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# Employment and Education Barriers: Examining the Socioeconomic Impact of Restricted Rights for Refugees and Migrants in Malaysia

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### ABSTRACT

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In recent years, migration and refugee issues have emerged as critical concerns worldwide, with many individuals seeking improved opportunities and safety in new countries. This study will focus on the restrictions faced by migrants and refugees in Malaysia, specifically in the areas of education and employment, and how these limitations impact their daily lives and socioeconomic status. The research further examines Malaysia's social institutions and labor market to understand the broader systemic challenges. A detailed literature review provides insight into recent studies, evolving policies, and the prevailing labor laws, including key statutes like the Industrial Relations Act, Employment Act of 1955, and Immigration Act of 1959/1963, which regulate the privileges of non-citizens, particularly refugees. Using secondary qualitative data, this study includes in-depth interviews with Malaysian citizens and non-citizens, such as civil society activists, human rights advocates, and eminent lawyers, to draw informed recommendations. The interviews reveal significant barriers to education and employment, contributing to socioeconomic exclusion that destabilises the well-being of migrants and refugees. The findings highlight constraints caused by the lack of educational opportunities and work permits, resulting in limited upward mobility, poverty, and marginalization. This study concludes with policy recommendations advocating for the integration of refugees and migrants into Malaysia's formal economy, emphasizing the benefits for both groups. Additionally, the results suggest the need for comprehensive economic and migration policies that acknowledge the role of migrants and refugees in national development.

## 1. Introduction

Malaysia has been a popular destination for migrants and refugees for a long time because of its topography and economic opportunities compared to other nations experiencing social and economic unrest. Due to geographical gravity, economic needs, and sociopolitical concerns, Malaysia's policies on immigrants, refugees, and migrants have changed over time. In spite of these

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differences, Malaysia is among the countries that have not ratified the 1951 and 1967 Protocols to the Refugee Convention, which address the fundamental rights of refugees and asylum seekers [1]. This legal status has a significant impact on the lives of travellers (migrants) and evacuees (refugees), who must deal with a difficult situation where their access to basic rights is limited. Although migrants, who are often regarded as temporary residents or "guest laborers," are expected to make economic contributions, they are rarely integrated into Malaysian society or granted permanent benefits. However, refugees face discrimination because they lack legal documentation, which denies them access to certain public services, formal schooling, and employment [2].

The current policies in relation to employment and labour work are governed under the Employment Act of 1955, the Industrial Relations Act, and the Immigration Act of 1959/1963 as these laws were made to regulate the immigration policies and labour market in Malaysia. However, they accidentally banned the freedoms and rights of migrants and refugees to financial, social and basic human rights inferences. A minute reading of Employment Act reflects that it was outlined for working terms however failed to cover the rights of migrant workers widely, leaving a legal gap that impairs their weakness. Over the decades, there is a complex tie between migrants and Malaysia over economic dependency with fair labour policies aimed at securing domestic work prospects. Besides this, the Malaysia has relaxed the policies to meet the labour work shortage in the country and welcomed the millions of migrants, especially in less-skilled sectors but they are remained under strict control of immigration with less pathways to naturalization or permanent residency [3]. This unjust and rigid policy has resulted into barriers to the socioeconomic routes and lives of migrants and refugees, sometimes sparing them side-lined or debarred from conventional society.

Significant evidence highlights the restrictions faced by many migrants and refugees in Malaysia, particularly in employment, education, and other areas of social life. However, there is a lack of comprehensive national analysis that quantifies these limitations and explores their combined socioeconomic consequences. This scoping review aims to address this gap by integrating an analysis of post-migration employment and educational challenges, with a specific focus on the joint impact of these factors.

