The Influx Of Foreign Workers In The Plantation Industry: A Study Of The Impact On The second generation of Felda settlers

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ABSTRACT
Issues related to foreign workers are very commonly reported in today’s media. Every year, the influx of foreign workers into Malaysia showed an increase and the number has gone out of control. The country is flooded with foreign workers who are involved in various sectors including the plantation sector. In Malaysia, the largest plantation operator is Felda. The flooding of foreign workers in the plantation sector has a wide impact on the second generation of FELDA. Thus, this study aims to identify the impacts of this phenomenon to the well-being of the second generation of FELDA and to develop an integrated impact model of the influx of migrant workers on the second generation of FELDA and to analyse their awareness about the policy of foreign workers intake in the plantation sector in Malaysia. The opinions and views regarding the impact of the influx of foreign workers had been obtained from focus group interviews that had been identified to provide a clearer view on the current state of the influx of foreign workers in the Felda's plantation sector in Malaysia. The study had taken the qualitative methods. A simple random selection of participants was chosen from second generation of FELDA. A qualitative research using focused interview approach involving 30 participants was done within the study area. A focused interview technique had been chosen for the purpose of gaining data at its basic and as clear since it was to be derived from the second generation of Felda themselves. During the process of the interview, the researcher asked a few questions related to the topic of study and all the answers given by the participants were recorded and kept as primary data. The data of this study were then analysed using the ATLAS ti software. Apart from that, the participants were also asked a few questions about their perception regarding the current government policy with regards to the flooding of foreign workers. The findings show that there are seven impacts from this phenomenon that is affecting the second generation of FELDA; economic, hygiene, skills, safety, health, communication and social.

Keywords: Foreign Workers, Plantation Industry, Impact, Second generation of FELDA, FELDA

1.0 Background
Malaysia is currently experiencing rapid economic growth and progress in achieving Vision 2020. The progress and growth of its economy has encouraged an open door policy to meet the demand of Malaysian labour market's need. A foreign worker is a non-citizen who works in another country temporarily. According to Che Hashim Hassan (2009), foreign workers or foreign labours in Malaysia are workers who come from other countries, who migrate to work or for a job in Malaysia for a certain period of time. Foreign workers are employed by companies or recruitment agencies for a limited period of time in order to increase the supply of workforce and provide skills to the country.

The influx of foreign workers has been increasing every year as a result of the national policy and development plan implemented by the country. According to Taylor (2006), economic studies show that the migration of foreign workers and economic development are closely related to each other. The flooding of foreign workers as reported by Department of Statistics, in 2012, concluded that by the end of 2012, the number of registered foreign workers has dropped to 1.6 million after almost reached the highest number at 2.1 million in 2008. However, the number of foreign workers increased to 2.1 million in the first six months of 2013. Today, the country is flooded with foreign workers.
workers involved in various employment sectors such as services, construction, manufacturing, agriculture, not to mention plantations.

According to the Economic Report 2010/2011, there were 1.8 million registered foreign workers in Malaysia. This includes the 14.2% in the plantation sector. Indonesia showed the highest number of foreign workers in Malaysia of 50.9%, followed by Bangladesh which is 17% of the total number of foreign workers in Malaysia. The number of foreign workers in the plantation sector in Malaysia showed an increase from 2010 to 2011; 266,196 to 299,217 people (Department of Statistics, 2012). The dependence on foreign workers in the plantation sector includes the harvesting, general care and maintenance of the oil palm plantations. The phenomenon of the increasing influx of foreign workers every year is also experienced by the FELDA agency. It is a known fact that the presence of foreign workers does help in the development of the country by fulfilling country's labour workforce demand in selected sectors. However, it is undeniable that the influx of foreign workers is negatively affecting the community which includes the Felda's society in general and Felda's second generation in particular. The job opportunities in Felda plantation industry that were supposed to be met by the second generation of Felda in continuing the legacy of the first generation is now monopolised by foreign workers brought into without restrictions by the authorities. Most of Felda's settlers are already old and they no longer have the physical ability to work in the farm. This leads to the farm being filled with foreign workers who are thirsted for jobs.

At first, the presence of foreign workers employed in the plantation sector brought positive impact, but after years without restriction, the inflows of foreign workers had caused an influx in the plantation sector and created negative impacts such as lack of employment opportunities for the second generation of Felda and rampant crime problem. The arising problems have affected the social welfare of the second generation in fulfilling the quality of life. According to Midgley (1995), the achievement of social welfare is determined by the success of the three aspects, namely the management or control of social problems, fulfilling the basic needs and opportunities for social mobility in a society or community. In this study, the second generation is seen as not being able to achieve the social welfare due to the influx of foreign workers that has caused the second generation fail to meet the basic needs such as employment, management and control of social problems such as crime and public safety as well as unemployment. This is the reason why this study is carried out.

2.0 Objective
This study aims to identify the impacts of the influx of foreign workers to the well-being of the second generation of FELDA and to develop integrated impact model of the influx of migrant workers on the second generation of FELDA.

