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Empowering migrant workers: the development and impact of the e-law consult application

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Abstract

This study will create and test the e-Law Consult app, which helps Indonesian migrant workers understand and exercise their legal rights overseas, particularly women. The research uses the 4D development approach (Define, Design, Develop, and Disseminate) to design, build, and test the app. A needs analysis involving migrant worker surveys and interviews preceded app development and usability testing. Questionnaires, user comments, and case study analysis collected quantitative and qualitative data. The results show that the e-Law Consult software improves migrant workers' legal literacy and promotes women's rights abroad. Users may quickly get legal advice with the app. The conversation discusses how digital platforms empower migrant workers legally and the app's potential for scalability and acceptance in different countries. This study shows how technology can protect migrant workers and raise their legal understanding. Implications include better legal resources for migrant workers and legislative proposals to integrate technology into protection systems. This study contributes to knowledge by demonstrating its uniqueness, innovative use of technology, and

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practical solutions to migratory worker issues. This research could influence professional practices and global migrant worker protection regulations, making it valuable.

Keywords: migrant workers, legal protection, e-Law consulting, digital consulting, international labor law, women's empowerment.

Empoderando a los trabajadores migrantes: el desarrollo e impacto de la aplicación e-law consult

Resumen

Este estudio desarrollará y evaluará la aplicación e-Law Consult, que ayuda a los trabajadores migrantes indonesios, particularmente a las mujeres, a comprender y ejercer sus derechos legales en el extranjero. La investigación utiliza el enfoque de desarrollo 4D (Definir, Diseñar, Desarrollar y Difundir) para diseñar, construir y probar la aplicación. Un análisis de necesidades, que incluyó encuestas y entrevistas con trabajadores migrantes, precedió al desarrollo y las pruebas de usabilidad de la aplicación. Los cuestionarios, los comentarios de los usuarios y el análisis de estudios de caso recopilaban datos cuantitativos y cualitativos. Los resultados muestran que el software e-Law Consult mejora la alfabetización legal de los trabajadores migrantes y promueve los derechos de las mujeres en el extranjero. Con la aplicación, los usuarios pueden obtener asesoramiento legal de manera rápida. La discusión aborda cómo las plataformas digitales empoderan legalmente a los trabajadores migrantes y el potencial de la aplicación para escalar y ser aceptada en diferentes países. Este estudio demuestra cómo la tecnología puede proteger a los trabajadores migrantes y aumentar su comprensión legal. Las implicaciones incluyen mejores recursos legales para los trabajadores migrantes y propuestas legislativas para integrar la tecnología en los sistemas de protección. Este estudio contribuye al conocimiento al demostrar su originalidad, uso innovador de la tecnología y soluciones prácticas a los problemas de los trabajadores migrantes. Esta investigación podría influir en las prácticas profesionales y en las regulaciones de protección global para los trabajadores migrantes, haciéndola valiosa.

Palabras clave: trabajadores migrantes, protección legal, consulta e-Law, consulta digital, derecho laboral internacional.

Introduction

Work is a human right guaranteed by laws around the world. The State of Indonesia guarantees the basic rights of migrant workers universally and internationally. The state has an obligation to contribute to respecting, protecting, and fulfilling the rights of Indonesian migrant workers (Akmal & Madda, 2022). The state's responsibilities to its citizens include protection abroad, as the state has the right to protect its citizens beyond its territorial boundaries. Legal protection for women migrant workers (TKW) is important to ensure safety from various forms of physical and psychological violence, such as harassment, rape, torture, persecution, murder, and deportation (Tan & Shahrullah, 2017)(Jasuli, 2021)(Wibisono, 2023).

The state is obliged to protect Indonesian women migrant workers, including those working abroad, as part of its responsibility to provide employment and protection to its citizens. This protection is based on the principles of international law, regardless of the limitations of the country's jurisdiction. The Indonesian government has a responsibility to protect migrant workers with appropriate standards of treatment. As a protective measure, Indonesia passed Law Number 18 of 2017 concerning the Protection of Migrant Workers, which replaced Law Number 39 of 2004 (Al Hasmi & Lumumba, 2022).

Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency in 2019, it is explained that there are 7.05 million unemployed in Indonesia. The Indonesian government has always done various ways to overcome unemployment in Indonesia, one of which is sending migrant workers (Syamsiah, 2020)(Suryadi et al., 2022)(Erawan, 2021)(Gibran & Khusairy, 2023). So far, there have been many problems for

Indonesian migrant workers in various countries. Immigration data states that there are about 2,600 Indonesian illegal migrant workers who flee abroad every month who are sent and cause legal problems (Rahayu & Ramdlany, 2016) (Kristiadi et al., 2022). The problems faced by Indonesian illegal migrant workers abroad are the same as those experienced by Indonesian official migrant workers, such as problems of violence, excess working hours, expired contracts, and salaries that are not in accordance with the agreement. Indonesian migrant workers in the labour sector in Malaysia face special exploitation with a contract work system in which contractors are responsible for the worker, not the employer (Kristiadi et al., 2022) (Febrianti & Afifah, 2023). BP2MI has notified complaints of migrant workers from January to September 2022, namely from Saudi Arabia as many as 29.5% with a total of 50 complaints, Malaysia as much as 16.5% with a total of 28 complaints, Taiwan as much as 10.6% with a total of 18 complaints, UAE as much as 7% with a total of 12 complaints, Poland as much as 6% with a total of 10 complaints, and other countries as much as 30.4% with a total of 51 complaints (Febrianti & Afifah, 2023).

The problem that occurs in general is that the workforce who receives information about job opportunities abroad does not come from government agencies/local Manpower Office/BP2MI, but from brokers who come to prospective workers (Ayunda et al., 2021)(Ompi et al., 2023). This problem is exacerbated by the fact that some destination countries do not provide adequate protection through their Employment Laws. As a result, the bargaining position of women migrant workers/TKW in fighting for their rights has become weak. This underlies the birth of Law Number 13 of 2003 concerning Manpower. Migrant workers have the right to state protection, in accordance with the mandate of the

constitution. Educational background also affects the type of profession that Indonesian migrant workers get abroad. The Indonesian government's protection covers not only migrant workers, but also all Indonesian citizens living or working outside the jurisdiction of the Indonesian state.

One alternative to address migrant problems is e-consultation. The use of online-based services has been used and the results have been effective in various fields such as e-consulting applications in the legal field (Maryanto et al., 2020) (Maryanto et al., 2021), Counseling (Kirana, 2019) (Nabilla & Ichwani, 2022) (Noor et al., 2022), application of each circuit in the field of learning (Rahman & Sudarmono, 2022), applications in the health sector (Purwanto & Dalis, 2020)(Ramadhani et al., 2021)(Tholib & Nugroho, 2020)(Widiasih et al., 2022)(Santoso et al., 2022)(Putriana et al., 2023). Through effectiveness in various fields of e-consultation, the field of legal assistance to migrant workers can be applied.

This problem requires basic knowledge of legal protection for migrant workers. One solution to overcome this problem is to develop the E-Law Consult application. The development of this application uses Thiagarajan, Semmel, and Semmel 4D models that focus on product development. This research approach is juridical sociology, aiming to provide a comprehensive picture through in-depth research on the real situation of the community, which can ultimately identify problems and find appropriate solutions (Maryanto et al., 2020). The E-Law Consult application can be used by migrant workers to obtain information about legal protection and consult directly with legal experts. Based on these needs, the development of the E-Law Consult application is very important to support legal protection for female migrant workers in Central Java.

1. Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework for this study is centered on a critical analysis of legal protection for migrant workers, with a particular focus on the intersection of human rights, labor law, and digital innovation. Key concepts explored include the universality of labour rights as enshrined in international law, the responsibility of states under human rights frameworks to protect citizens abroad, and the application of digital platforms to improve legal accessibility. The research draws on the theory of legal accountability in international relations, which emphasizes the obligation of states to respect, protect, and fulfill the rights of their citizens, regardless of their geographical location.

