “familyhood” in the face of mobility and separation. Using family-social resilience frameworks (Bawati et al., 2025) and religious community resilience theory (Storr et al., 2025), the study presents FBOs as mediators between micro-level coping, meso-level community solidarity, and macro-level institutional collaboration. Global evidence demonstrates that churches, mosques, and multifaith networks mobilize volunteers and moral legitimacy to deliver food, housing, legal help, and emotional care to migrant and refugee families (Lee, 2024). Congregational engagement often predicts better community-level resettlement outcomes, such as secure housing and access to daycare. In ASEAN, religion is essential to migratory governance. The ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights acknowledges community and faith

networks as social safety nets during migration; however, peer-reviewed analyses remain scarce.

Therefore, this study examines specifically how FBOs conceptualize and enact support for migrant families in Indonesia and Taiwan; how caregivers, children, and migrant workers experience faith-based support as part of their resilience processes; and how transnational linkages between Indonesian congregations in Taiwan extend moral and social infrastructures across borders. Bawati et al. (2025) argue that family resilience is inextricably linked to societal resilience, where families adapt and recover through the institutions and networks that surround them. Similarly, Schäfer et al. (2024) show that resilience occurs at the human, social, and societal levels, necessitating supportive infrastructures that connect the private and public realms. In this regard, FBOs serve as the linkages between the private and public domains. Storr et al. (2025) define FBOs as moral ecosystems of recovery in which shared purpose and mutual obligation provide the social capital required to cope with crises. When applied to migration, these insights suggest that FBOs act as a link between separated families, local communities, and institutional welfare systems in the host and home countries.

By analyzing these interactions using a multi-site qualitative design, this study is expected to contribute to three interconnected issues. First, it broadens the definition of social infrastructure to include religious and moral systems as critical components of family resilience. Second, it combines modern resilience theory with migration and faith studies to show how faith infrastructures connect the private and public domains of care. Third, it provides empirical evidence of how faith-based efforts in Indonesia and Taiwan might inform more inclusive, culturally sensitive policies for migrant-family well-being. Eventually, the study argues that faith functions as a living infrastructure of resilience, not just belief or ritual, but an organized network of trust, reciprocity, and meaning that keeps transnational families together in the face of separation.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study used a qualitative research method with an interpretivist paradigm to investigate how faith-based organizations (FBOs) strengthen Indonesian migrant families' resilience in two interrelated contexts: sending communities in Indramayu, Indonesia, and migrant destinations in Taiwan. The qualitative method was chosen to capture individuals' lived experiences, subjective meanings, and institutional narratives, which cannot be quantified using surveys alone. It enabled an in-depth study of the moral, social, and institutional features of FBO activities influencing family well-being.

Two key locations were chosen to represent both sides of the migration continuum: 1.) Indramayu, West Java (Indonesia), a major migrant-sending region with extensive religious networks and community-based welfare activities organized by local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as *majelis taklim* and mosque youth groups; 2.) Taiwan, a popular destination for Indonesian migrant workers, is a place where transnational FBO networks (such as diaspora mosques, Indonesian Muslim organizations, and migrant chaplaincies) offer spiritual and social support. This dual-site strategy enables a comparative analysis of FBO activities in both local (sending) and transnational (receiving) settings. The participants included 15 migrant workers who had worked in Taiwan for at least 1 year, 15 migrant children aged 7–20 years, 15 caregivers of migrant children, and 10 representatives of FBOs in Taiwan and Indonesia. Ethical consent was obtained from all participants, and pseudonyms were used to maintain confidentiality.

Data were collected in 2024 and 2025 using semi-structured, in-depth interviews. Each interview lasted 30-60 minutes and was conducted in Bahasa Indonesia. Interviews focused on migration, family separation, and coping mechanisms; the role of FBOs experienced by migrant families, participation in FBO activities or programs; perceptions of spiritual, emotional, and material support provided by FBOs; and institutional collaboration among FBOs, local governments, and transnational networks. All interviews were taped (with permission) and transcribed verbatim.

## RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study uses a three-layered concentric model (micro-meso-macro) to understand how faith-based organizations (FBOs) function as multi-level social infrastructures that support migrant family resilience. The model is theoretically grounded in Bronfenbrenner's (1976) ecological systems theory, which places individual adaptation within nested social settings, and is extended through contemporary socio-ecological frameworks of resilience (Tessa & Gardono Sudjatmiko, 2021; Walsh, 2016). Within this structure, the micro level represents the household sphere where individual and familial coping mechanisms operate; the meso level captures community-based relations mediated through FBOs and congregations; and the macro level encompasses institutional and transnational linkages that connect families, FBOs, and state or policy systems. This nested approach reflects the idea that resilience arises not from isolated actors but from interconnected social ecosystems. Recent studies on social infrastructure (Tomaney et al., 2024), family-social resilience integration (Bawati et al., 2025), and the family resilience of migrant workers (Gusman, 2024) reinforce this perspective, emphasizing how organizations, networks, and community trust regulate the flow of support across levels. In this study, FBOs are viewed as bridging infrastructures that connect faith-based values, community solidarity, and institutional collaboration in Indonesia and Taiwan.

### **Micro-Level: Faith and Household Coping**

#### **a. Migrant Workers' Coping Strategy**

Data for this section were collected from 15 migrant workers in Taiwan. Approximately 73% of the participants are women who have lived in Taiwan for 2 to 13 years. Most of the participants are married (73%) and have one to three children who live with their mothers, sisters, or spouses in Indonesia. Some of the children live independently, while one participant has entrusted her children to an Islamic boarding school (*pesantren*).

At the micro level, the resilience of Indonesian migrant families is determined by how individuals and households integrate faith as a source of emotional endurance, moral discipline, and meaning-making. When faced with challenges overseas, particularly in childcare, the majority of migrant workers did not seek assistance from others. They liked handling problems independently and leaving the results to Allah. Interviews revealed that many migrant workers were unaware they could seek help from third parties, such as the government, NGOs, or FBOs, if they encountered issues. They have never regarded the government, non-governmental organizations, or FBOs as part of their closest circle for providing help. For them, it seems impossible for these stakeholders to offer meaningful assistance, particularly in matters of childcare, which most Indonesians consider a private family responsibility. They had previously relied on recruitment agencies for assistance, but, based on their experience, these agencies were often reluctant to help. Participants felt that agencies were unwilling to help with professional work concerns, let alone family or childcare issues. As a participant explained:

“The agency seems primarily concerned with financial matters. They visit the employer’s house only when there is a new pay check schedule, but they never check on the workers’ condition. When a problem is reported, they rarely respond promptly and often side with the employers. I no longer rely on the agency; instead, I choose to handle any problems on my own. When I feel overwhelmed and uncertain about what to do, I cry and turn to Allah in prayer for strength and guidance.” (MW-4, 36 years old, Taiwan)

Baig & Chang (2020) distinguish between two primary forms of social support available to migrant workers: formal and informal. Formal social support encompasses services operating within bureaucratic and institutional structures, typically delivered by professionals and specialists. However, such support is often characterized as inaccessible, rigid, and problem-oriented, limiting its reach among migrant workers. In contrast, informal social support refers to assistance derived from personal networks, such as family members and friends. This form of support tends to be more spontaneous, accessible, and emotionally responsive, offering non-judgmental affective care. Owing to privacy concerns and ease of access, migrant workers generally prefer informal sources of support over formal mechanisms.

Besides, migrant workers' decisions to seek assistance are influenced by various socio-demographic and structural factors, including race, economic status, migration status, and level of social inclusion (Kaukinen, 2002). Migrant workers are socially and institutionally marginalized in both sending and receiving countries. In host countries, they receive limited social protection compared to local workers due to their partial citizenship status. Regulatory frameworks that limit the duration of stay render migrant workers temporary residents, often excluding them from comprehensive labor protections. Moreover, their residence permits are tied to employer sponsorship, constraining their mobility, limiting their ability to change employers, and restricting access to information. Consequently, migrant workers frequently struggle to identify and approach formal sources of assistance from government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and faith-based organizations when facing social, occupational, or family-related challenges.

Based on these conditions, the in-depth interviews revealed an interesting finding: when confronted with difficulties and obstacles, migrant workers put their faith in Allah as their primary source of strength. These findings contrast with Bender's, as cited in Chambon et al (2012), which suggests that migrants' primary support systems are their families and their "homeland." The term homeland refers to friends or peers from the same area or village. Although numerous migrant associations in Taiwan are organized by region of origin, they do not appear to be the primary sources of assistance or emotional support for migrant workers. Access to information and communication also affects how migrant workers seek help, which makes them isolated and cannot reach help from families and their "homeland". As a result, migrant workers often feel uncertain about whom to turn to when confronted with difficulties, other than themselves or God.

