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The position of children in the family migration process

A case study in a 'boarding house' in Semarang, Indonesia

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Bachelor Thesis Geography, Planning and Environment
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The photos in this thesis were made by Lies Huitema or myself

Preface

I am very happy to present my bachelor thesis about the position of children in the family migration process of migrants living in Semarang. With this thesis my bachelor Geography, Planning and Environment comes to an end. I am glad that I could combine the fieldwork with an amazing trip to Indonesia. Travelling outside of Europe and living for a month in a city on the other side of the world was a whole new experience for me. The differences in climate and culture were bigger than I expected but this made it even more enriching. The visits to the case study area were also quite intense. All together this trip was an experience I will never forget.

Writing this thesis would never have been possible without the help of several people. At first I would like to thank my supervisor Lothar Smith for his feedback and (together with Martin van der Velde) for the opportunity to do this research in Semarang. Secondly, I would like to thank the people from Unika University for their hospitality and help, especially Donny Danardono and Tjahjono Rahardjo. I am also very grateful to Unika student Angelika Jeany because of her great input and translations during the interviews. Of course I would also like to thank all my respondents for their helpfulness and candid stories. Last but not least I am also very thankful to the support of my fellow students who were with me on this trip, Rosa Daamen, Pepijn van den Eerenbeemt, Lies Huitema, Pauline Pappelendam, Linda Schravendeel and Marieke de Vries.



Summary

People all over the world are moving. In Asia there can be noticed an overall increasing level of mobility. An important trend seen in the countries is the movement from rural areas to urban territories. Migration and urbanization is among others noticeable in the city of Semarang. The process of migration may seem to be the outcome of an individual balancing of positive and negative aspects but in practice it is more than that. In most cases the decision is considered by a whole family. The advantages and disadvantages of all family members must be taken into account to have the most benefit from the movement. This does not necessary mean that the family should stay together, it is also possible that only some of the members migrates. For example the parents migrate and the children stay with their grandparents. Although it is the aim to optimize the situation for all family members, this does not assure that they all have an equal vote in the migration decision. Children are in most cases not the ones who initiate the migration but they definitely have the consequences. When they are migrating as part of a family they experience a complete new living environment. Besides that children can also be affected by migration when they are left behind by their parents.

The goal of this research is to contribute to theories about family migration and child migration by gaining insight into: the reasons behind family migration including movements of both parents and children, the direct and indirect influence of children in migration decisions and the consequences of the migration for all family members in the case area of the boarding house at the Jalan Tlogo Timun. This objective results in the following main question: **‘What is the position of children in the migration process of families living in the boarding house at the Jalan Tlogo Timun in Semarang?’**. This question is divided in five sub questions:

1. *What is the migration background of the families of the boarding house?*
2. *Why did the parents decide to migrate?*
3. *Why did the children migrate with their parents together and how did the children influence the decision(s)?*
4. *Why did the parents and children migrate separate from each other and how did the children influence this decision?*
5. *How did the decision to migration work out for the families?*

Theory about the position of children in the family migration process in the local context of the Indonesian city Semarang does not exist yet. This makes this research academic relevant. More insights in the position of children in the family migrations process can also raise awareness for

parents that are planning to migrate. Besides that the consequences of the migration for children can be useful for the (local) government.

The case area of this research is called a 'boarding house'. This is place where several chambers are located that are mainly rented by internal migrants. This place is suitable for this research because of the many families that live here, some with and some without their children.

With existing theories and literature a theoretical background for the concepts of 'family migration decision making' and 'child-migrants' is created. These concepts are derived from the research question. This question asks how families make their decisions about migration and what the position of their children is in this process. The theoretical framework explains that the migration decision is made by more than balancing the push and pull factors. The family and the aim to optimize the benefits and spread risks for them have an important influence. Also the children can influence this decision in several ways.

The method of a qualitative case study is used to answer the research questions. The data is gained by semi structured interviews with migrants living at the boarding house. Their stories were very personal, which was very useful for this research that depends on own perception and experience. The interviews were in Bahasa, they were translated in English for me during the interview. Besides that there were two other interviews: with the owner of the boarding house Pak Minh and with an expert on the topic of child migration Frans van Dijk. The outcome of the interviews was transcribed and coded by a programme called Atlas.ti.

The answer to the main question became a broad overview of the family migration process with a focus on the children their position is this. This included the movements of the family, the migration reasons of the parents, the reasons behind the movements of the children and an evaluation on the migration. The families of the boarding house were in several very different situations. They vary in stage of life, place of origin, number of children and the made movements of all members. One part of the families always lived together with all members. Two of them were young mothers who migrated first from a small town to the city of Semarang and got married and had children after that. There was also a family that made several movements with longer distances with their children together. The other families had all one or more members that live separately from the family. Most of them left or sent one or more children with their grandparents or other relatives at the hometown or at other places where they stayed before. Besides that there was a mother with a minor son who moved and lives independently from his family.

The reason for the migration was almost always related to economic advantages. A part of the respondents came from smaller towns in the region and they expected that the economic circumstances would be better for them in the big city. They wanted to find a job here and did not

have a thought out plan before they left their home town. These movements can be seen as a part of urbanization. The second group of respondents came from bigger cities further away from Semarang. Their reasons to migrate were more specific, they moved towards a job they found before (for example through an acquaintance) or they moved because their job moved and they wanted to keep it.

The families who always stayed together wanted to keep their children close and attach importance to let them grow up with both parents. Besides that, they expected the migration would improve the living environment and prospects for their children. This can be because of the pull factors of the city, but also because of push factors like a dangerous neighbourhood and limited opportunities in another big city. For the families that did not (always) migrate with all their children the most important factor that influences the decision to take a child with you seems to be the age of the children. If the children are very young it is more likely that parents take them with them when they migrate. The influence of the children their opinion on the migration decision when they are moving with the family is difficult to define. It depends in first place on the age of the children, at an older age they are more assertive. In the second place it depends on if the parents are very authoritarian or more open minded. Nevertheless in the situation of children moving as a family member it would not stop the plans of the parents when the children are against the migration.

A precondition to have the opportunity to 'leave a child behind' is that they have a place to stay. In most cases this are relatives like their grandparents who are still living at the place of origin. The children who are left behind were in several cases already started with school and their parents wanted them to finish it. After they finished middle school at the age of 14 most of them started working and go their own way. This is related to the influence of the age of a child at the time of migration. When the parent does not have the ability to take care of a child, this can also be a reason to leave it with relatives. The direct influence of the older children their opinion on the migration decisions varies in this situation. In some cases the parents made the decision without their children but there were no complains about it afterwards. In other cases where children protested against the plan to be 'left behind', they came along with their parents in the end.

There is a different situation when a child migrates with the family and the parents sent him back to the place of origin after a while. An important reason for this was in both cases that the grandparents were alone and their children felt guilty about that. One of them also had financial reasons. The children did not have much influence in this decision. One of the mothers told her son wanted to migrate but he was only 3 years old at that time. In the other case the 11 years old girl did not like the decision but she understands it.

In the situation where a child is migrating and living without any relatives, there was one case. One woman has a 15 years old son who was migrated because of work. He lives with a friend

and has still much contact with his mother. He made his own migration decision and his mother supported this.

How the migration works out for the families depends on if the migration succeeded or not. It succeeds when the parents can improve their position by for example finding a better job. This will be positive for the children their living circumstances and prospects. It fails when the parents were not able to improve their economic position and the children end up on the streets. It seems that the migration to the boarding house succeed for all the respondents because when asked they all say they are happy that they made the move and live here now. They all found a (better) job and earn enough money to take care of the family which improved their overall circumstances. They also mentioned to be happy with the atmosphere and possibilities of the city, good neighbourhood and the cohesion in the boarding house. The parents who live here with their children were also positive about the child friendly neighbourhood and the possibilities for their children. Parents with children living somewhere else have divided opinions about the current situation. One of them is happy with it and says her son is happy too. The others prefer to live with all their children together but they are okay with the situation. According to them this is the best option for now so that makes that they are okay with living separate. Frans van Dijk sees the situation when children are living with their grandparents not as something positive. According to him the generation gap is too big. Although the remittances the parents send home can improve their life, this does generally not compensate the absence of parents. It varies how and to what extent the parents thought about the future. For the young mothers it seems difficult to think further then their situation now. They are just happy that their family is together and keeping it this way is their first priority. They have some general ideas about that their young kid would go to school in the future and finds a job, preferably in Semarang. One woman with older kids really did not want to think about the future. Now everything is okay for them but she is afraid that in the future they will have not enough money to pay the school for their children. The other women had more concrete plans of the future like going back to the home town or stay in Semarang and live in a house with all family members together.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Project framework

People all over the world are moving. These movements of human can be described as mobility; the ability to go from one place to another, whether permanently or temporary. A second way to see the movement of population more specifically is in terms of migration. This is mostly a change in place of residence but can still be temporary or permanent (Knox and Marston, 2013, p. 85-86). In the 'Global South' which includes countries in South-America, Africa and Asia (Rigg, 2007) there can be noticed an overall increasing level of mobility. An important trend seen in these countries is the movement from rural areas to urban territories. This is also the case in Indonesia where this process seems to go very fast. The concentration of economic growth and industrialization in some of the major urban areas of the country is a key factor in this. At the same time young people became less attracted to employment in rural areas (Asian Development Bank, 2006, p. 160). This process of urbanization is still going on in Indonesia. In 2000 the part of people living in cities was 42 percent of the Indonesian population and in 2010 this grew to 49.8 percent (Mulyana et. al., 2013, p. 6). Migration and urbanization is among others noticeable in the city of Semarang. The long-term migrants of the city contain almost 27 percent of the total population. (Mulyana et. al., 2013, p. 10).

People generally migrate because they take advantage of the movement; they have a need or they want to move. The reason behind this move can be a pull factor like economical advances at the new place or a push factor such as escaping from a political situation because of war or suppression (Knox and Marston, 2013, p. 85-86). The process of migration may seem to be the outcome of an individual balancing of positive and negative aspects but in practice it is more than that. In most cases the decision is considered by a whole family. The advantages and disadvantages of all family members must be taken into account to have the most benefit from the movement. This does not necessary mean that the family should stay together, it is also possible that only some of the members migrates. For example the parents migrate and the children stay with their grandparents (Stark and Bloom, 1985; Mazzucato and Schans, 2008 and 2011).

Although it is the aim to optimize the situation for all family members, this does not assure that they all have an equal vote in the migration decision. Especially the children have less influence on this. How much they are able to have a say in this differs per situation (Bushin, 2009). Children are in most cases not the ones who initiate the migration but they definitely have the consequences (O' Connel Davidson, 2013, p. 1071). When they are migrating as part of a family they experience a complete new living environment. On the one hand this can create opportunities and chances like better

education. On the other hand you have a complete new social environment to fit in, which can be hard during childhood (Xu and Xie, 2013). Besides that children can also be affected by migration when they are left behind by their parents. In a positive way when the parents find a better job and send remittances that can improve the life of the children back home (Whitehead and Hashim, 2005). It affects in a negative way when the children start missing the parents or their authority (Mazzucato and Schans, 2011).

This research is focusing on how families move inside Indonesia, how parents make their migration decision and the position of children in this process. This includes their influence on migration in a direct and indirect way. It will also focus on the consequences of this decision for the children and the family as a whole.

1.2. Research objective

This research is focused on the contribution to theory about migration decision making for families. Migration is a topic that is frequently represented in literature and also about family migration exists several theories like Stark and Bloom (1985). About the combination children and family migration is written too, by for example by Punch (2007) and the influence of children in migration decisions is already discussed by Bushin (2009). This literature shifts the individual approach of the decisions and consequences of migration to an approach that is focusing on a whole family. It also provides insights of the influence of and consequences for children as members of a migrating family. Knowing this solves the 'problem' of the incorrect individual perspective on migration and the permanent focus on adults. However, theory about this topic in the local context of the Indonesian city Semarang does not exist yet. This means that theory about the expression of the existing theories, maybe with added local phenomena still needs to be created. Although the time and possibilities of this research are limited, it tries to make a contribution to this theory.