In addition, the study incorporates a model of digital consulting platforms, which have been used effectively in various fields, including law, education, and healthcare, as a medium to bridge gaps in access to information and professional services. Previous research has highlighted the success of electronic consulting tools in reducing barriers such as geographical distance, cost, and limited knowledge of the legal system. However, gaps remain in the literature, particularly regarding the integration of such platforms to address the specific challenges faced by women migrant workers in vulnerable sectors.

By synthesizing these concepts and findings, this theoretical framework establishes the foundation for the development of the E-Law Consult platform, which aims to address identified gaps and provide comprehensive, accessible, and effective legal aid solutions for Indonesian migrant workers. This approach not only contributes to a theoretical understanding of digital legal aid, but also offers practical insights into its implementation for broader social impact.

2. Research methods

This study uses a 4D development model (Define, Design, Develop, Disseminate) from Thiagarajan, Semmel, and Semmel (1974), which is focused on the Develop stage. The Define stage begins by identifying the needs and problems of migrant workers in accessing legal protection. At the Design stage, the design of the e-law consulting application is carried out, including the design of interfaces, features, and information structures. Furthermore, in the Develop stage, the application is developed and tested to assess its effectiveness in providing legal access.

Data collection is carried out through observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted to identify migrant worker challenges, interviews with legal experts and stakeholders provided a deeper perspective, and documentation collected secondary data related to legal protection policies and laws. The research instrument involved validation questionnaires that were sent to three groups of experts: ethnomates, learning evaluation experts, and learning media experts, to ensure the application was appropriate and effective.

3. Results and discussion

3.1. Results

The results of the development of E-Law Consult based on the 4D design model (Define, Design, Develop, Disseminate) will be explained in four stages, namely Definition, Design, Development, and Deployment. The stages in this study are limited to the Develop stage. Each stage contributes to building an

application that functions to provide legal protection to Indonesian migrant workers, especially women. The following are the results of each stage that has been carried out:

1) Defining At

This stage, the main focus is to define the problems and needs faced by Indonesian migrant workers. Based on the results of observations, interviews, and documentation conducted, it was found that migrant workers, especially women, face various legal problems related to employment contracts, violence, and wage differences. In addition, access to clear and reliable legal information is severely limited. Therefore, there is a need for a platform that provides easy, fast, and safe access for migrant workers to consult about their rights. The result of this definition stage is the determination of the purpose of developing the E-Law Consult application which can provide a legal consultation space, provide information related to the rights of migrant workers, as well as relevant legal education modules.

Table 1. Analysis of the Needs of Indonesian Migrant Workers

No	Question	Conclusion answer
1	Have you gotten effective and efficient legal protection as an Indonesian female migrant worker?	The majority of respondents stated that they have received effective and efficient legal protection as Indonesian female migrant workers. However, a small percentage of respondents complained that legal protection is still uneven in certain countries or regions.
2	What is the form of legal protection for Indonesian women migrant workers in	The legal protection received includes mediation with related parties and assistance from migrant worker organizations. However,

No	Question	Conclusion answer
	case of problems abroad? (can be your own experience or another friend's experience)	some respondents felt that this form of protection needed to be improved, especially to provide more responsive services in emergency situations.
3	What are the legal protection mechanisms or procedures for Indonesian migrant workers in case of problems abroad?	Legal protection mechanisms are considered adequate, but it is still necessary to speed up the administrative process and clarify the flow of actions that migrant workers must take when facing problems.
4	Who are the parties that provide legal protection for Indonesian migrant women who have problems abroad?	Respondents identified that the parties who helped them included the Indonesian Embassy, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and migrant worker communities, as well as paralegals. Good coordination between these parties is considered a key factor in providing effective legal protection.
5	What are the obstacles experienced in the process of providing legal aid for Indonesian migrant women who have problems abroad?	Although many feel that legal protection is effective, several obstacles are still felt, such as: time-consuming bureaucratic processes, lack of direct access to legal services in remote areas, languages spoken, and limited use of communication tools by some employers.
6	Are there any difficulties in obtaining legal protection for Indonesian female migrant workers who work?	Some respondents still find it difficult to understand the procedures that must be followed. In addition, the lack of internet access in some countries is a barrier to getting legal help quickly. In addition, some workers do not know what to ask for help.
7	Regarding the repatriation of Indonesian female migrant workers, is there coordination between workers and migrant worker coordinators?	The coordination between migrant workers and migrant worker coordinators is considered quite good. However, respondents proposed improved communication, especially in emergency situations that require immediate discharge.

