# The Bilocal Migrant: Economic Drivers Of Mobility Across The Rural Urban Interface In Central Java, Indonesia

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# The bilocal migrant: Economic drivers of mobility across the rural-urban interface in Central Java, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

The trends of bilocality – in which an individual will spend part of the year in a rural area, and the other in an urban area – presents a unique and increasingly common manifestation of the circular migrant. In this paper, we explore the dynamics of bilocal migrants in Indonesia from a Central Java city and examine migrant points of origin in terms of their characteristics, mobility patterns, and remittance uses. Data were collected from 105 sample cases among those classified as migrants distributed across the study area. We apply the Flocktracker software for our study, which is a mobile-based application that combines online questionnaires and provides associated locational attributes. Most of the bilocal migrants continue to migrate as a strategy to address the lack of income in rural areas. Migrants not only circulate between two destinations from their rural origins to one city, but also increasingly gravitate to other cities as a multiple destination strategy depending on networks and employment availability. A key finding of this study is that overall, although migration to urban areas supports rural household incomes, it contributes in limited ways to the commonly anticipated rural development outcomes. This suggests that policy interventions are mistaking job creation and remittances as a proxy for rural development, whereas policy priorities should be looking beyond job creation to identify other ways to support development in rural areas.

## 1. Introduction

Global trends in the past few decades show that cities in developing countries are growing rapidly. According to UN ESCAP and UN HABITAT (2015), the year 2008 became the tipping point of the world's population shift to a more urban world, whereby the global urban population surpassed the rural. Subsequent predictions also show that by 2050, people living in urban areas will consist of at least 65% of the total global population, of which most will be located in Asian and African cities. These urbanization trends are buttressed by the greater opportunities for employment and access to services in cities.

Unbalanced development in many Asian countries has led to a significant movement of people, both involving internal and transboundary migration, and characterised by movements from rural to urban centres. This mobility is largely compelled by the insufficiency of the agricultural sector to provide adequate employment opportunities (ILO, 2011). Generational differences also shape this trend, whereby younger individuals are the ones encouraged to migrate (Gödecke and Waibel, 2011; Taylor and Fletcher, 2007; Rosenzweig and Stark, 1989). Within the last two decades, the ease of movement also considerably escalated temporary migration dynamics in Southeast, South, and East Asia (De Braw, 2010; Deshingkar and Akter, 2009; Ha et al., 2009; Lam et al., 2007). This temporary migration is characterised as a circular migration, in which rural households apply strategies of seasonal movements to complement family income. Circular migration is not a new strategy, whereby part of a rural household strategy is to encourage a family member to temporarily leave to work in urban areas (Pham and Hill, 2008). This kind of movement is one of the confounding contributors to urban population increments in many large Indonesian cities, accumulating and reshaping cities, and overflowing into expanded peri-urban areas (Firman, 2002).

The increase of urban populations of many Asian cities has been directly affected by urban development trends that extend beyond traditional city boundaries (Hugo, 2006; Jones et al., 1999; McGee and Robinson, 1995). Rapid urban growth is derived from three main factors, including the natural growth of the city, rural to urban migration,

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and reclassification from 'rural' to 'urban' (UN-Habitat & ESCAP 2015; Hugo, 2015). While natural growth is more dominant in shaping growth in a smaller region, rural to urban migration and reclassification from 'rural' to 'urban' are more indicative of locations transforming into megacities. In Indonesia, these megacities include regions such as Jakarta, Surabaya, and Bandung metropolitan areas, and more recently are indicative of regions in emerging medium-sized cities like Semarang, Surakarta and Yogyakarta. Moreover, in large countries like Indonesia, rural to urban migration and reclassification of rural to urban accounted for more than 80% of urban growth in the 1990s (World Bank and IMF, 2013). There has been considerable attention to the spatial dynamics of urbanisation, peri-urbanisation, and the agglomeration of metropolitan areas (Friedmann, 2011; Leaf, 2011; Webster, 2002). Much of these spatial dynamics of urbanization are often imagined to be unidirectional, shaped by rural to urban migration. However, in this paper we examine the more fluid dynamics of mobility, a circular migration process that is not static through a common experience, which we describe as the bilocal migrant.

In most large cities in developing countries, spatial movement in terms of rural-urban or temporary migration is commonly attributed to economic reasons. In Malaysia for example, the income gap between rural and urban regions resulted in a vast exodus of rural household members migrating to urban areas to seek out work (Hussain et al., 2014). Meanwhile in Thailand, the push factors such as a lack of resource support for agriculture and increasing debt ratios were the main causes for household members to migrate (Gödecke and Waibel, 2011). In Indonesia, rural to urban migration also occurs for a variety of economic reasons (Rakodi and Firman, 2009). Circular rural-urban migration is a common phenomenon observed among migrants in many large Indonesian cities that attract rural people to migrate in search of income opportunities for a variety of reasons. Most of the circular migrants in large cities originate from surrounding areas, especially in megapolitan regions like Jakarta and Bandung (Firman, 2009). The broader rural-urban population ratios over time indicate the percentage of people living in cities increasing from 30.6% in 1990, to 44.3% in 2010, and 55.3% in 2018 (UN DESA, 2018; UN ESCAP and UN HABITAT, 2010).

Even though migration processes have taken place for decades, the economic crisis that hit the country in 1998 accelerated these trends, which was followed by an increase in the number and intensity of the migration process (Pratama, 2015; Fallon and Lucas, 2002). At that time, rural households simply believed they had no choice but to diversify economic strategies by sending members of their households to move to the city to seek alternative sources of income. For many rural areas, the agriculture sector remains insufficient in generating a significant multiplier effect to fulfil labour demands. This is supported by the fact that the land-labour ratio among average Indonesian farming households is less than a hectare of land for cultivation, particularly in Java (Mundlak et al., 2004; Manning, 1998). Limited land, labour, and livelihood opportunities in rural areas underpin the push factors driving rural people to migrate to cities, either permanently or in a circular fashion.

Circular rural-urban migration takes on many forms in different households, but nevertheless is increasingly a part of common household level livelihood strategies. In particular, this study classifies this trend as migrants that begin to relate to their geographic positioning in a duality that can be described to as the bilocal migrant. In other words, the localities of the urban and rural that the migrant occupy, at once becomes a sense of place in which they both belong and are absent for long periods of time. Unfortunately, the seasonality of rural-urban mobilisation in Indonesia is difficult to determine through formal surveys (Hugo, 1982). According to Skeldon (2012), migration data typically refers to someone's birthplace or current residence. Less data is available that describes periodical movements. The lack of available data of circular rural-urban migration also presents another major obstacle for researchers quantifying the temporal dimension of migration. Hence, the overall dynamics of circular rural-urban migration are difficult to comprehend (Ha et al., 2009). This in turn creates particular challenges for policymakers to anticipate the trends and address their effects.

One effective way to study rural-urban migrants is through a micro level approach. A micro level approach directly interacts with the migrant and helps to capture information related to migration trends. Findings help to describe what remittances mean for communities of origin as well as for the migrant (Cohen, 2005). On the other hand, studies on circular rural urban migration mostly focus on the uses of remittances and the migrant characteristics, without explicit attention on their mobility pattern (Satti et al., 2016; Gollopeni, 2015; Viet Cuong and Mont, 2012; Garip, 2012; Brücker and Jahn, 2011; Kirdar, 2009; McKenzie and Sasin, 2007; de Haas, 2006; Zhao, 2005; Cohen, 2005; Quartey and Blankson, 2004; Gubert, 2002).

The objective of this article is to explore the characteristics, remittance uses, and the mobility patterns of circular rural-urban migration. Further, this article tries to seek to what extend circular rural-urban migration contributes to the migrant's livelihood and community in rural area. This article also explicitly focuses on the empirical examples that highlight the bilocality of migration. This paper also provides a more comprehensive understanding of the migration process and its effects on broader development outcomes, particularly related to the impact of those dynamics unfolding in the rural points of origin. Due to the limitations of the scope herein, similar studies in the future should also attempt to provide a better understanding on the perplexing ways that spatial patterns form, and help to point to more rigorous quantitative methods on the utilization of remittances among rural households, as well as redirecting attention to the overall community development goals that splinter across bilocality.

## 2. Defining circular migration, bilocality, and connections to rural development

Migration – either permanent or temporary, within a state or transnationally – is not a new phenomenon, but the scale of mobility and its influence on urbanization continues to increase. Though more often examined in its fixity, temporary migration has also been studied by applying various terms such as circular, seasonal, short-term, and spontaneous migration, which follow a diverse spectrum of motivations, desires, and opportunities (Nail, 2015; Keshri and Bhagat, 2012). Zelinsky (1971) classical study on this shows that movements have a common purpose by seeking a temporary change of residence in the short term, in repetitive or cyclical patterns, which involves specific paths to a network of locales.