Another reason they choose not to seek assistance from anyone but Allah is the occasional conflict that arises between them and their families at home. Ideally, family members are expected to be the closest source of support; however, when problems occur within the family, they lose someone to rely on. Some seek help from spiritual or religious teachers, yet the majority prefer to resolve their problems independently or confide in Allah. Migrant workers who regard Allah as their primary source of support seek comfort through prayer, remembrance of Allah (*dhikr*), or by listening to Islamic lectures. Several respondents reported that getting closer to Allah made them feel better; whenever they faced difficulties, they prayed and subsequently felt a greater sense of serenity and peace. This faith-based coping mechanism also served as a readily accessible and effective stress-relief strategy. The findings demonstrate that migrant workers utilize religious beliefs not only as a private spiritual practice but also as an interpretive framework for understanding separation, difficulty, and hope. Faith, in this view, serves as a psychological framework that stabilizes emotions and redirects adversity into purposeful perseverance.

### **b. Children of Migrant Workers' Coping Strategy**

Among the child participants, 53% are female, and 47% are male, with ages ranging from 8 to 17 years. Approximately 93% of migrant parents are mothers who have migrated to destinations such as Taiwan, Singapore, Qatar, Malaysia, Hong Kong, and Saudi Arabia, with children aged 1 to 20 years. Many of these mothers departed when their children were at a very young age, with the youngest being only one year old at the time of separation. The majority of the children reside with their grandmothers (60%), while others live with their fathers (20%) or aunts (20%).

For child participants, interviews revealed that children tend to grow closer to their peers when their mothers are physically absent. Most participants stated that spending time with friends was one of the primary ways they coped with grief and loneliness. Peer interactions often take precedence over adult guidance and supervision. However, when children make poor friendship choices, they may experience various negative consequences. Research has shown that peers significantly influence adolescents' thoughts, self-perception, and behavior in multiple ways.

Furthermore, unhealthy peer relationships can have detrimental effects on the children of

migrant workers. Studies in Indonesia report that left-behind children of migrant workers frequently experience sadness, loneliness, and disrupted caregiving, leading to reduced social and academic adjustment (Fauk et al., 2025). Cross-national data similarly indicate that children separated from migrant parents display lower levels of subjective well-being compared to their peers (Băltătescu et al., 2023). In Indonesia, parental migration is also associated with decreased school participation and a higher likelihood of child labor (Susilo et al., 2024). A recent systematic review further confirms that left-behind children are at increased risk of both physical and mental health problems, underscoring the multidimensional nature of migration's impact (Chang et al., 2022). Collectively, these adverse effects weaken migrant families' overall resilience.

Faith does not appear to be the key basis of children's family resilience. The physical absence of parents makes it difficult for them to instill faith-based values in their children. Parents are unable to serve as good role models that their children can see and emulate. Caregivers also appear to have a limited influence in promoting resilience. Several factors contribute to this condition: a) limited resources, such as financial constraints and emotional fatigue, which affect their ability to provide optimal care for the children; b) a generational gap, which makes it difficult for grandmothers as the most caregivers to monitor the children or provide immediate assistance when needed closely; and c) limited knowledge about appropriate caregiving practices, which can reduce the quality of support they provide and may even lead to unintentional harm; and d) gender stereotyping, whereby grandmothers are viewed as the primary caregivers after the mothers. This perception inhibits the involvement of other family members, notably fathers, and the larger community in helping left-behind children.

This finding highlights an essential micro-level challenge: faith as a social infrastructure remains weak when not reinforced by direct parental modelling and daily religious practice. As a result, children's emotional and moral development is increasingly dependent on peers and digital environments rather than on formal, family-based religious teaching. The weakening of intergenerational religious transmission, combined with inadequate caregiving capacity, undermines the family's ability to build a strong moral foundation amid parental relocation. The interview results further showed that children confirmed they had never received support from other parties, such as the government, NGOs, FBOs, or other communities.

### **c. Caregivers' Challenges**

The caregiver participants vary in relation to the migrant workers: 34% are mothers of migrant workers, 20% are husbands, 13% are sisters, 13% are aunts, 13% are children of migrant workers, and 7% are mothers-in-law. The caregivers are aged 30 to 65 and have cared for the children for 3 to 15 years.

Concerning caregivers, in principle, they represent a potential source of resilience in migrant families. As the primary caregivers, they are responsible not only for the children's daily well-being but also for managing remittances from migrant parents to cover necessities like food, clothing, and education, as well as for savings, asset acquisition, and investment. However, the interview results indicate that caregivers' roles have yet to have a substantial impact on improving family resilience. This limitation is primarily due to their disinterest or inadequate attention to the emotional and developmental needs of the children left behind. The support provided tends to focus solely on basic physical needs, such as food and clothing, while neglecting the psychosocial and emotional factors critical to children's overall well-being.