No	Question	Conclusion answer
8	How long does it take to be able to return to the country for Indonesian female migrant workers who have problems abroad?	The majority stated that the repatriation time is faster than before, but there are still cases that take a long time, especially those involving complex legal issues.
9	What do you think is indispensable in protecting Indonesian migrant workers?	Respondents want an increase in more proactive legal information services, more intensive legal assistance, and the integration of legal services that are directly connected to the government and local organizations in the destination country.
10	Is there an e-law consultation app to help protect the legal protection of female migrant workers?	Respondents generally do not know the existing E-Law Consult application. They state that this application is necessary to provide direct and fast access to legal information.
11	What are the advantages and disadvantages of existing e-law consulting applications? Mention and explain!	Existing applications are considered helpful in providing legal information, but are still incomplete in providing practical guidance and interactive services, such as direct consultations or guidance on how to handle certain cases.
12	Do you think e-law consultation is needed again? And what can be used effectively?	Most respondents agreed that a new application such as E-Law Consult is still needed, with some proposed features: Clear and detailed information on legal procedures, direct consultation services with legal experts.

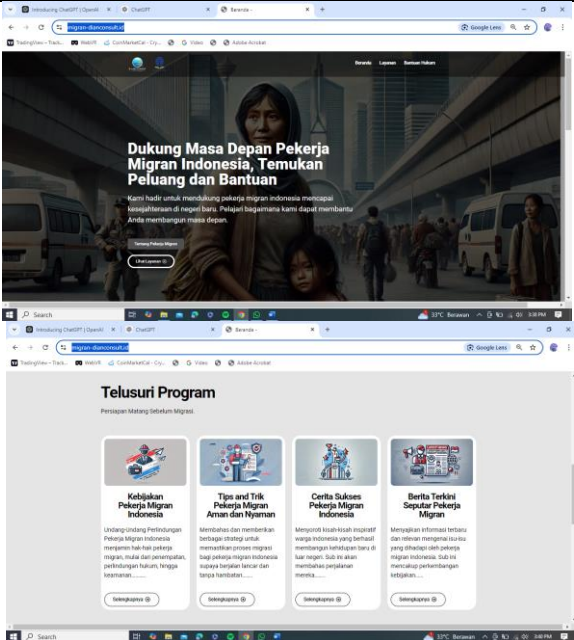
Table 1 shows that most Indonesian women migrant workers have received effective legal protection, but there are still obstacles such as complicated procedures, limited access, and communication between related parties. Legal protection generally involves embassies, non-governmental organizations, migrant worker communities, and paralegals, but it is less than optimal in terms of information and legal assistance. Digital applications such as e-law consultation