The term circular migration is generally used in the temporary migration literature and refers to internal migration dynamics in various settings, including rural-urban migration, urbanization writ large, and rural development in developing countries (particularly through studies of remittances); and has been used widely since the late 1960's and 1970's (Skeldon, 2010, 2012; Newland, 2009). By referring to the nature of migration such as for work, survival, or as a life cycle process, circular migration covers both seasonal or periodical migration (Newland, 2009). Circular migration encapsulates those who move from rural to urban areas but do not change their usual place of residence in the village, although they are absent for periods longer than a single day or up to six months (Hugo, 1982). Some village-based employment is usually preserved by circular migrants during their temporary absence. Nevertheless, nowadays the term circular migration is also applied in various literature to describe migration phenomenon externally, such as among countries (Agunias and Newland, 2007). Therefore, origin and migration destination are a central concept (Shen and Chiang, 2011).

Population mobility of origin and destination shapes mobility patterns, and the resultant linkages create feedback loops back and forth. In China for example, many circular urban-rural migrants oscillate

between cities and villages without permanently settling in the cities where they work and live (Shen and Chiang, 2011). The continuum of this circulation type creates the bilocal migrant, whereby people move regularly and their presence is as important in both their villages and among the urban areas they occupy. Bilocal migrants are bound to their origin villages in the form of family relations, social networks, identity and customs (King et al., 2013). The practice of bilocality results in a double edge of benefits and drawbacks by their presence and absence in their relations with both rural and urban areas (Zhu and Chen, 2010). Citizenship for the bilocal migrant typically remains in their point of origins in rural area, but as their main livelihoods are in the city, they have a distinct role and interaction with the city.

Migrate to urban areas not only considerably change the shape of the city, but also distinctly transform rural spaces, usually in the form of remittances or the investment preparations for anticipated future return. Rural spaces have thus transformed as part of the socioeconomic development opportunities shaped by migration. The movement of rural people, and mostly the absence of younger generations out of rural communities, has impacted the social and economic structures of most rural villages (Gödecke and Waibel, 2011). The decision-making processes for rural households to select, compel, or draw individuals to migrate are explained by various empirical micro-migration models, whereby some models focus on human capital investment models (Todaro and Maruszko, 1987; Todaro, 1976), while others focus on the more socially constructed dimensions (Nail, 2015). While, the former model considers the costs and benefits as the major concern in deciding to move to another location, the latter highlights the figure of the migrant and notions of identity as the driving forces. The decision to migrate is not only intended to improve overall household income but also to diversify household risk, and strive to meet broader notions of fulfilment, success, or need. Many migration models thus point to the factors of opportunity for reducing future risks, particularly in relation to the rural agricultural sector. In other words, migration serves as a form of insurance and assurance for departing and returning migrants of having a place go, and return to when economic ventures do not succeed (Hagen-Zanker, 2008; Stark and Taylor, 1991; Rosenzweig, 1988).

At scale, migration has resulted in a positive feedback for rural communities, but these benefits are not experience in uniform ways (Deshingkar and Akter, 2009). Those that produce higher earnings through more skilled opportunities develop new hierarchies of social networks that create new opportunities for growth; while unskilled labour migrants depend on existing social networks. Whether skilled or unskilled, educated or with limited education, bilocal migrants have their own contributions to the rural economy and its development. Rural development in particular is closely affected by the patterns of bilocal migration, particularly through remittances (Lucas, 2007). Migration may offer an escape from poverty among those that face limited opportunities in rural areas, while others are compelled to migrate. Opportunities from migration also provides relief in the form of additional income for family and relatives that remain in rural areas, which might not be able, or want to migrate. Bilocal migration accordingly contributes to the development of rural areas in significant ways. Empirical studies have shown this positive contribution on rural households and communities (Akay et al., 2014; Quartey and Blankson, 2004; Gubert, 2002; Schiff, 1994). Furthermore, bilocal migration may develop into a wider range of opportunities for adapting to future shocks and stressors, which might currently threaten family livelihood (De Haan et al., 2000).

## 3. Material and methods

### 3.1. Study area

The study area for this research is located in Surakarta City, Central Java, Indonesia as shown in Fig. 1a. Surakarta city was chosen as the study area because it experienced significant expansion in terms of city size in recent years. Furthermore, the economic activities of the city also include a dynamic population that fluctuates between the day and night, involving a wide range of informal sector activities, pointing to the likelihood of a high level of bilocal migration. The consideration to observe the whole city as a unit of analysis is due to the interests of the spatial representation of the issue. Surakarta can be categorized as a medium-sized city and the second largest city in Central Java after Semarang, with a total area of 44.04 $km^2$. Despite the fact that new developments are expanding the city limits, reshaping neighbouring districts (Kartasura, Solo Baru and Colomadu), the core economic activities remain concentrated in Surakarta. The city plays an important role as the centre of trade, tourism, and services for the surrounding area. A total of 586,036 people reside in the city (CBS, 2016), but these numbers more than triple when factoring in those that migrate into the city during the day. The Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) in 2016 noted that during the day, approximately 1.8 million people are active in the city. This number indicates that not only do cross-jurisdictional elements shape day-to-day activities in the city, but furthermore, a burgeoning economy has shaped a large informal sector, one that is indelibly influenced by migrants that interact with the city for various periods of time.

### 3.2. Data collection

Unfortunately, in Indonesia there is no statistical reference that includes the phenomenon of bilocal migration, whether at the national or local level (Hugo, 1982). This is unsurprising given that the nature of movement is temporary and usually unrecorded. Thus, there is no baseline data that can be used to make a preliminary identification of the total population of bilocal migrants in the city, specifically in Surakarta. For this study, data were collected from 105 samples of circular rural – urban migrants distributed in the study area by using simple random sampling (see Fig. 1b), by which each member of the sampling frame had an equal opportunity of being selected to participate in the research.

To determine suitable ways to identify empirical samples, specific criteria were developed. First, selected migrants must originally be from a rural area. Second, their minimum stay in the city must last somewhere between 1 week and 6 months, in which selected cases were sampled from those that have family members that still live in rural areas that they regularly visit. Third, the design remained open to different types of labour type, selecting from both skilled or unskilled labour.

A standardized questionnaire was thereafter distributed in order to collect data about bilocal migrants in Surakarta. More specifically, the questionnaire in this research collected characteristic information of the respondents, their circulation migration patterns, and the use of remittances to rural households and communities. The questionnaires were deployed by using an application called Flocktracker – a mobile-based application that combines the function of an online questionnaire with location attributes. Flocktracker was originally developed by Zegras et al. (2015) to plot bus routes in Dhaka. The application has since been applied widely in urban mobility settings. As stated by Medeiros et al. (2018), the importance of using this application is in its ability to record the automated geolocations for each interview. Flocktracker allows the field activities to speed up the survey and minimize data collection problems because results are simultaneously uploaded, organized and saved. The use of information technology-based methods can increase overall efficiency and accuracy of data collection processes.

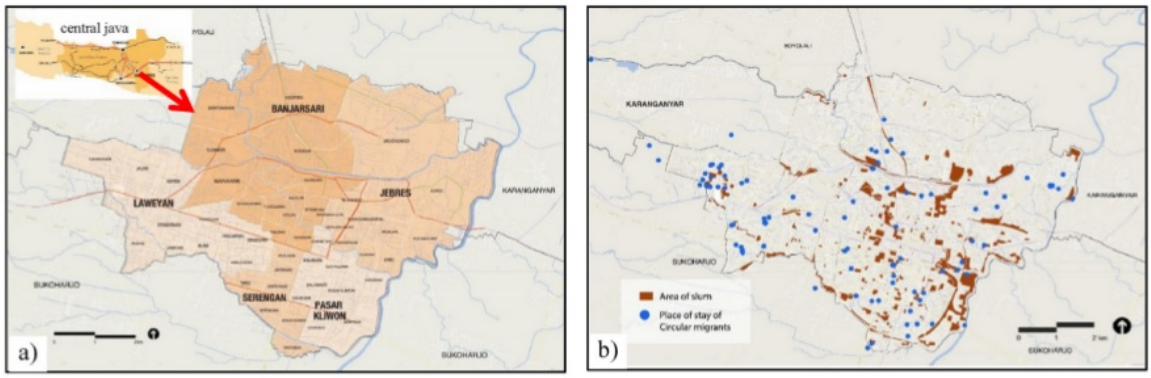


**Fig. 1.** City of Surakarta (a), and Samples distribution (b).

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Characteristics of bilocal migrants

#### 4.1.1. Origins

From the survey, most of the bilocal migrants originated from areas surrounding Surakarta, such as Boyolali, Sukoharjo, Wonogiri, Sragen, and Klaten districts. These districts are within a radius of 60 km of Surakarta. Bilocal migrants from this area shape around 36.2% of the total samples. A significant number of bilocal migrants were also identified from West Java Province, particularly from rural areas of Tasikmalaya, Cirebon, Kuningan, Ciamis and Garut districts. The bilocal migrants from this area share about 33.3% of the total samples, whereas Tasikmalaya district was found as the largest contributor with 7.1% of samples. Most migrants from West Java work as food vendors, selling traditional foods. Other than that, some of the bilocal migrants also come from other regions in Central Java Province like Grobogan, Kendal, Pekalongan, Tegal, and Brebes district. Others are from Yogyakarta and East Java Provinces. Fig. 2 shows the distribution of the origin of the bilocal migrants.