Regarding the role of the government, NGOs, and FBOs in supporting migrant workers and their families, the caregivers generally perceive these institutions as having limited significance. Some caregivers reported receiving financial assistance or necessities from NGOs and FBOs, and a few had entrusted their children to unpaid *Taman Pendidikan Al-Qur'an* (TPQ, informal religious education centers) or *Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini* (PAUD, early childhood education programs) managed by these organizations. However, most caregivers preferred receiving direct cash assistance, as it gave them greater flexibility to manage household needs according to their priorities.

### **d. The Role of Pesantren**

Some migrant workers send their children to educational institutions such as Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*). These institutes provide dormitory amenities for children while also providing general education and comprehensive Islamic religious education (Dudin & Munawaroh, 2020). In the context of parental migration, *pesantren* function as an alternative form of faith-based social infrastructure, where religious ideals and moral advice are transmitted despite the physical absence of parents. For many migrant parents who are unable to actively supervise their children's education, whether general or religious, the *pesantren* provides a trusted environment in which they can fulfill some of their parenting and spiritual responsibilities. However, while this arrangement can give structured supervision and religious education, it may also limit direct emotional attachment between parents and children, suggesting that institutionalized faith education cannot fully replace the nurturing role of family-based religious practice.

### **Meso-Level: Community-Based FBO Support**

At the meso-level, faith operates through institutional and community-based structures that connect individual resilience with collective forms of social support. Migrant families' resilience is strengthened by the collective efforts of FBOs, which translate moral principles into coordinated community care. FBOs such as *majelis taklim*, mosque youth organizations, and Islamic charity foundations serve as social infrastructure, providing material assistance, emotional support, and moral guidance to migrant families. Faith is not only practiced in these community places but is also institutionalized as solidarity expressed through donation (*sedekah*), mentorship, and communal worship.

In this study, FBOs refer to those operating in both Indonesia and Taiwan. In Indonesia, four FBOs were successfully interviewed: Dompet Dhuafa, Mandiri Amal Insani, Rumah Edukasi Kenanga, and *Majelis Taklim* Parenting Nabawiyah. In Taiwan, data were collected from representatives of the Keluarga Muslim Indonesia di Taiwan (KMIT), the Muhammadiyah Special Branch in Taiwan (PCI MU Taiwan), the Nahdlatul Ulama Special Branch in Taiwan (PCI NU Taiwan), Human Initiative Taiwan, and Salimah Taiwan. These organizations play an essential role in sustaining transnational faith-based support networks that bridge Indonesian migrant workers and their families. Through their programs and activities, they not only provide material and moral assistance but also foster a sense of belonging, solidarity, and shared religious identity among dispersed members of the migrant community.

Dompet Dhuafa is a national philanthropic and humanitarian organization in Indonesia that operates under five core pillars: Health, Education, Economy, Social Affairs, and Da'wah & Culture (Dhuafa, 2024). Within this framework, the organization has established the Migrants Institute to address the needs of Indonesian migrant workers, including pre-departure training, skills development, and placement assistance. Dompet Dhuafa provides empowerment and social support services to vulnerable populations, but is not specifically dedicated to the migrant families.

Mandiri Amal Insani (MAI) functions as a national zakat-collecting and distributing institution (LAZNAS) in Indonesia. Its mission includes collecting and distributing *Zakat*, *Infaq*, *Sadaqah*, and *Waqf* to improve the lives of vulnerable communities. MAI explicitly addresses the needs of former migrant workers (*purna pekerja migran*) through the “*Bapak Asuh Purna Migran*” initiative, which provides business capital and mentoring to support their reintegration and economic independence (Bank Mandiri, 2024). Additionally, MAI features key program pillars including economic empowerment, education, social support, health, and physical infrastructure. Their focus is more on former migrants, and economic empowerment efforts strengthen migrant household resilience by enhancing the economic base and potential support networks for families of migrant workers.