Because of the local approach it is also important to focus on the context of this research. This makes it relevant to gain information about the case area: the 'boarding house' at the Jalan Tlogo Timun. This place is a concatenation of chambers mainly rented by internal migrant families. The phenomenon will be explained further in chapter 4.

This research tries to focus on the causes and consequences of family migration of all family members, which includes both parents and children. It attempts to find the reasons behind movements of parents and movements of children and how these movements affect each other. This includes the direct (having influence by an own opinion and reasons) and indirect (having influencing because they exist) role children play in the decision making about migration.

To cover this it is necessary to ask several questions: how parents make the decision to migrate, how the decision behind the movement(s) of their children are made, how the children have influence in both decisions and how both parents and children experience the consequences. The previous explanation results in the following objective of this research:

To contribute to theories about family migration and child migration by gaining insight into: the reasons behind family migration including movements of both parents and children, the direct and indirect influence of children in migration decisions and the consequences of the migration for all family members in the case area of the boarding house at the Jalan Tlogo Timun.

1.3. Research questions

Following the project framework and research objective in the previous paragraphs there can be formulated a research question. The central question of this research is:

What is the position of children in the migration process of families living in the boarding house at the Jalan Tlogo Timun in Semarang?

Because this question is quite broad, it is divided in five sub questions to give a complete answer. They are formulated here below. Also the relation between them and the relevance to the main question will be explained.

1. What is the migration background of the families of the boarding house?

The goal of this sub question is to get a better picture of migrant families with children and the movements they make. This will help to answer the main question because knowing the different kinds of migration situations is needed to find out how those decisions are made. Because this research is very local and personal it is also useful to know the history of the families of the respondents for the following sub questions that will elaborate that further.

2. Why did the parents decide to migrate?

Looking into the reasons behind the movements of the parents gains insight in what kind of migrants they are and gives information about the situation of the family. It speaks for itself that parents have

the main influence in the migration decision making process for their family. This makes it clear that this sub question will answer a part of the main question.

3. *Why did the children migrate with their parents together and how did the children influence the decision(s)?*
4. *Why did the parents and children migrate separate from each other and how did the children influence this decision?*

Understanding the reasons behind the home situation of the children is very relevant to understand the family migration decision. A child can be influenced and affected by migration in several ways. This includes children that are migrating as a family member, children that are left behind and children that are migrating autonomously (Whitehead and Hashim, 2005). These are categorized in the two above sub-questions. Both questions also contain the influence children had in this decisions which is relevant to answer the main question and to reach the research objective.

5. *How did the decision to migration work out for the families?*

This question can evaluate the decisions and resulting movements explained in the previous four sub-questions and say if they had a generally positive or negative outcome. The answer will help to understand the whole process of migration for a family with children in this boarding house in Semarang and completes the main question with that.

1.4. Academic and social relevance

Useful research about the causes and motives of migration and the effects of the made move is frequently present in geography, economics and other social sciences. Also about the migration decision making process exist several theories (Haagen-Zanker, 2008). Among others there was the push- and pull factor theory of Lee (1966) which had an individualistic approach. Stark and Bloom (1985) shifted the assumption of migration as result an individual decision to a vision where it is more the process of a whole household. Literature like Mazzucato and Schans (2008; 2011) explained the reasons behind family migration decisions. Literature like Rigg (2007) and research like Hoang, Yeoh and Wattie (2012) looked at the migration process of Asian families. The position of children in the family migration process has also been studied. About how children can be affected by migration

is written by Whitehead and Hashim (2005), Castaldo, Gent, Sondhi and Whitehead (2009) and Punch (2007). Examples of research with an Asian case are the migration consequences of children in Bangladesh who moved to Dhaka city (Giani, 2006) and the causal effects of rural to urban migration on children in China (Xu and Xie, 2013). Resosudarmo and Suryadarma (2014) did a similar study in Indonesia in general but focused only on quantitative data about difference in education. Bushin (2009) did one of the few researches about the influence of children on the family migration decision but she used the English countryside as case study. Migrant families around the region of Semarang are hardly investigated. Especially not the position of children in this process. This thesis about the position of children in the family migration process aims to fill this gap. It can contribute to the knowledge about the region and it can also provide more general insights about migration theory.

More insights in the position of children in the family migrations process can also raise awareness for parents that are planning to migrate, with or without their children. Besides that the consequences of the migration for children can be useful for the (local) government. They are maybe helpful by taking migrant children or children who are left behind by their parents into account in their policy.

2. Theoretical framework

Migration is defined by Knox and Marston (2013, p. 85) as: *"... a long distance move to a new location. Migration involves a permanent or temporary change of residence from one neighborhood or settlement to another"*. About the reasons why people migrate exist much literature. This chapter will not provide a complete overview of migration theories because that would be out of the range of this research. It will explain a number of extensive theories that constitute a theoretical background for the two core concepts that result from the main question. These are 'family migration decision making' and 'child-migration'. The first paragraph starts with the more general theories about migration decision making and will specify after that to theories that focus on the family or household in the pre-migration process. The second is an explanation of the concept child-migrants which include how this group can be affected by migration and the influence they might have in the migration decision of the family. The theoretical background of this two concepts together attempt to create a framework for the answer of the main question. This will be clarified in the conceptual framework and operationalization in the last paragraph.

2.1. Family migration decision making

In the 'Global South' which includes countries in South-America, Africa and Asia (Rigg, 2007), an overall increasing level of mobility can be noticed. The reasons for that are very divergent. Examples of these are declining resources and environmental degradation of land, economic disadvantages like decreasing value of agricultural products, social changes; moving is more allowed by society for example and political like the easing of lifting of barriers to movement (Rigg, 2007, p. 120-121). An important trend seen in these countries is the movement from rural areas to urban territories. This is also the case in Indonesia where this process seems to go very fast. A key factor in this is the concentration of economic growth and industrialization in some of the major urban areas of the country. At the same time young people became less attracted to employment in rural areas (Asian Development Bank, 2006, p. 160). The movement to a city is made because of the prosperities of a better way of life with improved standards of living than before. The city is known by people as a place with broader labor markets, mostly more reliable and higher wages even in the informal sector, and a better access to education, health care, water supply and sanitation, and entertainment (Asian Development Bank, 2006, p. 29-30). This process of urbanization is still going on in Indonesia. In the year 2000 there was an urban population of 85 million people, which is about 42 percent of the Indonesian population. In 2010 the number grew to 118 million people who were living in urban areas, which constituted about 49.8 percent of the population (Mulyana et. al., 2013, p. 6). Migration

and urbanization is among others noticeable in the city of Semarang. The long-term migrants of the city contain almost 27 percent of the total population. Of this group about 22 percent came to the city from nearby rural areas (Mulyana et. al., 2013, p. 10).

Haagen-Zanker stated about the history of theory about migration decision making: *"While migration is as old as humanity itself, theories about migration are fairly new"* (2008, p. 4). One of the first developed theories about human migration is the 'Laws of Migration' by Ravenstein (1885). These are more a kind of analyze of patterns like that most migrants move short distances and mostly go to major cities. The laws of migration do not give an explanation or the motives of migration but they did function as a starting point for others to develop a theory about these.

In the '60 the neo-classical theories stated that spatial inequality in economic profits and prospects for individuals were the cause of migration. One of them is the theory of Lee (1966) which is considered to be the first that referred to a so-called push and pull factor framework. This theory focused on the influencing factors on the individual decision to migrate. These may be summarized in four categories (Lee, 1966, p. 50):

1. Factors associated with the area of origin
2. Factors associated with the area of destination
3. Intervening obstacles
4. Personal factors

The factors that belong to the first and second category are divided in two groups: push and pull factors. Things that are unfavorable about the area are push factors, and things that are attractive to the area are pull factors. Examples of push factors are limited amounts of job opportunities, medical care or wages. They can also be war, famine or pollution. Examples of pull factors are better job opportunities, living conditions, freedom, safety, medical care or education. The original place of residence and the considered place of residence in the future both have push and pull factors. The intervening obstacles (the third category) are obstacles of the movement itself. These can be facts like physical barriers, laws or transportation costs. The fourth mentioned personal factors differ for every person and are facts like intelligence and knowledge. There are also examples of this which are less constant like age and stage in the lifecycle. Personal factors can influence if something is a pull (or push) factor or not. Lee gives as an example that a parent with young children may count accessibility to good education as a pull factor while someone without children would not see it as an advantage (Lee, 1966, p. 49 - 51).

The theory got many comments about the fact that it is not really a theory but more a composed combination of factors affecting migration, without considering the exact causal

mechanisms. Some comments are that it assumes that everyone has a freedom of choice while there is also forced migration and that it expects that the migrants know everything about their destination before they go but this information is not always accessible for the emigrant. Another point is the fact that the theory is very oriented to the individual. This suggests that the decision to migrate is an individual and independent choice. This is in most cases not true and is a whole household involved in this decision (Haagen-Zanker, 2008)

Greenwood (1985) divided the migration theories that were developed after the push and pull theory in two different type. The first is more traditional and makes inequality on the spatial level the most important influence on the decision to migrate. It says that the system in general is always out of balance. Every movement is made to attempt equalizing the differences. In practice, this means that people move to a certain place because there are higher wages or there is better housing than at their original place of resident (Greenwood, 1985, p. 530). The second puts the family or household and the variety in stage of the lifecycle as most important aspects in the made movement. This are determents like family ties, marriage and gender differences (Greenwood, 1985, p. 528). A theory that goes further and combines family relations at one side and gaining benefits like better jobs or higher wages at the other side is the New Economics of Labor Migration (Stark and Bloom, 1985). They definitely departed from the assumption that the migration process is individual. Decisions about migration are made by a whole family. This does not necessarily mean this entire family is moving. If they spread their chances, only one or a few selected family members migrate. According to the New Economics of Labor Migration a household get this way higher joint income and status and a lower risk. These aspects contribute to the migration decision of the household. The migrant and the non-migrants make an agreement that they will both share the cost and benefits from the migration. The benefits are in this case the remittances from the migrant to the family at home. The risks and costs can be handled because they are with more family members; they are spreading the risks. This method exists because of the intention of families to optimize the benefits of the family as a whole. Instead of just the self-interest of the individual family member (Stark and Bloom, 1985, p. 173 - 176). This way of migration is also recognized in a case study of North Subang in West Java explained by Rigg (2007, p. 136). Here he describes the urbanization on Java as a combination of circumstances. The rural population first continued growing, the available land started shrinking and the agriculture sector suffered at the modernization with new technologies. This forced people of North Subang to move out and earn their money somewhere else. Between 1990 and 1998 the percentage of the working population there working in the agricultural sector declined from 75 percent to 58 percent. The rural population was also shrinking but not as much as expected. Many families 'choose' one person to migrate to one of the big cities. If he or she finds

work they will send a part of their earned money to their family at home. In 1990 one third of the households in North Subang had at least one member who was working outside the area in a non-agricultural sector and in 1998 this was increased to two thirds. This example shows that this kind of migration is maybe also represented in the city of Semarang and that new economics of labor theory may be useful to understand the migration decision of the migrants there.

This increasing migration of parts of families results in scattered living families. This so-called 'extended kinship networks' that lives divided from each other transforms the idea of a family with all the members (including grandparents, uncles and aunts etc.) that stay together at the same place (Choldin, 1999, p. 163). About these phenomena of a spread living family is written as part of a scientific movement called transnationalism. This term gained popularity in the early 20th century and comes from the increasing global connection between people and the decreasing value of land borders on both social and economic level (Graham, 1996). Research and literature about the so-called 'transnational families' like Mazzucato and Schans (2008; 2011) criticize the New Economics of Labor Migration as too limited because they just focus on the remittances people send back to their family at home. They argue that there can be so much more. Since there are good production relations, less expensive travel methods and advanced communication technologies, people can make movements and still be easy in contact with their place of origin. The result of this existing links are flows of products, money and people. It also spreads opinions and ideas that can influence the way of living of migrants in their new country or the people who were left back home (Mazzucato and Schans, 2008; 2011). Although this theory is actually focusing on people who are moving outside their own country, it is also applicable for internal migration. Parts of families that move to another place in the same country can also have benefit from each other. The people who stayed at the place of origin can improve their life with the remittances from the migrant, but for example also let their children stay in a bigger city to do a study. The other way around the migrants have a place to stay when they visit their hometown, trust their saving with them and have the possibility to leave their children there (Vertovec, 1999). There can also be negative exchange between the places of residence. For example when the caretaker of children or elderly moves away there can arise physical or psychological problems which are not covered. When these people are not able to act in the society later, the result is also economic negative (Mazzucato and Schans, 2011).