#### 4.1.2. Migration duration and the factor of proximity

The results showed that 45.7% of the respondents stay in the city between 3 and 6 months for one migratory period. Those who stay during this range of time are usually individuals who have temporary contracts in the city, like construction workers who have contracts between 3 and 6 months, depending on the project. Those who worked in food shops like *burjo* – a traditional food made from green beans – are usually contracted for periods of around 4 months. Those who decide to stay for more sustained periods do so because of the distance from their hometowns is quite far. About 28.6% of the respondents stay for shorter periods of time in the city, ranging from 1 to 3 months. This latter category consists of individuals who go to Surakarta and return regularly to their village. Usually, these migrants have their main jobs in the city, and even though they spend some time in the village, they will come back again and again on a regular basis. This latter scenario applied for some food vendors, some type of other informal vendors, pedicab drivers, and industrial workers.

Meanwhile, 7.6% of the respondents stay in the city for less than a month. Those who stay for these short periods of time are usually individuals who still have family in rural areas within a manageable distance (usually under the range of 60 km) to go back and forth for a short period of time. This case also applies for seasonal vendors who sell specific items during specific time periods in the city, like the case of flag sellers who come to the city between July–August every year anticipating the market leading up to national Independence Day. In this case, the sellers come from further distances, more than 350 km, but they do only one cycle of bilocal migration in a year, by which they spend the rest of the time in the village. Back in the village they are employed as flag makers and produce the item during their stay in the village. Other respondents have an uncertain time of stay in the city and varied on a case by case basis, categorized by the range of stay between 1 and 6 months.

#### 4.1.3. Longitudinal experience

The length of time of bilocal migration strongly correlates with migrant age groups. As illustrated in Table 1, younger bilocal migrants usually began recently, while older ones have long practiced the circulation strategy for a sustained period. About 10 respondents from the age group of 40–49 to > 60 years mentioned that they already practiced their bilocal strategy for more than 20 years. The information from Table 1 indicates that most of the bilocal migrants began quite young and some of them maintained the same livelihood strategies for a sustained period.

#### 4.1.4. Education level and type of job

Education level is often related with the type of job that can be accessed by people. In terms of education levels, bilocal migrants surveyed in this research mostly graduated from Senior High School (36%), and Junior High School (34%). While 25% of the respondents graduated from elementary school and 4% never attended school at all. Only 1% of the respondents have education experience at a university. In terms of job by education level as shown in Table 2, more migrants worked as food vendors, which was dominated by those with elementary, junior high school, and senior high school education, followed by informal vendors, construction worker, and pedicab drivers. Uneducated migrants worked as pedicab drivers or as informal vendors.

#### 4.1.5. Age, gender, and marital status

Bilocal migrants selected in the sample group are dominated by men (see Fig. 3). The ratio of male to female migrants is 5 to 1, by which the number of male migrant respondents are 83.8% of the total respondents, with the remaining number of female migrants at 16.2%. In terms of age group, 32.7% of the respondents range from 20 to 29 years, while 23.1% of the respondents are 30–39 years of age. The number of younger migrants is also high, in which ~11% of the respondents are younger than 19 years old.

Table 3 shows that almost 64% of respondents are married and leave the village on a temporary basis, while the main family members such as the wife or husband and or children still live in the rural area. The remaining 35.2% of the respondents are single, and common among the relatively younger respondents. One of their motivations for migrating is to seek experience in other areas than their hometown. The marital status affects the circulation pattern and future intention of migrants.

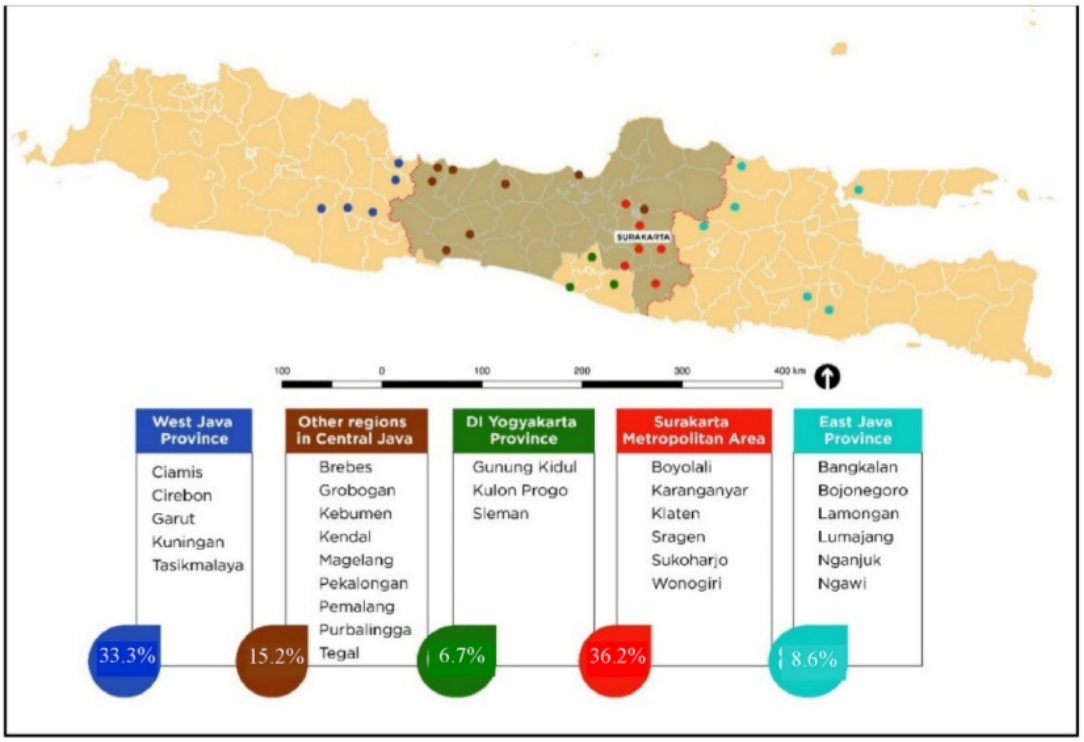


**Fig. 2.** The origin of bilocal migrants in Surakarta City.

**Table 1**
The length of time of bilocal migration experience.

| Length of time migrating bilocally | Migrant age groups (years) | | | | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | < 19 | 20–29 | 30–39 | 40–49 | 50–59 | > 60 | |
| < 1 year | 4 | 3 | 2 | – | – | – | **9** |
| 1–3 years | 6 | 21 | 3 | 8 | – | – | **38** |
| 3–5 years | 2 | 6 | 8 | 1 | – | 1 | **18** |
| 5–10 years | – | 3 | 6 | 4 | 2 | – | **15** |
| 10–15 years | – | – | 6 | 4 | 1 | – | **11** |
| 15–20 years | – | – | – | 3 | – | 1 | **4** |
| > 20 years | – | – | – | 3 | 4 | 3 | **10** |
| Total | **12** | **33** | **25** | **23** | **7** | **5** | **105** |

#### 4.1.6. Income levels and motivations

On average, bilocal migrants in Surakarta gain relatively low incomes in the city. As highlighted in Fig. 4, incomes range between US$ 66 to US$ 133 per month), which is characteristic of 66.7% of total respondents. The average income calculated from all respondents in this survey is $US 118 per month. Nevertheless, this amount is surprisingly higher than the minimum wage standard for Surakarta during 2017 which is only US$ 102 per month. However, migrant employment in the city usually correlates to rate of income. Several employment types, like food vendors and food shop workers have a wide range of incomes, from less than US$ 67 per month to more than US$ 167 per month.