Rumah Edukasi Kenanga (REK) was established by a former Indonesian migrant worker in Hong Kong who felt deep concern about the quality of childcare for left-behind children of migrant workers. With support from Dompet Dhuafa and Mandiri Amal Insani, REK developed training programs for caregivers to improve the quality of care and enhance their caregiving skills. For the children, REK introduced a *tahfiz* (Quran memorization) program

that plays a significant role in fostering positive outcomes for both children and caregivers. The children demonstrated improved discipline and practiced Islamic etiquette in their daily behavior. The existence of the *tahfiz* program also helps ease some of the caregivers' child-rearing responsibilities, allowing them to engage in other activities or take short breaks. At the same time, the children attend the *tahfiz* center.

Furthermore, the program provides overnight accommodation, enabling caregivers to entrust their children to the facility's care while still having opportunities to meet them regularly. This model of faith-based education illustrates how religious institutions can strengthen family resilience in contexts of parental migration. By combining spiritual education with structured childcare, the *tahfiz* program functions as a micro- and meso-level form of faith-based social infrastructure. Such initiatives reflect the potential of local FBO collaborations to fill the emotional and educational gaps left by parental absence, demonstrating how faith, when institutionalized through education, can become a sustaining force in the lives of migrant families.

Another FBO contributing to the resilience of migrant families in Indramayu is *Majelis Taklim Parenting Nabawiyah*. This community group was founded by a couple inspired by their neighbor, whose left-behind children were raised by a father with a strong religious background, who displayed less reckless behavior. Observing the strong link between religious upbringing and positive child behavior, they decided to establish a daycare center to provide comprehensive care and protection for young children and toddlers from migrant families. Educating these children requires additional effort due to their distinctive personalities and behavioral challenges, which set them apart from other children. The demanding nature of caregiving has caused many teachers at such childcare centers to resign.

At the same time, mothers working abroad often express concern that their children might develop stronger emotional bonds with daycare teachers than with family members. In response, the daycare center was transformed into an early childhood education institution, *Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini* (PAUD), called PAUD Al Fatih. This PAUD serves both as an educational institution for children of migrant workers and as a training platform for caregivers, mainly grandmothers or aunts. The training, called Parenting Nabawiyah, is held weekly and focuses on implementing Islamic parenting principles modeled on the Prophet Muhammad's approach to raising children. Offered free of charge, the training has significantly enhanced caregivers' parenting skills and improved the overall quality of childcare. One caregiver shared that, as a result of this training, not only did her grandchildren receive proper education, but she also gained valuable knowledge on effective parenting.

In addition to parenting classes, PAUD Al Fatih offers Qur'an reading sessions for caregivers. At the same time, they wait for their children, helping them strengthen their faith and feel more confident in guiding their children's learning at home. The Parenting Nabawiyah program also offers a platform for caregivers to exchange experiences and mutual support. As awareness of its benefits grew, the program expanded beyond families directly enrolled in PAUD Al Fatih to include other caregivers in the surrounding communities. This initiative has brought greater attention to the importance of caring for left-behind children. It demonstrates how faith-based parenting education can reinforce family resilience in the context of migration.

In Taiwan, FBOs also play a crucial role in supporting Indonesian migrant workers, serving as spiritual, social, and emotional anchors for those living far from their families. Among the most active groups are the Keluarga Muslim Indonesia di Taiwan (KMIT), the Muhammadiyah Special Branch in Taiwan (PCIM Taiwan), the Nahdlatul Ulama Special Branch in Taiwan (PCI-NU Taiwan), Human Initiative Taiwan, and Salimah Taiwan. These organizations operate independently yet share a common goal of fostering community cohesion, providing moral guidance, and strengthening the collective identity of Indonesian Muslim migrants.

KMIT primarily functions as a faith-based community hub, organizing *pengajian* (Qur'anic study groups), religious gatherings, and Islamic holiday celebrations, offering spiritual nourishment and a sense of belonging to its members. It also serves as a bridge between migrant workers and the Indonesian Muslim community in Taiwan, facilitating peer support,

distributing charitable donations, and offering emotional comfort to those struggling with isolation or homesickness. Similarly, PCI MU Taiwan and PCI NU Taiwan represent the two largest Islamic mass organizations in Indonesia, extending their religious and educational missions to the Indonesian diaspora. Both branches regularly conduct *pengajian*, leadership training, and dakwah activities tailored to the specific needs of migrant workers. They also assist workers in distress, such as mediation in employer conflicts, guidance on legal rights, and moral support for those facing emotional challenges. These branches serve as transnational extensions of Indonesia's faith-based civil society, helping maintain religious continuity and community solidarity in the host country. Human Initiative Taiwan, as a humanitarian FBO, complements these religious efforts by focusing on social welfare and emergency assistance. It supports migrants through charitable donations, fundraising for those facing illness or job loss, and coordination of relief efforts during crises. Meanwhile, Salimah Taiwan, the women's wing of the *Persaudaraan Muslimah* organization, focuses on empowering female migrant workers through *ta'lim* sessions, health education, and capacity-building activities. It emphasizes women's leadership within the diaspora community and promotes emotional and spiritual well-being among female domestic workers.