The spatial distribution of the family network makes it also easier for members of the family to make a move. They are more motivated to migrate when the way and destination is easy because it is known via relatives that moved away from the place of origin earlier. People migrate more often to places where they know people and in most cases this are relatives. This chain migration has several advantages. They can familiarize you with the new town, advise you about material stuff, teach you

about the local manners and moral, help you with finding a job and introduce you to their social networks (Choldin, 1999, p. 163 – 175). An important part of this theory is the fact that the goal of the family is not always reuniting. Sometimes the living-apart construction works fine and has the most benefit. Because of the better connections between places it is easier to keep in touch (Mazzucato and Schans, 2011).

2.2. Child-migrants

Child migration is a relatively new topic in academic literature if it is compared to the general migration theory. Interest in this topic for research exists only since the twenty-first century. In the time before that there have been made mainly incorrect assumptions about child migrants in research: *“They are often portrayed as passive victims of exploitation, lacking agency and not having an active role in the decision-making or migration process”* (Punch, 2007, p. 1). At the time child-migrants became a topic of interest, most research was about children in very specific (mainly bad) circumstances like child prostitutes, child soldiers and street children. More recently also the more ordinary child-migrants are represented in some studies (Punch, 2007).

When mentioning children in this research, it is important to define a child. The United Nations convention on the rights of the child which entry into force in 1990 determined children as every human being below the age of 18 years. Castaldo et al. (2009, p. 5) took the same age range and defined a child migrant as any person between 0 and 17 years of age who migrates either autonomously -separately from his or her parents or as part of a family. Worldwide, there are many children affected by migration flows. Because the number of migrations is growing, the number of this children (even though there is little reliable knowledge of that rates) presumably growing too. There are several reasons for this increase. These are developments like urbanization, globalization and the emergence of new kinds of labour (Whitehead and Hashim, 2005, p. 6). Whitehead and Hashim (2005) divided the children who are affected by migration in three different categories: children migrating as a family member, children left behind and children migrating autonomously. Their significance as phenomena is explained in figure 1.

Category	Situation	Relevant research themes about children
Children migrating as a family member	From city to city, from rural to urban environment	Benefits or disadvantages in health and education, children as family workers, risks on the street
Children left behind	When fathers migrate	Poverty, effects on well-being or education, vulnerability, remittances
	When mothers migrate	Effects on well-being or education, abuse, different gender roles
	When both parents migrate and the children stay with grandparents or other relatives	Effects on well-being or education, heavy for grandparents
Children migrating autonomously	For labour or education, trafficked, as orphan	Child labour, trafficking, street children, AIDS orphans

Figure 1: Whitehead and Hashim (2005, p. 7)

This categories will also be used in the following part of this chapter. The way the movement can affect the child will be explained for each group. The influence children have on the family migration decision will also be discussed.

Child migration as part of a family

According to Xu and Xie (2013, p. 5) being a child migrant in Asia always has two sides. On the one hand the migration can create opportunities for children because of the benefits their new living environment, especially in the case of migration from a rural area to the city. This improvement is characterized by new ideas by new ideas, more permissive social norms, expanded peer networks, and a wider pool of potential resources. Also the quality of facilities like hospitals and education, schools and teachers are in general better which is good for children their well-being and development. According to Resosudarmo and Suryadarma (2014, p. 330) people who did migrate to an urban area during their childhood have an average of 2.9 years more schooling relative to an observably similar individual who remained in the rural area. On the other hand, migrant children in all situations experience a new social environment in which they have to assimilate. This can be difficult because it is different or maybe even discriminating. The disruption from the environment and culture they grow up with can be hard during childhood (Xu and Xie, 2013, p. 5).

Children left behind

It is not easy to get numbers of how many children are affected by migration in the way that one or both of their parents are located somewhere else. This is because they are difficult to differentiate. For example, not all kids who are living with only one or without their parents are children of migrants; they can also be orphans or have divorced parents. Known is that in countries in Asia and

Africa many children grow up with only one or without parents as result of migration. The amount of mothers, fathers or both parents who migrate and if they did leave their children differs per circumstance. In most cases when both parents migrate, the grandparents are taking care of the children (Whitehead and Hashim, 2005, p. 11-13). The effects of this kind of migration on a family household are difficult to generalize. In Asia there has been some research in Bangladesh that suggests that about 40 percent of this kind of families uses remittances for education and health care. Because remittances often go to whole families, also the children can profit from it and this makes the outcome positive (Whitehead and Hashim, 2005, p. 15-18). But also in this situation there are two sides of the story. When the parents are away it is possible that the children get emotional or psychological problems. This can have negative consequences like dropping out of school (Mazzucato and Schans, 2011).

Children migrating autonomously

The reliable information about this group of migrants is almost none. Because these children are not represented separately from adults in statistics, researching them on how many such children there are and what kind of the effects their migration has on their well-being is difficult (Whitehead and Hashim, 2005). Known is that important reasons for autonomous migration of children are work and education. In the case of work the movement is often from a rural place to a city. Sometimes it is to meet individual needs, in other cases they want to contribute to the income of the household. In the case of education this is mainly because the quality of the school somewhere else is better or because there is for example no secondary school around in the place of origin (Punch, 2007).

Influence

Bushin (2009) researched children their representation in making family migration decisions with a 'children-in-families approach'. Although her research took place at the English countryside which is a very different place then this case study, the described levels of direct influence can also be used here. They are divided in three categories:

- Parent(s) decide, parent(s) notify child
The decision of the parents is made without any influence of the children. After they knew for sure they were going to move they told their kids.
- Parent(s) consult child, parent(s) decide
The possibility of moving is discussed between the parents and children. The parents explained things about the process of migration and asked about the opinion of the children. The final decision is made by the parents but with keeping the children their input in mind.
- Child participates in decision-making with parent(s)

The children are involved since the beginning of the migration decision making process. They together discussed the advantages and disadvantages of a movement considering the benefits for each family member.

As expected the level of influence that children have on the migration decision of their family depends on the situation. According to the mentioned research the kind of the relation between the family members is can be important in this. In some families children are more equal to their parents than others. In less hierarchical families children are more often allowed to express their opinion. Another factor on which the level of influence depends is the age of the children. But again it depends on the situation and the parent on what age the child is considered to be old enough to participate in the decision making process (Bushin, 2009). Also when the children their opinion is not taken into account in the decision, it is still possible they influenced it in an indirect way. *“Often parents acted in what they thought to be the best interests of children without consulting the children themselves”* (Bushin, 2009, p. 438).

In the case of children migrating autonomously the situation is a bit different. In that case it is also possible that the child decide for him- or herself. The other extreme is still possible; the parents decide about the movement without any influence. Again here the amount of influence of children and parents depend on the situation. Sometimes parents are originators or actively stimulating their children’s migration. In other situations they are trying to postpone it, or some may resist it and children leave without their permission (Punch, 2007).

2.3. Conceptual framework

Conceptual model

The previous paragraphs tried to create a theoretical background for the concepts of 'family migration decision making' and 'child-migrants'. These concepts derived from the earlier mentioned main question: ***What is the position of children in the migration process of families living in the boarding house at the Jalan Tlogo Timun in Semarang?*** This main question is conceptualized in figure 2.

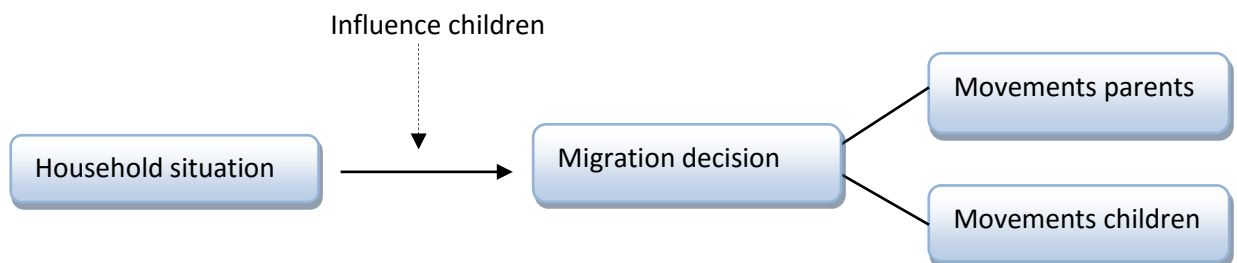


Figure 2: The conceptual model

The research questions ask how families make their decisions about migration and what the position of their children is in this process. Following the theoretical framework the migration decision is made by more than balancing the push and pull factors. The family and the aim to optimize the benefits and spread risks for them have an important influence. Also the children can influence this decision in several ways. For that reason '*household situation*', '*influence children*' and '*migration decision*' are shown this way. The '*migration decision*' is split up in '*movements parents*' and '*movements children*' because both movements are relevant to the outcome of the migration. This division is also used in the sub questions.

Operationalization

The concept of migration decision can be operationalized in push and pull factors associated with the area of origin, the area of destination, intervening obstacles and personal factors. Because these are too limited in most cases, it is important to combine them with the dimension of the family. Decisions are made with the household and try to optimize the benefits of the family as a whole and spread risks as much as possible. Besides that the family network can be a stimulation to migrate and influences the destination. The concept of child-migrants is visualized in the figures below. Figure 3

shows in which ways children can be affected by migration and figure 4 shows the levels of influence they can have on a (family-) migration decision.

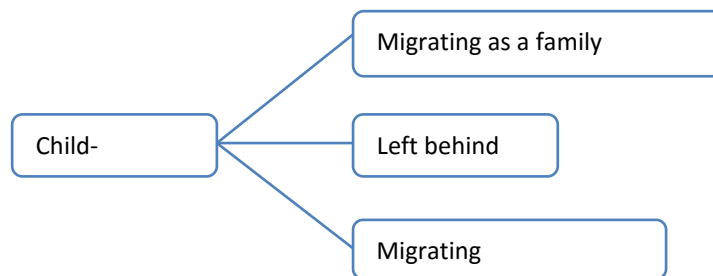


Figure 3: Operationalization of child-migrant

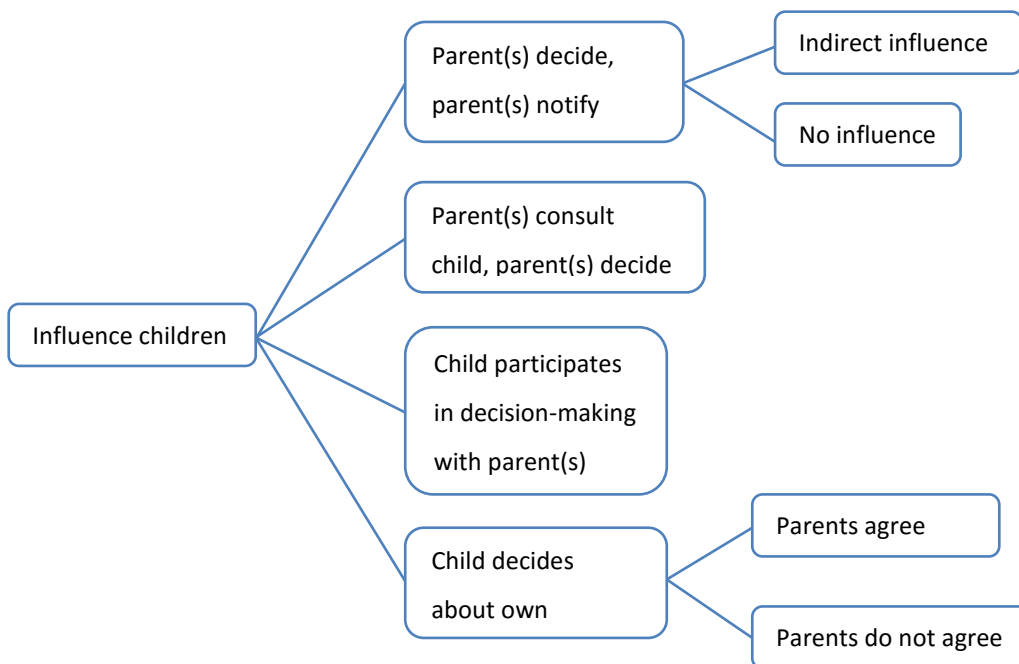


Figure 4: Operationalization of influence children

3. Methodology

In this chapter the previous described conceptual model is made more concrete. There will be explained how the material is gathered that is needed to provide the main question of an answer and to reach the research objective. In the first paragraph the strategy of this research is argued and explained. The second paragraph is about how the data is collected and analysed. This includes the approach, the respondents and how their information is useful material for this research.