3.0 Methodology
Qualitative method was used in the study. A simple random selection of participants was taken from the second generation of FELDA. A qualitative research using focused interview approach involving 30 participants was done within the study area. A focused interview technique was chosen for the purpose of gaining data at its basic and as clear since it was to be derived from the second generation of Felda. During the process of the interview, the researcher asked a few questions related to the topic of study and all the answers given by the participants were recorded and kept as primary data. The data of this study were analysed by using the ATLAS.ti software.

3.1 The participants
A total of 30 individuals from the second generation of FELDA were selected from a group of the second generation of FELDA as participants in this study. The participants selected consisted of two categories: male and female participants who were married and not married within three age groups between 18-40 years old.
3.2 The procedure and data analysis
The aim of this study was to identify the impacts of the influx of foreign workers to the well-being of the second generation of FELDA. In the interview, the researcher will ask a few questions related to the topic of study and all the answers given by the respondents will be recorded and stored as primary data. Most of the data collected during the focused group interviews are based on perception and knowledge of participants. The data in this study is the interview transcript that was analysed by using the ATLAS.ti software. According to Othman Talib (2014), qualitative data analysis procedure using the ATLAS.ti goes through a number of processes such as collecting data in the field, data transcription, data review, reading the whole text to get an overview of the data, coding, categorizing code, building sub-theme/theme, interpreting and report writing. This study used qualitative approach by questioning 30 participants in a semi-structured interview. ATLAS.ti network diagram was used to describe a category of codes so it would be easy to make interpretations. Thus, the purpose of the analysis is to identify the impacts of the influx of foreign workers to the well-being of the second generation of FELDA. Therefore, this study involves a process of inductive and emergent code. No coding is determined prior to the analysis and it is depending on the research transcripts of statements in advance.

4.0 Results and discussion
Based on the network obtained, the data analysis shows that there are two impacts themes; positive impact theme and negative impact theme. Code are the seven codes representing the impacts of foreign workers influx to the second generation of FELDA which consist of the economic impact, hygiene impact, skills impact, safety impact, health impact, communication impact and social impact.

The findings show that out of all the impacts, economic impact dominates the well-being of the second generation of FELDA, followed by social impact, safety impact, skills impact, hygiene impact and communication impact. The least affecting impact is the health impact. The network graphic shows that there are two themes of impact of the influx of foreign workers to the well-being of the second generation of FELDA, the positive impacts and the negative impacts. According to the participants, an example of a positive impact is "the foreign workers help the old folks with farm works and the productivity of their work is good" [2: 4] and the negative impact such as "the decrease in jobs opportunities for FELDA’s generations" [3: 6]. The network graphic also shows the relationship between an increased inflow of foreign workers in the plantation sector and its impacts on FELDA's second generation. The participants' opinion as related to the high influx of foreign workers was "government policies that are not strict enough lead to the increase in the number of foreign workers in FELDA" [1: 2] and this had given an impact on their well-being such as "jobs for the second generation has decreased because they were not given a chance in plantation management" [1: 4]. The findings gained from the focused group interview analysis conclude that the second generation of FELDA is facing an increased inflow of foreign workers which have positive as well as negative impacts on them. The impacts such as economic impact, hygiene impact, skills impact, safety impact, health impact, communication impact and social impact are affecting the well-being of the second generation of FELDA. The inflow of foreign workers has negative impacts such as lack of employment opportunities for Felda's second generation and rampant crime problem. The problems are affecting the second generation's social welfare in fulfilling their quality of life. According to Haris (2010), social welfare is a goal and a core element for the development of society. Felda is an organisation that plays a role in fulfilling the quality of life of the people as expressed by Sarjit (2007), the establishment of land development agencies such as Felda and agriculture is essential to meet the objectives of creating jobs and increasing the income of farmers. The results are shown in the following figures:
Fig. 1: Network of the positive and negative impacts of foreign workers of participants 1-10

Fig. 2: Network of the positive and negative impacts of foreign workers of participants 11-20
Fig. 3: Network of the positive and negative impacts of foreign workers of participants 21-30

Fig. 4: Network of the impacts of foreign workers of participants 1-10

Fig. 5: Network of the impacts of foreign workers of participants 11-20
5.0 Proposal and conclusion

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that Felda's second generation are more negatively impacted than they are positively due to the increase in the inflow of foreign workers in the plantation industry to the extent that their well-being is affected. According to Midgley (1995), the achievement of social welfare is determined by the success of the three aspects, namely the management or control of social problems, fulfilling the needs and opportunities for social mobility in a society or community. In this study, the second generation is seen as not being able to achieve the social welfare due to the influx of foreign workers which has caused them failure to meet the basic needs such as employment, management and control of social problems such as crime and public safety as well as unemployment. Therefore, this study is very important in contributing to the development of social sciences, particularly on the studies of social impact of the influx of foreign workers in Malaysia. The study may also help the management of Felda to strategize and plan on socio-economic in the area so that the second generation would be interested in staying and continuing the role of the previous generation without having to get foreign workers involved in the Felda's plantation sector. The results of this study can also be used as a general reference on the effects of the influx of foreign workers in Felda's plantation sector in particular and in Malaysia in general.

REFERENCES