As migration and refugee issues gain attention, previous research has disregarded the socio-economic impact of labor market and educational constraints. Loganathan *et al.*, [4] examined undocumented children's educational issues but not their work situation. Similarly, Todd *et al.*, [5] highlighted the economic benefits of refugee work but did not account for educational difficulties. Priya [6] focused on skill development but not structural challenges. Many studies have investigated job and educational hurdles separately, but few have examined their interconnectedness. This study analyzes how these multiple constraints affect Malaysian migrants and refugees' socioeconomic well-being to address this essential gap.

### 1.1 Literature Review

The academic discourse over the subject topic has emerged substantially in the past decade whereby number of studies were undergone exploring the different surfaces of the prevailing challenges. Instant study has initially highlighted the restricted job rights and educational limitations suffered by the migrants and refugees, proposing valuable insights so far and parting extensive breaches in understanding the full socio-economic impact of these barriers.

Presently, Loganathan *et al.*, [4] conducted the research wherein he explored the educational entrance among the side-lined non-citizen children in Malaysia, comprising undocumented children and refugees. This study classifies key impediments e.g. lack of institutional support, legislative

restrictions and financial constraints. However, it offers a healthy examination of education barriers but provides very limited insight to the challenges of employment

The other studies have examined the particular educational challenges for refugees like the trust on community-based learning institutes and formal schooling. However, these researches have mainly addressed the schooling systems and had not delved thoroughly into combined socio-economic effects of these restrictions or employment obstacles [7,8]. The study examining the monetary benefits of allowing work privileges to refugees to perform their jobs legally, stresses the economic rewards but disregards the barricades refugees face in retrieving education [5].

A number of initiatives like the Employability and Entrepreneurial Education (3Ev) Program for Refugees, objects to highlight the skill development for employability of refugees. However, such programs are crucial, which used to fall short of highlighting systemic difficulties to formal education and employment [6]. Likewise, the COVID-19 pandemic left an unbearable impact on refugees' approach to healthcare and education, proved by recent investigations, undermines the dire requisite for policy interventions but focuses primarily on post-pandemic effects instead of pre-existing education and employment barriers [9].

The UNHCR Malaysia studied the summaries of educational background for the children of refugee, explaining their elimination from formal education systems and supported the community-based education institutes. They focused on provision of quality education and easy access to their children. This study only provides a general synopsis, not analysing exhaustive examination of socioeconomic impacts and employment barricades [10].

Generally, these literatures point out noteworthy gaps, compel for broad research studying the both employments so also educational barricades for migrants and refugees in Malaysia and the collective influence on socio-economic well-being. Moreover, the longitudinal researches following long-term results and more dedicated policy influence assessments are required to understand better the effects of preventive laws on these marginalized people.

To compare the present research with international prospectus, the studies carried out in United States of America and Europe, concluded that empowering the migrants and refugees may strengthen the economy of the country [11]. The results underscore the requirement for a major policy change in Malaysia as well. However, a small number of studies carried out while mixing the obstacles included in education and employment to migrants and refugees which also contributes to continue socio-economic exclusion.

International analyses emphasize the significance of this issue. In Europe, Manthei [12] observed the integration of migrants and refugees may boost economic development. Likewise, Jones and Taylor [13] found that societal stability can be enhanced by providing access to education to the migrants and refugees. During research in the United States of America, Miller, and Thomas [14] emphasized the training programmes for migrants to teach them local language. African contexts, such as researchers highlighted the effect of migrants' camps on the economy of host countries [15]. All these studies offer an international background for studying the Malaysian scenario.

## *1.2 Research Problem*

The migrants and refugees in Malaysia are subjected to substantial social and legal barriers that curtail their chances for education, social integration and more importantly the employment. Having no formal identification, the refugees are usually discouraged for jobs and they suffer restrictions over their residence and travelling. Besides, the migrants enjoy legal recognition but face almost same barriers and sometime they are under legal obligations of strict job contracts that restrict their work prospects outside the explicit area and border their movement.