Meanwhile, other types of jobs, like pedicab drivers, industrial workers, and service workers have a smaller range of incomes, from less than US$ 67 to US$ 100–133. These three job categories have the lowest average salary compared to others. On the other hand, semi-formal sector workers – those who worked in more formal environments such as shop and printing companies – also have short ranges of salary, but this group also have a slightly higher rate of income compared to the above-mentioned categories (Fig. 4). In terms of migrant average income, other informal vendors have the highest average income compared to other types of jobs, followed by construction

**Table 2**
Level of education attainment by type of job.

| Type of job | Education attainment | | | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Never attended school | Elementary school | Junior high school | Senior high school | University | |
| Food vendors | 1 | 17 | 20 | 11 | – | 49 |
| Food shop workers | – | – | 3 | 6 | – | 9 |
| Other informal vendors | – | 2 | 7 | 4 | 1 | 14 |
| Construction workers | – | – | 7 | 4 | – | 11 |
| Industrial workers | – | – | 1 | 2 | – | 3 |
| Pedicab drivers | 3 | 3 | 1 | 2 | – | 9 |
| Service workers | – | 2 | – | 4 | – | 6 |
| Semiformal-sector workers | – | – | – | 4 | – | 4 |
| Total | 4 | 24 | 39 | 37 | 1 | 105 |

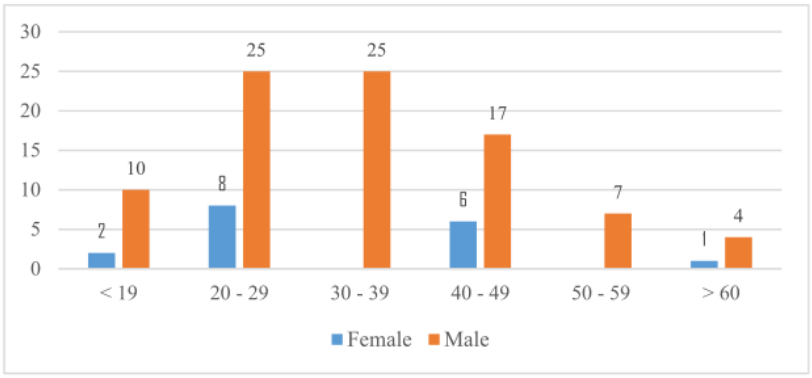


**Fig. 3.** Age and gender distribution.

**Table 3**
Marital status.

| Marital Status | Female | | Male | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % |
| Single | 8 | 7.6% | 29 | 27.6% | 37 | 35.2% |
| Married | 8 | 7.6% | 59 | 56.2% | 67 | 63.8% |
| Divorced-widowed | 1 | 1.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 1 | 1.0% |
| Total | **17** | **16.2%** | **88** | **83.8%** | **105** | **100%** |

workers, semiformal sector workers and food vendors. Pedicab drivers have the lowest rate of income among other job types, which are also below Surakarta's minimum wage standards. Industrial workers have an income rate similar to city standards.

The internal decision for bilocal migration between two places is mainly due to economic reasons (see Fig. 5 for motivations). Among the 105 sample respondents – note they are allowed to provide more than one answer on their motivation for bilocal migration – 90 respondents (85%) of migrants sought to obtain additional sources of income for the family as their major reason. Thereafter, 62% of respondents are motivated by social and cultural reasons, while others are compelled to leave for reason like lack of access.

### 4.2. Circulation patterns

#### 4.2.1. The bilocality of migrants: rural-urban livelihood profile

The bilocality aspect of the migrant is explained by the characteristics of rural-urban livelihoods as shown in Table 4. In this research, the migrant's core family members – either their spouse or child – still live in the village. The migrants usually go to the city and return to the village frequently either for work or visiting family. About 73% of the respondents still maintain employment in rural areas. The remainder do not have permanent employment but provide support for family members in his/her line of work in return for pay, usually in farming sectors such as rice farming or home-based businesses such as food and snack stalls. Meanwhile, in regards to land ownership, only about half of respondents still have agriculture land in rural areas. They usually still work in the agriculture sector upon return or have family who work in that sector.

The agriculture-based work shapes around 60% of the experience of total respondents. However, there are also others who work in the trade and service sectors, i.e. those who run home-based businesses, work as traders, find construction work, do service work, and other semiformal sector employment. The area that stands out about these two livelihood profiles is the fact that those who work in agriculture sectors in the village have a diverse range of jobs in the city, including serving as food vendors to service workers. On the other hand, all respondents who work as semiformal sector workers in the city, which includes work as shopkeepers, usually do not have jobs anymore in rural areas.

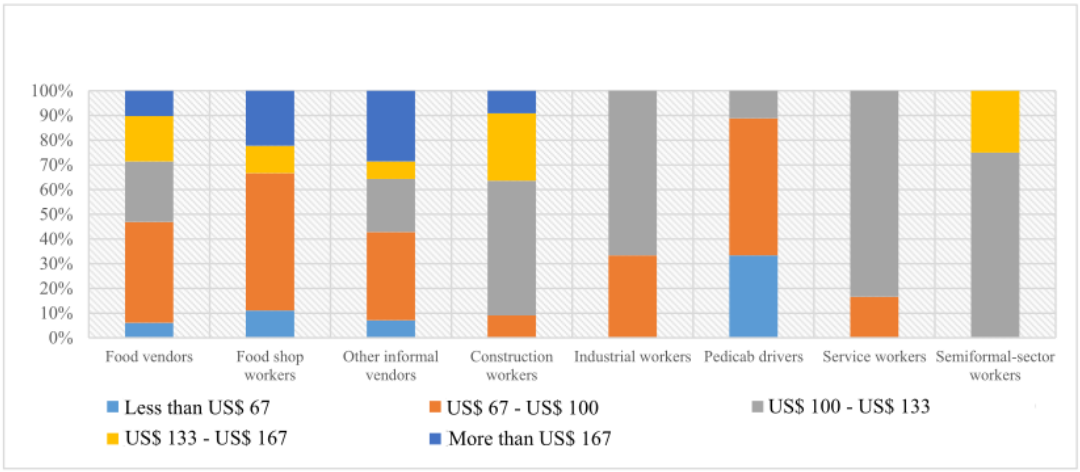


**Fig. 4.** Percentage of income per month by job type.

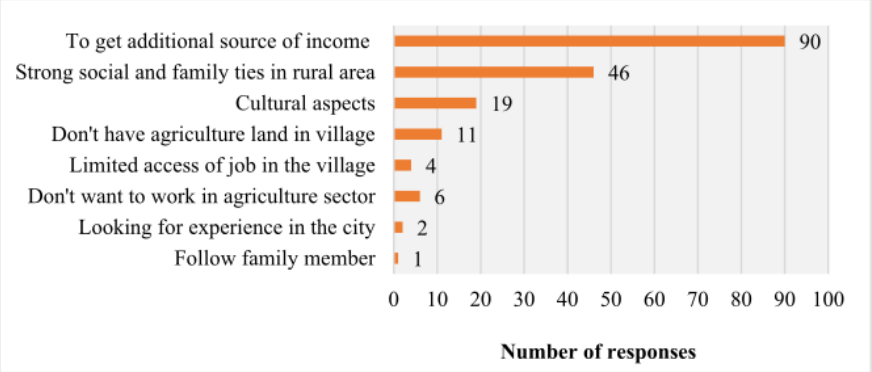


**Fig. 5.** Motivation for migration.

**Table 4**
Profile of bilocal livelihoods.

| Type of Job in Urban Area | Respondents | Still have Job in Rural Area | | Family Living in Rural Area | | Agriculture Land Ownership | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Yes | % Yes | Yes | % Yes | Yes | % Yes |
| Food vendors | 49 | 30 | 61 | 49 | 100 | 26 | 53 |
| Food shop workers | 9 | 8 | 89 | 9 | 100 | 2 | 22 |
| Other informal vendors | 14 | 12 | 86 | 14 | 100 | 8 | 57 |
| Construction workers | 11 | 10 | 91 | 11 | 100 | 7 | 64 |
| Industrial workers | 3 | 3 | 100 | 3 | 100 | 1 | 33 |
| Pedicab drivers | 9 | 9 | 100 | 9 | 100 | 3 | 33 |
| Service workers | 6 | 5 | 83 | 6 | 100 | 4 | 67 |
| Semiformal-sector workers | 4 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 100 | 2 | 50 |
| Total | 105 | 77 | 73 | 105 | 100 | 53 | 50 |