Among the FBOs operating in Taiwan, Salimah Taiwan appears to be the most active organization in strengthening the family resilience of Indonesian migrant workers. In collaboration with National Chengchi University (NCCU) and Union Migrant (UNIMIG) Indonesia, Salimah Taiwan has developed a series of training programs to enhance migrant workers' capacity in long-distance parenting. Given the problematic working conditions many migrant workers face, they must devise strategies to balance multiple roles serving as employees abroad while continuing to fulfil their responsibilities as mothers or fathers to their children in Indonesia.

Widyarto & Rifauddin (2020) found that parental migration often weakens the emotional bond between parents and children, creating communication barriers. Children may feel emotionally detached even when daily contact is maintained. Religious routines, such as prayer, become less monitored; an emphasis on academic success often replaces moral education; and a limited understanding of children's personalities can lead to behavioral challenges, including rebellion or withdrawal. Furthermore, many left-behind children experience discomfort living with non-biological caregivers, while their rights are compromised due to parents' limited time and inadequate parenting skills. Ineffective communication further disrupts the quality of long-distance parenting. To address these issues, Salimah Taiwan and its partners initiated practical communication training for Indonesian migrant workers. The program aims to foster stronger parent-child relationships by improving interpersonal and emotional communication. It also integrates Islamic perspectives on parenting, providing participants with guidance on instilling Islamic values in their children despite physical separation. This approach is grounded in the recognition that many migrant workers feel inadequate as parents because they struggle to meet Islamic parenting ideals.

Participants viewed the training as both an educational and emotional intervention, an expression of empathy toward the challenges faced by Indonesian migrant workers in Taiwan. They noted that migrant workers are often treated merely as economic commodities, receiving little attention regarding childcare and family well-being. Through this initiative, Salimah Taiwan and its partners offered not only practical parenting skills and religious education but also renewed motivation and dignity to participants, reinforcing their faith and family resilience.

Collectively, these FBOs function as a transnational social infrastructure of faith, linking Indonesian migrants in Taiwan with their families and religious networks back home. They provide a multidimensional support system that combines spiritual care, social solidarity, and practical assistance, thereby reinforcing both individual and collective resilience. Through regular religious gatherings, training, and mutual aid activities, these organizations foster a sense of community that mitigates the psychological burdens of migration and sustains the moral fabric of Indonesian migrant families across borders.

## **Macro-Level: Institutional and Transnational Collaboration**

At the macro level, the resilience of migrant families is influenced not only by household dynamics and community-based networks but also by the institutional and policy frameworks governing labor migration and family welfare. Indonesia and Taiwan have established several bilateral mechanisms aimed at regulating the recruitment, placement, and protection of Indonesian migrant workers. One key initiative is the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the recruitment, placement, and protection of Indonesian migrant workers, signed in December 2018, which sought to strengthen cooperation and improve the protection of Indonesian migrant workers residing in Taiwan (Andiani & Juned, 2024). Taiwan's Ministry of Labor has also expanded its Direct Hiring Service Center (DHSC) program, which allows employers in Taiwan to directly recruit Indonesian workers in specific sectors, such as caregiving and agriculture, thereby reducing reliance on recruitment agencies and mitigating the risk of exploitation (MOL Taiwan, 2022). Despite these institutional frameworks, migrant workers continue to experience limited labor protections, weak law enforcement, and a lack of policies addressing the welfare of family members left behind (Jerzewski, 2025).

Within this policy landscape, faith-based organizations (FBOs) play an increasingly important complementary role. Operating within the gaps left by formal policy, these organizations provide emotional, moral, and spiritual support and empowerment that extends across borders. FBOs thus act as bridging social infrastructures, translating macro-level policy environments into lived forms of resilience at the meso (community) and micro (household) levels. While macro-level frameworks provide the structural conditions for migration through labor policies, bilateral agreements, and protection schemes, the meso- and micro-level mechanisms, such as FBO-led programs, caregiving systems, and faith transmission, transform those structures into practical resilience strategies for migrant families.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study demonstrates that faith constitutes a critical form of social infrastructure that underpins the resilience of Indonesian migrant families in Indonesia and Taiwan. It shows how FBOs, moral systems, and institutional arrangements collectively sustain families as they navigate the pressures of transnational migration. The findings extend conventional, secular understandings of social infrastructure by illustrating how prayer, dhikr, and scriptural engagement provide emotional equilibrium and moral coherence for migrant workers and their households. Despite variations among parents, children, and caregivers, faith remains an essential coping resource.