The restrictions over their education so also their children's education also creates hindrance to formalize their pathways for better future. The children of refugees are not allowed to study in public schools. Some community based or private initiatives have been taken in this regard but they are lack of consistency and quality education. Due to non-availability of educational and vocational trainings for adults, they are deprived from high-pay jobs which limit their professional advancement and ability to secure stable job.

The isolation and cycle of poverty are the main causes of systematic exclusion of refugees and migrants; therefore, they are not able to contribute their due share in the prosperity and economy growth of Malaysia or integrate with Malaysian society. Hence, the research problem, stands on understanding the legal frameworks and understanding which restraint the access to employment and education to refugees and migrants and study as to how these restrictions have affected their well-being and socio-economic condition. The current research aims to discover, by pointing out the barriers created by present laws, the vast socio-economic influence of Malaysian's migration strategies on the week refugees and migrants.

### *1.3 Objectives*

The prime purpose of the current research is to analyse the socio-economic influence of restrictive policies of Malaysia on employment and education for migrants and refugees. Specially the research aims to identify how these strategies have contributed to marginalization, poverty and limited rising agility among these groups. This research aims to bring in light the social and economic consequences of exclusionary policies and practices, in light of lived experiences of migrants and refugees, exploring how Malaysian society and economy is affected by these constrained and restrictions to contribute meaningfully.

By reviewing the Malaysia's migration laws thoroughly, including but not limited to, Immigration Act, Employment Act and Industrial Relations Act, this research will examine the evolution of strategies effecting migrants and refugees. Interviews with key stakeholders, including civil society representatives, legal experts, social activists will provide insight into the educational, economic and social barricades enforced on these groups and offer a basis for actionable recommendations.

Lastly, the research object to propose a policy/recommendation that encourage the amalgamation of migrants and refugees into Malaysia's economy, improving both their contributions to national development and personal well-being.

## **2. Methodology**

A range of sources, including academic papers, official publications, NGO reports, legal statutes, and a Google Forms poll, provided data for this study. In order to comprehend the legal framework influencing migrant and refugee rights in Malaysia, the Immigration Act 1959/1963 and the Employment Act 1955 were the primary legislative sources examined. Furthermore, relevant perspectives on the socioeconomic issues encountered by these groups were provided by government agencies and international organizations/NGOs. Academic publications on employment legislation, migration, and socioeconomic impact studies improved the analysis even more.

Using a mixed-methods approach, this study examined the socioeconomic effects of limited work and educational rights on migrants and refugees in Malaysia by combining qualitative and quantitative data. In order to determine the main obstacles to social integration tactics, employment limitations, and educational access, the qualitative component entailed a thorough analysis of policy papers and legal documents. To evaluate employment trends, public views, and educational barriers

faced by migrants and refugees, quantitative data from the survey was analyzed using Python. In order to investigate the frequency and distribution of responses across various demographic groups, this statistical analysis included cross-tabulations and descriptive statistics.

The study employed secondary indicators, such as additional employment statistics and poverty impact evaluations, to determine the wider socioeconomic impacts of curtailed rights on the welfare of refugees and migrants. To obtain secondary data 50 participants were recruited, including but not limited to, legal experts, human rights activists, students, and civil society activists. They were put to different questions in relation to migration policies, making it possible to a balance opinion to the challenges, in rural and urban areas, suffering by migrants and refugees. The research employed goal-oriented sampling, focusing individuals having enough knowledge of migrations policies, incorporating 50 respondents aged about 18 to 54 years. The majority of respondents were Malaysian (27), Chinese (13) and Pakistani (4). The respondents were migrants, activists, legal experts having diverse viewpoints.

The Malaysian immigrant and refugee communities were the particular focus of this study. The survey's scope went beyond these demographics to include personal accounts and larger public perceptions, providing a thorough understanding of the difficulties migrants and refugees encounter in obtaining work and education.