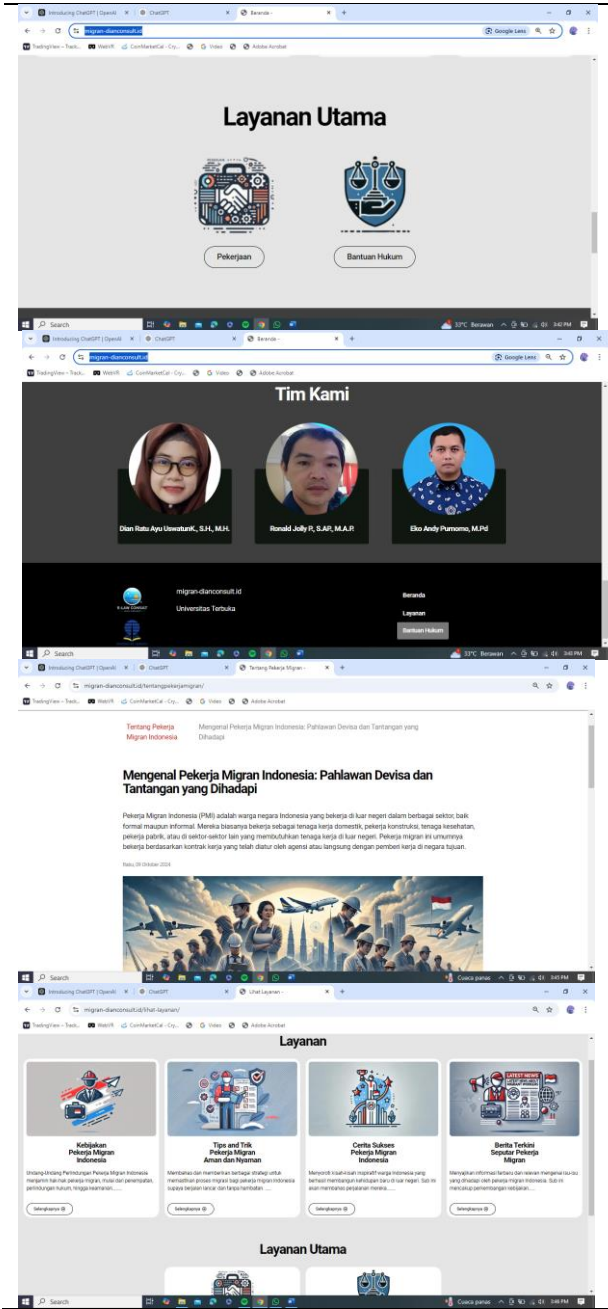
are considered important to improve the accessibility and efficiency of legal protection, although current applications are considered to have shortcomings. Therefore, it is necessary to develop more comprehensive, responsive, and easily accessible e-law consultations to meet the needs of female migrant workers.

2) Design

This stage resulted in the design of the E-Law Consult prototype. The app is designed with a user-friendly interface and features that suit the needs of migrant workers. The design of E-Law Consult is as follows:

Table 2. Design of "E-Law Consultation"

Design	Information
	<p>Home page, contains words that are media symbols. In addition, there are "About Migrant Workers" and "View Services" buttons. On it is a header containing the logo and menu.</p> <p>Menu Page, contains 4 programs that can be explored, namely about Law, Tips and Tricks, Success Stories and Latest News.</p>



Main Services Page,
contains 2 available services,
namely "Employment" and "Legal
Aid".

Team Page,
It contains the team information
and below it is a footer that
contains web information and
menus.

