

**INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL DETERMINANTS OF CAREER  
DESTINATION CHOICE AMONG INDONESIAN STUDENTS IN  
TAIWAN**

By

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# **Internal and External Determinants of Career Destination Choice among Indonesian Students in Taiwan**

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Wenzao Ursuline University 2024

## **Abstract**

This study explores the internal and external determinants influencing the career destination choices of Indonesian students in Taiwan. As Taiwan is growing to become more internationalized, it has become a major destination choice for Indonesian students seeking higher education and career opportunities. Life after graduation brings these students to face a pivotal decision; to stay in Taiwan or to return to Indonesia. Factors that ultimately shape their decision vary, coming from different internal and external things. This research aims to explore and understand the determinants that shape these decisions, particularly focusing on economic, social, and cultural influences. As students navigate economic disparities, social and family expectations, and cultural adjustment, their decision not only impacts their future lives but also leads to broader labor markets and migration trends between the two countries.

By interviewing 10 diverse participants and using a theoretical analysis to understand migration phenomena, this study reveals that while external factors such as Taiwan's high salary, supportive policies, and career prospects attract many individuals, family values, cultural ties, and long-term career considerations often pulls them back to Indonesia. By shedding light on these factors and stories, this study highlights the challenges and opportunities students face, ultimately providing insights for policy makers to help the new generation in their future career path.

**Keywords: Student Migration, Career-decision making, Taiwan-Indonesia Relations**



# 在台灣印尼學生職業選擇的內外部影響因素

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## 摘要

這項研究探討了影響在台灣印尼學生職業選擇的內外部因素。隨著台灣逐漸國際化，台灣已成為印尼學生尋求高等教育和職業發展機會的主要目的地。畢業後的生活讓這些學生面臨關鍵決策：是留在台灣還是回到印尼。影響他們最終決定的因素各有不同，包括內在和外在的多種原因。本研究旨在探索並理解這些決策的影響因素，特別是經濟、社會和文化方面的影響。當學生在經濟差距、社會和家庭期望以及文化適應之間進行選擇時，他們的決策不僅影響他們的未來生活，還對兩國之間的勞動市場和遷移趨勢產生了更廣泛的影響。通過訪談 10 位不同背景的受訪者並運用理論分析來理解遷移現象，這項研究揭示了台灣的高薪、支持性政策和職業前景等外部因素吸引了許多學生，但家庭價值、文化聯繫和長期職業規劃的考量往往使他們回到印尼。通過揭示這些因素和故事，本研究強調了學生面臨的挑戰和機會，最終為政策制定者提供了幫助新一代在未來職業發展道路上的見解。

**關鍵詞：**學生遷徙, 職業決策, 台灣與印尼關係

# INTRODUCTION

## Background

The 21<sup>st</sup> century has seen a major increase in migration from all over the world. People migrate to seek new opportunities for a better life. A better life can be considered by many things, such as better safety, better facilities, better ideologies, and even better education. Therefore, migration can be driven not only by livelihood security search but by higher education or service sector employment <sup>1</sup>. Education-driven migration is important not only for home countries but also for host countries. Students who choose to study abroad are those who seek to find better education in hopes of improving their knowledge and skills and broadening their opportunities for better jobs or careers. International students who have learned new skills may use them to bring about new ideas for host countries. Likewise, international students who do return home may help bring new capabilities to their home country, helping the development of the nation itself. Therefore, International student mobility brings about mutual benefits not only to the individual but also to host and home countries.

Indonesia is one of the fastest-growing developing countries in Asia. To improve their nation, Indonesia understands the importance of education and thrives for better education for its younger generation. Therefore, the government encourages students to broaden their knowledge by stepping into other countries in hopes of future development of skills among Indonesian youth. The Indonesian government has created several scholarship programs such as The Kominfo Scholarship, Indonesia Maju Scholarship (BIM), The Indonesian Education

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<sup>1</sup> Shivali Tukdeo, *India Goes to School* (Springer, 2019).

Scholarship (BPI), and the Lembaga Pengelola Dana Pendidikan Scholarship (LPDP).<sup>2</sup>

Many Indonesian students are interested in pursuing a better education in Taiwan. According to an interview during the Taiwan Higher Education Fair, Yinghue Chen from the Taiwan Education Center (TECSID) said, that every year there are around 7,000 Indonesian students who want to pursue higher education in Taiwan<sup>3</sup>. Therefore, Indonesian students are one of the major communities among international students in Taiwan. In fact, Indonesia is part of the top 5 contributors of international students in Taiwan. However, despite the growing interest of Indonesian students to study abroad, the rate of students coming back to Indonesia is not identical. According to OECD statistics, the rate of Indonesians who attained higher education and emigrated to another country but end up adopting a foreign nationality has gone up to 62%<sup>4</sup>. This is due to many push and pull factors such as career opportunities and even personal considerations about quality of life. This poses an issue to Indonesia as the government needs highly skilled Indonesian youth to come back and bring about contributions for the development of the country. Nevertheless, as Indonesia continues its efforts into development, Indonesian student's perception towards Indonesia may or may not change over time.

Like many countries, Taiwan has been greatly impacted by immigration from other countries. Although Taiwan has seen its ups and downs about migration and its changing foreign policy, Taiwan has now become a popular Asian country for overseas education. As Taiwan faces a rise in aging population and low birth rate, having an increase of migrants in

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<sup>2</sup> Dian Ihsan Tim Redaksi Mahar Prastiwi, "11 Beasiswa dari Pemerintah Indonesia, Kuliah Gratis di Luar Negeri," *Kompas* 2022, <https://www.kompas.com/edu/read/2022/11/29/101800571/11-beasiswa-dari-pemerintah-indonesia-kuliah-gratis-di-luar-negeri?page=all>.

<sup>3</sup> Astrid Faidlatul Habibah, "TEC: 7.000 mahasiswa baru Indonesia berkuliah di Taiwan tiap tahun," *Antara News* 2023, <https://www.antaranews.com/berita/3446289/tec-7000-mahasiswa-baru-indonesia-berkuliah-di-taiwan-tiap-tahun>.

<sup>4</sup> OECD, *A Review of Indonesian Emigrants* (2022). <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/content/publication/48a8a873-en>.

Taiwan may fill in the labor gap that Taiwan requires. Furthermore, as Taiwan tries to become a globally competitive country and increase its internationalization worldwide, attracting not only foreign workers but also foreign students is essential to meet their future aspirations. Taiwan has created foreign-friendly policies such as The New Southbound Talent Development Plan. The Ministry of Education has outlined its goals which include increasing the number of students from ASEAN and South Asian countries by 20% each year and assisting international students from New Southbound countries to work locally after graduation<sup>5</sup>. This policy may help not only attract international students to have increased opportunities for higher education in Taiwan but also increase their career prospects in Taiwan. Currently, Taiwan is continuing to create new policies to increase internalization such as, the 2030 Bilingual Policy. As stated from the National Development council, this policy aims to increase global competitiveness among Taiwanese youth by encouraging them to increase English proficiency and enhance bilingualism in Taiwan<sup>6</sup>. This policy is not only beneficial for Taiwanese people but also beneficial for International students, as it extends networking opportunities for students and cultural integration and communication within the society. However, when considering Taiwan's shifting focus on whether to be more receptive to foreign labor and skills, it remains to be seen if these strategies align with the perspectives of Indonesian students regarding their career mobility prospects in Taiwan or Indonesia.

Indonesian students are increasingly drawn to Taiwan for higher education opportunities, and their decision-making post-graduation is complex and is influenced by push and pull factors from home and host country. These consist of factors such as personal background influence and considerations, economic opportunities, social networks, and also political policy openness. This research aims to delve into these factors that might affect

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<sup>5</sup> Bonnie S Glaser, Scott Kennedy, and Derek Mitchell, *The new southbound policy: Deepening Taiwan's regional integration* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2018).

<sup>6</sup> "National Development Planning ", [https://www.ndc.gov.tw/en/Content\\_List.aspx?n=BF21AB4041BB5255](https://www.ndc.gov.tw/en/Content_List.aspx?n=BF21AB4041BB5255).

decision-making and how that would impact the mobility of Indonesian students. Where key factors Indonesian students in Taiwan consider whether they decide to stay in Taiwan, go back to Indonesia, or pursue elsewhere, is the focus of my research.

### **Motivation**

Deciding whether to stay in the country of study or return to one's home country is one of the significant decisions faced by international students. It is a decision that marks a critical step in their career paths. As the majority of bachelor students are Gen Z and living in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, most of our values about life and how to gain success have evolved to something at odd with parents used to be like. Unlike our parents' generation who prioritized a traditional career path and a simple yet safe and stable work life, Gen Z students prioritize career flexibility, and value gaining new opportunities to increase their experiences. Therefore, personal factors that influence the decision making whether or not to stay in another country or to go home may be different than those of past generations. The development and situation in one's home country and host country have also changed, in which Indonesia is experiencing rapid economic growth and developing immensely, and Taiwan is changing its policies to increase interconnectedness. This means that migration trends may have changed due to these transformations. For instance, Indonesia is experiencing rapid economic growth and substantial development, while Taiwan is adopting policies aimed at increasing global interconnectedness. These transformations may have influenced migration trends and decision-making processes. Therefore, this research aims to examine the factors influencing decision-making among international students in the current era, considering evolving values, global challenges, and new opportunities.

## **Research Purpose**

The purpose of this research is to better understand how different factors influence the decision-making of Indonesian students on career destinations post-graduation. As the types of factors researched are divided into internal and external determinants, this research aims to give a nuanced understanding of decision-making in the contemporary era, not only looking at political and economic determinants, but also personal determinants from background, and experience during study.

## **Research Question**

1. What are the internal and external determinants that influence undergraduate Indonesian student in Taiwan's decision-making of career destination choice post-graduation?
2. How do these determinants shape the decision making of Indonesian students in Taiwan?

## **Contribution**

By understanding internal and external determinants of decision making on career destination choice of Indonesian students in Taiwan, this research contributes an understanding of global migration patterns and adds to previous academic knowledge about international education and cross-cultural studies. Moreover, this research can also be useful for policymakers as it tries to give a reflection on how to retain talent and even on how to increase bilateral cooperation of Taiwan and Indonesia.

## **Limit**

Researching determinants on career decision-making among Indonesians would need a wide scale data for the high number of Indonesian students who are studying abroad in Taiwan and the diversity within Indonesia. Indonesia is one of the biggest countries in the world with a diverse society. Indonesia has many ethnic groups that each offers different culture and different traditions such as the Javanese, the Sundanese, the Batakese, the Chinese Indonesian, and many more. Therefore, this research acknowledges the certain limitation in its scope and representation. The cultural diversity among Indonesian students may result in the varying factors influencing their decision which this research may not entirely encompass. Additionally, the scope of this study is limited by the availability of the participants from various backgrounds which may further restrict the diversity of viewpoints included.

## **Delimit**

As this research acknowledges the diversity that Indonesian students have, efforts have been made to select a diverse sample of Indonesian students in Taiwan in which this interview was conducted on native Indonesian ethnic groups and also Chinese-Indonesian. However, the majority of this participant in this study are Chinese Indonesians, reflecting the demographic trend that they constitute a significant portion of the Indonesian student population in Taiwan. The majority of the participants being Chinese Indonesian may influence the generalizability of the finding to other Indonesian subgroups however, this study seeks to offer insights into the broader patterns affecting career decisions among Indonesian students these days. Moreover, to gain a wide perspective of job decision-making, this research conducted interviews not only on bachelor degree students but also master degree students to capture a broader range of perspectives, as students at different academic

phases may experience different factors influencing their career choices. Additionally, participants were drawn from various cities in Taiwan to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the job market across different regions of the country.



## LITERATURE REVIEW

### 1. Overview of Migration

Migration is the movement of people from one geographical location to another. This includes the movement within the same country or across national boundaries<sup>7</sup>. Migration has been done by humans for centuries and for many reasons, such as to find a better life due to war, or national conflict or to find better opportunities. One of the fast-growing migration trends currently is education-driven migration, which is a movement from one place to another, for education. The phenomenon of students going to a foreign country in pursuit of a high-level education is defined as student mobility.<sup>8</sup> The number of international students in the world has increased tremendously from 1.3 million in 1990 to 5.3 million in 2019.<sup>9</sup> This number will no doubt continue to rise due to the increase of globalization and the high pursuit of quality education. Particularly in Asia, the growth in global higher education enrolment has led to increased pressure on domestic systems, promoting students to seek opportunities abroad.

#### 1.1 Brain circulation

The impact of global student mobility on to host and home country is also seeing a new trend. Traditionally, global student mobility can bring about of impacts to these countries, which is “Brain Drain”. Brain Drain” is a large emigration of individuals with technical skills or knowledge, normally due to conflict, lack of opportunity, political instability, or health risks<sup>10</sup>. International students are one of the important people that can

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<sup>7</sup> George J. Borjas, "Migration, Economics of" (2001).

<sup>8</sup> Per A Nilsson and Nannette Ripmeester, "International student expectations: Career opportunities and employability," *Journal of International Students* 6, no. 2 (2016).

<sup>9</sup> "Global Flow of Tertiary-Level Students," 2021 <https://uis.unesco.org/en/uis-student-flow>.