### 3. Results

The responses received in survey were analysed through Python and the following findings were gathered:

#### 3.1 Employment Barriers

The analysis disclosed the significant opinion of the participants towards employment barriers initially due to social discrimination and legal limitations. The finding also brings into line to Razalai *et al.*, [16] who deliberate how the Industrial Relations Act and the Employment Act of 1955 border legal job opportunities for migrants and refugees, exploitative work sectors and restraining them to informal. Policy restrictions and legal impediments, such as limited access to normal employment and the lack of work permits which further embed economic side-lining [17].

The respondents also emphasized upon the impact of policy restraining the migrants to seek a stable job. In addition, Todd *et al.*, [5] claim that Malaysia's economy may be boosted while allowing rights to work to the migrants and refugees which may also decline the reliance upon charitable aid and enabling self-dependency among them. Notwithstanding these benefits, they usually suffer obstacles from local stakeholders, as some informal employment sectors offer very cheap labour for industries like manufacturing and agriculture [2]. Malaysia's socioeconomic policy is under risk while not aligning the migrants and refugees into normal labour market, which may cause serious damage to economic contributors [1].

The younger respondents were found more optimistic in cross-tabulation about potential policy changes, while on the other hand the older respondents responded prospective policy changes. Trask [2] ropes this opinion, observing that rural-urban disparities and age in public belief usually shape views on service/work inclusivity for migrants and refugees. Loganathan and others similarly establish that rural residents recognise migrants and refugees as contesting for jobs, ahead to sensitive resistance concerning work policy deviations [4].

### 3.2 Educational Barriers

The respondents in their responses highly responded to the educational challenges to access free, fair and quality education to the migrants and refugees, in particular referring the issues of resource availability and eligibility. The Education Act of Malaysia restrains the non-Malaysians to access the education in public sector which compel the migrants and refugees to rely upon community-based schooling. These barriers discriminate the children of migrants and refugees to quality education and limit their future prosperity [4].

The conclusions support with Loganathan *et al.*, [4], substantiating that educational barriers spread poverty. Nevertheless, this report increases the consideration by exhibiting that concurrent employment obstacles exacerbate marginalization. Particularly, the outcomes diverge from Ochieng and David [18], who noted positive economic contributions of migrants and refugees, proposing that Malaysia's restraining policies may preclude such results. This emphasises the imperative need for policy reform.

The data analysis also shows that how lack of work facilities and educational opportunities to the migrants and refugees are perpetuates a cycle of poverty among them [10]. This report also emphasizes the same modules which indicate that the community-based schools are not alternative of formal educational sectors or quality education. Their children feel themselves different from normal local children. Jeron [7] points out that education to the children of migrants and refugees are usually limited to local measures which is normally exempted from regulatory oversight which incumbering social integration and educational accomplishment. The measures taken by NGOs and others in shape of vocational training programs for migrants and refugees are not enough or alternate of long-term skill development which also restrains their professional growth [6].

The key barriers for migrants and refugees to get quality education is financial constraints which cause spreading economic hardship so also the lack of quality education may create hindrance in their career pathway prospectus. In such situation, they will remain strangers to Malaysia's socio-economic progress [19]. The countries like United States of America and others, allow refugees and migrants to get quality education with their citizens and provide almost equal rights have good socio-economic growth and stability and suggest Malaysia to adopt the similar policy by reviewing its current strategies [2].

### 3.3 Public Opinion on Policy and Support

A mixed response received from public over rights of refugees and migrants. The analysis shows that the respondents from rural areas had concerns over job and educational rights of the migrants and refugees while the respondents in urban area showed positive attitude toward their rights. It has been observed that the rurales are not much supportive to the rights and liberties of migrants and refugees and restraining them to play their part in economic growth [2]. This division is also observed by Ahmed, by noting that urbans are found have accepting trends while dealing with the refugees and their rights [1].