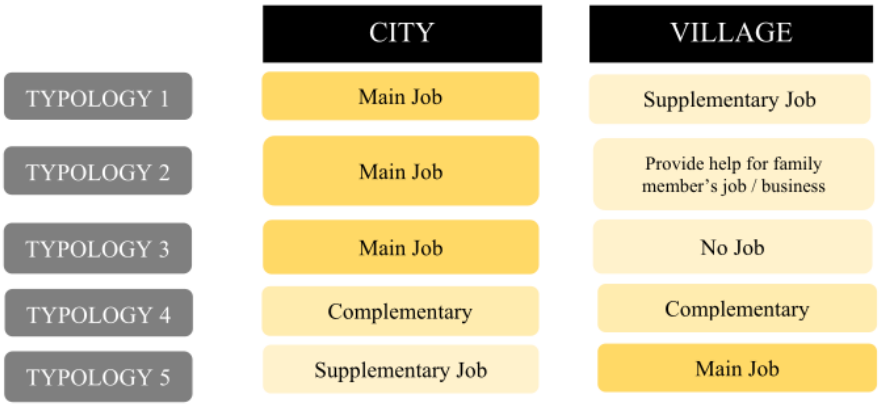


**Fig. 6.** Classification of bilocal livelihood typologies.

According to the result of the survey, the livelihood profile of these bilocal migrants can be classified into five typologies. Each typology was identified based on the livelihood profile of the samples in rural and urban areas, mainly based on job type at each locale as viewed by the respondent (Fig. 6). Typology 1 considers their main job in the city with a supplementary job in the village. Typology 2 considers the main site of employment also in the city, but they do not have a full-time job in the village upon their return. Rather, they provide help for a family member in his/her line of work in return for pay. A third typology has a full-time job in the city and no job in the rural area, but they still maintain bilocality, especially to spend time with family or maintain assets. The fourth typology has jobs both in the city and the village as complementary to each other. The fifth typology is the bilocal migrant who has their main job in the village, and obtains supplementary employment in the city. Table 5 provides a further descriptive explanation of the typologies of the bilocal migrant relative to their livelihoods and circularity.

#### 4.2.2. *The iterative and spatial dimension*

From the survey, two types of circulation patterns were identified in relation to the migrant jobs in Surakarta, i.e.: a simple pattern and a multiple pattern (see Fig. 7). The simple pattern applies for migrants that apply circularity strategies in a recurring process between two areas. This case applies for migrants who have a more permanent or structured job in the city, whereas the migrants can always come back to obtain employment such as food vendors, food shop workers, pedicab drivers, semiformal-sector workers, and as other informal vendors. In the case of pedicab drivers, they usually come to the city and rent the

**Table 5**
Typology of bilocal livelihoods.

| Typology | Livelihood condition | Description |
|---|---|---|
| Typology 1 | Main job in city and supplementary work in village | • Stay longer in the city, around 8–10 months<br>• Migrant household depends on earnings in the city as the main income for the family, while income in the village is seen as supplementary.<br>• Circularity is maintained in order to keep both jobs in both locations. |
| Typology 2 | Main job in city – provide help in village | • Migrants do not have permanent employment in the village, usually only helping family members to do their line of work in return for payment<br>• Circularity often, but not necessarily for the purpose of work, often to visit family in rural area. |
| Typology 3 | Main job in city – no job in village | • Migrants do not have a job in rural area but still maintain circularity.<br>• Movements are usually for the purpose of seeing family members or maintaining assets in the village.<br>• Even though migrants do not have a job in the village, without intention of moving to the city.<br>• Circularity occurs regularly since most of them come from surrounding areas of Surakarta. |
| Typology 4 | Complementary - Complementary | • Migrants have not decided which one is the main job for them, because both types of work are considered as complementary to one another.<br>• Usually they stay in the city and village for similar amounts of time, or they make equal rate of income even though time differences can vary.<br>• In the case of farm workers who work as pedicab drivers in the city, they come back to the village during key planting or harvest seasons. They consider this pattern as complementary rather than one supporting the other. |
| Typology 5 | Main job in village – supplementary job in city | • Stay in the city and village same amount of time, around 6 - 6 months to 8–4 months.<br>• Some migrants only stay in the city for a very short period of time, around 1–2 months in the city.<br>• Circularity more periodical.<br>• Most migrants included in this category are self-employed farmers who own agricultural land in the village or work as service workers who come to the city to sell products that they make in the village. |

pedicab. Therefore, even though it is not their main employment, they can always easily return to the city and recommence their work whenever they want, because there is always a demand for these services.

The multiple patterns of circulation also involve varying destinations. The migrants who left the origin area and travelled to Surakarta to work then returned to their origin at some point. At times they went on to other destinations. This type of circularity is applied for those who have less permanent employment in the city or those with short-term contract systems, such as construction workers that have a more permanent job in rural area as farm workers. They usually work in agriculture sector in rural areas but migrate to urban areas for supplementary income during time periods where less labour is required for agriculture. Therefore, they can work on daily rates, especially common for construction projects, upon which they can also follow networks to many different cities pending opportunities. The multiple pattern is also found among food shop workers, particularly *burjo* sellers who come from West Java, whereby they have the regular rolling system that allows migrants workers to return home after four months of work in the city. They will stay in the village for around two weeks to a month before the employer sends them to another city.

Multiple patterns also present a unique characteristic of bilocality from the perspective of the migrant, in which the two types of multiple destinations were practiced in terms of movements to different cities. While the circularity of the construction workers and food shop sellers are more driven by the work demand in other cities and employment systems, the other type of circularity also depends on migrant decisions to move to other cities. In the case of food vendors, industrial workers, and other informal vendors, the decision to move to other cities are usually determined by considering market potential. This type of decision usually requires a longer time. Thus, this type of job usually involves multiple circularity to the same area, then when a new opportunity arises, they will move to other cities, to follow a pattern of circularity at the new city. But in the case of construction workers and food shop workers, destinations changed found more often, while the period of stay in one migratory period is also usually shorter. This situation is described in Fig. 8.

### 4.3. Remittance uses and contributions to rural development

#### 4.3.1. Remittance use for rural households

From primary data collection, 66.6% of the migrants are the main income earners for their household. Bilocal migrants who send the largest amount of remittances to the rural household relative to their earnings in the city are construction workers and service workers. Both of these categories send more than 60% of their earnings in the city to their families in rural areas. Meanwhile, industrial workers and pedicab drivers send less remittances to their family. In comparison to the others, these two types of job also gain the lowest income. The rationale that they send smaller amounts of money is because they use the rest of the income to fulfil their daily needs in the city. Table 6 shows the distribution of average remittances from each type of job.

The dominant use of remittances is for consumptive uses in the household, particularly to fulfil daily needs of the family. Data on remittance usage is presented in Table 7. The result from all respondents is compiled and summarized per expense item, and it is found that on average, the use of remittances for daily consumption (food) of family shares amount to 39.2% of the total remittance. Meanwhile, the second highest use of the average remittance of the migrants is for education (16.8%). This is understandable since most are the main income earners, and most have school age children. The spending for education is actually considered as a productive use since the purpose of spending for education is considered an improvement to the quality of living of the next generation in the family. The third highest use of the remittance is allocated for savings (14.91%), which means that the rural household is aware about their family's future, indicating higher expectations for the future. Surprisingly, the use of remittances for other consumptive uses other than food is quite low. According to interviews with respondents, some of them mentioned that the priority is for daily needs and education, while buying secondary needs are not considered as crucial.

#### 4.3.2. Remittance use for rural community

Table 8 presents data of remittances for rural community use. It shows the spending for gifts and donations for neighbours or relatives is one of the highest amounts, with an actual average of US$ 8.5. The amount that they spend for this allocation varies from time to time, which really depends on the number of social events and ceremonies that occurs in a given month. Other types of utilization of remittances for rural communities is the contribution for the improvement of infrastructure and facilities, like mosques and small roads. The relative average of spending for infrastructure with the actual average is quite small, US$ 6.5 among 13 responses (more or less 5–7% from total income per month).

