

Female transnational migration, religion and subjectivity: The Case of Indonesian domestic workers.

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*Abstract*

Drawing on an analysis of in-depth interviews with returned migrant women from East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia, this paper considers the links between migration, religious beliefs and subjectivity. Low skilled migrant women, including domestic workers, have often been represented as marginalized.

This article argues that in the context of migration, women constantly move through trajectories of power using religion as a spiritual resource. Against the commonly patriarchal characteristics of their religion and community, the women employ cognitive strategies to face challenges in migration. In each stage of their transnational migration, the women's experiences reveal the multitude of ways in which they continue to invest in their beliefs through everyday practices, rituals and networking. These experiences highlight the women's strategies in accessing different forms of power.

This study demonstrates the significance of focusing on these women's experiences, including their everyday religious practices and their shifting sense of self, as a way of broadening the conceptual basis of our understanding of female migration.