It is worth mentioning to note that public sentiments denote the limitation of rights to non-citizen by perpetuating exclusionary attitude which is also supported by Malaysia's legal landscape [3]. The element of national interest is also involved, in public opinion, by limiting the migrants and refugees from education and employment through hostile policies. This concept is also armoured by media representations that stress economic strains postured by migrants and refugees [16].

The differing general conclusions highlight the requirement for designated strategy mediations. Malaysia could take on techniques utilized by different countries to address public's uncertainties

while advancing harmonization. This approach lines up with discoveries by Low [3], who declares that boosting organizations to utilize evacuees can adjust public discernments by featuring their monetary commitments. Through comprehensive strategy changes, Malaysia can address both social and financial difficulties related with evacuee reconciliation.

### 3.4 Frequency Analysis Results

Based on the key survey questions, following are the general response patterns (see Table 1).

**Table 1**  
 Combined frequency analysis

Response Category	Awareness of Restrictions	Right to Work	Public School Access	Economic Impact of Employment	Impact of Education Access	Policy Support for Rights	Support for Integration
Agree	0	35	0	0	0	29	32
Disagree	0	9	0	0	0	6	3
May Be	0	0	13	0	0	0	0
May be	0	0	0	22	0	14	14
Negatively	0	0	0	8	13	0	0
No	6	0	10	0	0	0	0
Not Applicable	0	5	0	0	10	0	0
Positively	0	0	0	19	26	0	0
Somewhat	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Yes	39	0	26	0	0	0	0

The examination discloses clear tendencies in public opinion concerning the rights and amalgamation of migrants and refugees in Malaysia. The mainstream of respondents (39) are in knowledge of current restrictions on education and work for these groups, with strong backing (35) for allowing migrants and refugees legal work rights. There is also notable support for permitting access to public educational sectors, with 26 respondents in favour, although a section stated uncertainty (13 "May Be" responses). Economic impression opinions were mixed, with 19 respondents observing rights for employment to refugees as inexpensively positive and 8 foreseeing negative effects. Furthermore, long-term educational access was mainly perceived as valuable, with 26 sighted positive results. Backing for policy reform was robust, with 29 respondents agreeing that the government should announce compassionate policies. Conclusively, most respondents (32) favoured social integration plans such as language courses, community engagement and replicating a general candidness towards inclusion.

To understand the relationships between demographic factors and opinions on support initiatives, education and employment, the Chi-Square Test and ANOVA test were performed.

- i) Chi-Square test results: Age and right to work for refugees (see Table 2).

**Table 2**  
 Contingency table

Age	Agree	Disagree	Not Applicable
18-30	24	6	4
45-54	1	0	0
Under 18	3	0	0

- a) Chi-Square Statistic: 1.60
- b) p-value: 0.81
- c) Degrees of Freedom: 4

Explanation: Since the p-value is greater than 0.05, we do not have sufficient evidence to suggest a significant association between age group and opinion on the right to work for refugees. This specifies that thoughts on this question do not diverge significantly across age groups.

The ANOVA test was conducted to compare observations of economic influence across unlike education levels.

ii) ANOVA Results: Perceptions of Economic Impact Across Education Levels

- a) F-statistic: 0.93
- b) p-value: 0.44

Interpretation: With a p-value greater than 0.05, there is no statistically significant difference in perceptions of the economic impact of refugee employment across different education levels. This suggests that respondents' views on this matter do not vary significantly based on their educational background.

Explanation: With a p-value greater than 0.05, there is no measurably huge distinction in view of the monetary effect of refugee work permits across various educational levels. This recommends that respondents' perspectives on this matter don't fluctuate significantly founded on their educational footings.

Impact on Employment: Malaysia's employment legislation, for example, the Employment Act 1955, prevents refugees and migrants from obtaining legal work, and, therefore, from holding stable and regulated employment [16]. This legal restriction pushes millions into the informal sector, exposing them to extreme levels of exploitation, lower wages, and job insecurity. Refugees who do not have lawful work permits are frequently exposed to fairly insecure employment and lack a mechanism against grievance/unfair treatment. This results in a trap of social vulnerability and economic uncertainty for these areas.