<sup>10</sup> Mohammad Reza Iravani, "Brain drain problem: A review," *International Journal of Business and Social Science* 2, no. 15 (2011).

create this brain drain due to their choice to emigrate and stay in that foreign country after their studies. Scholars who researched about brain drain specifically in Asia has theorized that there are three interrelated problem- patterns that creates brain drain in Asia which are: (1) vocational attitudes and preferences in the Asian nations, (2) the limitations of domestic Asian opportunity and development, and (3) immigration and educational policies in countries such as the United States which are the principal beneficiaries of the Asian brain drain<sup>11</sup>. However, with evolving globalization, policy changes from countries, and their recognition of the benefits of international students, the phenomena of student mobility does not only bring about the traditional notion of “brain drain” but now “brain circulation”.

“Brain Circulation” gives a more dynamic and multidirectional flow of talent across borders

<sup>12</sup>. Brain circulation can also be defined as “brain gain”. Different than brain drain, "Brain gain" refers to the gain of human capital from trained individuals entering a country.<sup>13</sup>

However, it can also be referred to as the extent to which individuals train abroad and bring those skills back to their home country <sup>14</sup>. Nevertheless, as student mobility increases, research within the effects of student mobility has also evolved. They now involve, not only seeing this type of migration as a phenomenon in which individuals are lost to their home countries permanently but instead engage in a global exchange of human capital.

Countries’ policies play a crucial role in influencing brain drain and brain gain impacts.

When a country has restrictive policies, it creates “brain blocking” <sup>15</sup>, which may lead to that

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<sup>11</sup> Justus M. van der Kroef, "Asia's "Brain Drain": The Causes Are Complex and Not Wholly Economic," *The Journal of Higher Education* 39, 241-253 (1968), URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1979417>.

<sup>12</sup> Rajika Bhandari and Peggy Blumenthal, "Global student mobility and the twenty-first century silk road: National trends and new directions," in *International students and global mobility in higher education: National trends and new directions* (Springer, 2011).

<sup>13</sup> Christian Helmenstein Oded Stark , Alexia Prskawetz "A brain gain with a brain drain," *Economic Letters* 55, 227-234 (1997).

<sup>14</sup> Oded Stark "A brain gain with a brain drain."

<sup>15</sup> Jeffrey L Gower, "As dumb as we wanna be: US H1-B visa policy and the brain blocking of Asian technology professionals," *Rutgers Race & L. Rev.* 12 (2011).

country experiencing a lack of labor talent. Therefore, changing immigration policies to be more open can bring benefits such as addressing shortages of labor with foreign labor, and bring about more foreign talent and skills in that country (brain gain)<sup>16</sup>. This can be done in both home and host countries. For example, the government of Albania had established the “Brain Gain Programme” (BGP) with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in an effort to combat the diaspora of Albanian international students and to encourage Albanians to come back to Albania for work.<sup>17</sup>

## 1.2 Push and Pull Model

Education is an important aspect of people’s lives. Therefore, where we go to seek the education we want is also important. Mazzarol and Geoffrey argue that students decide where to study overseas due *to push and pull factors*. Students are influenced by push factors from their home country, which leads them to try to seek new opportunities due to the lack of opportunities, family pressure, or economic conditions. Furthermore, students are influenced by pull factors from the destination country, due to the benefits they can receive, the quality of education, and bigger career opportunities.<sup>18</sup>

This push and pull model of immigration also prevails in the studies of international student migration upon graduation. In Hazen and Albert's research of the intentions to stay or return among international students in the US, they found that economic and professional factors generally motivate students to stay in the US, while personal and societal factors draw them back to their home countries. The decision-making process of the students are layered, involving both structural factors like job markets, economic opportunities, and political

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<sup>16</sup> Nancy Arthur and Sarah Nunes, "Should I stay or should I go home? Career guidance with international students," in *Handbook of career development: International perspectives* (Springer, 2014).

<sup>17</sup> Lajda Bana, "Brain Circulation, the Phenomenon and Challenges," *European Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies* 2, no. 1 (2016).

<sup>18</sup> Tim Mazzarol and Geoffrey N Soutar, "'Push-pull' factors influencing international student destination choice," *International journal of educational management* 16, no. 2 (2002).

systems and individual factors such as family connections and personal circumstances<sup>19</sup>.

Baruch, Budhwar, and Khatri's research also suggests both structural factors and personal factors significantly influence their decision to stay or return by their push and pull influence. They found that a positive perception of the host country's economy often leads to a desire to stay in the host country. Moreover, students from countries with greater cultural differences from the host country are less likely to stay in the host country.<sup>20</sup>

## 2. Factors of Migration & Career Decision

### 2.1 Economic Theories of International Migration

Many researchers have theorized the impact of economy in the push for migration. One of the first theories of international migration from the perspective of economics is called the neoclassical economics theory. This theory argues that economic factors influence international migration for study or work. This theory posits that individuals migrate to maximize their economic well-being. This theory suggests that migrants are rational actors who take into consideration of the benefits of moving to another country, taking into account the likelihood of finding employment and the potential of higher earnings.<sup>21</sup> Harris and Todaro's research found that people migrate internationally because of wage differences between countries<sup>22</sup>. Therefore, where the labor supply of one country is great but the wage is low, people will migrate to high-wage countries. This theory assumes that migration decisions are primarily driven by economic factors like job opportunities and income prospects. Therefore, many scholars have criticized this theory as it oversimplifies migration

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<sup>19</sup> Helen D Hazen and Heike C Alberts, "Visitors or immigrants? International students in the United States," *Population, Space and Place* 12, no. 3 (2006).

<sup>20</sup> Yehuda Baruch, Pawan S Budhwar, and Naresh Khatri, "Brain drain: Inclination to stay abroad after studies," *Journal of world business* 42, no. 1 (2007).

<sup>21</sup> Douglas S Massey et al., "Theories of international migration: A review and appraisal," *Population and development review* (1993).

<sup>22</sup> John R Harris and Michael P Todaro, "Migration, unemployment and development: a two-sector analysis," *The American economic review* 60, no. 1 (1970).

motivates by neglecting non-economic factors, such as society and political stability in one's country. Thereby, Stark's research argues that migration is a household or family decision aimed at reducing economic risk and improving overall well-being, not just individual outcome. Stark's theory is known as the New Economic of Labour Migration or NELM. By emphasizing the role of households and families in migration decisions, NELM challenges the Neo-classical perspective, offering a more nuanced understanding that integrates socio-economic dynamics beyond wage differentials.<sup>23</sup>

## 2.2 Network Theory of Migration

Different than the neoclassical economic theory of migration, Boyd suggests that migration is not only due to economic reasons but also influenced by personal networks and the role of family. Boyd's research explains that family can provide information about job opportunities, living condition on the host country which can influence the decision. Family's economic situation, the age and sex structure of the family can all influence the propensity and pattern of migration. Having a family or personal network in the host countries can also bring about expectations of that country which influences a person's decision to migrate.<sup>24</sup> In Brooks and Water's research, when looking at the experiences of people from the UK who have studied abroad or thinking about doing so, they found that social networks influence decisions to study abroad by shaping values and providing practical support.<sup>25</sup> Similar to the suggestions of Boyd, Brooks find that family who value traveling or studying abroad can inspire their children to want the same things. The decision to study abroad can also come from support and encouragement from friends and romantic partners.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Oded Stark, "Migration in LDCs: risk, remittances, and the family," *Finance and Development* 28, no. 4 (1991).

<sup>24</sup> Monica Boyd, "Family and personal networks in international migration: Recent developments and new agendas," *International migration review* 23, no. 3 (1989).

<sup>25</sup> Rachel Brooks and Johanna Waters, "Social networks and educational mobility: The experiences of UK students," *Globalisation, Societies and Education* 8, no. 1 (2010).

<sup>26</sup> Brooks and Waters, "Social networks and educational mobility: The experiences of UK students."

### 2.3 Individual Expectations and Lifestyle Motivations of Career Decision

Other than economic or network factors, individual factors such as identity influence career choices for students. Jacquelynne Eccles, an educational psychologist made significant contributions to understanding how personal values and self-identity shape academic motivation and decision-making processes. In her book, “Who am I and What am I going to do with my life?” Eccles developed the “Expectancy-Value Theory”, which explores the role of identity in shaping individual and collective motivations. She found that individual's decisions are influenced by their expectations of success and the value they place on these outcomes<sup>27</sup>. If individuals expect to be successful in these areas they think have valuable outcomes, they are more likely to pursue it. Sociologists Benson and O’reily explored why some people move to different places other than for work. Their research suggests a new form of Internal migration, “lifestyle migration” which believes aspiration and desires are the drive of people to migrate. This is influenced by globalization, increased mobility, and relative wealth. People are more reflective about their life choices and seek alternative lifestyles in different locations. Unlike other types of migration, lifestyle migration focuses on personal lifestyle choices and the relative economic privilege of affluent individuals<sup>28</sup>. Lifestyle migration illustrates how identity and personal values can impact migration and professional choices by emphasizing aspirations and the pursuit of personal fulfilment. It also suggests that people are becoming more conscious of how they match their life choices with their self-concept.

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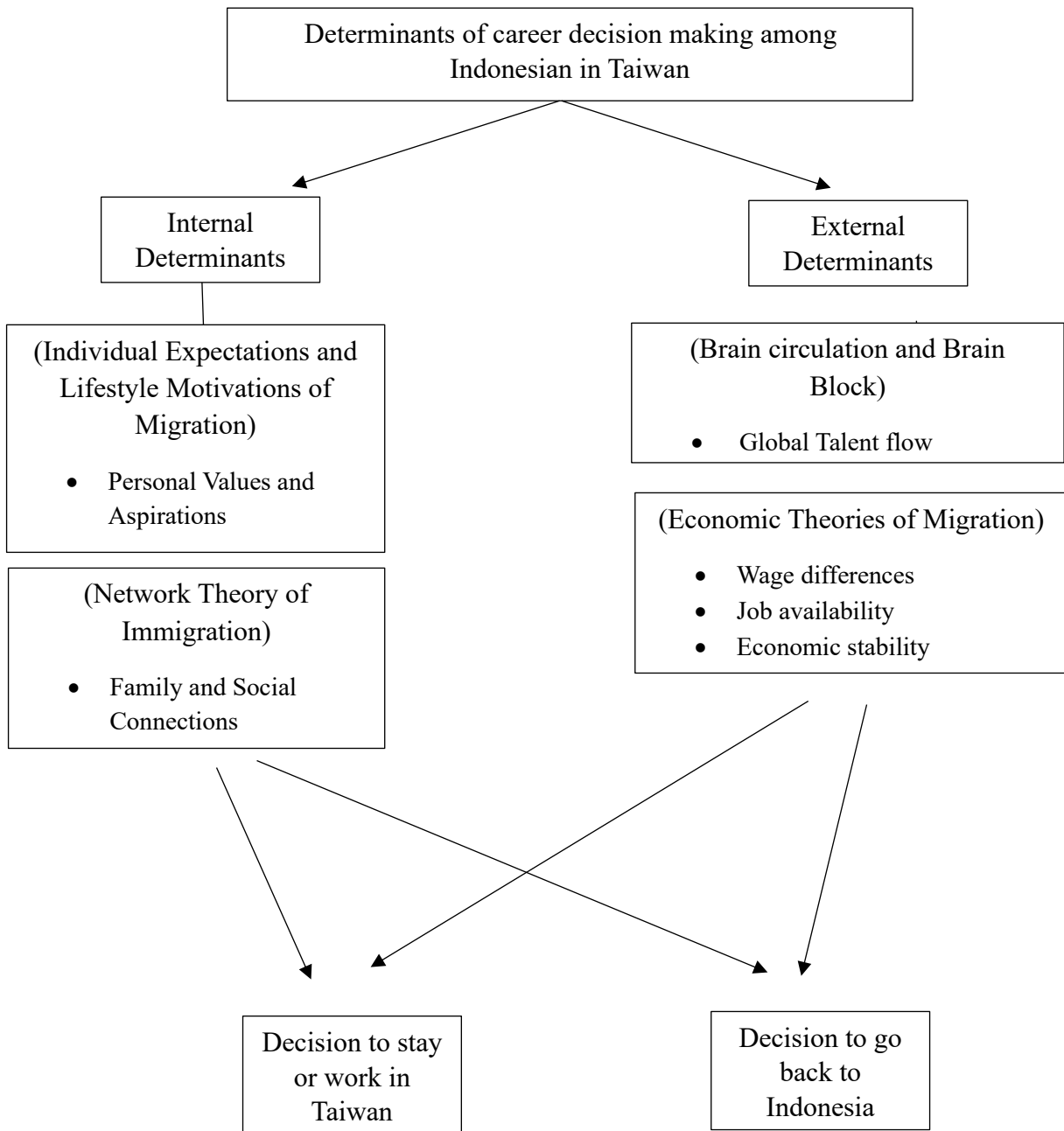
<sup>27</sup> Jacquelynne Eccles, "Who am I and what am I going to do with my life? Personal and collective identities as motivators of action," *Educational psychologist* 44, no. 2 (2009).

<sup>28</sup> Michaela Benson and Karen O'reilly, "Migration and the search for a better way of life: a critical exploration of lifestyle migration," *The sociological review* 57, no. 4 (2009).