At the micro level, children and caregivers who engage in structured faith-based routines such as tafhiz programs and Parenting Nabawiyah training demonstrate stronger emotional regulation and moral development. This indicates that religion is foundational to the affective dimensions of resilience rather than merely supplementary. At the meso level, faith organizations such as REK, Majelis Taklim Parenting Nabawiyah, Salimah Taiwan, and Indonesian Muslim associations (KMIT, PCI Muhammadiyah, PCI NU Taiwan) function as intermediary institutions that connect household practices to broader community support. Their programs transform spiritual values into psychosocial assistance and educational interventions, reinforcing the relational and socially embedded character of resilience. At the macro level, the study highlights how FBOs complement limitations in formal migration governance. Policy frameworks in Indonesia and Taiwan essentially prioritize employment and legal regulation while overlooking the emotional, cultural, and moral implications of family separation. Collaborative initiatives involving Salimah Taiwan, NCCU, and UNIMIG illustrate how bottom-up, faith-rooted interventions expand the scope of care by providing long-distance parenting support, religiously grounded childcare education, and community counselling. These initiatives function as transnational moral infrastructures that reach beyond the capacities of formal institutions.

The policy implications are clear: FBOs should be systematically integrated into transnational social protection frameworks. Collaborative caregiver training, structural support for

community faith programs, and coordinated psychosocial services are necessary complements to existing economic and legal protections. Ultimately, this study shows that migrant family resilience emerges not from isolated factors but from the dynamic interplay between faith, community, and institutional systems. Faith thus operates as a public good, a cross-border moral resource that strengthens familial well-being and reinforces the social fabric within transnational migration contexts.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The LPIPM Universitas Al-Azhar Indonesia supported this research through the 2025 Joint Research Grant. The authors would like to express sincere gratitude for the support.

## REFERENCES

Andiani, D., & Juned, M. (2024). Cooperation Between Indonesia And Taiwan In Supporting The Protection Of Runaway Indonesian Migrant Workers In Taiwan. *Journal of Tourism and Economics Policy*, 4(2), 232–243.

Asmorowati, S., Pitaloka, D., & Wahyuni, R. (2019). Community Parenting: The Caring Of The Migrant Workers' Children In East Java, Indonesia. *Opcion*. <https://medium.com/@arifwicaksanaa/pengertian-use-case-a7e576e1b6bf>

Baig, R. B., & Chang, C. W. (2020). Formal and Informal Social Support Systems for Migrant Domestic Workers. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 64(6), 784–801. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764220910251>

Băltătescu, S., Strózik, T., Soo, K., Kutsar, D., Strózik, D., & Bacter, C. (2023). Subjective Well-being of Children Left Behind by Migrant Parents in Six European Countries. *Child Indicators Research*, 16(5), 1941–1969. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-023-10054-w>

Bank Mandiri. (2024). *Program Mandiri Sahabatku dan Bapak Asuh*.

Bawati, A., Nieuwenhuis, R., Uzunalioglu, M., & Thaning, M. (2025). Family and social resilience: A scoping review of the empirical literature. In *Demographic Research* (Vol. 52, pp. 887–914). Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research. <https://doi.org/10.4054/DemRes.2025.52.27>

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1976). The Experimental Ecology of Education. *Educational Researcher*, 5(19), 5–15. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X005009005>

Bryceson, D. F. (2019). Transnational families negotiating migration and care life cycles across nation-state borders. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 45(16), 3042–3064. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2018.1547017>

Chambon, A., Schröer, W., & Schwepp, C. (2012). *Transnational Social Support* (A. Chambon, W. Schröer, & C. Schwepp, Eds.). Routledge.

Chang, R., Li, C., Qi, H., Zhang, Y., & Zhang, J. (2022). Birth and Health Outcomes of Children Migrating With Parents: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. In *Frontiers in Pediatrics* (Vol. 10). Frontiers Media S.A. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fped.2022.810150>

Dhuafa, D. (2024). *Annual Report 2024*.