Impact on Education: Refugees and migrants face considerable educational barriers most notably because of legal restrictions on access to public schools for non-nationals as set out in the Education Act. Financial barriers, absence of language assistance, and lack of legal rights all contribute to compounding these issues. With insufficient education, refugees and migrants are limited in their chance of upward socioeconomic mobility, since educational attainment has a direct effect on both employment and earnings. This limited access can cause long-term poverty spirals in both communities.

Broader Socioeconomic Implications: Without including refugees and migrants in the official labour force the economic impact of Malaysia is more significant than other countries. Due to restricting social legal avenues of employment, the nation, as a consequence, allows a highly developed informal sector in which refugees render work without social security benefits and protections. All of these dependencies on informal economy, it also puts strain on Malaysia's social welfare programs because informal workers do not contribute to tax, nor any social security. In order to survive, some refugees turn to the illegal and thus the legal and social systems are overburdened and the problem of effectively controlling the labour market is exacerbated.



## **4. Conclusion**

### **4.1 Recommendations for Educational Reform:**

- i) Amend the Education Act, 1996 to allow migrants and refugees' access to public schools, ensuring equitable education opportunities.

The Education Act of 1996 primarily governs the national education system in Malaysia, emphasizing the development of informed and capable Malaysian citizens. This focus has led to the exclusion of non-citizen children, including migrants and refugees, from accessing public schooling. A 2002 amendment to the Act mandated primary education for Malaysian children, but excluded non-citizens, so marginalizing migrant and refugee children and denying them formal educational opportunities.

Amending the Education Act to provide migrants and refugees access to public schools would promote equitable educational opportunities, ensuring Malaysia complies with international obligations, such as Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Sustainable Development Goal 4, which advocates for inclusive and equitable quality education for all. Enabling educational opportunities is crucial for breaking the cycle of poverty and enhancing social solidarity. Studies demonstrate that inclusive education systems improve integration results for refugees and reduce long-term social costs. Thus, revising the Education Act to include non-citizen children would not only protect essential human rights but also foster a more inclusive and unified society in Malaysia.

- ii) Establish government-sponsored vocational training programs tailored for refugees to enhance their skills and employability.

Establishing government-sponsored vocational training programs for refugees in Malaysia could enhance their skills and employability while addressing labor shortages in key industries such as manufacturing, agriculture, and construction. These programs should align with Malaysia's labor market needs and legal framework, which currently limits formal employment for refugees. Vocational training can focus on skill-building for permitted work under informal or temporary arrangements, ensuring compliance with national policies.

Partnering with private companies and NGOs could provide practical training opportunities, while recognized certifications would enhance employability. Programs should prioritize sectors aligned with Malaysia's National Policy on Industry 4.0 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 8), fostering decent work and economic growth. Pilot initiatives in areas with significant refugee populations, such as Selangor or Kuala Lumpur, could be monitored for scalability and effectiveness. By tailoring these programs to local regulations and economic needs, Malaysia can support refugees' livelihoods while contributing to its workforce development goals.

### **4.2 Recommendations for Employment Reform:**

- i) Amend Malaysia's Employment Act, 1955 to include provisions for issuing work permits to refugees, facilitating their formal sector inclusion.

Amending Malaysia's Employment Act, 1955 to include provisions for issuing temporary work permits to refugees can address labor shortages while adhering to Malaysia's legal framework. Refugees registered with the UNHCR or other recognized bodies could work in sectors with labor

demands, such as agriculture, construction, and manufacturing. This system would complement local workforce needs without granting refugees permanent residency or citizenship.