## 2.4 Theoretical Framework

Looking at these different theories can provide an understanding of how economic, social, and personal factors may influence migration and career decision. Therefore, this research will use these theories as a framework to investigate which of these factors influence the most on Indonesian students in Taiwan and how the way it influences them. The graph below is the theoretical framework of the researcher's research that compiles the previous literature about migration. The main focus of the research, as shown in the graph is to find the different factors and understand how these factors influence the decision to stay in Taiwan or go back to Indonesia and add into these initial theories.

**Figure 1. Theoretical Framework**





### 3. Indonesian students Educational Migration

#### 3.1 Historical Context

International education migration has been done since the Dutch colonial period in Indonesia in which some elites were able to go to the Netherlands to study. Since the economic growth of Indonesia, education migration in Indonesia has continued to grow internally and internationally. Indonesian families have moved from rural areas to urban areas to not only seek better economic opportunities but also better educational attainment. Between 1960 to 1964, 74% of population movements were still to rural areas and urban migration was still at 26%. However, urban migration rates started to shift massively between 2000 and 2020 in which migration intensity in urban areas in 2010 was “two to three times higher than in rural areas”<sup>29</sup>. These shifts in Indonesia are not only due to the people seeking opportunities, but also due to the push of Indonesian government programs that support migration of the people with national policies that taxed primary production and policies that protected the urban sector through trade and price interventions.

#### 3.2 Contemporary trends of migration in Indonesia

For international migration, low-skilled labor migration of Indonesian continues to be a prominent migration in which a significant number of Indonesians going to non- OECD countries such as Malaysia and Saudi Arabia for work opportunities. High-skilled labor migration is also prominent among Indonesians in which many Indonesians migrate to Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development countries such as the Netherlands, United States, and Australia.<sup>30</sup> However, an emerging trend of Indonesians

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<sup>29</sup>Paul Hasan Thung, and Kartika Sari Juniawaty Center for International Forestry Research, "Patterns, Trends, and Background of Migration," *Missing Links in the Forest - migration nexus* An analysis of trends, literature and data sources (2018).

<sup>30</sup> OECD, *A Review of Indonesian Emigrants*.

seeking education migration in Asian countries such as China, Taiwan, and South Korea is arising. As Indonesia continues to strengthen their economic partnerships and educational ties with other Asian countries, education migration to these countries have grown. Moreover, Asian countries also offer cheaper tuition fees and living cost which pulls Indonesian students in.<sup>31</sup> In addition, Asian countries has increased their international competitiveness, especially in their universities which brings about competitiveness to Western countries. Asian countries such as Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, has started to create new foreign enrolment goals, in which Japan aims to increase their foreign enrolment to 400,000, South Korea aims to get 300,000, and Taiwan to 320,000 by 2030.<sup>32</sup>

Furthermore, the trend of interest among Indonesian students to study abroad has increased. In which Indonesians are not only interested in studying abroad once, but also in continuing their education in foreign countries. Indonesians are starting to be more optimistic in achieving high education. According to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (Kemendikbudristek), the age of students applying for doctoral education scholarships overseas is getting younger. In 2022, the average of students applying is 33 which is about 7 years younger than the average 12 years ago.<sup>33</sup> These interests are due to the government's support for Indonesians to find higher education overseas. Indonesia has created a new goal for Indonesia's development, specifically for their 100-year independence anniversary, to become a Golden Indonesia 2025. To achieve Golden Indonesia by 2025, Indonesia has created 4 visions: 1. Human Development and Mastery of Science and

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<sup>31</sup> Laura E Rumbley, Philip G Altbach, and Liz Reisberg, "Internationalization within the higher education context," *The SAGE handbook of international higher education* 3 (2012).

<sup>32</sup> ICEF monitor, "Southeast Asian students increasingly considering "studying abroad" closer to home," (2024 ). <https://monitor.icef.com/2024/02/southeast-asian-students-increasingly-considering-studying-abroad-closer-to-home/>.

<sup>33</sup> Stephanus Aranditio, "Interest among young Indonesians in continuing their studies abroad is increasing," (Kompas ) 2024 <https://www.kompas.id/baca/english/2024/01/06/en-minat-pelajar-indonesia-melanjutkan-studi-ke-luar-negeri-meningkat>.

Technology, 2. Sustainable Economic Development, 3. Equal Development Strengthening, 5. National Resilience and Governance.<sup>34</sup> To achieve these goals, the Indonesian government wants to increase skills of Indonesian not only by encouraging Indonesians to study abroad but also by providing scholarship for Indonesians to study abroad, such as LPDP, Darmasiswa Scholarship, and IISMA Scholarship.

#### 4.1 Challenges and Opportunities of Migration of Indonesians

Although many Indonesians who have studied or worked abroad are plenty, literature that talks about the growing diaspora and brain drain Indonesia suffers are very limited. Indonesia continues to try to increase their economic development and desperately needs excellent human resources to cope with the industrial revolution 4.0<sup>35</sup> According to BPS Statistics Indonesia, Indonesia has managed to increase their Human Resource Index slightly to 74.39, but there are still come provinces whose human resources index are still relatively medium level, such as Papua, Kalimantan, and Nusa Tenggara Timur.<sup>36</sup> Up to 2015, the estimated size of Indonesian diaspora ranged from between 2.9 to 8 million and will continue to grow.<sup>37</sup> Therefore, the Indonesian government has started to recognize not only the rise in the diaspora but also the potential of it for the development of Indonesia if they were to return. The diaspora's financial contributions through remittances are significant, although they currently contribute only about 1% to Indonesia's GDP. The government aims to increase this contribution, especially considering that remittances from the diaspora amounted to an estimated US\$10.5 billion in 2015. Furthermore, the government realises the importance on

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<sup>34</sup> Andrian W. Finaka, "4 Pilar Visi Indonesi 2045 " (Indonesia Baik, 2020). <https://indonesiabaik.id/infografis/4-pilar-visi-indonesia-2045>.

<sup>35</sup> Ahmad Zafrullah Tayibnapi, Lucia Endang Wuryaningsih, and Radita Gora, "Indonesia's efforts to achieve globally competitive human resources," *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention (IJHSSI)* 7, no. 8 (2018).

<sup>36</sup> , <https://www.bps.go.id/en/pressrelease/2023/11/15/2033/indonesias-human-development-index-in-2023-reached-74-39--an-increase-of-0-62-points--0-84-percent--compared-to-previous-year--73-77--.html>.

<sup>37</sup> Bhandari and Blumenthal, "Global student mobility and the twenty-first century silk road: National trends and new directions."

diaspora's in electoral Influence in which millions of registered overseas Indonesian are lean into supporting secular and progressive candidates. In addition, diaspora can serve as a bridge to promote Indonesian culture and services abroad. Therefore, the government has tried to provide new initiatives such as the "Diaspora Card", which provides special privileges like long-term visas and property ownership rights to Indonesians abroad.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, the government is also considering to allow dual citizenship to increase competitiveness, employment, and foreign investment.<sup>39</sup>

However, even if some Indonesian are willing to come back to Indonesia, many things from their considerations pushes them away from returning to Indonesia. Economy is one of the main reasons. Employment opportunities that offers decent payments are easily achievable, especially for Indonesian migrant workers. This leads them to look for another overseas job opportunities<sup>40</sup>. Moreover, Indonesians who have pursuit international education may find challenges when returning to Indonesia, especially in terms of work expectations. Despite the expectations that international education will lead to better financial prospects, some graduates have faced financial struggles due to being paid with low salary.<sup>41</sup> Therefore, although overseas study and overseas work is increasing among Indonesians, the realities of opportunities in Indonesia has not sufficiently created an environment in that pulls Indonesian diaspora to come back to Indonesia and contribute their skills for the development of Indonesia. Although much literature has talked about the potentials Indonesian diaspora, and international studies have for Indonesia, studies of the reality on how Indonesians can

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<sup>38</sup> Charlotte Setijadi, "Harnessing the potential of the Indonesian diaspora," (2017).

<sup>39</sup> Andi Agus Salim, Rizaldy Anggriawan, and Mohammad Hazyar Arumbinang, "Dilemma of Dual Citizenship Issues in Indonesia: A Legal and Political Perspective," *JILS* 7 (2022).

<sup>40</sup> Ratih Pratiwi Anwar, "Return migration and local development in Indonesia," *현대사회와다문화* 5, no. 2 (2015).

<sup>41</sup> Robert Cannon, "The outcomes of an international education for Indonesian graduates: The third place?," *Higher Education Research & Development* 19, no. 3 (2000).

contribute and experience better situations back in Indonesia, and their overall attitudes towards coming back is still understudied.

Therefore, this research aims to add to the lack of literature regarding Indonesian international student's migration in career choices. Additionally, by looking at the background of migration in Indonesia, this research would like to analyse the reality of how Indonesian student's feel about their opportunities and their life quality expectations in Indonesia and in Taiwan. This can bring about suggestions on how Indonesia may improve their policies to retain talent and decrease the number of potential diaspora in Indonesia.

Studies on International students have primarily concentrated on their decision-making before studying abroad, their adjustment and acculturation during their study. Moreover, research regarding the factors that influence the decision-making of international students' career destination decisions, their level of certainty, and an in-depth understanding of their considerations are limited. Moreover, studies about international students have primarily focused on international students going to western countries such as the US. Therefore, this research aims to add into past literature, by giving a new perspective about Indonesian students going to Taiwan, as a growing Asian country for international student's destination.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research design**

In this study, the research aims to not only find the factors that influence decision-making on career destinations post-graduation. It seeks to understand how these factors shape these views. Therefore, to find a clear understanding, an in-depth interview will be implemented. To create flexibility during the interviews, questions of the interview will be semi-structured. Semi-structured interviews are aimed to create a relaxed environment for the participant also allows for deeper understanding in participant's experience.

### **Data Sources**

Participants for the data collection will be divided into two: (1) Indonesians who are currently pursuing education in Taiwan, and (2) Indonesians who has recently graduated. To gain a diverse perspective, Indonesian students in Taiwan is focused on those who are studying for a bachelor's degree and master's degree. Participants who have graduated are those who have graduated and are in Indonesia and those who have found a job and are working in Taiwan or are using the employment-seeking visa. Indonesians who are pursuing education in Taiwan can help in helping understand how university institutions, experience, influence decision-making. Whereas those who are on job-seeking visas gives a new perspective on the realities of job-seeking in Taiwan and Indonesia post-graduation. Furthermore, those who have landed a job in Taiwan and in Indonesia are important in understanding their experiences of job seeking and decision-making post-graduation. To find and select my participants, I used a mix of convenience sampling and snowball sampling. I started with Indonesian students whom I knew could give sufficient data for my research. To expand my participants, I asked for referrals from initial participants to find other

participants. These methods are done to create diversity within my study population which may bring more diversity in experiences and factors that I aim to find in my research.

### **Data collection**

To gain an understanding of their decision-making and opinions on the current global situation, a face-to-face semi-structured interview was conducted. A semi-structured interview is used to create flexibility in the interview and help gain a deeper understanding of the personal experiences of the interviewees. Data collection was done virtually for the convenience of schedule alignment with the participants, cost, and also convenience of distance, as some participants live far away from Kaohsiung. The interview is done both in English and Indonesian, heeding to the comfort of each interviewee. For analysis, a theory-driven analysis is conducted to understand how the different factors affect the many participants. To add perspective into past theories, each factor is put into subthemes and analysed accordingly. Below is a table of the demographic of the interviewed participants for this study.

**Table 1. Demographic of Interviewed Participants**

No.	Age	Gender	Mandarin proficiency	Educational Background & Major	Scholarship status	Family economic background	Work/ Study Status
1.	23	Male	Intermediate	Bachelor's Degree (Computer Science and Information Engineering)	None	Middle income	Working in Taiwan
2.	26	Female	Intermediate	Master's Degree (Global Human Resource Management)	Yes (Full scholarship)	Middle	Working in Taiwan
3.	22	Female	Advanced	Bachelor's Degree (French)	Yes (Full scholarship)	Middle Upper	Working in Taiwan
4.	23	Male	Intermediate	Bachelor's degree (Culinary arts management)	Yes (half scholarship)	Middle	Working in Indonesia

5.	24	Female	Advanced	Bachelor's degree (English Department)	Yes (full scholarship)	Middle	Working in Indonesia
6.	21	Male	Intermediate	Undergraduate student (Biotechnology agriculture science)	No	Middle	Studying in Taiwan.
7.	24	Female	Beginner	Master's Student (Industrial Engineering)	Yes	Middle	Studying in Taiwan
8.	21	Female	Beginner	Undergraduate student (International Affairs)	Yes (full scholarship)	Middle Upper	Studying in Taiwan
9.	24	Female	Intermediate	Bachelor's Degree (Int. Business Administration)	No	Middle	Working in Taiwan
10.	23	Female	Beginner	Bachelor's Degree (Tourism and Hospitality)	Yes	Middle	Working in Indonesia



## DATA ANALYSIS

### Background of Interviewed Participants

Participants who are working in Taiwan included both male and female participants from different backgrounds. Participant 1 is a Chinese Indonesian male who after graduation works in a web developer company in Taiwan. Participant 2 is a Javanese, female, master's student graduate who previously attained her bachelor's degree in Taiwan, who now is currently working in an Indonesian company in Taiwan and working in marketing. Participant 3 is a Chinese Indonesian female who previously did an exchange program in France but returned to Taiwan after graduation to work as an English teacher. Participant 9 is a Javanese, Muslim woman who recently graduated but is continuing her former part-time job, now working as a full-time employee.