3.1. Research strategy

The research strategy of this research will be explained by means of the five different strategies described by Verschuren and Doorewaard (2007, p. 162 – 164) and argues why these may or may not be applicable. The first is a survey, a broad research which can be based on literature or empirical data. It is aiming for statements that depend as little as possible on specific local conditions. This is not used in this because a broad view and the large amounts of needed quantitative data makes it difficult to research motives and experiences of specific families. The experiment is a study to the effects of different methods and was not applicable because this is not what this research is about. Also the grounded theory method was less applicable because of the focus of this research on depth information and stories from the migrants and not on creating a generally applicable theory. A desk research is not possible because there is no literature about the motives of migrant families in Semarang. Also the mentioned experiences from migrants will be difficult to gain only from existing literature and will be clearer with empirical research combined with literature. The best applicable strategy and the one that is used for this research is the case study. This is because of the aim of getting detailed information about motives, decisions and their relations with the social background. The goal of a case study is to get depth understanding of the way certain processes are taking place in practice and why it is this way.

This case study is a research with a limited number of observation units. Because of this, a qualitative approach is more obvious than a quantitative approach. Besides this, a case study is more a deep research and less broad. By trying to reach this depth, open or semi structured face-to-face interviews are most common. It prefers to combine this with observation of the area and an analyse of textual and audio visual data. Another characteristic of a case study is the use of strategic sampling. This contains that the choice of the observation units is determined by the things you want to know or the central questions and the conceptual model. This is contrast with for example coincidence in a survey (Verschuren and Doorewaard, 2007, p. 184 – 185). According to the research objective and main questions there is no question of comparing two or more cases. This makes clear that a single case study is used here. A single case study is a detailed investigation of only one case

(Verschuren and Doorewaard, 2007, p. 187). The same strategy will be used for all the questions and sub questions.

The location of the case study is the 'pondok boro' at the Jalan Tlogo Timun. The term 'pondok boro' is Bahasa¹ and is used for a house with chambers with one owner that are mainly rented by migrants. There is no good translation of this phenomena but the people there translated it as 'boarding house' for me so that is how it will be called in this thesis. The choice of a boarding house as case was because of the many migrants that stay there. The choice of this particular boarding house was because of the many families and children who live there. The research objects were this migrant families staying at the boarding house. I wanted to know how families make their choices about migration in different household situation. This made the household situation (which I meant as things like if all the members were staying here or not) the varying factor. Constants factors were that (at least) the mothers of the families were staying at the boarding house and that all the families were internal migrants. In the boarding house are seven rooms that are all inhabited by (parts of) families and because they all met the above criteria (migrants, different kinds of situations and at least the mother of the family living here) and seven is not a big number there was no need for sampling. This means that from every room a resident is interviewed. The face-to-face interviews were all with the mothers so their answers could be compared better. This interviews were semi-structured with prepared questions. This questions were identical for all respondents but because every interview is different, the conversation sometimes took another turn. Because a better understanding of the situation of the respondents would make this research more complete, I wanted some background information. In first place about the area of the boarding house. I did observations by walking around and taking pictures and I interviewed Pak Minh² who is the owner of the boarding house. His information contributed to the knowledge about the case and provided background information about the case area. In second place I wanted some more information about this kind of migrant families in general. I gained this by interviewing Frans van Dijk who is a former representative of Southeast Asia for Terre des Hommes. Terre des Hommes is an nongovernmental organization that focusses on stopping child exploitation. Now he is working on a project about scholarships for disadvantaged children. Frans is from the Netherlands but has lived in Indonesia for over 30 years. Because he has seen a lot situation due with family migration and child migration he can provide background information about the situations of the group of respondents. With all this information together, the sub questions and the main question can be answered.

¹ Bahasa is the official language of Indonesia

² Pak means 'mister' in Bahasa

3.2. Research material

Data collection

The needed data for this research are collected during a month fieldwork in Semarang. This was together with six other students who did their own research. To get to the case I got help from several people from Unika University in Semarang. Our supervisor Donny Danardono introduced me to Tjahjono Rahardjo who brought me in contact with boarding house owner Pak Minh. In this boarding house the interviews with the migrants took place.

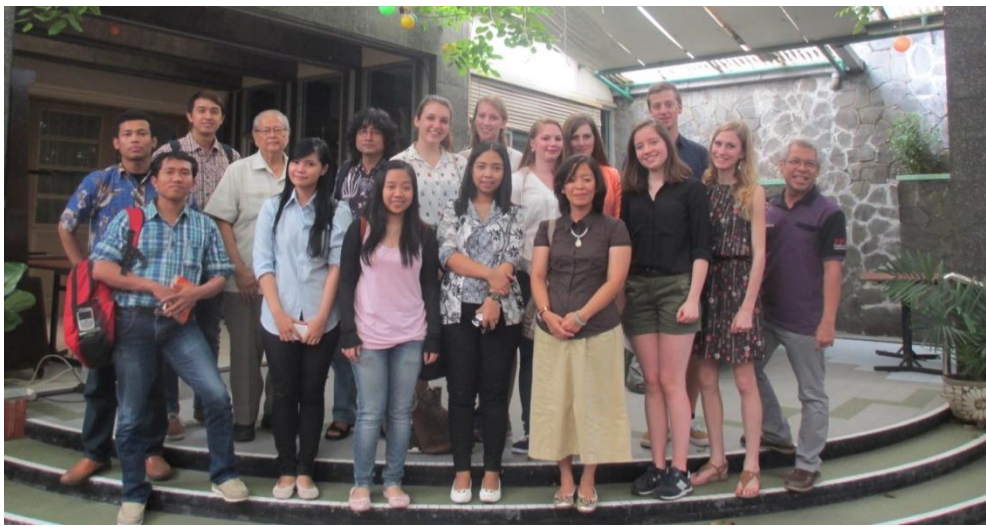


Figure 5: Meeting with the supervisors and translators from Unika University

The interviews were inside or in front of the rooms of the respondents. The interviews were as explained with the mothers of the families but in several cases sometimes the father or an older kid added some information when she was answering. In figure 6 the respondents from the boarding house are described. In this research there are used fictive names. The place of origin of the respondents differed, but they all came from the island Java. Three of them came from Purwodadi (a town close to Semarang), the others from Solo (south of Semarang) and Madura (an Island in the eastside of Java, close to Surabaya). We also talked to two people who were originally from Semarang but also had a history with several movements. The first did also live in Jakarta with her family and moved there a lot inside the city. The second moved a lot too with (a part of) her family but inside Semarang. The way how the family members of the respondents migrate and live differs in each case. Many of them made more than one movement. Some did always move with the family together but others did not. They left one of their children with family or send him or her to family somewhere else. The age of the respondent is very diverse. It varies between 21 and 53 years old.

They were in different life stages too. Five of the respondents are married, the other two are widow. Two of them just had their first child, four had more kids who were older and one woman her children were already grown up. The last mentioned seems less useful for this research but she could tell about the past, when she moved while her children were young.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Place of origin</i>	<i>Current job</i>	<i>Time living in the boarding house</i>	<i>Main reason for the migration</i>	<i>Household situation</i>
1. Ratna	38	Purwodadi	Selling Indonesian salad on a cart	Since 2013, she came to Semarang in 2000.	To find a better job.	She has four kids, but lives with only the youngest (3 months old) and her husband in the room. The oldest daughter also lives at the boarding house but has her own room with her family. The second is working in Jakarta and the third is having school in Purwodadi, staying with his grandparents.
2. Susanti (daughter of Ratna)	23	Purwodadi	Housewife, her husband is working in a restaurant	Since 2010, she came to Semarang in 2005.	To find a job. She stayed here because of marriage.	She lives in the room with her husband and her 4 year old daughter. Her child was born after the migration.
3. Yenny	33	Semarang, but she and her family also lived in Jakarta.	Selling food, her husband is a kind of 'office boy'.	Since 2010	Her husband could find a job here in Semarang after he became too old for his security job.	She lives with her husband and three kids in the room. The children are between 3, 5 and 14 years. The oldest is a boy and he is now in the 6 th grade of elementary school.
4. Nindita and her husband	27	Madura, they also lived in Surabaya.	Housewife, her husband is selling ice cubes from a company.	Since 2015, just a few months before the interview	To find a better job here.	She lives with her husband and two daughters (5 and 11 years old) in the room. The oldest will be sent to school in Madura soon, living with her grandmother.
5. Kani	21	Purwodadi	Housewife, her husband works on a meatball stall.	Since 2013	To find a job and to be independent. She stayed here also because of marriage.	She lives with her husband and baby daughter. Her baby was born in Purwodadi because she wanted to be with her mum, but they came back after.
6. Ade	53	Semarang	Babysitting	Since 2008	Because this room was cheap and not that far	She has three children who are grown up now (25, 30 and 35). Only the youngest is still living with her

					from her job at that time.	in the room. Her husband died when her children were little.
7. Sucianty	39	Solo	Cleaning	Since 2013	She found a job here through a friend.	She lives in the room alone. Her husband died 8 years ago. She has two children, a grown up daughter who is living on Sumatra and a 17 years old son who lives in Jakarta with a friend.

Figure 6: The respondents

Because I do not speak Bahasa and the respondents did not speak English, I needed a translator during this interview. For this I got help from Unika student Angelika Jeany who spoke both English and Bahasa. Because she had to translate my questions I discussed my interview guide with her before we started so we were sure she understood what I wanted to ask and investigate. During the interviews she translated the questions and answers for me so I was able to respond to the situation and could ask questions in reply. This went the same during the interview with Pak Minh who also did not speak English. This took place in front of his house. The quotes of the interviews with the migrants and Pak Minh that are used in chapter four to nine are not literally what they said, it are the translation of their answers of Jeany. The observation of the area was done at moments before and after interviews with the migrants. The interview with Frans van Dijk was at his place in Jakarta and was after the month field work in Semarang.

Not everything went well during the data collection. Originally we planned to visit more places like this boarding house so we could talk to more migrants. Therefore, we needed to go to the leader of the district. Pak Minh brought us to his office and we talked with him. He told about the area but he just became district leader so he did not know that much. He also said he would help us if we had a letter from the government of Semarang, the letter we had from Unika was not enough. Otherwise we could not do research in the area. To get such a letter I needed to show a 'sociocultural' visa, but I had a tourist visa. This caused that I could just focus on the case of this boarding house.

Data analyse

All the interviews were recorded and transcribed. The transcripts of the interviews with the inhabitants of the boarding house were analysed with the use of the Atlas.ti programme. First, the qualitative data was coded. The concepts derived from the literature, used in the operationalization,

research objective and research questions are partly used to code the data. The other part is coded without using that background, to stay closer to the stories of the respondents. The codes are ordered by so called code families and super code families. In figure 7 the used codes are described. The qualitative data is coded to categorize the main information and will help with the analysis and with the explanations of the results (Creswell, 2007, p. 64).