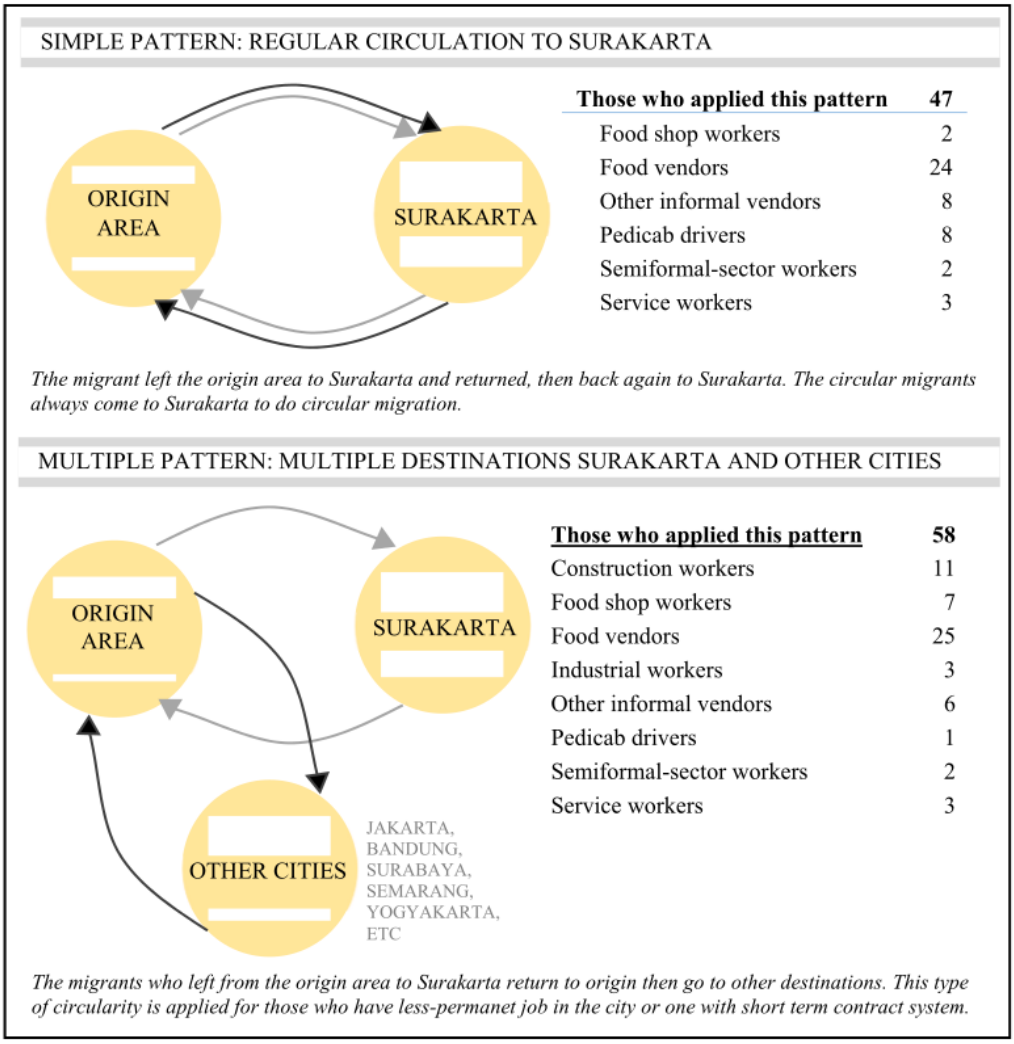


**Fig. 7.** Circulation pattern of the bilocal migrant.

In sum, remittance uses of bilocal migrants are still primarily allocated for domestic household use (Table 9). The use for consumptive matters such as food, goods, medical expenses, debt payment, and housing improvements govern 56.33% of total remittance spending, while the use for more productive matters like education, savings and investment shapes 34.83% of the remittance uses. Meanwhile, the use for the rural community is quite limited, which forms only 8.84% of the total remittance, with consumptive use around 5.32%. However, the shares that contribute to rural community development, in particular for infrastructure improvement and capital loans for the rural community are still very low, affecting only 3.52% of total remittances sent to the rural household.

### *4.4. Relationship of livelihood typologies, circularity, and remittance uses*

The dynamics of bilocal migration points to the interconnected aspects in terms of typology, circular patterns, duration of stay, types of jobs, and remittance uses (Table 10). Simple circular patterns are mostly practiced by the bilocal migrants with livelihood typologies 1, 2, and 3. This category of bilocal migrant spends more time in the city and uses more of their income for household needs, with less contributions to the broader community. On the other hand, the combination of simple and multiple circular patterns in livelihood typology 4 – whereby the main intent of their job in the urban area is to provide support in the rural area – tends to provide more support to overall community development. Those with multiple pattern bilocality, where migrants spend more time in the village as their main job (typology 5) also provides positive contributions for both consumptive and productive uses in remittance, also providing a positive impact on community development.

## 5. Discussion

Exploring mobility through the lens of bilocality of migrants through their various characteristics, patterns, and remittances provides context for broader trends in Indonesian development. The findings herein point to a larger contribution to better understanding the patterns and dynamics of migration and employment that has taken place, solidified, and intensified between rural to urban areas for decades. Rural-urban migration is shaping urbanisation in Indonesia at various scales in ways that are often misunderstood or explained in overly simplistic ways. Migration is believed to be a major cause of

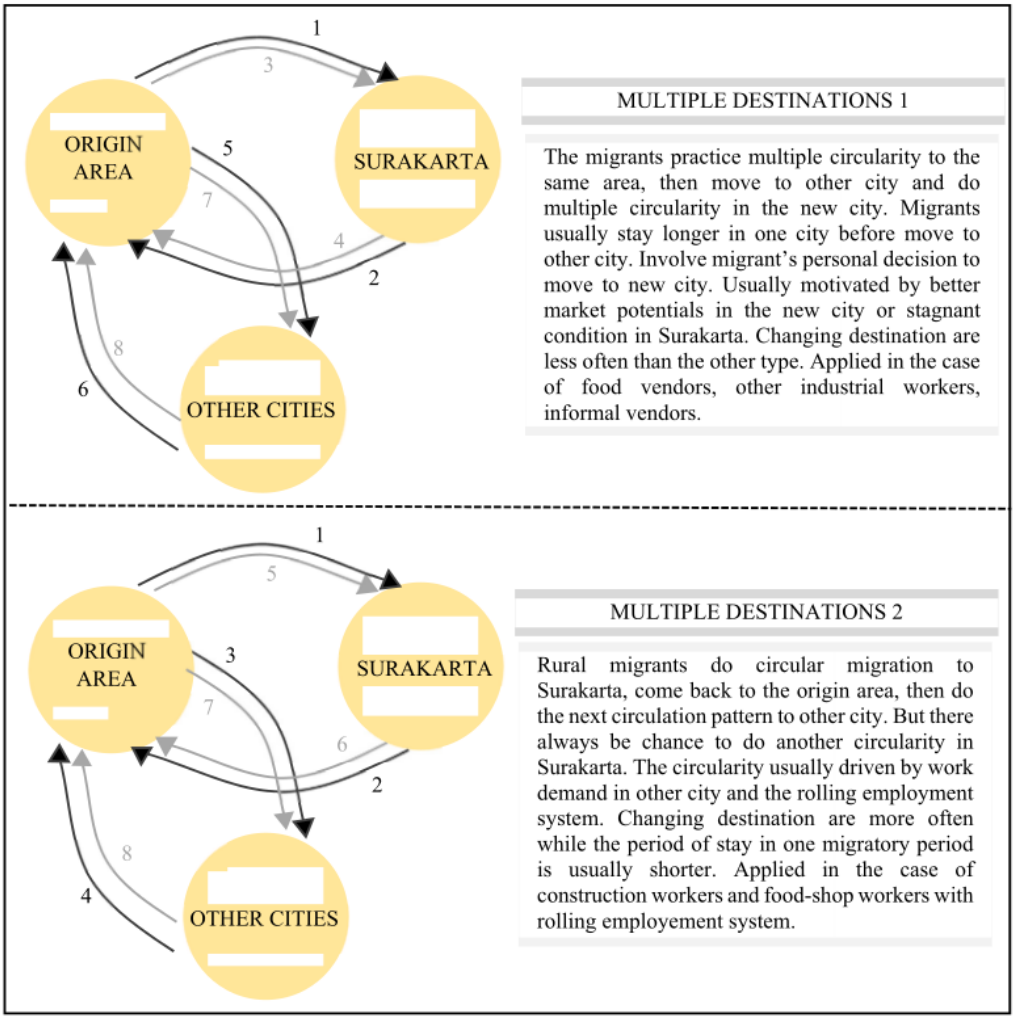


**Fig. 8.** Multiple pattern migrations with multiple destinations.

**Table 6**
Average remittance of each type of job.

| Job Type in the City | Average Income (US $ per month) | Average of Remittance (US$ per month) | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Food vendors | 117.6 | 61.3 | 52.2 |
| Food shop workers | 121.5 | 70.4 | 57.9 |
| Other informal vendors | 136.4 | 76.2 | 55.8 |
| Construction workers | 133.3 | 86.01 | 64.5 |
| Industrial workers | 105.5 | 26.7 | 25.3 |
| Pedicab drivers | 79.2 | 29.3 | 36.9 |
| Service workers | 111.1 | 67.8 | 61.0 |
| Semiformal-sector workers | 125.0 | 44.2 | 35.3 |
| Average | 118.4 | 63.1 | 52.9 |

urbanisation, and some of the more complex but common factors like bilocal migration, are less understood (Tacoli and McGranahan, 2015). It is this phenomenon of bilocality that this paper has sought to address. Circular patterns of rural-urban migration are normally repetitive and has their own cyclical phenomenon. The evidence from this research shows that a growing number of seasonal and bilocal migration takes place alongside processes shaped by commuters or permanent migrants unfolding in many Indonesian cities (Firman, 1994).