Participants who are working in Indonesia includes both male and female participants who some have come back to Indonesia for 2 years, and some who have just recently went back. Participant 4 is a Chinese Indonesian male who recently came back to Indonesia after spending 1 year in Taiwan post-graduation to help run his family's business. Participant 5 is also a Chinese Indonesian female who after spending 1 year in Taiwan post-graduation, finally went back to Indonesia and works as a Chinese teacher. Participant 10 is a mixed Javanese and Chinese Indonesian female who after spending a few months in Taiwan post-graduation, went back to Indonesia and works in a bank.

Participant who are studying in Taiwan includes diverse participants from different universities and cities. Participant 6 is a Chinese Indonesian, 4<sup>th</sup> year student studying in a university in Chiayi, pursuing biotechnical engineering. Participant 7 is a Javanese master's degree student in Taipei who is pursuing industrial engineering and is currently interning in

an engineering company. Participant 8 is also a Chinese Indonesian female 4<sup>th</sup> year student studying in a university in Kaohsiung, pursuing International Affair studies.

## **Factor Analysis**

To understand the different factors that influenced participants decision making whether or not to stay or return to Indonesia, themes were split into two aspects, internal aspects and external aspects. Internal aspects are factors that influences their decision-making through their individual thinking, values and feelings. In this chapter, internal factors will talk about personal aspirations and motivations, family and social influence, cultural adaptation and cultural comfort. External factors are factors that are external to the participant or situations that influence the participants' ability. External factors in this chapter will look at economic opportunity, labor market trends and employment stability, and migration policies and barriers. This chapter will look at how different factors influence each participant and show the similarities of influence these factors have to the participants from their experiences.

## **INTERNAL FACTORS**

### **Personal Aspirations and Motivations**

Pursuing study in a foreign country is a big decision for many students. It's a leap into the unknown and a step towards reshaping themselves through this new path. For many individuals in this study, personal ambitions became a fuel that drove themselves to search for self-improvement. Taiwan represented an opportunity to grow. Thus, their motivation to study and stay in Taiwan was anchored not only in just academic achievement but self-development.

## 1. Language Skills as a Key Motivation

Learning Mandarin was seen as a valuable tool for self-improvement due to the rapid growth of Chinese influence in the global economy. Individuals were pulled by Taiwan due to the opportunity of learning mandarin which would allow them to grow professionally and compete in global job markets. For example, many individuals expressed their ambitions to use their time in Taiwan to gain a new skill, specifically Chinese.

*“I have a goal which is to be able to be fluent in Chinese. That’s my main goal. Because I think like four years in Taiwan, at least you need to gain something right? You need to gain something. So, one of the most important thing for me is to be able to be very fluent in Chinese. That’s my main goal” – participant 5, working in Indonesia*

*“Yes, I initially thought, “I’ll study and at the same time, learn Mandarin,” since Mandarin is very useful in Indonesia nowadays.” – participant 10, working in Indonesia*

*“I also wanted to learn Mandarin, because other than English, mandarin will be one of the most important language that’s used in the world. So, I feel like learning mandarin will help me in the future” – Participant 8, studying in Taiwan*

*“My motivation to come to Taiwan, to take higher education, first of all is to learn Chinese for the languages”- Participant 6, studying in Taiwan*

This desire to acquire new skills, especially language skills remained to be a defining aspiration for these students even after they have graduated. When asked what were some things that working in Taiwan can offer for her, participant 2 shared how working in Taiwan can give her more time and opportunities to further practice and improve her mandarin skills which brought upon her decision to work in Taiwan.

*“Here, I can practice my Mandarin more, right? It’s like, okay, we learned Mandarin at an intermediate level in school, but the language out there can be different. There are slangs, and the language in books is quite different from daily conversation.” – Participant 2, working in Taiwan*

## 2. Pursuit of Advanced Education

Beyond language, Taiwan was seen as a place where they could experience a different level of education. Many participants saw Taiwan as a country with one of the best educations in Asia, therefore students expected to be able to learn more in Taiwanese universities, heeding to their ambitions of self-improvement; increasing their capabilities and knowledge. For example, participant 1 shared how Taiwan's well-known advancement and education system became the reason he chose Taiwan for further studies.

*“So, what motivated me to continue my studies in Taiwan, first of all, is that Taiwan is an advanced country. Education in Taiwan is ranked among the top in Asia, at least as far as I remember from five years ago.” – participant 1, working in Taiwan*

Notably, some such as those in science or engineering fields, imply their desire not only to use gain new knowledge for themselves, but use this new knowledge for the improvement of Indonesia itself. For example, participant 6 and 7 both viewed Taiwan's education system as more advanced and better equipped for hands on learning compared to what they could find at home in Indonesia.

*“we all know that Taiwan is a developed country. So, I would like to get the science from Taiwan because I'm learning bio-culture and bio-technology. Indonesia agriculture is very traditional, very out dated I think. Especially in Taiwan, Japan or Korea have more like a modern, with the machines or science, they all have good science for that so I think Indonesia has to adapt with the modernization for the agriculture.” – Participant 6, studying in Taiwan*

*“In Taiwan if I see it from the engineering perspective, in here it's more advanced. So, everything in here is like more automation and they use so many things with coding, data science, and so on. And from what I learn in Indonesia, it is like it's really far from that state” – Participant 7, studying in Taiwan*

Both participants continued to share how they have aspirations in using their gained knowledge for the improvement of the Indonesian society.

*“I have like many dreams but I also have the highest dream, but this is like the thing is what I wanted to do like I want to be able to participate in the improvement of our society, something like that. – Participant 7*

*“I would like to get the science from Taiwan because I’m learning bio-culture and bio-technology right? I hope what I learn from Taiwan I can bring back to Indonesia for the agriculture for Indonesia.”- Participant 6.*

Therefore, their time in Taiwan wasn’t merely about academic accomplishment but can also be used to lay groundwork for meaningful change in Indonesia.

### 3. Gaining Work Experience as a Fuel for Financial Ambitions

During their time in Taiwan, having the opportunity to experience working part time fuelled their ambitions for self-improvement in terms of financial stability ambitions and discipline. Indonesian university students are usually told to focus on their academic process rather than work. Taiwan allows students to not only improve educational knowledge, but life skills and work experiences when they are young. Therefore, it was found that many participants felt Taiwan had become a place for them to grow in their mentality and personality, specifically in independence, cultural understanding, and financial independence aspects.

For example, participant 4 mentioned how Taiwan shaped his views about working at a young age. He saw how even though in Indonesia many would be embarrassed about working part time, Taiwan encourages and allows achieving financial dreams for students making students rich or poor want to work.

*“Taiwanese people, there is no big conjunction between the poor and the rich, they are all the same, and for me it’s an inspirational experience, because when I saw my friends in my country having a part time job, they felt like embarrassed, they would be bullied or something. But when you’re in Taiwan, if you don’t have any part-time job, then you will feel guilty, because other people are doing part-time job despite them being rich or poor.” – Participant 4, working in Taiwan*

Participant 5 and 10 additionally mentioned how their time working part time and doing an internship shaped their mental strength due to their own experience of being independent and finding their own income. This then helped themselves in shaping who they are today and their ability to navigate their career path.

*“Because if I went to college in Indonesia not Taiwan, I won’t be able to have the opportunity to work part time. To have my own money, my hard-earned money”- Participant 5, working in Indonesia*

*“I think it shaped me mostly in terms of mental strength. In Taiwan, especially since we’re far from home, we have to do most things by ourselves. When I was in Taiwan, I did an internship, so I experienced working—like real, daily work. That shaped me a lot when I started my new job because I already understood how to behave with others, whether it's my superiors or my peers.” – Participant 10, working in Indonesia*

### **Family and Social influence**

Family was found to be an important aspect in student’s lives as it gives an influence to their career aspirations and their decision, especially through their guidance and support. However, the effects family and social influence gives depends on the values each person has for themselves.

#### **1. Family Guidance and Influence**

As a student, looking at their families and friend’s experiences can shape their mindset of how things are in the world. For example, participant 6 felt the comfortability and understanding of coming to Taiwan due to their family who has also been to Taiwan before.

*“ I think my relatives have more experience in Taiwan. They all went to Taiwan before me right? So, I think I know more about Taiwan” – Participant 6, studying in Taiwan*

Furthermore, family's impact on these student's lives can act as both a guide and at times a constraint. For some, family influence was a quiet reminder of their responsibility and the desire to honor family expectations.

For example, participant 4 whose family ran a business in Indonesia, spoke of the weight of family expectations. Pursuing higher education in Taiwan was a decision due to their parent's desire for him to gain knowledge for the future when he will eventually take over the business.

*“Because from the first time I'm going to Taiwan, it was that influence to take me study abroad in Taiwan, and then when they said that I need to go back to help them, and then it influences my decision making also, because for me personally, I cannot imagine that I could be stay longer in Taiwan.”*  
– Participant 4, working in Indonesia

When asked why he decided to go back home, Participant 4 expressed how his decision to go back to Indonesia was also influenced by his parent's as he was tied to the sense of responsibility that he had to help run the business.

*“Helping to run the business, because they are already old and they need their children to help to run the business”* – Participant 4, working in Indonesia

## 2. Emotional Ties to Family

In addition to the feeling of responsibility, students who put family expectations and family ties as an important personal value to them, are led to the image of the future and would want to be close to their family and go back to their country.

Participant 5 expressed their deep feeling of the importance of families in her personal values which led her to feel strong emotional ties to their family, pulling her to stay and be close for the comfort of it.

*“I think because I'm more like a family person. So sometimes the feeling of longing to be close to my family actually makes me miss them so much, during my time in Taiwan. During that three and a half years when we were*

*not able to go back to Indonesia, I missed them so much.” – Participant 5, working in Indonesia*

Therefore, the pull of home, rooted in family bonds and personal values remained a constant influence in shaping future career decisions to some.

### 3. Independence and Personal Ambitions

However, not all students felt equally tied to family influence. Some participants, while still respecting family advice, felt a need to define and follow their own path independently. Parents nowadays show more support for their children and the children’s own pursuit for their lives. Many students have their own goals for their future and are confident about their wants to achieve greater things on their own. Therefore, family and friends as a factor in their decision-making works sometimes only by the support and advice that they give to the students. Although many parents have certain opinions on things and unease about situations, many of the student’s decision-making was made by themselves. For them, family was a source of support rather than direction and decision making was ultimately done by themselves. For example;

*“Even though I still communicate with my family and often ask for their opinions, I’m the one experiencing reality directly. So, I have to make my own decisions”- Participant 2, working in Taiwan*

*“Because I’ve always been the type of person who, once I set my mind on something, I will definitely do it. I might ask for their opinions, like, “What do you think? Is this a good idea?” But their input won’t necessarily influence my decision 100%; it ultimately depends on me.”*

*- Participant 8, studying in Taiwan.*

Participant 3 expressed how even though she felt close to her family, she did not share the same pull to return home. Instead, she prioritized her personal ambition, feeling the freedom to pursue her career and further study abroad, unfettered by traditional expectations.

*“Most of my friends go back to Indonesia, and one of the biggest reasons is because of their family. But I never really feel that way. I don’t know. I’m*



*not a very family person I'd say. But that's just maybe how I was brought up. I mean I'm close with my family but not as a big family thing" – Participant 3, working in Taiwan*

Therefore, students who priorities their personal ambitions and personal goals as their personal values are often more interested in exploring the world or even staying in Taiwan rather than going back to Indonesia. Students who value their connection with their family motivates them to go home.

### **Cultural Adaptation and Cultural Comfort**

Even though many see cultural experience as an external factor, the cultural experience and participants feeling of cultural comfort are one of the most important internal factor that plays a role in their decision-making. Student's perception towards their cultural experience and the impacts of their long-term career choice varies from each individual.

#### **1. Positive Adaptation to Taiwanese Culture**

Many have taken their cultural adaption to the Taiwanese society very positively, allowing themselves to feel very comfortable and wanting to stay for the future. For some, Taiwanese individualistic culture and balanced approach to life which is different to Indonesia was deeply appreciated. Work ethics in Taiwan was seen very positively among many of the participants, as it is seen to be very balanced and fair, different to Indonesia which is seen as intense. This appreciation for Taiwanese lifestyle and culture made Taiwan to be a place where they could envision a future. For example, Participant 7 expressed her comfortability in living in Taiwan due to their open mindset.

*"In social life, people here tend to think more individually. They don't really worry about others and don't interfere much in other people's affairs. I like that aspect; it's part of why I feel comfortable here because everyone focuses on their own business. They have a much more open mindset and*

*prioritize balance in life. It feels quite different from the culture in Indonesia.” – Participant 7*

## 2. Strong Ties to Indonesian Identity

Still, a positive reaction to the culture that Taiwan has does not necessarily mean that they are interested for a permanent stay but only an openness to staying longer. Even those who have adapted well to Taiwanese culture often remained deeply connected to their Indonesian identity, feeling the familiar pull of home despite their comfort in Taiwan. Those who are working in Indonesia also expressed positive reactions to the culture of Taiwan’s society. They also expressed their disappointment and dislikes of the culture in Indonesia. However, it didn’t create a reluctance for them to go back to Indonesia. Even though many participants enjoyed and liked Taiwanese culture, participants were also used and comfortable in Indonesian culture even though they expressed some problems that they did not agree with.