Super family	Family	Code
General information	<i>General information</i>	Age
		Marital status
		Job
		Number of children
		Age of children
Situation	<i>Migration background</i>	Place of origin
		Previous places
		Birthplace of children
	<i>Kind of migration</i>	Migration before having children
		Migration with children
		Leaving a child behind
		Sending a child away
		Autonomous child migration
	<i>Current situation</i>	Time at the boarding house
		Place of residence children
		Children stay with other relatives
		Children live separate from family or relatives
Pre migration	<i>Main reasons</i>	Economic improvement
		Finding a job
		A prearranged job
		Family network
		Bad living environment
		Independency
	<i>Reasons for child migration</i>	Education
		Parents want the child close
		Child wants the parents close
	<i>Reasons for children and parents living apart</i>	Improve environment child
		Continuing education
		Cheaper education
		Lonely grandparents
	<i>Influence children</i>	Keeping a job child
		No influence
		Indirect influence
		Parents consult child, parents decide
		Child participates in decision-making with parents
		Child decides about own movement
Post migration	<i>Opinion about current situation</i>	Good environment
		Child friendly environment
		Improved economic position here
		Happy with migration decision
		Situation is good but only for now
		Children are happy
		Children are less happy
	<i>Prospects</i>	Reuniting the family

Future plans family
Future plans children
No idea about the future

Figure 7: The codes in the AtlasTi programme

4. The case study area

People are preparing dinner, others just returned from work, children are playing and they all sit in front of their rooms. This is what you see when you walk around the area in this boarding house in the afternoon. Almost all the people that live here are labour migrants. Some of them stay here now for several years, others arrived just a month ago. This place was the case area of this research. To increase understanding of the context of this research this chapter is focussing on the case area. It will start with a description of the city and country where the case is located to get a more complete idea about it. After that the case study will be introduced and explained.

4.1. The area around

The country: Indonesia

Indonesia consists of more than 17.600 islands. The population of around 225 million people is spread on these islands. This makes it the fourth country in the list of most populous countries in the world. Indonesia is a cultural really diverse country, noticeable at for example the 300 local spoken languages. About the question what to do with this diversity were in recent history two answers. Under the government of Sukarno and later Suharto who were in power the four decade right after Indonesia gained independency, there was tried to unify the country from a central government. Today's vision is more about using the existing diversity in the policy. This means that the country government gives more power to the local governments, because the idea is that the local government knows better what the residents of their area want. This process of decentralization shows that Indonesia is a country in development. Indonesia is undergoing other major changes too. Examples of these processes are democratization, the privatization of various socioeconomic activities and urbanization (Asian Development Bank, 2006, p. 155-157).

This last mentioned process of urbanization causes a large part of the internal migration flows. This internal movements are not something recent. Like in almost all countries, the population and economic development in Indonesia was and is not equitably distributed. The country consists of islands and the island Java was historically always relatively high densely populated. Because of that there were always migration flows from other islands to Java because more people means more economic activity and more wealth. Later, Java needed because of the high population more investment from the government like infrastructure and housing. This resulted in more work and more migration to Java too (Groppo and Mendola, 2014, p. 8-10). This process of internal migration started to go faster in Indonesia around 1990 because of the economic growth. In many cases the movement was taking place from a rural area because of the decrease of work, to the city where

there was an increase of jobs (Asian Development Bank, 2006, p. 160). In Asian countries the process of urbanization goes faster than in countries in for example Western Europe. Also in Indonesia this urban growth is extremely fast (Handayani & Rudiarto, 2014, p. 80-81). Figure 8 shows the population trends in the urban and rural areas in Indonesia. The graph starts at 1950, when the rural population was much higher than the urban population. Until the year 1997 they grow similar but after that the urban part grows faster and the rural part starts shrinking. Now they are about equal but expected is that in 2030 65 percent of the Indonesian population will live in cities (Asian Development Bank, 2006, p. 159-160).

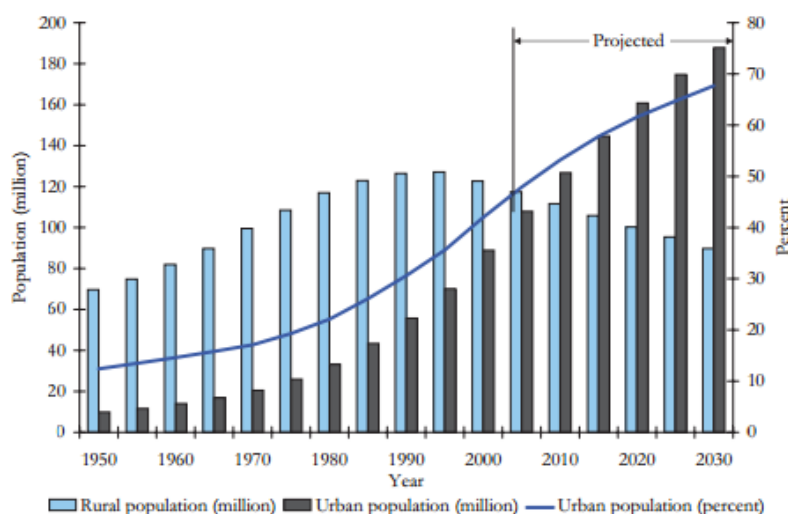


Figure 8: Development of the urban and rural population in Indonesia (Asian Development Bank, 2006, p. 160)

Looking closer to Java, where Semarang is located, the process of urbanization is kind of the same or even faster than in Indonesia as a whole because this island is one of the most densely populated rural areas in the world (Rigg, 2007, 136). This corresponds with the table in figure 9 knowing that nine of the twelve cities are located on Java (these are Jakarta, Surabaya, Bandung, Bekasi, Semarang, Tangerang, Depok, Malang and Bogor).

No	City	Population in 2000 (rounded figures)	Average Growth 1990–2000 (%)
1	Jakarta*	8,347,000	0.17
2	Surabaya	2,600,000	1.75
3	Bandung	2,136,000	3.48
4	Medan	1,904,000	1.17
5	Bekasi**	1,638,000	5.19
6	Palembang	1,452,000	2.45
7	Semarang	1,351,000	1.67
8	Tangerang**	1,312,000	4.29
9	Depok***	1,143,000	2.03
10	Makassar	1,113,000	1.64
11	Malang	757,000	not available
12	Bogor**	751,000	1.47

Figure 9: Indonesia's largest cities (Asian Development Bank, 2006, p. 162)

The major reason for this fast urbanization in Indonesia is the increasing industry and economic growth in small number of important urban areas. At the same time the rural areas became less attractive for young people to work. This causes that cities which were already big are growing more and rural areas are pushed away, suffering the build of new industries. Many people are leaving their hometowns and move to one of these big cities. A list of the largest cities of Indonesia is showed in figure 9. This development results in planning issues like urban infrastructure, housing and services like security and waste management (Asian Development Bank, 2006, 159-162). Related to the urbanization the country also experience economic prosperity. After the Asian Financial Crisis of 1997-1998 Indonesia recovered with a steady economic growth and the creation of solid jobs in the urban areas. This helped to reduce the poverty rate, it declined from 24 percent in 1999 to 11,4 percent in the beginning of 2013 (The World Bank, 2014). Another positive development is the growing amount of people who had education. Of the children between 7 and 14 years old, almost 100 percent go to school (Development Progress, 2014, p. 3). The fact that school everywhere in Indonesia is free probably helped with that, but this needs a comment. Unfortunately this does not mean there are no costs for the parents. Sometimes a school still needs to ask a contribution because they do not receive enough money from the government to offer qualitative good education (Institute of Development Studies, 2011). Also former regional representative of Southeast Asia of the NGO Terre des Hommes Frans van Dijk comments on the “free” education. He explained that the parents still need to buy things like books, notebooks and sometimes uniforms.

The city: Semarang

Semarang is located at the north coast of Java. The city is seventh of Indonesia (visible in figure...) and fifth of Java in terms of population size. Around the year 1700 the city was grown as the third city of Java. This was because the Dutch who were in power at that time planted large tobacco farms in the region of Semarang. They also built railways and roads for transportation of goods. At that time it became the centre of the colonial governance and the most important city of northern Java. After Semarang gained independency it became the capital of the Central Java Province. The growth of the urban population became was very fast. Its location on the north coast in middle-Java is on a strategic place. This because this is between Jakarta and Surabaya; on one of the most important national transportation corridors. Also the big harbour was attractive to labour migrants because it served much jobs (Setioko, 2010, p. 149-152). The city kept growing after the independence of Indonesia. In 2010 Semarang had about 1.500.000 inhabitants. The growth rate is now 1.43% and continuing of growth in the future is predicted. However, the growth of Semarang is much lower than most of the other big Javanese cities (CBS, 2010).



Figure 10: Map of Java, Semarang is located at the north coast (https://www.welt-atlas.de/map_of_java_6-619, 2016)

The city has an airport, two train stations and a toll road. It is like most other Javanese cities a busy city with a lot of traffic. Semarang consists of a lower part at the coast and a higher part in the hills. As expected most inhabitants are from Javanese origin, but also the Chinese minority is quite big in the city. Semarang is divided in of 16 districts and 177 sub districts (Setioko, Pandelaki and Murtini, 2013). All the districts have a kind of leader who is quit important. If you want to undertake something in the district like in my case gaining some qualitative data for a research, you need to have permission from the leader. These leaders usually switch from district every couple of years (oral communication with the district leader at the district of the boarding house).



Figure 11 and 12: The city centre of Semarang

4.2. The boarding house

The interviews for this research with migrants were done in a place that is called 'pondok boro' in Bahasa. Literally translated the word pondok means cottage or cabin. For the word boro is no translation to English. People from Semarang translated pondok boro for me as boarding house or migrant house. In this research the term boarding house is used. This kind of houses consists of several rooms that are rented, in most cases by migrants. You have them in several price ranges and quality categories and in the neighbourhood of this case study you can find them all. There are a lot of these boarding houses in this particular neighbourhood. As mentioned earlier the owner of the house of this case study is named Pak Minh. He told about the history of the area. The origin of these houses can be found in the flow of migrants towards Semarang which increased the demand of dwellings. In this neighbourhood many people owned large parts of land. They started building places at that land where migrants could stay. They first only came temporary. This were mostly farmers who had a so called seasonal job, a part of the year they had work but the other part of the year they were just waiting. In the meantime they rented a room in Semarang and took a temporary job here. Some people still live like that, but most of them decided to stay here permanently because they earn more money if they do their job here the whole year. The reason that so many of this and other kind of migrants are living in this area is beside the available rooms is the good location. It is good accessible because it is close to main roads, public transport and the city centre and there are also many jobs. Especially the many people and busy roads make it a good place for selling.

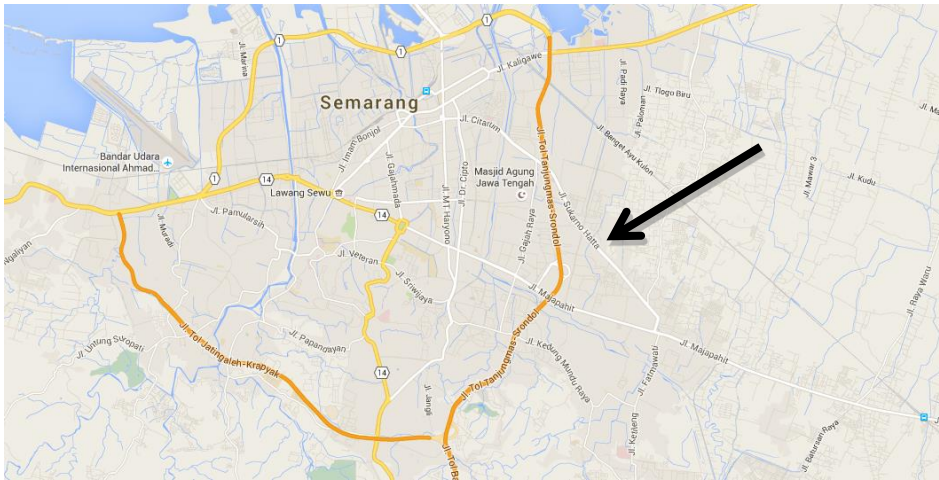


Figure 13: The location of the boarding house at the Tlogo Timun Raya, Semarang (Google Maps, 2016)

The boarding house of the case study consists of seven rooms arranged in U-shape. It is one of the poorer looking houses in the area. In contrast to the other boarding houses in the area, there are many families and children living here. In most rooms are families living with around four people, a few are inhabited with just one person. All the residents share one toilet, one bathroom, one kitchen and a kind of courtyard. They get their water from a draw well located at the courtyard. In figure 13 you see the entrance of the boarding house. It is located behind the house of the owner.