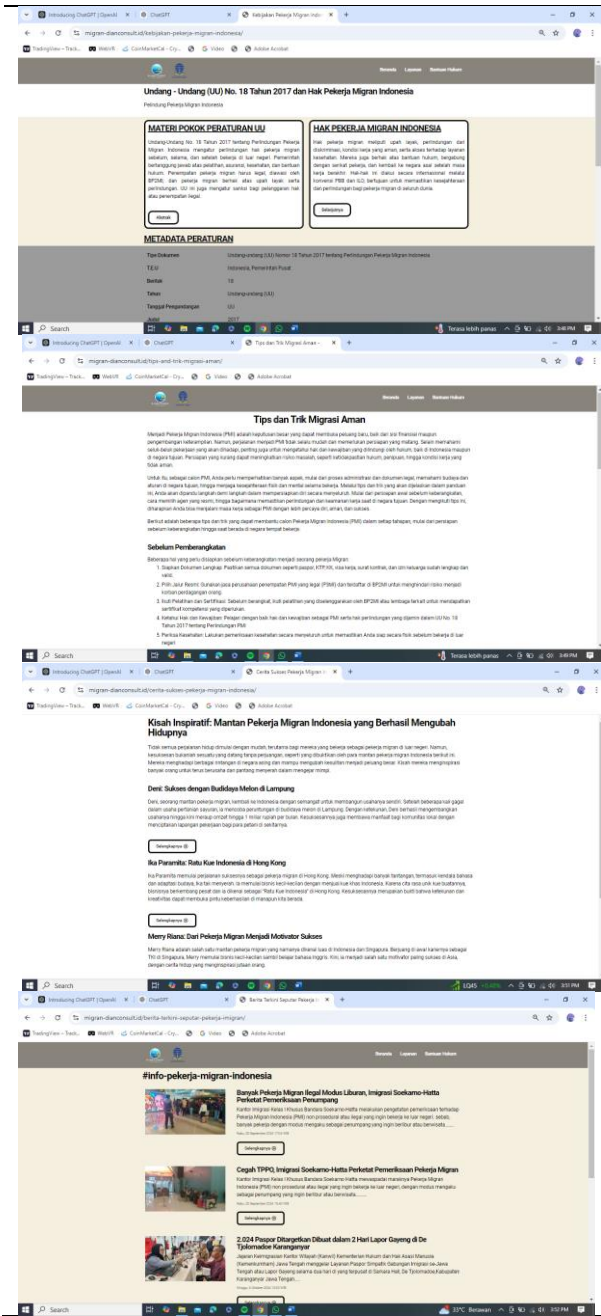
Post "About Migrant Workers"
contains information about
Indonesian migrant workers.

Post "View Services"
contains all the main programs
and services.



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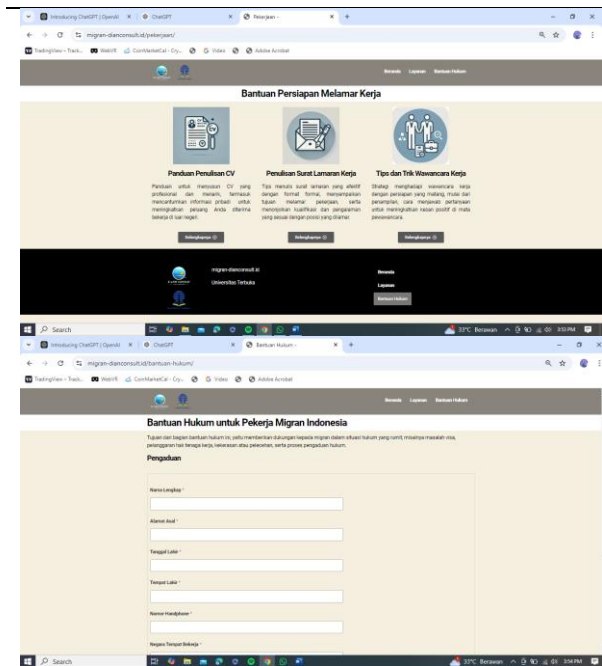


Post "Legal"
contains the Law and Rights of
Indonesian Migrant Workers.

Post "Tips and Tricks"
Contains information on tips and
tricks for migrating safely.

Post "Success Story"
contains several success stories of
successful Indonesian migrant
workers.

Post "Latest Info"
contains some news about
Indonesian migrant workers who
are currently hot.



Post "Jobs"
 Contains features for assistance
 before applying for a job.

Post "Legal Aid"
 contains an e-form of complaint if
 there is a problem by Indonesian
 migrant workers.

The "migran-dianconsult.id" website provides essential resources and support for Indonesian migrant workers. It features sections such as "Indonesian Migrant Worker Policy," which discusses the laws and rights of migrant workers, including protection and safety measures. There are also tips to ensure a smooth migration process, migrant worker success stories, and the latest news on migration issues. Additionally, it offers legal assistance and a range of services to assist workers in navigating legal challenges abroad, making it a valuable resource for Indonesian migrant workers.