For example, even though participant 7 previously mentioned positive things about Taiwanese culture, when asked if this positive reaction allured her to stay for the long run, the participant expressed that she is still open to going back to Indonesia.

*“I think the second choice, I think even though in the end I would have to go back to Indonesia or even go to another country, I think I would still be okay.”- Participant 8, studying in Taiwan*

Participant 5 even expressed their concern of the safety in Indonesia due to the conservative culture of Indonesia and it’s difference with Taiwan’s culture that is individualistic and free.

*“in Taiwan it’s more like, you do you. I don’t care what you do, you can just do whatever you want whatever you like. You can just wear however you want or however you like it. But in Indonesia you cannot be like that. I mean like, okay lets say when it comes to clothing. In Taiwan you can just wear shorts and you can just go out. And nothing happened. But i think, that doesn’t apply here. It’s not safe bro. So the culture itself is very different.”*

Even with this concern, when asked if it made her reluctant to go back to Indonesia, the participant was able to still live with the situation, open to re-adapting the conservative culture that the Indonesian society has.

*“I can live with that because i think we are quite privileged enough because we have our own house. We have a roof above our heads, we have our job so we can just go to the mall and you can just go back to your house”-*  
Participant 5, working in Indonesia

### 3. Inability to Fully Integrate

Therefore, despite comfort in Taiwan, individuals with strong link to the Indonesian identity saw their time in Taiwan as a process of cultural adaptation, unable to deny strong cultural identity.

For example, participant 1 expressed how during his time in Taiwan, dealing with cultural differences was just a serious of learning to adapt but difficulties in fully blending in was due to his strong cultural ties with living in Indonesia.

*“I’m still learning. I can’t fully blend in.” – Participant 1, working in Taiwan*

Another participant expressed their inability to fully integrate with the Taiwanese culture due to the undeniable challenge of being a minority in Taiwan. Specifically, this participant was used to being a part of the majority religious population in Indonesia; Islam but felt like a minority in Taiwan and unable to practice her faith like she usually does in Taiwan. This led to the feeling of some discomfort, specifically in social and religious practices which she felt to be freer in Indonesia than in Taiwan. This leads her to view Taiwan as a chapter in a life, not a permanent home.

*“it took a lot of time and effort for me to become familiar with their culture. And this is one of the factors that makes me not want to live there forever. No matter how good the facilities in Taiwan are or how high the salary I can get there, I can never feel the same comfort I have in Indonesia.*

*Personally, in terms of comfort, especially in practicing my religion and social life, it's different. In Indonesia, I'm not a minority; here, people don't really care about each other, but there's still that feeling of, "Oh, I'm a minority here, I can't do this," you know?"*

- Participant 9, working in Taiwan

## **EXTERNAL DETERMINANTS**

### **Salary**

The aspiration for financial stability was a prevalent thread running through the decision making of many participants. The majority of the participants, including both the participants who have come back to Indonesia and those who are still in Taiwan agreed that Taiwan offers a wealth of economic opportunities.

#### **1. Higher-Earning Potential in Taiwan**

The majority expressed that there are better economic opportunities in Taiwan than in Indonesia in terms of jobs and appealing salaries. For example, Participant 8 noted how even when they working part-time, they were still able to make a decent amount for themselves, a factor that stood in contrast to the earning potentials of Indonesia.

*"I've heard many long-term residents say, "For now, I want to work here because the pay is high," and I feel the same way. Even part-time jobs here pay more than full-time jobs in Indonesia!"* – Participant 8, studying in Taiwan

#### **2. A Path to Future Financial Goals**

High salary in Taiwan not only enables them to have financial stability, but also allows them to achieve greater stability and save money for themselves. It also opened doors to future goals for many individuals, such as saving for a future business venture or future studies. therefore, many saw Taiwan as a place that is not only good to find money for saving up, but can also be used as a pit stop where they can save up in a shorter amount of time.

Making them able to have more financial freedom faster and have more opportunities in the future.

For example, participant 3 shared how she chose to stay in Taiwan to save up for her plans on pursuing further education in Europe. The participant expressed how due to the high wage Taiwan jobs have to offer, it makes it easier for her to save up in the long run whereas Indonesian jobs won't pay as much and saving up would take longer time.

*“I want to save up for masters and it's in Europe, which is I don't know twice triple times much more expensive than in Asia, so I will save better money and faster as well and like time length, if I stay in Taiwan”-*

Participant 3

Participant 2 similarly shared how her reason to stay and work in Taiwan was because of her aspirations in helping her family's economic situation and also save up for her future plans fast, which she felt she would not be able to do if she were to receive Indonesian salary.

*“It's probably because I want to help the economy at home and also save for my future. That's the first reason, to help my family's economy and to save for myself. Because if I compare it to Indonesia, I can help my family's economy there, but it would take a long time. In Taiwan, it's like I can shortcut that time” – Participant 2*

### 3. Fair and Reliable Wage Structure

Not only is salary in Taiwan deemed high, but it is seen as fair. Participants who have worked part time in Taiwan or are working in Taiwan feels that the salary in Taiwan are fair and are enough to cover basic living expenses whereas in Indonesia that isn't always the case. Therefore, fair salary and fair policies in overtime pay in Taiwan assures participants of a better quality of life for them.

For example, when asked what economic factors pushed their decision to stay and work in Taiwan both participant 1 and 2, who are working in Taiwan, expressed how salary

and fair policies in Taiwan became a determinant that assured their ability to be able to have a secure financial situation for themselves.

*“the minimum wage here is higher. Also, their bonuses and other benefits are clearer. Even the leave policies are well organized. And when they say the minimum wage is a certain amount, it’s not going to be below that. And that applies all across Taiwan. So, it’s fair. They’re fair. Even for overtime, they have their own calculations, and everything is fair.” -Participant 1, working in Taiwan*

*“one of the economic factors is indeed salary. The minimum wage here is higher compared to Indonesia, but, again, the cost of living here is also higher than in Indonesia. However, what I appreciate about Taiwan is that, from an HR perspective, the minimum wage here at least covers basic necessities. So, even if we earn the minimum wage, we can still live, eat three meals a day, and have a place to stay, like in a dorm. That’s a significant factor that influences why I choose to stay here.” – Participant 2, working in Taiwan*

Overall, salary in Taiwan is not only perceived as high paying, but also fair. This gives them the opportunity to save up faster for future plans and also to have financial stability. Participants who are looking to make high wages whether that is only for financial stability or for future savings, are influenced majorly by salary which often leads them to want to stay in Taiwan.

### **Job Opportunities & Labor Market**

The opinions of participants about job opportunities was found to be a bit varied, revealing both perceived advantages and notable challenges. Some saw Taiwan as a land of opportunity, while others encountered barriers that made employment a challenge.

#### **1. Job Market in Taiwan and in Indonesia**

For some, Taiwan seemed to be a land of opportunities because of how Taiwan seemed to offer greater accessibility to jobs than Indonesia. For example, participant 1 voiced his opinion how it is easy for Indonesians to find jobs in Taiwan due to the advantage Indonesian students have, such as them being a Taiwan graduate, and also being a Southeast

Asian with other language capabilities which increases their value. Companies with ties to Southeast Asia found value in hiring Indonesians which gave these students a unique advantage.

*“Indonesians in Taiwan actually have broader job opportunities compared to other countries. Why? Because we speak Indonesian, and for many Taiwanese companies, that’s an important asset. Some companies have large Southeast Asian customer bases, so they need people who can speak English and regional languages like Indonesian.”* – Participant 1, working in Taiwan

Taiwan’s job market was also appreciated for its openness. Many participants expressed how Taiwanese companies are open to many job seekers and are willing to accept a range of qualifications as long as the candidate has the necessary skills. In contrast, Indonesian companies tend to want more from job seekers such as requiring more qualifications and work experience even for entry-level positions.

*“Maybe in Taiwan, as long as you have the skills, it’s easier to get in. In Indonesia, it’s like you need this, that, and the other thing. The requirements are usually more. You need a bachelor’s degree and all sorts of things”* – Participant 1, working in Taiwan

*“The reason I say it’s tougher in Indonesia is because of the high competition, especially in Jakarta and Tangerang. To get higher salaries, the qualifications required can be quite extensive. Plus, many candidates have internship experience starting from their third year in college, making it harder for fresh graduates to find jobs. They often want at least one year of work experience.”* – Participant 10, working in Indonesia

When asked how she would compare the job market in Indonesia and Taiwan, Participant 9 expressed how there are bigger opportunities in Taiwan. She shared about how even master students can experience struggles in finding a job in Indonesia. This makes students feel less confident in their ability to get a job in Indonesia even though they have bachelor’s degree.

*“Because in Indonesia now, there are already too many graduates. Even now, we see the reality where someone with a master’s degree still has difficulty finding a job. There are just too many people looking for jobs, while job vacancies are getting fewer, and the qualifications are getting higher. In Taiwan, as long as you have a degree from Taiwan and have a bit of Chinese ability, you can still enter a company there.”* – Participant 9, working in Taiwan

This means that higher competition in the job market can make students feel uncertain about their ability to land a job and the prospects back home, making them more reluctant to go back

## 2. Challenges and Barriers

Nevertheless, despite the perception of Taiwan as a country with many job opportunities, many participants expressed that there are still many barriers to securing employment in Taiwan.

For example, looking at the experiences of the people around her, participant 7 found how many international students struggle to find a job in Taiwan despite the assumed greater opportunities in Taiwan.

*“From my friend’s experience, for international students, I think there is opportunity here, but it’s also not as easy as that, because there also so many Indonesian students that spend a very long time to looking for the job vacancy, but they still didn’t get any call, so they decided to go back to Indonesia and just work there. But from my senior there are also so many of them that got accepted in here and then now they’re working in here”* – Participant 7, studying in Taiwan

### 2.1 Language Barrier

One of the major barriers in getting a job in Taiwan is the language ability of the participant. Participant 5 noted how through her friend’s experience, she saw that individuals lacking Chinese fluency skills would find it hard to find a job in Taiwan.

*“I do think that sometimes it’s kind of hard for students who just graduated from college Taiwan but they’re not fluent enough in Chinese, to look for a*



*job in Taiwan. I think it's kind of hard because I heard from some of my friends that it's not easy to get a company that's really hard on foreigners.”*  
– Participant 5, working in Indonesia

Participant 3 added how for foreigners finding a job in Taiwan, those who have an intermediate level Chinese and would have a higher chance in getting a job in Taiwan.

*“So at least for some foreigners, It's either you really know someone working from the inside or your Chinese is very good.”* – Participant 3, working in Taiwan

## 2.2 Visa and Work Contracts

Visa policies and work contract structure added another layer of complexity for students to work in Taiwan. Many felt reluctance in getting a job in Taiwan due to visa constraints and company regulation that limit their mobility. For example, many participants expressed how work contracts in Taiwan are too long which made them reluctant to apply to jobs in Taiwan. A long duration makes participants feel like they are being tied for too long and limits their opportunity for other work in the job market. Other than that, Taiwan has strict rules and duration for foreigners who wants to move to another job due to their ties with the work visas. Therefore, strict work visas and long contracts in Taiwan limits their mobility and flexibility in the job market, making them feel tied to a particular employer.

*“In Taiwan, there are contracts, and from what I heard from Taiwanese people, the minimum contract is two years. I was worried that if I started working there, I might not enjoy it or feel comfortable. So, I decided to just keep thinking about it and didn't apply anywhere”* – Participant 10, working in Indonesia

*“if you're working in the company and then your visa is under that company. So that's means like you relay yourself on that company. And if you like resign from that company, that means your visa is gone. So it's like what the hell is that?”*- Participant 7, studying in Taiwan

*“I think because I already had in mind that I wanted to go back to Indonesia. So, I think if I applied to any company in Taiwan, I am afraid that they need me to sign the contract for two years which I don't want that.”* – Participant 5, Working in Indonesia

*“We want to jump around and gain experiences, which makes it difficult. I’m not sure if this is the case for all companies in Taiwan, but in Hoki, we have a two-year contract, and if we want to leave before the two years, we get penalized. So, we have to stay there. That’s what makes people hesitate about working in Taiwan, because the contracts are too long”- Participant 9, working in Taiwan*

### 2.3 Sector Limitations

Additionally, many participants noted the difficulty in breaking into certain sectors.

For example, participant 1 expressed how Indonesians have limited fields that they can work into, as the majority of Indonesians who work in Taiwan often goes to the translation field.

*“Also, in Taiwan, for Indonesian workers, it’s mostly in translation jobs. In Indonesia, the fields are more varied. But it’s not impossible to find work in other sectors here; it’s just rare.” – Participant 1, working in Taiwan*

Another example, participant 3 expressed her struggles in breaking into the English teaching sector due to visa restrictions and her status as a non-native speaker even though she was more than qualified for the job.

