

ABSTRACT

The Influence of Motives for Applying to the EPA Program and Difficulties Experienced by Indonesian Nurses on Their Support Needs
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The Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) provides Indonesian nurse candidates opportunities to study, obtain certification, and even work in Japan. This study investigated the relationship between Indonesian nurses' motives for applying to the EPA program and their difficulties and support needs while studying and working in Japan.

This paper consists of seven chapters. Chapter 1 reviews trends in the acceptance of foreign workers in Japan and the current situation of foreign nurse and care worker candidates under the EPA. Although the program is expected to continue accepting foreign nurse and care worker candidates, the program is replete with problems that need to be addressed.

Chapter 2 provides an overview of previous research relevant to this study, including an overview of key terms such as "motivations," "difficulties" and "needs" and a survey of research on foreign nurses and care workers. Although the literature has identified various challenges faced by these professionals, there is a lack of studies offering detailed analyses of those issues. This chapter also states the purpose of the study.

Chapter 3 (research 1) describes a qualitative study on Indonesian nurse candidates' motives for applying to the EPA program, difficulties and needs. Motives were classified into four categories: "acquiring skills and experience," "inclination to move overseas," "external factors" and "economic reasons." Difficulties were classified into seven categories: "insufficient learning supports," "national board examination," "human relations," "language barriers," "lack of foreknowledge," "limited nursing duties" and "acculturation." Finally, needs were classified into three categories: "learning supports," "self-improvement" and "opportunities for nursing duties," as well as a single card: "sharing information with other Indonesian nurses." An analysis of hospital supports indicated a need for measures that considered differences in Indonesian nurse candidates' backgrounds and situations surrounding them.

Chapter 4 (research 2) presents quantitative analyses of the relationship between nurse candidates' motives for applying to the EPA program and their support needs. A factor analysis identified five motives: "acquiring knowledge and experience for career," "desire for the economic prosperity," "interest in the EPA program," "interest by the external factors" and "inclination to move

overseas,” as well as five support needs: “understanding and handling their situation,” “enhanced learning environment and infrastructure,” “instruction of duties,” “socio-cultural education” and “national board exam preparation.” The results of multiple regression analyses demonstrated a correlation between motives for applying to the EPA program and support needs.

Chapter 5 (research 3) describes a quantitative analysis of the relationship between the nurse candidates’ difficulties and support needs. A factor analysis identified five difficulties: “language barriers,” “inadequate living situation,” “cross-cultural adaptability,” “non-utilized carriers” and “poor learning environment.” The results of multiple regression analyses identified a significant correlation between difficulties and support needs.

Chapter 6 (research 4) presents a qualitative study on the difficulties and support needs experienced by Indonesian nurses working in Japan after obtaining certification. Difficulties were classified into four categories: “occupation-related stress,” “language and communication barriers,” “negative workplace environment and interpersonal relations” and “insufficient social network.” Support needs were classified into three categories: “workplace support system,” “stable EPA support system” and “resources for improving quality of life,” as well as a single card: “opportunities for social interaction.” Case studies highlighted Indonesian nurses’ difficulties in coping with occupation-related stress without social and professional supports, which is proposed as a factor in the decision to return home in cases when the situation does not improve.

Chapter 7 provides a detailed discussion of study results and advocates for a support system dedicated to Indonesian nurses’ acculturation and career growth. This study contributes new evidence of the support needs and adaptations of Indonesian nurses in Japan.