Figure 14: the entrance of the boarding house



Figure 15: An impression of the courtyard of the boarding house

The courtyard between the rooms is a lively spot during the day. While being there in the afternoon you see people sitting in front of their room, some are chatting with their neighbours and others are hanging their laundry or preparing dinner. The most of them are women, some of them are housewife and others only work in the morning. Most of the man are not present because they work until the evening. Children are playing together and walking in and out, the older ones that are just returned from school are still wearing their uniforms. People are arriving and leaving, some of them at a scooter or bicycle. Some people are already returned from their job, others are just leaving. Especially the people with a selling job have to work in the morning and the afternoon because at those times of the day they have the most customers. Many inhabitants of the boarding house have selling jobs in the area because of the earlier mentioned strategic location. Ratna has such a job, she prepares and sells the Indonesian dish Gado Gado on her own cart. Like most of the others who are selling food, she goes to the main street close to the area. After my interview with her she made Gado Gado for Unika student and translator Jeany and me before she started working. Because of the friendly and relaxed looking people the area has a pleasant atmosphere. They were all willing to answer my questions and they were not in a hurry. Also the mutual kindness and cooperation was noticeable. The respondents talked about that too, a woman told: *"they help each other, if I need help, they help me. She is also helping the others when they need help"*



Figure 16: Ratna preparing Gado Gado for us

The owner of the place is a man named Pak Minh (Pak means mister in Bahasa). He told in the interview with him that he owns a big part of land in the district on where a supermarket, a sell stand for martabak (an Indonesian dish), his own house and as mentioned the boarding house is located. The surface of the area is around 843 meter square all together. Pak Minh is born in this area and lives there for 58 years now. He inherit the land from his father.

Remarkable of this boarding house is that there are many families with children living there. In the other houses are mainly single people living. The reason for that is according to Pak Minh the price. Living with your family here is more expensive. The single people living in the other boarding houses have less to take care of so they can often afford a more comfortable living room. A migration together with a family to care of is more expensive. The rent of a room here is around 200 000 roepia a month, that is more or less 14 euros. This is including water and gas, but if they use much electricity because they have a television or something, they pay a bit more. The rent is that low because of the condition of the rooms. When you walk through the area, you can see this house is in a poorer condition than the others. The condition is visible on the pictures in figure 16 and 17. It is because Pak Minh used the material of the former house of his parents to build the boarding house. He explained: *“he did this because he has a principle that he wants to have lower people. So if he build in a good condition, it would be too expensive, he only wants to help lower people”*. According to him his house has always been full after it opened in 2008: *“many people with the low income, they came and see the condition, and they know that the price is cheap (...) you won’t find a boarding house as cheap as mine. Even in the same condition, it is not as cheap”*.



Figure 17: The shared bathroom (the little building in the front) and kitchen (behind at the right)



Figure 18: The inside of one of the rooms

5. The family migration history

This chapter explains the background of the respondents and their family. It is about the previous places where the family members stayed, the situation they were in at that time and how they are living now. The central question of this chapter is: *What is the migration background of the families of the boarding house?* Knowing the personal migration history of the respondents will make it easier to understand how they make their decisions about this topic. The families are divided in two categories; families who lived and moved always together and families with one or more members who are living and moving separately.

5.1. Keeping the family together

The families of three of my respondents always lived together with all members. Two of them are young mothers living with their husband and their first baby. The 23 years old Susanti is from Purwodadi, a smaller town located east to Semarang. She made the move to Semarang alone at the age of 15. She had just finished school at that time. Her mother, who will be mentioned later in this chapter, made the same movement a few years earlier. Susanti worked and lived in a restaurant for three years. After that time she married, her husband is originally from Semarang. They moved to the boarding house, her mother already lived there at that time. Their daughter was born here and still lives here, she is 4 years old now. Also Kani (21) moved at a young age from Purwodadi to Semarang. She met her husband in Semarang and married two years ago. They live together in the boarding house since that time. Their baby was born in Purwodadi because Kani wanted to be with her mum at that time. After this, she went back to Semarang to live with her husband and daughter who is nearly a year old now. Also the family of Yenny (33) was always together, but they moved around as a family too. Yenny is originally from Semarang and she also grew up here. After she finished school she left and moved to Jakarta. She met her husband there and they had their first child. Together they moved a lot inside Jakarta because of the moving job of the husband, he was working in the security sector. Their second child was born there but he died at a young age. After that they had their third child, also in Jakarta. When the husband became too old to do his job they migrated all back to Semarang and started living at the boarding house. The youngest child was born after that.

5.2. Family members moving separately

Members of one family who are moving or living apart are present in the majority of the families living in the boarding house. A clear example of separate movements is the family of Ratna (38). When Ratna and her husband moved to Semarang they took their third child with them and left their

two other children with their grandparents in Purwodadi. After these two daughters finished their school in Purwodadi, one of them moved to Jakarta and the other came to Semarang. The last mentioned is the 23 years old Susanti who is also living in the boarding house in her own room with her family. The third child had his early childhood in Semarang but was sent back to his grandparents in Purwodadi when he was 3 years old, now he still lives there. The fourth kid was born in Semarang and is still a baby. It is expected that he will stay in Semarang with his parents. Another case where children who are in the school going age are left behind is the family of Nindita (27). She and her husband moved together with their child from the island Madura to Surabaya, so at that time they migrated as a family. When her husband went working in Malaysia and later Jakarta, she and her daughter stayed in Surabaya where Nindita had her second daughter. After that she and the baby also moved to Jakarta. The oldest daughter stayed in Surabaya with her father's nephew. In 2015, a few months before I spoke to them, the complete family migrated to the boarding house in Semarang together and lives here now, but the oldest girl will be sent away again. This time to her grandparents in Madura. It is remarkable that in most families not all of the children were left behind by for example their grandparents. Most times it was just one child left behind or sent away. Another family that makes that clear is the of Ade (53). Ade always moved a lot inside Semarang. She has three children who are grown up now (25, 30 and 35), the youngest boy is still living with her. She lives here for ten years now. Her husband died when her children were little. Her oldest child and her youngest always lived and moved with her but her second stayed with his aunt, the sister of Ati. In opposite of these, there are also people at the boarding house who live and came alone. Like Sucianty (39) who moved from Solo to Semarang two years ago. Her husband died eight years ago. Her two children did not migrate with her. Her grown up daughter was already living on Sumatra with her own family at that time. Her son was 15 years old at that time and decided to stay in Solo. After a year he moved to Jakarta with a friend for whom he works but he is still in contact with his mother.

6. Migration reasons of the parents

In this chapter the motives behind the migration of the parents are discussed. It explains the push factors of their previous place, the pull factors of the city of Semarang and why they chose for this boarding house. The first part is about the together migrating families and the second part is about the families who were not always together. Central question of this chapter is: *Why did the parents decide to migrate?*

6.1. Keeping the family together

The most mentioned reason for migration was for the people I spoke to almost always related to economic advantages. Most of them came from outside Semarang and told that the economic circumstances are better here than at their previous place. The younger women who came to Semarang before they had a child, did this with finding a job here as main reason. They are from a smaller town and thought the chance to find a job in a big city like Semarang would be better. Susanti told: *"...she came to Semarang, most because she wants to find a job here. Almost everyone from Purwodadi looks for a job in Semarang. According to her Semarang is more interesting."* Kani explained this further: *"...because it is difficult to find a job in Purwodadi. Because the situation is most of them are the farmers. So when they don't have kind of rice field or they don't have something like that, for their own, they prefer to come here and find a job here."* Both women succeeded in this and had in their first years here several jobs like cleaning or working in a restaurant. After they married and became a mother they both decided to be housewife so they could focus on their child. They chose to move to Semarang instead of another big city because it is relatively close to their hometown Purwodadi, about two hours by car. This makes it easier to sometimes visit relatives who are still living there. Another important reason for Susanti was the fact that her mother was already living in Semarang. Another reason why Kani prefers living here instead of living in Purwodadi is because she wants to be independent from her parents.

Respondents from places outside the region had more specific reasons to go to Semarang. The family of Yenny is a good example of this. Yenny is originally from Semarang. Like the others she also left her hometown to find a better job but in her case this resulted in a movement from Semarang to Jakarta. In Jakarta she worked in an electronics store until she married. Her husband had a security job in Jakarta. *"They moved from one area to one area, to find the closest area with the husbands job"*

because the husbands job is also moving around." Now he is 43 years old which is too old for the security work. He found a new job in an office through an acquaintance of Yenny in her hometown Semarang. The whole family moved and they live here now.

Beside the motives for a migration to the city of Semarang, the overall reasons those families had to choose this boarding house was because of the good neighbourhood. The majority of the respondents (and their husbands) sells food or other stuff in the area and that works well in this neighbourhood: *"many people, good access, things like that"* and *"this area is near to the centre of Semarang and also easy access to get there"*. The cheapest place to rent a room in the area is this boarding house.

6.2. Family members moving separately

The main motives of parents of families who were not always together were also related to economic advantages, just like the examples before. Still their reasons behind that differ from each other. Some of the respondents moved to improve their income and came to Semarang because this big city was the closest to their hometown, similar to the first examples in this chapter. Ratna, who is also from Purwodadi and moved with her husband and youngest child to Semarang, had such reasons. She told that the life of her family in Purwodadi was poor. They wanted to improve that and expected to find a better job here. Ratna started with a job as housekeeper for a year. After that she began selling Indonesian Salad on a car. She explained that it was not possible to do that in her hometown: *"in Purwodadi it is quieter then here so for selling that would not be good."* and *"...in Purwodadi it is cheaper. And in Semarang she can sell it for more expensive"*. Her husband is also working in Semarang. They mainly used the extra money they earned to improve their living conditions and to pay the school of the children who stayed in Purwodadi. They still do that for the one son who lives there.

Also the respondents in this situation, who came from places further away, had a certain goal in Semarang. Like Sucianty who went from Solo to Semarang because a friend who already lived in Semarang knew a job for her. She needs the money because has a debt. The reason for that was her husband his illness, he had diabetes and died 8 years ago. At the time he was sick she had to rent money from family for medicines and stuff. Now she is still working to pay that back so she has to work hard: *"...the first time she came here she had six poses. But then she gets tired, so now she only has four poses a day"*. She is working as cleaner in several houses since she came to the boarding

house. Also Nindita and her husband who moved from Jakarta came here because they knew the husband could have a job here. *"She is housewife. Her husband is working; his job is selling ice cubes. So he took from the company. Ice cube company. And then he sells it to others"*. The other movements he made was also because of this reason: *"She told me that after she came from Surabaya her husband also find another job in Malaysia and Jakarta and other place (...) she was still in Surabaya"*. At the times Nindita and the daughters were not with the father, he sent money to them.

The reasons to choose this specific boarding house are similar for this group of respondents. The neighbourhood and price were the main pull factors for them too. For Ade (53) this low price was the main reason to move to the boarding house. She is from Semarang and lived in several rooms: *"cause she cannot afford her own house so she rents a room somewhere"*. She did several jobs like house cleaning and babysitting. She told that she moved here because of the cheap price and the fact that it was not that far from her job at that time.



Figure 19: One of the women in front of her families' room

7. Children migrating with their family

This chapter is in contrast with the previous one about the position of the children in the migration decision. It is especially about the children who live at the boarding house with their parents and maybe also migrate with their parents together. The reasons behind the fact that they kept their children with them will be explained here. The central question of this chapter is: *Why did the children migrate with their parents together and how did the children influence the decision(s)?* The categories of Whitehead and Hashim (2005) are used in this chapter. They divided the children who are affected by migration in three different categories: children migrating as a family member, children left behind and children migrating autonomously. This chapter is about the first group.

A clear reason to keep your children close is because you always want them to be with you and that you want for them to grow up with both parents. For the young mothers Susanti and Kani this is obvious their main reason to live with their children in the boarding house. They told: *“she wants to, the baby near with her father”* and *“for the baby it is most important that she is close to her parents”*.