*“As a foreigner it’s very hard for you to work in Taiwan if your company doesn’t know or doesn’t want to make your work visa. Because it’s what I’ve been through. And in another aspect, as a teacher, it’s stated at the government website for you to work as a full-time teacher in either kindergarten or cram school, you need to have a passport issued by a native speaking country. Well, I’m sorry to say, what do you want to? scale someone’s teaching ability by how fluent they speak English, like come on. You gotta be kidding me right? Not everyone can be a teacher. Like you’re not even giving people like us a chance.” – Participant 3, working in Taiwan*

Despite that, participants who are studying fields in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) or fields in applied sciences and technology are found to be more positive about their career prospects. They see not only a broader and open job opportunity for them in Taiwan, but also see Taiwan’s job opportunities in those fields as more advanced than Indonesia.

For example, Participant 5 expressed how she was given an internship opportunity and was later also given a contract to work in Taiwan after her graduation. Additionally, her

internship opportunity sprouted her vision in her future career path, making her plans to stay in Taiwan after graduation.

*“As an industrial engineering, we are able to have career in many fields. For the example, it is like we are more flexible what we are going to do in our works. But I got an internship in summer in one of the company in Hsinchu and then at that time I was in the research and development department and I think like during my internship, what I did was just like doing coding and so on, so I think that’s going to be one of the my career path, just working with that kind of environment and in research and development and so on, maybe that. My immediate plan is like I will working in here 2 years, because I already got like the pre-offer from the company, so I will like working there and then whether I would continue it or not it’s still in the future” – Participant 7, studying in Taiwan*

### **Future Job Stability**

#### **1. Financial Stability in Taiwan**

While the job opportunities in Taiwan are often seen as larger and more stable, the long-term career progression remains uncertain for some participants. Participants who value financial security sees Taiwan’s wage structure as very fair, creating a more stable environment for saving and planning the future, making Taiwan as a better option and stable environment for their long-term financial security.

For example, Participant 1 expressed how Taiwan can offer long-term financial stability due to the fair wage that increases every year.

*“Every year, the wage increases. So, for long-term stability, Taiwan is definitely more stable.” – Participant 1, working in Taiwan*

Participant 8 saw Taiwan as a place that could offer better long-term stability due from looking at the experiences of Indonesian’s who became long-term residents in Taiwan.

*“I think working in Taiwan offers better long-term security. I’ve heard many long-term residents say, “For now, I want to work here because the pay is high,” and I feel the same way. I should be able to earn enough to meet my*

*living expenses, and in the long run, it should still be okay. Plus, if I get married, my husband will definitely be working too, which will add to our income. I also feel there are opportunities for promotions and advancements in my workplace,”- Participant 8, studying in Taiwan*

## 2. Career Advancement & Entrepreneurial Opportunities in Indonesia

However, other viewed stability differently, focusing instead on opportunities for career progression and advancement such as though promotions and being a permanent staff in that company. Therefore, many participants especially those who work in Indonesia, see Indonesian jobs as a job that although does not provide wage that is as big as Taiwan, but could give you more opportunities for future promotion and a long-term career due to their privilege of being an Indonesian.

*“The main reason I choose Indonesia is that the chances for advancement are much quicker. But that’s not true for all companies. I consider myself lucky to get into a company where my superiors say that if I perform well and stay, my career will progress quickly. That means my salary will increase too. In Taiwan, if you’re assigned a specific role, you often stick to it and don’t get much opportunity to learn something new. It’s tough to explore different areas.”- Participant 10, working in Indonesia*

*“From what I know in Indonesia, if your goal in working is to seek stability rather than quick career development—which I want to emphasize as quick, not slow—then it’s better in Indonesia. Because in Indonesia, I don’t know, maybe the culture is still the same, but people tend to work at a place for many years, sometimes even over a decade. That shows that the people working there aren’t competing to move up the ladder; instead, the competition is more about how I can live long-term, stable for the long run.” – Participant 2, working in Taiwan*

Some participants even had entrepreneurial aspiration, finding Indonesia to be a place more fit as a landscape to more accommodating for building a business. Participant 4 noted that he wanted to continue building a business in Indonesia so he chose to stay in Indonesia because building a business in Indonesia can offer more than a stable wage from average Taiwanese companies.

*“If we already have a growing business, then rather than working in Taiwan—maybe just part-time or full-time—we still get a stable wage if we work in Taiwan. But if we go back to Indonesia, it will probably be tougher,*

*and the salary might be lower. However, the opportunity to skill up will be higher, and hopefully, the salary in Taiwan won't compare to what we can achieve by building our own business in Indonesia.”- Participant 4, Working in Indonesia*

Therefore, participants' decisions in future jobs look at how the opportunities can match their personal economic aspirations. An ample job opportunities and big job market like in Taiwan encourages them to find a job there whereas competitive job markets with high requirements like in Indonesia make students question their prospects. However, challenges and barriers in language or employment contracts can deter some from viewing Taiwan as an option for future career. Furthermore, each participant's view on future job stability can influence their career choice such as how some participants look at Indonesia as having a higher potential for quicker advancement and entrepreneurial growth despite not getting the same wage as you would get in Taiwan.

### **Migration Policies and Barriers**

Taiwan's immigration policies are seen to be very open to foreigners, aligning with Taiwan's own goals to be more internationalized, and has made it an attractive destination. Many participants agree that Taiwan brings about many opportunities especially for students to study in Taiwan.

#### **1. Benefits for International Students**

A major factor is that Taiwan's government and Taiwanese universities provide many scholarship programs for international students which attracts many students to want to seek higher education here. Scholarships give opportunities for many different international students to come to Taiwan to not only have a change for learning abroad but also to help financial situations at home. When participants were asked as to why they studied in Taiwan, many said that it was due to scholarship opportunities, for example;

*“Well to be very bland with all of you it’s going to be the scholarship. That would be the biggest motivation, because I’ve known about this scholarship program ever since I was in Junior high, and it was ever since that I was in the 9th grade.”- Participant 3, working in Taiwan*

*“I really had no plans to study in Taiwan beforehand, not at all. At that time, I was studying at Santa Ursula in Serviam, and the scholarship to Taiwan from Ursula wasn't widely known in my school. Coincidentally, my dad also taught at Santa Theresia, and he already knew about this scholarship. So, my dad offered it to me, asking if I wanted to give it a try. So, my initial motivation was really just to try it out” – Participant 2, working in Taiwan*

*“So, first of all, since middle school, I was motivated to come to Taiwan because there was a scholarship that could help with my family's finances and economy. The scholarship offered by Wenzao, as they said, would cover 100% of the costs for housing, food, and also education. So, I felt that this opportunity would be great because I had the chance to study abroad while also easing my family's financial burden.” – Participant 8*

Beyond scholarships, Taiwan has provided other benefits for International students such as a sufficient time to find jobs in Taiwan with their job-seeking ARC. These job-seeking ARC, which allows students to remain in Taiwan for a period of up to two years while looking for work are perceived to be beneficial for students which pushes students to want to stay and at least try to find a job in Taiwan. For example; when asked if the job seeking ARC given by the Taiwanese government is sufficient, many said 2 years is sufficient and reasonable. Participant 2 added how she accepts this duration, especially when looking at the views of the policy makers.

*“I think it’s definitely enough. From my perspective, I’ll give you two viewpoints. From the perspective of the policy maker, one to two years is enough. Because if it’s more than two years, that wouldn’t be good for the country either. It’s like having someone homeless, someone who’s alone, living in my country—don’t let it go on for too long. Because maybe they were previously on a student scholarship, and they have their own privileges. If they stay too long here with the privileges they have as job seekers, it would just waste the country’s resources, from my perspective. But from my perspective as a job seeker, two years is fine. I wouldn’t say it’s enough, but it’s okay. Two years is acceptable; maybe one year would be a bit too fast, but I think two years is ideal.” – Participant 2, working in Taiwan*

*“I feel like they provide a lot of security and convenience. The proof is that now, even after we graduate, we’re given a 2-year opportunity to find a job. It really shows that they are opening up chances for us to find work.”* – Participant 8, working in Taiwan

*“I think it’s more than enough time that they give to us international students when we already graduated and we need to seek a job and maybe if I’m not wrong, They give us 2 year time right? That is a long time for us to seek a job, unless that we don’t have any skill, we don’t have any other special ability to work in Taiwan.”* – Participant 4, working in Indonesia

Therefore, although the job-seeking ARC is temporary, it gave students the peace of mind and security to stay and test the waters in Taiwan’s job market.

## 2. Challenges with Work Visas and Long-Term Employment

Although the Taiwanese government brings about initial support and opportunities for students to be in Taiwan and seek a job in Taiwan, many participants find that this initial support does not necessarily translate into immediately finding a job or securing a permanent employment and residence in Taiwan. When students transition from the job-seeking visa to a work visa, many participants are faced with many challenges of the realities of job market in Taiwan. For example, some participants argue that the process of securing a work visa often depends on the willingness of a company to sponsor the international employee.

*“But the thing is like they wanted to make it easy for foreigner to work here right? But in the reality, I think that’s not that easy. In the reality, there are so many things that is very like complicated to do, and many of them also like I think if I’m not mistaken, if you wanted to get the working visa, you need to like give Chinese proficiency, something like that. So, it is like the policy I think that’s like also one of the things that make it difficult for the foreigner to working here”* – Participant 6, studying in Taiwan

Another example, participant 5 shared about the difficulties in finding employers willing to sponsor her for a long-term work visa or an APRC. This is because securing a work visa often depends on the willingness of the company to sponsor the international employee, making it difficult for foreign workers to secure stable long-term employment.

*“If you’re in Taiwan, as a student, if you work in a factory for example or you’re teaching, you’re making a lot of money. But afterwards, it’s going to be so hard. At least for a foreigner. Because you also have something that’s called the golden ARC, maybe you’ve heard about that? Oh, that is the star card. But It’s very limited. At least for my problem, it either I’m not qualified enough or the company doesn’t want to make the working visa. It’s not fair, you want to make me as your employee but you don’t want to take care of my shit to be your employee?”*

*“As a foreigner it’s very hard for you to work in Taiwan if your company doesn’t know or doesn’t want to make your work visa. Because it’s what I’ve been through.” – Participant 3*

Therefore, sufficient opportunities given by the government to find a job in Taiwan does encourage students to stay and look for jobs in Taiwan, however challenges and barriers in landing the job and the reliance of company to give the work visa brings about difficulties in Indonesians to stay in Taiwan and creates an uncertainty for future career.

### 3. Suggestions for Improvement

Hence, when participants were asked whether they have any ideas on how the Taiwanese government can improve immigration policies for foreigners, the suggestions were mixed. Individuals who are satisfied with the policies did not have any suggestions, for example;

*“It seems like there haven't been any issues so far because I still feel like I'm in a safe and comfortable zone. I haven't had any complaints about the regulations they provide”- Participant 8, studying in Taiwan*

*“None, for now I cannot think any other” – Participant 4, working in Indonesia*

*“uhm, right now I don’t have any thoughts about that.” – Participant 6, studying Taiwan*

However, some individuals did suggest policy ideas that the Taiwanese government could implement to help foreign students. From their suggestions, it was found that although many participants appreciated Taiwan’s government in giving foreigners time for job seeking many participants felt the need for Taiwanese government to create a more inclusive policy or



platform that can help foreigners specifically in finding a job in Taiwan. For example, participant 2 shared her idea that was inspired by The Indonesian Economic and Trade office to Taipei (KDEI) about Taiwan having a platform for foreigners to find jobs that are specifically open to foreign workers.

*“KDEI has a portal where we can upload our CVs, and from the company’s side, they can browse through it. It’s like LinkedIn, but specifically for Indonesian students in Taiwan and Taiwanese companies looking to hire Indonesians. So, on that portal, I can upload my CV, and if a company is browsing and sees a CV that fits their criteria, they’ll contact you there.*

*there is one in Taiwan, if you know 104; that’s a portal too. But it’s more random there because it includes both Taiwanese and foreigners all in one place, and it gets quite spammy, especially from insurance companies. It’s really spammy. When you open your CV, you’ll definitely get calls. I once got 30 calls in a day just offering, ‘Do you want to work in our insurance?’ and I was like, ‘Huh?’ So, it might be better if each consular representative or embassy here has a portal specifically for their citizens who want to work in Taiwan.”* – Participant 2, working in Taiwan

Additionally, some participants added that attaining jobs in Taiwan can still be a bit difficult due to language barriers. Therefore, some participants suggested an increase in English-friendly environment or English-friendly fields for Taiwanese jobs. This improvement would align with Taiwan’s goal to be more internationalized and bilingual.

*“I would say maybe increase the number of job openings for English speakers, but that might not be feasible. However, everyone needs to be proficient in Mandarin. So, I think they should really provide more opportunities for those who can speak English. Especially for Indonesians, even if we say we’re fluent in English, Taiwanese people often don’t believe it. We need to be extremely fluent, and our accent has to be spot on for them to trust that we can actually speak English.”* – Participant 10, working in Indonesia

*“Maybe increase the number of job openings that require English. Because even though some companies require Mandarin, the reason is that most people here aren’t fluent in English. But in the global business world, English is necessary. There are rare cases where is used, but most of the time, it’s English. Especially for Southeast Asians, like Indonesians—most of them don’t speak Mandarin. So, it would be helpful if there were more job openings that only required English.”* - Participant 1, working in Taiwan

Participant 7 and 9 additionally suggested creating more flexibility in language proficiency requirement for visas in Taiwan. This suggestion is made to attract international talents and this will push not only foreigners but locals to create an international and multicultural environment.