Employers hiring refugees must follow existing labor laws, including minimum wages and workplace safety standards. Collaboration between the Ministry of Human Resources, Ministry of Home Affairs, and UNHCR can ensure effective implementation, with permits tied to specific sectors and reviewed regularly. Vocational training programs, aligned with Malaysia's development goals, could further enhance refugees' contributions to the economy.

This approach respects Malaysia's non-signatory status to the 1951 Refugee Convention while addressing economic and social challenges, reducing reliance on informal labor, and supporting the inclusivity goals outlined in the 12th Malaysia Plan.

- ii) Implement nationwide language training initiatives, improving communication and societal integration.

Implementing nationwide language training initiatives can significantly enhance communication and societal integration for refugees and migrants in Malaysia, aligning with the country's multicultural context and policies. These programs could focus on teaching Bahasa Malaysia as the national language, ensuring participants can navigate daily life and engage in community and economic activities effectively. Such training initiatives, conducted in collaboration with government agencies, NGOs, and local education providers, would not only support social cohesion but also prepare participants for sectors where labor demand exists, such as agriculture, manufacturing, and services. This approach adheres to Malaysia's legal framework by prioritizing non-permanent solutions while fostering skills that align with national development goals and societal harmony.

The research may conclude with the observations that job barricades for the migrants and refugees have profound influences on their educational, economic, social, mental and integrative aspects of life. Poverty, financial dependency and social isolation are the main causes of job restrictions which restrain them to integrate into Malaysian society. Their lives are diminished due to mental health results which includes long-term physical work, anxiety and stress. Furthermore, educational barriers also impact significant hindrance to language acquisition and social acceptance to the children of migrants and refugees. Legal framework and efficient policies may facilitate the migrants and refugees to get quality education and stable employment which will ultimately strengthen the Malaysian economy, reduce dependency on government/NGOs and increase the tax collection on national level.

In light of above factual grounds and public opinion this research proposes the following recommendations:

- i) Educational Opportunities for Refugee and Migrant Children:

In order to give refugee and migrant children equal access to education, the Education Act is being amended to permit their enrollment in public schools. In addition to gaining necessary skills, these kids will benefit from having access to high-quality education, which will also help the nation's socioeconomic stability and future integration. Economic opportunities for migrant and refugee communities can be greatly improved by the establishment of easily accessible vocational training facilities. These centers should provide programs that are specifically designed for adults and young people, giving them the tools, they need to land better-paying employment and creating a road to financial independence. Speaking the language well is essential for getting work and access to education. To help migrants and refugees overcome linguistic difficulties, language learning

programs should be put into place. By helping them integrate into the larger community, this program will increase their social and economic chances.

ii) Policy Reforms for Employment Access:

In order to implement safeguards for migrant and refugee workers, such as the establishment of labor unions and a strong complaint resolution process, policies must be revised. By protecting vulnerable workers from exploitation and providing them with channels to voice their complaints about their working conditions, these actions will advance security and equitable treatment. For migrant workers, a clear and efficient visa policy is crucial. The government can stop illicit activities and agents engaged in fraudulent permit acquisition by creating a regulatory framework for work permit issuance and separating the function of the immigration department from the work permit process. In order to help Malaysia's economy, thrive and lessen economic inequality, legal recognition will allow migrants and refugees to more successfully contribute to industries like manufacturing and agriculture that are experiencing a labor shortage. By providing incentives such as tax credits or other benefits for lawfully employing members of these groups, employers should be encouraged to hire migrant and refugee labor. This method encourages migrants' and refugees' involvement in Malaysia's economic development by integrating them into the official sector and guaranteeing their tax contributions.

iii) Addressing Broader Socioeconomic Needs

Migrants and refugees should be granted access to fundamental social services such as housing support and healthcare programs, thereby fortifying these communities and concurrently diminishing their engagement in unlawful activities. Community-level program initiatives have the potential to diminish the disparities among Malaysian citizens, migrants, and refugees, thereby fostering mutual understanding and enhancing social cohesion.

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