In examining Surakarta, this study identified bilocal migrants as mostly originating from the surrounding areas across Central Java Province (51.4%) followed by migrants from West Java (33.3%), East Java (8.6%), and Yogyakarta Province (6.7%). From Central Java, migrants mostly originated from the metropolitan area of Surakarta such as Boyolali, Karanganyar, Klaten, Sragen, Sukoharjo, and Wonogiri districts which fell within a distance range of 30 up to 85 km. About 46% of migrants followed this pattern and this spatial dimension is relevant because distance plays an important role in structuring circular movement decisions. This has been considered as an exchange motive whereby short distances increases the likelihood of returning to the origin (Garip, 2012). Thus, the distance directly influences the length of stay of a migrant due to transportation time and cost considerations (Lucas, 2007).

The duration of stay varies among bilocal migrants. Most migrants spend their time working in the city for about 3–6 months and migrate on a contract basis, particularly among those that work in construction. Less duration was found among the migrants who come from nearby Surakarta. Other types of migrants depend on their financial conditions and perceived need, which determines decisions to go back to their

**Table 7**
Remittance for household use per month.
- *Column (a) The sum of the amount of remittance of all 105 respondents in each type of use of remittance.*
- *Column (b) The number shown in the table represent the total number of respondents that have the spending on the particular type of use of remittance. Not all respondents provide answer for all types.*

| Type of Use of Remittances | Total use of remittances (US$) | Number of Responses | Total use of remittances (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| | (a) | (b) | (c) |
| Food (daily consumption) | 2925.3 | 94 | 43.0 |
| Goods (Phone, television, clothing, etc.) | 467.0 | 30 | 6.9 |
| House improvement | 109.3 | 15 | 1.6 |
| Debt payment | 336.0 | 18 | 4.9 |
| Medical expenses | 366.3 | 39 | 5.4 |
| Education (for children or other family members) | 1258.7 | 53 | 18.5 |
| Saving | 1112.3 | 55 | 16.4 |
| Investment | 228.0 | 21 | 3.3 |
| Total remittance for household | **6803.0** | | **100.0** |

Notes.

village. The decisions vary between once a month to within 4–6 months a year depending on how much money they earned and spent.

Education is an important indicator of successful socioeconomic development in a family, and is a determining factor of migrant access to employment in the city (Keshri and Bhagat, 2012). Among the surveyed respondents, food vendors and other informal vendors have a diverse range of education levels, from never attending school to university graduates. The diversity of educational attainment in job-sectors related to the different requirements of a job. For example, vendors that sell flowers in the market might have the lowest educational background, whereas those that sell flags require an additional skill. The diversity of education level is also strongly contingent upon the economic condition of the migrant family, availability of educational facility at the origin, as well as other cultural elements from that community. Meanwhile, construction workers, industrial workers, and food shop workers typically had similar education levels between junior and senior high school. Migrants with this kind of job relied more on technical skills for their labour, engaging in a particular sector of work. Semi-formal sector workers who work in a more formal environment also have a relatively higher educational attainment having finished high school. This is most likely reflective of the job requirements required by the employer.

Circular rural-urban migration occurs due to economic reasons and is a household strategy to diversify risks and opportunity within a household's decision making process (Brücker and Jahn, 2011; Kirdar, 2009; Zhao, 2005). Most of the respondents in this study also focused on the economic reasons as their main motivations for bilocal migration. On the other hand, the lack of available choices in rural areas also serves as a key driver for why people migrate bilocally. Strong social and family ties in rural area, as well as cultural factors, also contribute to the reason for migrants choosing the circular patterns over a permanent migration strategy. Within the socio-cultural explanation, temporary migration has become institutionalized within some ethnic groups in Indonesia, so it has become part of the cultural norm within the community group to spend part of their life seeking opportunity outside of their origin area. This cultural explanation is particularly relevant for the bilocal migrants from West Java, particularly areas of Tasikmalaya district, in which a large percentage of young people move out of the village once they finish junior/senior high school. Even though most of the reasons for engaging in bilocal migration is rationally based on economic reasons, there is no doubt that in many regions strong family and village ties and the preference for a rural-based way of life exerts a strong pull on the migrant to always come back to the village (Haan, 1997; Hugo, 1982). Therefore, economic reasons accompanied by the unfavourable rural opportunities has made the decision to migrate and develop a strategy of bilocally as a common approach (Dejong, 2000).

The migratory decisions of rural households to urban areas is either temporary or seasonal and has resulted in its own pattern of back-and-forth movement between origin and destination (Vadean & Piracha, 2009). The circularity of bilocal migrants is applied for work, survival, and during particular season, as part of a life-cycle process which includes a pattern of coming and going and the emergence of a fluidity between a 'home' place and a 'destination' place (Newland, 2009; Hugo, 1982; Zelinsky, 1971). Regarding the locations, according to Hugo (2013), bilocal migration processes involves migrants sharing work, family, and other aspects of their lives between two [or more] locations. The pattern of the bilocal migrant is thus categorized in this study into a set of five typologies that describe rural-urban lives and livelihood strategies.

These different typologies reflect the circulation patterns, like the duration of stay in the city, the reasons and timing of movement,

**Table 8**
Remittances for community use.
- Column (a) The sum of the amount of remittance of all 105 respondents in each type of use of remittance.
- *Column (b) Tthe total number of respondents that have the spending on the particular type of use of remittance. Not all respondents provide answer for all types.*

| Type of Use of Remittances for Rural Community and Development | Total use of remittance (US$) | Number of Responses | Total use of remittance (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| | (a) | (b) | (c) |
| Social ceremonies/religious events | 40.0 | 7 | 6.1 |
| Gifts/donations for neighbours/relatives | 356.9 | 42 | 54.1 |
| Capital loan for the community in origin area; | 136.7 | 5 | 20.7 |
| Investment for entrepreneurial activity that foster village potential | 6.7 | 1 | 0.9 |
| Infrastructure improvement and development in the origin area (mosques, road, etc.) | 85.0 | 13 | 12.9 |
| Training for specific skills for rural community | 34.3 | 2 | 5.3 |
| Total | **659.6** | **70** | **100.0** |

Notes.

**Table 9**
Remittance uses and contributions to rural household and community.

| | | NATURE OF USE | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Consumptive | Productive |
| SCOPE | **Household** | Typical use of remittances<br>The use of remittance of bilocal migrants:<br>● Primary needs (food and clothing);<br>● Secondary needs (television, phone, vehicle, housewares, etc.);<br>● Medical expenses;<br>● Debt payment;<br>● Home improvement.<br>Impacts to rural community<br>● Flow of money in rural area → foster economic activity in rural area.<br>● Some spending to improve housing conditions contributes to the improvement of physical condition of the rural area. | Typical use of remittances<br>The use of remittances to increase the standard of living of migrant family. i.e.:<br>● Education;<br>● Savings;<br>● Investments to support current business/family businesses.<br>Impacts to rural community<br>● The use of remittances for education increases the educational attainment of the younger generations in the rural areas, which stimulate the human development index as well as result in possibilities for better living conditions in the future.<br>● Investment for business fosters the growth of economic activities in the rural area. |
| | **Community** | Typical use of remittances<br>The use of remittances to meet the needs of community, such as:<br>● Social ceremonies/religious events;<br>● Gifts/donations for relatives.<br>Impacts to rural community<br>● Maintain social ties in the rural communities. | Typical use of remittances<br>The use of remittances to create new social assets for the community, i.e.:<br>● Contribution to the improvement of infrastructure and development in the origin area (mosques, road, etc.) through the monthly donations during the community meeting.<br>Impacts to rural community<br>● Even though the contribution of remittance to the improvement of rural infrastructure is quite small, the regularity in the contribution, indicates an important role of active citizenship in the rural areas, which is a positive indicator for development priority. |

whether it is for work or visiting family, and the rate of income in rural and urban area. It also dictates the priorities of what the income is used for. In general, the pattern between the typology of rural-urban livelihoods matches the composition of rural-urban income of the bilocal migrants. Typology 3 (main job urban – no job rural), clearly only have one type of combination of income proportion where migrants gained 100% of their income from the city. In contrast, those who have their main job in rural areas (Typology 5) have quite a diverse proportion of rural-urban income. Others have a balanced income between rural and urban areas, while others still have larger incomes in rural areas. Surprisingly, the income earned by many migrants is larger in comparison to the formal wage sector in Surakarta, and to some extent bilocal migration indicates a strategic approach for accessing improved employment opportunities (de Haas, 2006).