*“That’s like maybe you don’t need have the proficiency test for the visa, because it’s very difficult. They don’t even accept the China version of the proficiency test. So, it is like I think they can make adjustment in that part. So that it can be more flexible and it can attract more and more international. But the thing is this is also the thing that I cannot say too, because based on my experience during the internship, this is not everyone in the company can speak English, so that means like if you put that, the government also need to give the environment, so we can work efficiency.”*  
– Participant 7, studying in Taiwan

*“Also, regarding Chinese ability, for foreigners, at least it should be relaxed a bit. It shouldn’t be too strict that you must have Chinese ability or something like that.”* – Participant 9, working in Taiwan

### **Political Atmosphere**

When asked whether or not political situations or political tensions in Indonesia or in Taiwan influences their certainty of settling in that country, the majority of the participants said that it does not influence their decision making. Most participants were not interested in political matters, showing that Indonesia and Taiwan’s political situation and tensions are not viewed as something too serious or threatening. Some even expressed that political situations will always have complications so it is not something they worry too much on.

*“I’m not a political person, I try to stay away from it because I feel like it’s not for me. I’ll probably just blow up some conversations, I don’t care. But the tension between Taiwan and China, it’s not really my Roman Empire, but time to time I do think of it. For Indonesia I don’t think it really changes a lot. There’s a lot of things to rant about in Indonesia. Especially the government is very corrupted and it’s not safe as a country especially if you’re a girl. But the biggest reason I stay in Taiwan is because of the money”* – Participant 3, working in Taiwan

*“For me it’s not affecting my decision making.”*- Participant 4, working in Indonesia

*“Deep down, I don’t really care. Politics is always dynamic, and as international workers or students, we shouldn’t get involved” – Participant 6, studying in Taiwan*

However, for participants who care for politics, they see the tensions between Taiwan and China as a serious tension that affects their long-term future plan. For example, participant 1 expressed how a possible war is threatening due to it possibly causing a problem for the life and career he has already built in Taiwan.

*“Because Taiwan is at risk of war. Imagine if in the future, after we’ve signed contracts and built stable careers, something unexpected happens—then it becomes a hassle. There’s a risk there, so I’ve been thinking about it.” – Participant 1, working in Taiwan*

Another participant, participant 2 expressed how political situations both in Taiwan and in Indonesia concerns her future career planning as she tries to find a place that has the most peace in terms of political situations.

*“So, it’s not just the politics in Taiwan; I also consider the political situation in Indonesia. People who want to live and settle down are definitely looking for peace, right? Especially for the long term. What’s the point of staying in a country that isn’t safe for your mental health and political situation? So, I’m quite politically aware; both of Indonesian and Taiwanese politics, and the political situations in both place”- Participant 2, working in Taiwan*

Therefore, political situations may affect those who are more politically aware and take serious considerations towards political tensions and conflicts a country is in.

## **OPENNESS TO RETURNING TO INDONESIA**

Despite the range of experiences, opportunities, and challenges encountered in Taiwan, the majority of the participants still remain open to the idea of going back home to Indonesia whether that is for future career or future retirement and settlement. This willingness is tied to many different factors such as personal aspirations and values, long term goals, cultural ties, and their own privilege as an Indonesian in Indonesia.

## 1. Cultural and Family Ties

One of the main factors that push Indonesians to stay in Indonesia is due to cultural ties of that Indonesians have with their friends and families. Many participants highly value family ties and although they can seek for many job opportunities in Taiwan, future plans are still tied to the family. For example, when asked about their future plan, participant 1 expressed how plans on starting a family will be better to be done in Indonesia due to cultural ties and personal assets that he already has in Indonesia

*“Most of my family lives in Indonesia, and second, because most of my assets are in Indonesia, so leaving them would be difficult. Also, in terms of the future, like starting a family and such, it’s easier in Indonesia”-*  
Participant 6, studying in Taiwan

Many participants are found to be very comfortable when close to their family. Even if they go abroad, being close to their family is an important value for them. Participant 10, 6 and 2 all expressed the comfort they felt in Indonesia because of their families. Therefore, when choosing their long-term destination for settling down or the destination for retirement, all expressed their desire to go back to Indonesia.

*“It’s more that I feel more comfortable in Indonesia. My family is here. Everything and everyone closest to me is here. Even if I think about going abroad for a master’s degree or work, it would just be temporary. But for good, I would still stay in Indonesia. Even if I go abroad again, it will always be back to Indonesia.”* – Participant 10, working in Indonesia

*“for long term I think I will choose Indonesia. Because all of my family is in Indonesia and like I said, for retirement or future jobs that I will settle down in, maybe in Indonesia.”* - Participant 6, studying in Taiwan

*“I might be missing home too. I’ve been away for too long; at the end of the day, I definitely miss home.”* – Participant 2, working in Taiwan

## 2. National Privileges and Opportunities

Another factor is due to the privilege that Indonesians have as an Indonesian. As many participants have their own personal goals, their privilege as an Indonesian can give them more opportunities to reach their own goals, such as creating a business in the future or owning land.

For example, participant 8 who is open to work in Taiwan in the future shared his future aspirations of going back to Indonesia to build his own business.

*“I want me to be stable at 35. I can go back to Indonesia and start something new again. yeah, making my own business. Yes, in Indo. Because I feel that the opportunity to build a business in Indonesia is still better. Yes, because it's easier for us compared to abroad” -Participant 8, Studying in Taiwan*

## 3. Desire to Contribute to Indonesia’s Development

Furthermore, some participants have aspirations in using their knowledge for the development for Indonesia. For example, participant 7 and 6 expressed their desire to help Indonesia’s development in their sectors.

*“Maybe, so the thing is for now what I wanted to do is just like working and gain more experience in Taiwan, and then when the time is already come, I will like try to do something different, that is more like can help our society and can be able be there like to be present in the society and so on.” – Participant 7, working in Taiwan*

*“I think I will still go back to Indonesia, but when the time, I cannot answer. But I think I will go back to Indonesia, because I have something that I wanted to do in Indonesia. Well maybe what I want to do is like one of the part of being Indonesia emas 2045.” – Participant 7, studying in Taiwan*

*“My motivation to come to Taiwan, to take higher education, first of all is to learn Chinese for the languages, and then maybe because we all know that Taiwan is a developed country. So, I would like to get the science from Taiwan because im learning bio-culture and bio-technology right? I hope what I learn from Taiwan I can bring back to Indonesia for the agriculture for Indonesia” – Participant 6, studying in Taiwan*

## ANALYSIS OF PREVIOUS THEORIES

### 1. Brain Circulation

Brain circulation is a concept that challenges the notion of brain drain where talented individuals permanently leave their home countries for better opportunities abroad. Instead of brain drain, brain circulation highlights the potential for skills to be gained in the host country to fly back to the home country when students return. The experiences of the participants align with the concept of brain circulation in which when talented individuals migrate, they do not permanently leave their home countries for better opportunities. Although most participants came to Taiwan to seek better education and had experienced opportunities outside of Indonesia, the chances of them coming back to Indonesia and using their skills for the development of Indonesia is still very high. For example, participants who study in STEM fields acknowledge the lack of advancement of Indonesian STEM sectors therefore they expressed their interest in using the advancement and new ideas that they've learned from Taiwan for the development of Indonesia's own sector.

*“Maybe I want to help farmers in Indonesia to have the same education and same knowledge as Taiwan. Because there's a lot of farmers that have struggles right? And the prices are low. In Taiwan, farmers are very stable. I want to give a try for Indonesian export and develop the machinery in Indonesia”- Participant 6, studying in Taiwan*

Therefore, Indonesia is experiencing brain circulation rather than a traditional brain drain as students who seek education and opportunities abroad are still motivated to return and even apply their newfound skills to benefit Indonesia.

## 2. Brain Blocking

Moreover, the concept of brain blocking explores how restrictive immigration policies in host countries can prevent international students or foreign talents to remain in the host country even though they wish to contribute to the host country's economy. In the context of Taiwanese policies, we find that Taiwanese policies have been quite open to many international students and foreign workers. Many participants expressed how the Taiwanese government offers many benefits to students studying here through scholarships. Participant 8 pointed out that foreigners were also given many benefits and many rights such as cheap medical insurance.

*“Yeah, even for now, just for health insurance, we pay only that much for medical expenses. In Indonesia, it's already several times more”-*

*Participant 8, studying in Taiwan*

Taiwanese policies also allow and encourage international students to do part-time work during their study. Therefore, students are able to have a good life in Taiwan and become more interested to continue their stay. Although some participants faced challenges due to strict work visa regulations in Taiwan which causes some uncertainty for future and long-term career, many participants expressed satisfaction in the policies that Taiwan has today.

## 3. Economic Theories of Migration

From the perspective of economic theories of international migration, it can be seen that the decision of Indonesian students about their career relies heavily on the evaluation of economic prospects. The neoclassical economics theory argues that people migrate to maximize their well-being by looking at economic prospects like salary. This is reflected by

many participants' experience in which many stayed in Taiwan and are open to Taiwan due to Taiwan's higher salary. Many participants pointed that Taiwanese jobs could give more stability due to their minimum wage being much higher than Indonesia's, for example;

*“One of the economic factors is indeed salary. The minimum wage here is higher compared to Indonesia, but, again, the cost of living here is also higher than in Indonesia. However, what I appreciate about Taiwan is that, from an HR perspective, the minimum wage here at least covers basic necessities”- Participant 2, working in Taiwan*

*“The salary difference is huge. Right now in Indonesia, the minimum wage is only around 5 million rupiah. Here, it's already 14 million NTD. Plus, every year, the wage increases. So, for long-term stability, Taiwan is definitely more stable.” – Participant 1, working in Taiwan*

#### 4. Network Theories of Migration

Moreover, high wage as key to their economic prospects as it is not only seen as something that can give them financial stability, but can also used for future prospects like saving up for later business or future study ambitions. Nevertheless, The New Economics of Labor Migration (NELM) theory by Stark that emphasises the role of family in migration decision in which migration is help family economic situation, is also reflected in some participant's experience however not heavily. Participant 3 expressed how she wanted to work to help her family's economic situation.

*“That's the first reason, to help my family's economy and to save for myself. Because if I compare it to Indonesia, I can help my family's economy there, but it would take a long time.”- Participant 9, working in Taiwan*

Looking at Network theories of Migration, it was shown that personal networks and family does play a role in helping participants navigate through their decision to come to Taiwan, as for example participant 6 expressed how he chose to study in Taiwan due to support from his mom and seeing the experiences of his friends in Taiwan.

*“Well, my mom always pushes me to go to other countries. So, from the start of senior high school, I always looked for other countries to have, to take a degree. So, I also have a lot of friends who went to Taiwan before me*



*right? So, that's why I chose Taiwan as my destination" - Participant 6, studying in Taiwan*

Furthermore, when looking at how friends and personal connections can help navigate participants lives and opportunities, it was found that personal connections was used to secure job opportunities, making them want to stay and able to stay in Taiwan. For example, participant 3 noted how connections have helped her navigate her life in Taiwan through shared information and additionally added that she wouldn't have been able to get her job without referrals from her friends.

*"I think connections are extremely important. Especially since I got my job through connections. It significantly affects my current work. With connections, we can get different information and insights. Connections are really, really important for me, especially. Because even in Hoki, the company I work in, if I didn't have connections, I wouldn't have been able to get in, in my case." – Participant 9, working in Taiwan.*

Although support and experiences from friends and families can bring about expectation and navigations of participants lives, it was also found that this influence of networks seems to vary among individuals. Individuals who emphasize independence can prioritize their own career ambitions and make their own personal decision making and use networks they have only as a support.

## 5. Individual Expectations and Values in Career Development

Therefore, when looking at individual and personal factors as a decision for career making, the emphasis Eccles made on individual expectations and personal values on future decision making align with participant's experiences. For some participants, the desire of experiencing living abroad and achieving personal mile stones like becoming fluent in mandarin, gaining international work experience played a role in their decision to stay in Taiwan. For example, when some participants who are highly interested in working in Taiwan was asked why Taiwanese jobs can offer more than Indonesian jobs other than high salary,

many said due to opportunities of practicing mandarin. Therefore, seeing opportunities for personal growth becomes a motivation for individuals to choose that path.

*“Here, I can practice my Mandarin more, right? It’s like, okay, we learned Mandarin at an intermediate level in school, but the language out there can be different. There are slangs, and the language in books is quite different from daily conversation. Plus, I can build connections with other people, expanding my network and making it more international compared to if I stayed and worked in Indonesia”- Participant 2, working in Taiwan*

Ultimately, taking in these many theories of migration and factors of decision-making, it is found that migration decisions are multifaced and has a complex interplay of many different factors. Therefore, the desire to balance economic opportunities, personal growth, and cultural comfort leads varied outcomes, demonstrating that migration decisions cannot be understood through a single lens but rather through a synthesis of multiple theoretical perspectives.