Improvement of living environment can also be a motivation to take your children with you. This includes the circumstances now but also the future prospects for the children which are maybe better now than if they stayed at the previous place. Especially in case of a movement from a small town to Semarang. Frans van Dijk mentioned that children in Indonesia generally have more chances in the big city. Three important pull factors are a bigger chance of economic improvement, better medical care and better education. Also the young mother Susanti thinks it is better for her child to grow up in Semarang than in hometown Purwodadi. She wants to send her daughter to school and hopes she will find a job here. *“She said that is not useful, having high education in Purwodadi. Because in the end they will be farmers”*. Improvement of living environment can also be a reason when the movement is from another big city to Semarang. Yenny explained why the living environment and circumstances here are better for her children than in their previous place in Jakarta. Two years before they came to Semarang the oldest son stopped with school because they could not afford it anymore. Primary and middle school is free throughout Indonesia but parents still need to pay for things like uniforms and books. The boy started to do other things: *“He was singing on the street to get money.”* Yenny explained their neighbourhoods in Jakarta as dangerous: *“...like fighting in the streets or something like that”* so she was often worried about his safety. This bad environment also pushed her to move to a more secure place with her children. After the migration the oldest boy started having education again because his school here is free. This is because it is part of an orphanage which pays books and uniforms for poorer families.

Besides this reasons to take your children with you, it is also important to tell that not every parent has the opportunity to leave their children in the hometown or send them back. Susanti did not really have a choice because her parents left Semarang before she did. If she did prefer to let her child having school in Purwodadi, it would be difficult because there is no one there who can take care of her.

For the families that did not (always) migrate with all their children the most important factor that influences the decision to take a child with you seems to be the age of the children. If the children are very young it is more likely that parents take them with them when they migrate. Three of the respondents took only their youngest child with them when they were moving. For example Ade told: *"...the number three stayed with her because he was so little at that time"*. It is easier to change the living environment of a very young child because they do not have obligations like school, jobs or friends.

The influence of the children their opinion on the migration decision when they are moving with the family is different in each case. This depends according to Frans van Dijk in first place on the age of the children. At an older age they are more assertive and able to explain what they want. In the second place it depends on the parents. When they are very authoritarian they would not make the decision together with their children. When they are more open they can be interested in this opinion and take it into account but it would not stop their plans when the children are against the migration of the family.

Yenny and her husband were the only respondents in this group with three older kids, their age is between 5 and 14 years old. They listened partially to them. The family lived in Jakarta before and they moved a lot there. The children sometimes complained about that: *"at the first time he also protest about why do we move very often (...) the children didn't like it because they lose friends"* and she tried to explain them they did not have a choice because of the father his job. You can say that the parents consult their children about the migration but they are the ones who decide. Especially the oldest son did not like that he loses friends after a movement. When the family was planning to move to Semarang he was offered to stay in Jakarta: *"her number one kid could be adopted by the husbands sister"*. He was nine years old at that time. Because he wanted to be with his parents, he refused this and came together with the others to Semarang. In that situation the child participates in the decision-making with the parents.



Figure 21: Two of the children who live at the boarding house

8. Children living without their parents

In this chapter the reasons behind the movements of parents without their children or children without their parents are discussed. The central question of this chapter is: *Why did the parents and children migrate separate from each other and how did the children influence this decision?* This is about the two last categories of Whitehead and Hashim (2005): children left behind and children migrating autonomously. There is also one category added: children sent back. This will be motivated in the corresponding paragraph.

8.1. Left behind

As explained at the theoretical framework it is not necessary the best option to stay together with the whole family. Sometimes it provides more benefit when only the parents migrate and leave their children with relatives at the hometown. It is remarkable that none of the respondent families left all their children behind. They left in most cases only a part of their children and moved with the other part to the new place.

A precondition to have the opportunity to leave a child is that they have a place to stay. In most cases this is with close relatives who are still living at the birthplace. Besides that the parents also had clear reasons why they migrated without the child. The most mentioned reasons were about the education of the kids. Except that school can be a reason for parents to take the children with them to the new place, it can also be a motivation to let them stay at the place of origin. The children who are left behind were in several cases already started with school and their parents wanted them to go on there so they could stay at the same school. After they finished middle school at the age of 14 (Classbase Education Database, 2012) they mostly started working and go their own way. Their siblings who were younger and did not have the age to go school at the time of migration, were sometimes moving with the parents. A clear example of this is the history of the family of Ratna; she migrated with her youngest child and her two oldest children stayed with family in Purwodadi for this reason. Nindita and her husband made a similar decision; they moved from Surabaya to Jakarta with only their youngest daughter. The oldest daughter stayed in Surabaya with her father his nephew and his family to finish school. However, this did not go as expected: *"But then she cried. Because she wants to be with her parents. And that is why she drops out of school. She didn't like it there without her parents."* Now she is eleven years old and lives together with her sister and parents in Semarang but does not go to school.

When the parent does not have the ability to take care of the child, this can also be a reason to leave it behind. This was the case for Ati. Her children are adults now but she told about the time when they were little. One of her children lived with her sister: *"because she was so busy, the second child, only the second she gave to her sister"*. She worked so much because her husband already died at that time so she was the only one who earned money for the family. Because she had not enough money and so little time she felt like she could not handle it with taking care of all her children.

The direct influence of the older children their opinion on the migration decisions also varies here. In the case of the family of Nindita it is clear that they let the daughter participate in the decision-making process because they changed the decision when the girl did not want to stay in Surabaya anymore. It was a different situation when Ratna and her husband moved to Semarang and left two of their children. They did not really talked about it but there were no complains: *"The children did not really influence the decision to migrate, it were only economic reasons and the children are just okay with it"*. Ade explains her situation in a similar way: *"I asked her maybe her movement influence the children, she said no, there is not any problem (...) never complaining about that at all"*. You can say that they only notified the children of their decision.

8.2. Sent back

It appeared that there was another way children are affected by migration in this case study, when they are sent back to the place of origin. There is a different situation when a child migrates with the family and the parents sent him back to the place of origin after a while. The result may be almost the same as when children are left behind, but it appeared that the reasons respondents gave about the decision were a bit different. Two of the respondents made this kind of decision about one of their children. Ratna and her husband lived with their two youngest children in the boarding house in Semarang. When the oldest of them was about three years old they sent him back to hometown Purwodadi to live with his grandparents. The eleven years old daughter of Nindita is now still living in Semarang with her parents and sister but will be sent to her grandma in Madura soon.

An important reason for this was in both cases that the grandparents were alone and their children felt guilty about that. Most of their relatives moved to bigger cities and the children want them to have some company. Ratna explained: *"...because she is feeling pity because the grandfather and grandmother were feeling lonely because there were no children with them"* and Nindita told: *"...her mother is alone, the father died, and she wants her daughter to accompany her"*. There were also other factors that influence these decisions. Ratna told that her son is doing really well there: *"...he is*

in the fifth grade of elementary school (...) and he already has many friends in Purwodadi so that is why he refused staying here". She and her husband pay for his school. Nindita and her husband explained that the school in Madura is cheaper than in Semarang. Because they are now in the boarding house for just a month, they are unsure about how much they can afford. When the girl is staying with her grandma they are sure that she can go to school and lives under good conditions.

At the time of the research the girl was still at the boarding house so it was possible to ask her what she thought about living with her grandma in Madura: *"I tried to ask the girl if she wants to go to school in Madura, she said yes I want to. (...) And then I tried to ask her; will you miss your mum and your dad, but she said yes I will miss them but we don't have money"*. It is more difficult to find out what the son of Ratna thought about the movement because he was only 3 years old at that time. She told about is as if it was his own choice: *"...he decided to go back to Purwodadi (...) she explained it to the boy and then the boy wants to accompany his grandparents"*. This is maybe difficult to understand because of the young age of the boy at the time of the migration. In both situations is seems that the children were consulted but the parents made the decision.

8.3. Migrating autonomously

Only one of the respondents has a child who is moving and living without any relatives. Sucianty lived with her 15 years old son in Solo before she moved to Semarang two years ago. He was working at a meatball stall there and when she left he wanted to stay there. Main reason for that was keeping the job: *"She said that looking for job is kind of difficult now in Semarang. At that time, he was asked by person who had meatball stall and she said that the boy just took the chance"*. He became good friends with the owner of the stall and his family and he moved with them to Jakarta. *"And the guy who is selling meatballs would take the son as his own son, just like adopted. But she thinks that because she feels getting old, she wants a son who can take care of her when she is older (...) and that is why she refused the adoption, and let the boy working with him, helping him (...) sometimes the boy is coming here, for checking his mum, looking if she is okay."*

9. The post-migration situation

This chapter is about the situation after the migration and if consequences for the children were positive or negative. In the first paragraph the opinion of the respondents about the life at the boarding house in Semarang for them and their children will be discussed. Main question is here if their circumstances are improved now. The second paragraph is about the ideas of the respondents about the future and prospects of their family now they are living here. The categories of the family together and family members moving separately are also used in this chapter. The central question of this chapter is: *How did the migration decision work out for the families?*

9.1. Better now?

According to Frans van Dijk this depends on if the migration succeeds. It succeeds when the parents can improve their position by for example finding a better job. This will be positive for the children their living circumstances and prospects. It fails when the parents were not able to improve their economic position and the children end up on the streets. It seems that all the respondents succeed their migration because when asked they all say they are happy that they made the move and live here now.

Keeping the family together

The young mother Susanti is happy that she made the move because she thinks her financial situation now is better than it would have been if she stayed in Purwodadi. Her husband has a job and he earns enough to take care of the family. She also feels more comfortable living here because she likes the atmosphere: *"Semarang at 7 pm, there will be a lot of people still going around, still socializing, something like that. In Purwodadi at 7 pm they are already at home and sleep."* Kani is also happy she left Purwodadi but that has nothing to do with the environment or financial improvement. She is just glad that she is with her husband and child together here. Also Yenny is happy she moved from Jakarta to Semarang. She and her husband both have a job (even if they still do not earn much) and the children go to school. She is also positive about the area and especially the safety for her kids here. She explained: *"...especially she as a mother can keep watch her children. She can keep controlling them. Because they are playing with their friends but only in this area. Not that far, when she was in Jakarta."* The fact that her oldest son does not work on the streets anymore and goes to school instead makes her more comfortable too: *"...she hates when the boy goes to the street and asking money"*. On the other hand, she told that her son is less happier here: *"...the first kid he was happier in Jakarta because there he can get money"*.

Family members moving separately

Sucianty, who moved from Solo to Semarang is mainly happy she is here because she can get money here. She has a permanent job now and the jobs she had in the past were mostly temporary. She is less happy about the fact that she does not live with her son but she is okay with the situation:

“Actually she didn’t like that her son moved to Jakarta. That they live separate. But for now she is thankful for her job now, her sons job now, the economy.. It is not that good but that is enough for them now”. She is positive about the neighbourhood and the people who live around her: *“...they help each other, if I need help, they help me. She is also helping the others when they need help”*. Ade gave a similar answer about that: *“Yeah, she is happy. She is also happy with the neighbourhood, it is like others but it is good. She is comfortable living here because she knows the people here and the people here know her”*. Nindita is also happy about the migration because her husband has a job here. She is less happy that she and her oldest daughter will live separate from each other soon (the girl will move to her grandma in Madura) but she feels like that is something she needs to do. Like the others she is positive about living in the city of Semarang: *“...having more choice in consuming. And then the husband said about the weather, that is more nice in Semarang then in Madura”*. Ratna is very happy she made the movement from Purwodadi to Semarang. She and her husband earn more money and this improved the life of all family members. Her third child who lives with his grandparents is doing really well there. She has no negative points about the situation now. Frans van Dijk sees the situation when children are living with their grandparents not as something positive. According to him the generation gap is too big. The grandparents can take care of the kids by sending them to school and providing food and a home, but they do not educate them about what is good and bad in life. They are less informed about the world the children live in. When the parents send money home, this can improve the children their life but in most cases it does not compensate the absence of their parents.