On average, migrants who have their main job in the city (typology 1, 2, and 3) spend around 8–10 months in the city. While on the other hand, those whose main job is in the rural area (typology 5) usually spend more time in the village rather than in the city. An unanticipated finding about the duration of stay of bilocal migrants in the city is that it has a correlation with the type of livelihood profile in both locations. Migrants who have their main job in the city more likely spend more time in the city rather than in rural area. However, the purpose of returning to the city is different from one another. Despite visiting family, migrants have supplementary work in the village (typology 1) and usually return to the village to do their jobs, but for the other two types, the main purpose of going back to the village is only for visiting family or resting from the work routine in the city, while some do work on a voluntary basis. While for those who have seen the work in urban and rural area as a complementary work to each other (typology 4), these profiles usually spend their time in the city in a more balanced timeframe. All the typologies of bilocality found in study is therefore identified based on the movement cycle determined by livelihoods.

The circular nature of bilocality follows a repetitive pattern. In order to understand the migrant patterns, there are key factors that need to be explained, namely: spatial, temporal, iterative and development aspects (UNECE, 2016; Newland, 2009). The iterative and spatial dimension of bilocality includes this repetition and directionality of the movements. In terms of the direction, bilocal migration includes at least two poles: the place of origin and the place of destination. Over time the direction mould into more sedimented bilocality. The two types of circular spatial patterns found in this study include simple and multiple patterns. The simple pattern indicates bilocality to and from the same destinations, while multiple patterns is practiced by those who establish more than two poles of orientation. Some of the most popular destinations mentioned by the migrants are Jakarta, Yogyakarta, Surabaya, Bandung, Denpasar, and other cities outside Java like Palembang, Lampung, and cities in Kalimantan. Bilocality should therefore not be viewed as a static and singularly dual process.

The repetitive movement also suggests a flow of remittances for various purposes, for daily consumption, for household support remittances, and others for rural community development (Skeldon, 2010). Remittances is therefore not only about the money but also about the social benefits to the rural livelihoods at a household and community level. In general, migrants who send remittances in high

**Table 10**
Relationship between livelihood typologies, circular pattern, and remittance use.

| | Pattern | Duration of stay | | Type of Jobs | Remittance use | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | City | Village | | consumptive | productive |
| Typology 1, 2, 3 | Simple | (+) | (−) | 1,2,3,4,5,6 | household (+)<br>community (+) | household (+)<br>community (−) |
| Typology 4 | Simple - Multiple | more less equal | | 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8 | | household (+) |
| Typology 5 | Multiple | (−) | (+) | | | community (+) |

Note: 1. Food shop workers; 2. Food vendors; 3. Other informal sectors; 4. Pedicab driver; 5. Semiformal sector workers; 6. service workers; 7. Construction workers; 8. Industrial workers.

proportions of their income are those who are the main earners for their family. These conditions vary between unmarried migrants that usually send remittances in lower amounts and a non-regular basis. They usually do not have dependants in the village and only send the remittance as part of additional economic support to the family, such as for education support and during times of need such as health issues. Construction workers, informal vendors, and service workers are the highest remittance contributors to rural household as they earned more compared to other type of jobs. The amount of remittance to rural household is likely to follow the income earning capacity by the migrants in the city. Higher income earners may affect migrant behaviour and determines the amount of remittances (Akay et al., 2014; Gubert, 2002) and the overall intent of remittance also prove the level of care for their relatives well-being (Gubert, 2002).

Most of the household uses of remittances are for consumptive purposes, particularly to fulfil daily needs of the family. Productive use for education is also important as compared to savings, which may be the last option. A total of 53 respondents allocated budget lines for education, and it became the second highest priority for the use of remittances. This indicates that education has become one of the main concerns of migrant households. In this sense, bilocal migration provides a positive impact to education levels of younger generations and increases the possibility of rural household to be able to reach higher educational attainment. On the other hand, spending for investment is quite low, which shapes only 3.2% of total average remittances. Respondents that spend on this category of investment, usually use this portion of income to support activities or businesses in rural areas, such as buying new tools to support agriculture activities, buying chairs to improve the food-shop in front of the house, adding capital to home-based businesses, etc. The study also confirmed that for those migrants who still have agricultural land in their rural area of origin, they would like to invest more on activities that support the farm instead other types of investment. Agricultural activities are still of importance for the migrants when they return to their village (see also Qian et al., 2016; McCarthy et al., 2009).

In regards to remittances for the rural community, the proportion is not as high when compared to the household. Generally, temporary migration with a circular pattern is more likely to respond to the urgent needs of the family and hence household use is the most important priority, which is then followed by more general support to the community (Rahmi and Rudiarto, 2013; Lam Tran et al., 2007). Most of the bilocal migrants did not allocate part of their remittances for broader use other than intra-household use. The usage of the remittances for investing in the community is more-likely for consumptive uses, particularly for gifts or donations for neighbours or relatives and social ceremonies or religious events. The regular contribution for infrastructure is usually given on a monthly basis during the community meeting. However, additional spending may take place for a specific occasion such as building a new mosque, or before the celebration of the national Independence Day where each village usually organises physical improvements of the neighbourhood. But the amount is not significant as compared to the main spending for primary household needs.

## 6. Conclusion

Several types of circular mobility were identified based on their livelihood profile in both rural and urban areas. This included the duration of stay in the city, the repetition of movement and directionality, as well as the remittance use both for households and the community. This article views such dynamics through the lens of bilocality, which focuses on dynamics between urban and rural areas. Different types of employment were found in Surakarta where the informal sector provided the dominant labour opportunity. This includes jobs such as food vendors, food shop workers, other informal vendors, pedicab drivers, construction workers, industrial workers, and service workers with various income levels. Education level and skill issues are two major reasons determining the patterns of bilocal migrants involved in the informal sector in the study area.

Meanwhile, the responsibility of the migrants to their family in rural areas has also created particular types of circular mobility, which was classified as a simple pattern and a multiple pattern. The circularity pattern of the rural urban migrants is quite dynamic, whereby Surakarta city is not always the main destination, particularly to those who sought out labour opportunities in multiple destinations. Personal decision and changing market potential are two main reasons structuring the movements of this type of migrant. Even though the movement is dynamic from one city to another city, the job involved remains the same, as construction workers or food vendors. It shows that the ability and habits of a migrant in a specific employment sector determines his/her job continuity in other destinations.

In regard to the impacts of remittance to the rural household and community, this study makes clear that bilocal migration provides a means for the rural household. Most of the remittances are spent on fulfilling daily needs of the family for basic consumption needs (food, goods, medical expenses, debt payment and home improvements), while the other portion is allocated for productive uses like education costs, savings, and investment. Nevertheless, the impacts of remittances to the rural community in a broader sense are still limited, and as households may benefit from additional income, there is a limited impact on the broader development needs in rural areas, such as in the form of contributions to infrastructure and loans to rural community development. At this level, bilocal migration is mostly considered as fulfilling the urgent needs of the family, and to a much lesser degree having an impact to the broader community. Furthermore, the impacts on future development will also take shape as part of the strategies of length of stay. Some bilocal migrants express migration as part of a preliminary strategy before an ultimate permanent relocation for them and their family (or future family, as most of the respondents are relatively of a younger age), but for others, migration is part of a strategy to return to their rural and ancestral homes. Thus, the convenience and strategic practice of the middle ground, in which bilocal migration is a distinct trend to live to some degree in both worlds. A strong connection to the rural origin affects future decisions, and the way *bilocality* unfolds as part of broader economic conditions among migrants shape the process that will determine future development far beyond those taking place in urban areas.

Bilocal migration is indeed one remedy for rural people to sustain and improve their living conditions in the face of more challenging economic opportunities that hold higher risks in rural areas. To a certain extent, in the beginning, bilocal migration was likely to support subsistence activities in the migrant's place of origin. But over time, migration also changes one's life and ways of seeing. While this research shows many commonalities, each experience must still be viewed within the broader historical context of the migrant. Change, whether opportunity or setback creates new development possibilities and determines possibility for both rural and urban communities. One clear finding of this research however, shows that benefits and opportunities overwhelmingly accrue in urban areas, and that the imaginary of the bilocal migrant returning to their rural points of origin to develop the village is less likely to be the case. This development imbalance also makes it more attractive to seek out lives and livelihoods among the greater opportunities and amenities of urban areas. Therefore, on a broader scale, policymakers should play closer attention to the extensive interventions that are needed to support rural areas develop apace as those in urban areas. While creating job opportunities in rural areas has long been discussed as a priority, the shrinking attention on the broader aims of development also need to be addressed in a more integrated approach to rural planning.

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