The purpose of this stage is to evaluate the validity and suitability of the E-Law Consult application developed, which aims to provide easy and practical legal access for migrant workers. After the learning media design process is complete, the next step is to validate it by the relevant experts. This validation process

involves three experts, namely media experts, material experts, and legal experts, who provide assessments and recommendations for improvement in the application. Each expert provided input related to technical aspects, the content of the legal material presented, and the suitability of the application to the legal needs of migrant workers. The revision is carried out taking into account input from experts to ensure the application meets the expected standards. Once improvements are made, the app will be re-evaluated to ensure its quality and effectiveness. The results of this validation process can be seen in the attached table below, which shows the results of each expert's assessment based on predetermined criteria.

Table 2. Results of media expert validation and learning models

Not.	Validators	Membership/Expertise	Average Validation Results
1	Senior Lecturer 1	Media Members	4.15
2	Senior Lecturer 2	Materials Expert	4.25
3	Senior Lecturer 3	Legal Expert	4.10
		Middle	4.167
		Group	Highly Valid

Based on the results of expert validation, the E-Law Consult application obtained an average score of 4,167, which is classified as very valid with few

revisions. Legal experts provide input to focus more on applicable legal information, relevant to the condition of migrant workers, and provide practical guidance on their rights, legal procedures, and how to protect themselves. Media experts suggest improvements to the app's display and navigation to improve user convenience, as well as content variations to improve interactivity. With excellent validation results, the next step is to apply the application to migrant workers to test its effectiveness in increasing their understanding and awareness of the law.

3.2. Discussion

A number of studies have highlighted the importance of legal education that can address this knowledge gap. For example, research by Longgarini et al., (2023) emphasized that migrant workers who receive education on their legal rights have a greater chance of avoiding legal problems in the workplace and protecting themselves from potential exploitation. Furthermore, research by Rizki, (2020) Finding that a lack of understanding of the law can lead to migrant workers not knowing how to deal with employment contract violations, document withholding, or inhumane working conditions.

Migrant workers are also often hampered in accessing information related to applicable laws and regulations, due to language barriers, difficulties in obtaining the right information, and the inability to seek legal assistance due to a lack of understanding of the legal system in the destination country (Riansyah & Wati, 2024). Therefore, media that can provide information in a way that is easily accessible and understood by migrant workers is urgently needed.

As a solution, several studies offer a technology-based approach to address this problem. Research by (Durotulhikmah et al., 2024) Demonstrate that

technology-based learning platforms, such as mobile apps or web portals designed for migrant workers, can be an effective means of conveying legal information directly to them. This can increase their awareness of their rights and provide them with the tools to access legal aid if needed.

On the other hand, a study by Bayuaji, (2024) emphasizing the importance of a community-based approach in educating migrant workers. Migrant workers involved in community-based education programs showed increased confidence in using the information obtained and were better able to engage themselves in their legal protection. The study shows that governments and non-governmental organizations work together to provide legal training with a more personalized approach and adapted to the socio-cultural context of migrant workers. Based on this research, it is important to develop systems that are inclusive and responsive to the legal information needs of migrant workers, such as web-based platforms or applications that provide legal information related to their work and protection. Platforms must be able to overcome language barriers and present information clearly, so that migrant workers can be more confident and informed in doing work abroad.

Conclusion

Based on the results of analysis and validation by experts in the fields of media, materials, and law, the platform developed has been considered valid and relevant to be used in supporting migrant workers in understanding their rights, where the score obtained is 4,167 with very valid criteria. This research aims to develop and validate a web-based platform that can provide legal information related to the rights of migrant workers, with a focus on ease of access,

understanding, and application of legal information. Overall, the results of this study show that the development of a web-based platform for migrant workers is the right step in increasing their legal awareness and providing better access to the protection of their rights. In the future, this research can be the basis for the further development of a more affordable and efficient technology-based legal information system for migrant workers around the world.

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