## CONCLUSION

This study has explored the internal and external factors influencing career choices of Indonesian students in Taiwan, against the backdrop of shifting migration trends in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The decision-making of Indonesian students on whether to stay in Taiwan or return to Indonesia for further career has been revealed to be a multi-layered decision-making process shaped by a combination of internal and external factors such as individual values, familial and cultural connections, and the structural opportunities and constraint of the host country. These determinants emerged by the challenges faced, ambitions, and hopes each individual has for their future.

Internal factors in their decision-making included their personal ambitions and family influence, with personal aspirations intertwined with family expectations and cultural values. During student's journey of attaining higher education in Taiwan, Taiwan became a stepping stone towards broader goals and self-development. Students arrived with ambitions to improve their skills, broaden their world view, and create foundations for their future career. This time abroad fostered a sense of personal investment in Taiwan, leading those who valued personal growth to want to stay longer to explore career opportunities, continuing their personal development in a place that had come to feel comfortable for them. Yet, individuals who valued family in their lives often weighed their career aspirations against the desire to fulfil familial responsibilities back home. Some felt a responsibility to return and manage the family businesses, while others were drawn back due to a deep-seated connection to Indonesia where Taiwan, a country with many memories and comfort could not replace.

The opportunities of the host country and its flexibility is a major external determinant for many students that determines not only their career choices but also their future long-term stability. The economic appeal of Taiwan is undeniable. Students in Taiwan

was able to seek financial stability and savings during their study in Taiwan. With wages in Taiwan surpassing those in Indonesia, students saw Taiwan as an opportunity to secure a better quality of life, save money, and achieve financial independence faster with some seeing Taiwan as a pit stop. Therefore, students who see Taiwan as country that can give more economic opportunities for them would likely stay in Taiwan. Yet this ambition to find a job in Taiwan is tempered by structural challenges such as language. Students with a lack of mandarin proficiency will find difficulty in finding employment in Taiwan. Employment in Taiwan also poses unique hurdles such as strict work-visa conditions and lengthy contract commitments which makes students feel tied to specific employers and limited flexibility to explore other job opportunities. This restrictive nature of Taiwan's work policies can make students feel uncertain of the stability of their career long-term and lose the retention of international talent.

Despite the promises of high wages and job stability, these constraints often push students to rethink their long-term plans, with some choosing Indonesia over Taiwan. Although there is no denying that salary in Taiwan is bigger, some perceives Indonesia as a place that can bring about better career progressions for them and better entrepreneurial prospects. This perception is supported because of pull factors from Indonesia in which national citizens will have greater likelihood of long-term career development through chances of promotions and becoming a permanent staff, broader job prospects, and ease in building entrepreneurial careers. Therefore, those who seek long-term stability and further development in their career opt to return to Indonesia.

Decisions to stay in Taiwan was found not solely based on economic considerations but also fuelled by cultural integration and Taiwanese policies for foreigners. Many felt Taiwan's policies to be open and fair for students, giving them opportunities to work part time and giving benefits to international students such as cheap and efficient healthcare.

Policies and the governing of Taiwan in daily life also offer safety for students which creates comfortability in student's daily life and ease in adapting to Taiwan's society. Nevertheless, even though Taiwanese society was found to be safer and more structured, cultural comfortability of the students towards Indonesia society remained.

Taiwan announces that they aim to be more Internationalized, which aligns with the majority of their perspective in which Taiwanese policies such as the job-seeking visa were perceived as generous and supportive, encouraging them to envision futures in Taiwan. Yet, this support did not translate easily into stable employment as many found themselves, facing barriers when transitioning from student visa to work permits due to the reality of strict work visas and company regulations. This reality has led to some uncertainties and re-evaluation of their options and consider the relative ease and familiarity of returning to Indonesia. Therefore, even though Taiwan has tried to create more policies to increase internalization such as the 2030 Bilingual Policy and the New Southbound policy, foreigners in Taiwan still experience the structural challenges of the reality for them in Taiwan.

Through this study, it becomes clear that further decisions to migrate post-study are shaped by an intricate blend of many factors, not just one. Despite the numerous pull factors Taiwan offers such as financial stability, supportive policies, and opportunities for career growth, Indonesians still remain open to the idea of returning to Indonesia whether that is for future career shift, creating a business, or retirement. This creates a pattern of brain circulation for Indonesia rather than a full-scale diaspora crisis. As they are still in their early stages of their career, in which some have yet to graduate and some have just gotten accepted to the job, many have not expressed a deep desire to settle permanently in Taiwan, instead viewing their time abroad as a temporary chapter in their professional journey.

## **CONTRIBUTION & SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

The career choices these students make are more than individual decisions but also a reflection of the broader patterns of migration and adaptation that underscore the multifaced nature of career aspirations in an increasingly globalized world. This research thus contributes to our understanding of international student migration. Although this study aligned with many aspects of theories on migration, future research is suggested for further studies about student migration theories that delve into socio-economic and personal thinking as a major determinant for further migration theories. As this study focuses on students who are close to graduating and Indonesians who have just stepped into their career path, further studies could explore the long-term career progression of other International graduates in Taiwan, examining how immigration policies impact their decision to stay or leave. Additionally, a comparative analysis between Indonesian students in Taiwan and those in other countries could illuminate how Taiwanese policies shape career aspirations and retention of many foreign graduates which can provide insights for policymakers aiming to retain international talent.

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## **APPENDIX A**

### **Interview Questions**

#### **Interview Guide for participants studying in Taiwan.**

Hello \_\_\_\_\_,

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview. My name is Maria Melvinka, and I am a student in Wenzao University. I am conducting research on the internal and external determinants of career destination choices among Indonesian students in Taiwan.

The purpose of this interview is to understand the various factors that influence your decision-making process regarding your career after graduation. Your insights will be incredibly valuable in helping us understand the experiences and perspectives of Indonesian students studying in Taiwan.

Before we begin, I would like to give you some important details about this interview:

- Your responses and identity will be kept confidential to respect your privacy and protect your identity
- You may skip or withdraw from the interview or interview questions at any time, if you do not feel comfortable.
- This interview will be recorded with your consent. If you agree with being recorded, you may sign this consent form.

Now, let's begin our interview

1. What motivated you to pursue higher education in Taiwan?

**Personal Goals and Aspirations:**

2. How has studying in Taiwan influenced your career aspirations?

**Personal Background Influence:**

3. How have people in your life, such as family or friends influenced your career decision-making process?
4. How has your personal values and priorities influenced your career decision-making process?

**Cultural and Social Adaptation:**

5. What are your opinions towards Taiwanese culture and lifestyle? Do you think it's very different from Indonesia? How?
6. How have you adapted to the Taiwanese culture and lifestyle? Does this cultural adaptation play a role in your decision to stay in Taiwan or not?

**Economic Opportunities:**

7. Which do you find more important? High wage or work-life balance?
8. Based on what you know or have heard, how do you think the job market in Taiwan influences your consideration to stay and work here after graduation, compared to what you expect from the job market in Indonesia?
9. What are your expectations regarding salary and job stability in Taiwan compared to Indonesia, and how do these expectations influence your career decision-making?

**Social Networks:**

10. Have you developed professional connections in Taiwan or in Indonesia that could impact your career choice or enhance your career opportunity?

**Political and Policy Factors:**

11. How do Taiwan's migration policies affect your ability to stay and work here? Do you think the employment seeking visa that the Taiwanese government provides is enough for any international students?

12. Do you have any policy ideas that the Taiwanese government can implement to help international students in job seeking in Taiwan?

13. Do political situations, both in Taiwan or Indonesia influence your decision to stay in Taiwan? How?

**Reflecting on Experiences:**

14. Reflecting on your overall experience, what are the key factors that will most influence your decision to stay in Taiwan, return to Indonesia, or move to another country?

**Future Plans:**

15. As of right now, what are your immediate plans post-graduation?

## **Interview Guide for participants in Indonesia**

Hello \_\_\_\_\_,

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview. My name is Maria Melvinka, and I am a student in Wenzao University. I am conducting research on the internal and external determinants of career destination choices among Indonesian students in Taiwan.

The purpose of this interview is to understand the various factors that influence your decision-making process regarding your career after graduation. Your insights will be incredibly valuable in helping us understand the experiences and perspectives of Indonesian students studying in Taiwan.

Before we begin, I would like to give you some important details about this interview:

1. Your responses and identity will be kept confidential to respect your privacy and protect your identity
2. You may skip or withdraw from the interview or interview questions at any time, if you do not feel comfortable.
3. This interview will be recorded with your consent. If you agree with being recorded, you may sign this consent form.

Before we proceed with the interview, I would like to collect some background information data. This information will only be used for the analysis process, not to share your personal information.

Now, let's begin our interview

1. What motivated you to pursue higher education in Taiwan?

**Decision to Return to Indonesia:**

2. Why did you decide to go back to Indonesia? Did you consider staying in Taiwan or moving to another country?

**Personal Goals and Aspirations:**

3. How has studying in Taiwan influenced your career aspirations and long-term goals?

**Personal Background Influence:**

4. How does people in your life, for example family or friends influence your decision to stay in Indonesia? Were their opinions significant in your decision making?

5. How did your family and friends react to your decision to return to Indonesia? Did their opinions influence your decision?

**Cultural and Social Adaptation:**

6. How have you adapted to the Taiwanese culture and lifestyle? Did this cultural adaptation play a role in your decision to go back to Indonesia or not?

7. What challenges, if any, did you face when reintegrating into Indonesian society after your return? How did you manage?

**Economic Opportunities:**

8. What were the key economic factors that influenced your decision to stay in Taiwan?

9. Based on your experience, how did the job market in Indonesia influence your decision to return and work here, and how does it compare to what you experienced in Taiwan when thinking about your future?

10. How do the salary and long-term job stability you've experienced in Indonesia compare to what you encountered in Taiwan, and how does this comparison influence your decision about your future career path?

**Social Networks:**

11. How important have your social networks (friends, professional connections) been in helping you establish your career? Do you feel more connected in Taiwan or Indonesia?

**Political and Policy Factors:**

12. How do Taiwan's migration policies affect your ability to stay and work here? Do you think the employment seeking visa that the Taiwanese government provides is enough for any international students?

13. Do political situations, both in Taiwan or Indonesia influence your decision to stay in Taiwan? How?

**Future Plans**

14. Do you see yourself potentially moving back to Taiwan or another country in the future? Why or why not?

## **Interview Guide for Participants in Indonesia**

Hello \_\_\_\_\_,

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview. My name is Maria Melvinka, and I am a student in Wenzao University. I am conducting research on the internal and external determinants of career destination choices among Indonesian students in Taiwan.

The purpose of this interview is to understand the various factors that influence your decision-making process regarding your career after graduation. Your insights will be incredibly valuable in helping us understand the experiences and perspectives of Indonesian students studying in Taiwan.

Before we begin, I would like to give you some important details about this interview:

1. Your responses and identity will be kept confidential to respect your privacy and protect your identity
2. You may skip or withdraw from the interview or interview questions at any time, if you do not feel comfortable.
3. This interview will be recorded with your consent. If you agree with being recorded, you may sign this consent form.

Before we proceed with the interview, I would like to collect some background information data. This information will only be used for the analysis process, not to share your personal information.

Now, let's begin our interview

1. What motivated you to pursue higher education in Taiwan?



**Decision to Return to Indonesia:**

2. Why did you decide to go back to Indonesia? Did you consider staying in Taiwan or moving to another country?

**Personal Goals and Aspirations:**

3. How has studying in Taiwan influenced your career aspirations and long-term goals?

**Personal Background Influence:**

4. How does people in your life, for example family or friends influence your decision to stay in Indonesia? Were their opinions significant in your decision making?

5. How did your family and friends react to your decision to return to Indonesia? Did their opinions influence your decision?

**Cultural and Social Adaptation:**

6. How have you adapted to the Taiwanese culture and lifestyle? Did this cultural adaptation play a role in your decision to go back to Indonesia or not?

7. What challenges, if any, did you face when reintegrating into Indonesian society after your return? How did you manage?

**Economic Opportunities:**

8. What were the key economic factors that influenced your decision to stay in Taiwan?

9. Based on your experience, how did the job market in Indonesia influence your decision to return and work here, and how does it compare to what you experienced in Taiwan when thinking about your future?

10. How do the salary and long-term job stability you've experienced in Indonesia compare to what you encountered in Taiwan, and how does this comparison influence your decision about your future career path?

**Social Networks:**

11. How important have your social networks (friends, professional connections) been in helping you establish your career? Do you feel more connected in Taiwan or Indonesia?

**Political and Policy Factors:**

12. How do Taiwan's migration policies affect your ability to stay and work here? Do you think the employment seeking visa that the Taiwanese government provides is enough for any international students?

13. Do political situations, both in Taiwan or Indonesia influence your decision to stay in Taiwan? How?

**Future Plans**

14. Do you see yourself potentially moving back to Taiwan or another country in the future? Why or why not?

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Consent Form**

This is the consent form for the recording process of the interview. To ensure the accuracy of the data and facilitate analysis, this interview will be recorded. This interview will help collect data on your experiences and perspectives as an Indonesian student in Taiwan. The recording will be used exclusively for research and analysis purposes, and your identity will be kept confidential.

By checking this box form, you indicate that you have understood the purpose of this study and agree to participate in the recorded interview.

I hereby give my consent for the recording of the online interview for research analysis purposes.