9.2. Future plans

Keeping the family together

Kani and Susanti did not really thought about the future. They are still young, their children are so little and it is difficult for them to think further then their situation now. Maybe they also do not want to think about the future because it is still insecure. They are just happy that their family is together and keeping it this way is their first priority. Kani told: *“She does not think about the future,*

she has a baby, has a husband, for the baby it is most important that she is close to her parents (...) she don't have plans, not yet. She is just focusing for now". Susanti her ideas are similar but she could tell a general plan for the future of her family and especially her daughter: *"Yes, she will go to school when she is older. And then find job here, that is what she said. They are not interested in having a life in Purwodadi".* It seemed that Yenny really did not want to think about the future of the family. The life of today is difficult enough for the family. Her kids go to school now but her oldest son has almost finished the elementary school. She cannot afford the education of a junior high school: *"...for the junior high school she needs to pay about 1 to 1 and a half million roepia. But she can't afford that. That is what she said".*³ She is probably unhappy with that because education seems to be important for her. Her son thinks different about that, he would like to have a job here: *"...probably helping in a restaurant or a kind of like washing the plates or cleaning the restaurant, something like that".* She do not let him now because she thinks he is too small and he has to go to school: *"...because there is time to study, time to play, but he sacrifice for finding the job and money (...) I am okay with if the boy is working, as long as he is still able to study and go to school".*

Family members moving separately

Sucianty, the widow who lives alone and has a grown up daughter and a 17 years old son working in Jakarta, has a clear vision of the future. She wants to go back to her hometown Solo when she is retired. She has a house there but in a poor condition, she did not have the money to pay for renovation yet. *"Now she is working harder so she can pay it."* In Solo she has many relatives like her mother and several brothers and sisters. She hopes her son will go with her but she does not expect he will do that: *"...she said yes but I think my son is happy in Jakarta now. Because the owner of the meatball stall loves him like his own son, and when he asked for like a cell phone, he get it from him. That is why she is focusing on herself now".* She also wants to visit her daughter more often, but this is difficult because she lives on Sumatra which is far away. She also has a grandchild there, a boy. Also Nindita and her husband thought about what they want for the future but their plans sound more insecure. Their earlier mentioned daughter will be sent to Madura soon. Despite her parents think also that their children have better opportunities in Semarang, *"I don't have any choices. The point, the main point was about having the priority source of the economy".* They want both of the children back in Semarang when their economic position has become better. Nindita wants her mother who lives alone in Madura now to come too. Her husband is now working for an ice cube company and in the future they would like to have their own ice cube company so they can buy a house. Nindita said: *"then I will take the children and mum to come live with me".*

³ A million roepia has the same value as circa 70 euros



Figure 22: Two of the women with their children

10. Conclusion

10.1. Conclusion

This research examined the position of children in the migration process of families living in the boarding house at the Jalan Tlogo Timun in Semarang. The objective was to contribute to theories about family migration and child migration. This was attempt to reach by gaining insight into the reasons behind family migration including movements of both parents and children, the direct and indirect influence of children in migration decisions and the consequences of the migration for all family members in the case area. This resulted in this main question: ***What is the position of children in the migration process of families living in the boarding house at the Jalan Tlogo Timun in Semarang?*** The answer to this question will be provided by considering the topics deduced from the earlier formulated sub questions.

The family migration history

The families of the boarding house were in several very different situations. They vary in stage of life, place of origin, number of children and the made movements of all members. One part of the families always lived together with all members. Two of them were young mothers who migrated first from a small town to the city of Semarang and got married and had children after that. There was also a family that made several movements with longer distances with their children together. The other families had all one or more members that live separately from the family. Most of them left or sent one or more children with their grandparents or other relatives at the hometown or at other places where they stayed before. Besides that there was a mother with a minor son who moved and lives independently from his family.

Migration reasons of the parents

The reason for the migration was for the people I spoke to almost always related to economic advantages. There did not seem to be clear division between the together migrating families and the separate migrating families in this. There can be found more similarities between the reasons of the parents by looking at what kind of place they came from. A part of the respondents came from smaller towns in the region and they expected that the economic circumstances would be better for them in the big city. The reason for them to choose the city of Semarang was because it is close to their place of origin and because they heard positive stories from family and friends who moved here earlier. They wanted to find a job here and did not have a thought out plan before they left their home town. These movements can be seen as a part of urbanization. The second group of

respondents came from bigger cities further away from Semarang. Their reasons to migrate were more specific, they moved towards a job they found before (for example through an acquaintance) or they moved because their job moved and they wanted to keep it. One of the respondents does not belong to both of the groups, she is originally from Semarang and moved to the boarding house because of the low price. For the others this price was together with the good neighbourhood and the availability of (mostly selling) jobs also the reason to choose this place in Semarang above others.

Children migrating with their family

The families who always stayed together wanted to keep their children close and attach importance to let them grow up with both parents. Especially the young mothers were mentioning this. Besides that, they expected the migration would improve the living environment for their children. In the cases where they moved from a smaller town the advantages of a city were pull factors, like better facilities as education and health care and a higher chance of economic improvement for the family. This should result in better prospects for the child. The wish to improve your children their living environment can also be influencing when the movement is from one urban area to another. An example of this is a family who lived in Jakarta before. They lived in a dangerous neighbourhood for their children and the parents were worried about their son who worked on the streets. Here they could live in the boarding house which is a safer place and the mother can easily watch and control her children. They can also go to school with money from a local foundation. For the families that did not (always) migrate with all their children the most important factor that influences the decision to take a child with you seems to be the age of the children. If the children are very young it is more likely that parents take them with them when they migrate. The influence of the children their opinion on the migration decision when they are moving with the family is difficult to define. It depends in first place on the age of the children, at an older age they are more assertive. In the second place it depends on if the parents are very authoritarian or more open minded. One of the respondents with older children seems to belong to the last category. She talked with a children about their complains towards the movements. Nevertheless in the situation of children moving as a family member it would not stop the plans of the parents when the children are against the migration.

Children living without their parents

A precondition to have the opportunity to 'leave a child behind' is that they have a place to stay. In most cases this are relatives like their grandparents who are still living at the place of origin. Parents who made use of this possibility did this in general for the same reasons. The children who are left behind were in several cases already started with school and their parents wanted them to finish it.

They thought it would be easier if they could stay at the same school. After they finished middle school at the age of 14 most of them started working and go their own way. This is related to the influence of the age of a child at the time of migration that is mentioned in the conclusion of the previous sub question. It is easier to change the living environment of a very young child because they do not have obligations like school, jobs or friends. For this parents it felt like a logical decision to let their children stay at the place where they had their (early) childhood. When the parent does not have the ability to take care of a child, this can also be a reason to leave it with relatives. This was the case with an older women that told about the time when her children were little. One of her children stayed with her sister because she felt like she did not have enough money and time for three children. The direct influence of the older children their opinion on the migration decisions varies in this situation. The children can be positive about it because they could stay at their familiar surroundings or unhappy because their parents are leaving them. In two cases this was a bit unclear. The mother told the parents made the decision without their children but there were no complains about it afterwards. The children seems to have more influence in other cases where they really protest against the migration. This becomes clear in the case where parents were planning to let a boy stay, but he did not want that. In the end he came along with his parents. In another case a girl got homesick after her parents left and she moved to her parents in Semarang because of that.

There is a different situation when a child migrates with the family and the parents sent him back to the place of origin after a while. An important reason for this was in both cases that the grandparents were alone and their children felt guilty about that. One of them also had financial reasons. When their daughter is staying with her grandma they are sure that she can go to school and lives under good conditions. The children did not have much influence in this decision. One of the mothers told her son wanted to migrate but he was only 3 years old at that time. In the other case the 11 years old girl did not like the decision but she understands it.

In the situation where a child is migrating and living without any relatives, there was one case. One woman has a 15 years old son who was migrated because of work. He lives with a friend and has still much contact with his mother. He made his own migration decision and his mother supported this.

The post-migration situation

How the migration works out for the families depends on if the migration succeeded or not. It succeeds when the parents can improve their position by for example finding a better job. This will be positive for the children their living circumstances and prospects. It fails when the parents were not able to improve their economic position and the children end up on the streets. It seems that the migration to the boarding house succeed for all the respondents because when asked they all say

they are happy that they made the move and live here now. They all found a (better) job and earn enough money to take care of the family which improved their overall circumstances. They also mentioned to be happy with the environment. This includes the atmosphere and possibilities of the city and the good neighbourhood. They are also glad with the cohesion in the boarding house. The parents who live here with their children were also positive about the child friendly neighbourhood and the possibilities for their children. Notable is that the son of one of the respondents is less happy here because he has to go to school now and at the previous place him worked and earned money. Parents with children living somewhere else have divided opinions about the current situation. One of them is happy with it and says her son is happy too. The others prefer to live with all their children together but they are okay with the situation. According to them this is the best option for now so that makes that they are okay with living separate. Frans van Dijk sees the situation when children are living with their grandparents not as something positive. According to him the generation gap is too big. Although the remittances the parents send home can improve their life, this does generally not compensate the absence of parents.

It varies how and to what extent the parents thought about the future. For the young mothers it seems difficult to think further then their situation now. Maybe they also do not want to think about the future because it is still insecure. They are just happy that their family is together and keeping it this way is their first priority. They have some general ideas about that their young kid would go to school in the future and finds a job, preferably in Semarang. One woman with older kids really did not want to think about the future. Now everything is okay for them but she is afraid that in the future they will have not enough money to pay the school for their children. The other women had more concrete plans of the future like going back to the home town or stay in Semarang and live in a house with all family members together.

In this research the central literature about family migration of writers like Stark and Bloom (1985), Vertovec (1999) and Mazzucato and Schans (2008) is used. The concept of child-migration is examined by using literature like Whitehead and Hashim (2005), Punch (2007) and Bushin (2009). This literature is used to create a theoretical framework, conceptual model and operationalization. Much of the aspects from the literature were similar to the empirical data, like the idea that families make their movements in the way that generates the most benefits even if this results in living separate from each other. Also the chain migration that results from this scattered living families was visible in the empirical results. The categories of children affected by migration overlap mostly, though there was perceived an extra category about children who were sent back.

10.2. Recommendations

Further research about the position of children in the migration process in the context of Semarang can be recommended because this is a topic that is hardly explored. An important recommendation is to change the perspective. The results of this research came from the perspective of the mothers, it would be interesting to compare this with the perspective of their children. This can include the experience of children who are moved with their parents or children who are left behind or sent back and living without their parents. Besides that also the grandparents that take care of their grandchildren can be a topic of interest. It would also be interesting to look at the long term outcome of any kind of migration during childhood. Furthermore a specific research to the phenomenon boarding house would also be relevant because this is still unknown. This can be about the way of living, the condition, the social cohesion and the influence of being a migrant.

10.3. Reflection

From the research and writing process of this thesis I learned a lot. During the fieldwork I had to deal with unexpected situations which made that I had to change my plans. This does not necessary have to be a bad thing, it can also result in cases that are even more interesting. I for example originally planned to research families that moved together with their children. During the first interview with a woman, she told that she moved without her children. At first I thought she was not the right respondent for my research but during the interview I realized that the reasons why parents leave their children behind are quite interesting too. The unexpected situations did not always lead to something positive. As earlier mentioned in the methodology chapter I originally planned together with Jeany to visit more places like this boarding house so we could talk to more migrants. Therefore, we needed to go to the leader of the district. According to him we could not do research in the area without a certain letter from the government of Semarang, the letter we had from Unika was not enough. This caused that I could just focus on the case of this boarding house. I think this research would be more relevant with more respondents.

The cultural differences had also a positive and negative influence on this research. It was really helpful that the people I interviewed really took the time for me, in some cases without any appointment. Besides that it was really fascinating to experience a totally different culture. Because of that there were also some things I did not understand, but the presence of Jeany during the interviews was very helpful. I think the language barrier was the biggest disadvantage of doing a

research abroad. Although Jeany her translations were great, was still pity that I could not literally understand what the respondent said during an interview.

The writing process after the fieldwork took more time then needed. It lasted very long before I felt like I was on the right track. In the future I need to use my time more efficient.

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