Dudin, A., & Munawaroh. (2020). Sistem Pengasuhan Santri Pada Pesantren Darul Muttaqin Parung Bogor. *Jurnal PENAMAS*, 33(1), 153–174.

Fauk, N. K., Seran, A. L., Aylward, P., Mwanri, L., & Ward, P. R. (2024). Parental Migration and the Social and Mental Well-Being Challenges among Indonesian Left-Behind Children: A Qualitative Study. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 21(6). <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph21060793>

Fauk, N. K., Seran, A. L., & Ward, P. R. (2025). The Impacts of Parental Migration on the Mental and Physical Health, Daily Needs, and Social Lives of Indonesian Caregivers of Left-Behind Children: A Qualitative Study. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 22(8). <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph22081307>

Geneva, I. (2024). *Global Appeal 2024*. [www.iom.int](http://www.iom.int)

Gusman, Y. (2024). The Endeavour of Indonesian Female Migrant Workers in Taiwan in Building Family Resilience. *Journal of Social Development Studies*, 5(1), 16–30. <https://doi.org/10.22146/jsds.11361>

Jerzewski, M. (2025, October). Taken For Granted: Taiwan's Flagship Foreign Policy Neglects Labor Issues. *New Bloom Mag*. <https://newbloommag.net/2025/05/10/nsp-labor-issues/>

Kaukinen, C. (2002). The help-seeking of women violent crime victims: Findings from the Canadian violence against women survey. *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, 22(7–8), 5–44. <https://doi.org/10.1108/01443330210790085/FULL/XML>

KPAI. (2016). *11,2 Juta Anak Telantar Di Kampung Karena Ibunya Bekerja Di Luar Negeri*. <https://www.kpai.go.id/publikasi/asrorun-niam-sholeh-112-juta-anak-telantar-di-kampung-karena-ibunya-bekerja-di-luar-negeri>

Lam, T., & Yeoh, B. S. A. (2019). Parental migration and disruptions in everyday life: reactions of left-behind children in Southeast Asia. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 45(16), 3085–3104. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2018.1547022>

Lee, Y. Joo. (2024). Welcoming Strangers: Protestant Churches' Involvement in Refugee Resettlement in the United States. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 63(2), 388–405. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jssr.12900>

Mindarti, L., & Nabil, P. (2019). *Pemberdayaan Mantan Pekerja Migran Indonesia Melalui Program Desmigratif*. 5–10.

MOL Taiwan. (2022). *Ministry of Labor, Republic of China (Taiwan)* - 勞動部全球資訊網英文網. Ministry of Labor, Republic of China (Taiwan). <https://english.mol.gov.tw/>

Schäfer, S. K., Supke, M., Kausmann, C., Schaubruch, L. M., Lieb, K., & Cohrdes, C. (2024). A systematic review of individual, social, and societal resilience factors in response to societal challenges and crises. *Communications Psychology*, 2(1). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s44271-024-00138-w>

Storr, V. H., Lofthouse, J. K., & Storr, N. M. (2025). Calling on and thanking God: the role of faith and faith communities in disaster recovery. *Disasters*, 49(4). <https://doi.org/10.1111/dis.70003>

Susilo, Khoiruddin, M. A., Pratomo, D. S., & Al Ayyubi, M. S. (2024). Does internal parental migration affect child school participation and work in Indonesia? *Cogent Social Sciences*, 10(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2024.2363037>

Tessa, A., & Gardono Sudjatmiko, I. (2021). Peran Dan Kontestasi Patron Agama Dalam Penguatan Resiliensi Komunitas Rawan Bencana Ganda (Double Disaster) Di Tengah Pandemi Covid-19. *Penamas*, 34(1), 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.31330/penamas.v34i1.492>

Tomaney, J., Blackman, M., Natarajan, L., Panayotopoulos-Tsiros, D., Sutcliffe-Braithwaite, F., & Taylor, M. (2024). Social infrastructure and 'left-behind places.' *Regional Studies*, 58(6), 1237–1250. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00343404.2023.2224828>

UNICEF. (2021). *Protection from violence and exploitation*.

Walsh, F. (2016). Family Resilience: a developmental system framework. *European Journal of Developmental Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.17405/29.2016.1154035>

Widyarto, W. G., & Rifauddin, M. (2020). Problematika Anak Pekerja Migran di Tulungagung dalam Perspektif Bimbingan dan Konseling. *Jurnal Kajian Bimbingan Dan Konseling*, 5(3), 91–103. <https://doi.org/10.17977/um001v5i32020p091>