WAGE INEQUALITYAMONG MYANMAR IMMIGRANT AGRICULTURAL WORKERS IN THAILAND

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Abstract

Myanmar immigrants are the largest percentage among all immigrants in Thailand, the main destination for immigrants in Southeast Asia. Thai government has set a minimum wage (300 THB/day or approximately 9 USD/day) across the country in 2013. Nevertheless, Myanmar immigrants receive less or often far less than the minimum wage. The objectives of this paper are to reveal the characteristics of Myanmar's immigrant agricultural workers in Thailand, and identify the relationship between characteristics of immigrant workers and their wages. This study used multiple regression analysis and comparative analysis to analyze interrelationships among variables and focused on the Myanmar agricultural workers who have worked in Tak and Kanchanaburi provinces in Thailand in 2016. Legal registration, formal education, longer tenure, and more skilled-required tasks were positively affect daily wage of Myanmar immigrant farm workers. This paper suggests that Myanmar immigrant workers should comply with Thailand's immigration law to obtain work permits in order to increase their daily wages. Moreover, immigrant workers should invest in formal education and improve their skills in order to enhance their earnings.

Keywords: Agricultural workers, Myanmar immigrants, wage differentials, wage inequality

Introduction

Cross border migration

Many people migrated from one area to another for their survival, food, land, peace or economic security (Petersen, 1978). About 10% of Myanmar population migrated to other countries due to inability to earn enough money to survive as well as political and/or ethnic conflict, and Thailand is the recipient of the largest immigrants from Myanmar (Hall, 2012). Thailand, bordered with Myanmar, is an upper middle income country that has low unemployment rate at about 1%. Given that Thailand society is aging fast from a falling birth rate and rising proportion of the populace aged 65 and over, Thailand has faced a shortage in labor supply particularly in unskilled sectors, namely agriculture, fishery, services, construction, and manufacturing. There is an influx of immigrants from Cambodia, Laos, and Myanmar into Thailand, both legal and illegal, principally due to incentives to earn more income than in their home countries (Howard, 2017).

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Net migration –- the difference between migrants entering a country and migrants leaving a country—in Thailand has increased from -3.3% in 1960-1970 to 9.1% in 1990-2000, most of whom are unskilled workers (Walmsley et al., 2013). Over three million immigrants are currently working in Thailand constitutes to approximately 7% of the country's total working population. Among them, Myanmar immigrants contribute to the largest share of immigrant workers in unskilled sectors, about 2.3 million (International Organization for Migration, 2013).

In January 2013, Thailand raised the minimum wage (300 THB/day or approximately 9USD/day) uniformly nationwide, and this was applied to every employee in Thailand, regardless of age, gender, industry or nationality. Nevertheless, unregistered immigrant workers may earn about half of their registered counterparts. The survey if Myanmar immigrants around the time of uniform minimum wage policy found that over 40% of Myanmar immigrants earned less than 300 THB/day particularly in Chiangmai, Kanchanaburi, Ranong, and Tak provinces. Of those who earn less than 300 THB/day, more than half are documented immigrant workers (International Organization for Migration, 2013).

Wages can be different depending on their occupational and gender differential (Nielsen, Rosholm et al., 2004; Pozo et al., 2011; Thrane, 2008), and depending on the legal status such as among U.S farm workers (Nisbet & Rodgers, 2013). It is also documented in Thailand that wage differentials also depend on the legal status. Registered immigrants received wages less than half of those of native workers; female registered immigrants also received less than male immigrant, and less than native workers (International Labor Organization, 2013).At present, there is no clear evidence of wage discrimination after minimum wage policy, particularly against immigrants, especially agricultural workers whose wages are often the lowest. Given that agriculture contributes to the largest share of unskilled workers in Thailand at about 37%, and Myanmar contributes to the largest percentage of unskilled immigrant workers in Thailand (Walmsley et al., 2013), this study focuses on the earning of Myanmar immigrants in agricultural sector. Hence, in order to provide appropriate policy implications related to unskilled immigrant workers in Thailand, it is important to identify determinants that influence the wage inequality of Myanmar immigrant workers in agricultural sector.

Wage differentials studies

There are many reasons why some workers received more wages than others because of differences in the labor quality i.e. blue collar workers or unskilled workers in dangerous industries might receive higher wages to compensate them for the risks. Wages are different among workers due to differences in human capital stocks i.e., workers who have greater human capital are associated with greater income and higher salaries (Mincer, 1997). Borjas (2000) explained the human capital theory that high skilled workers earn more than low skilled workers because they have higher skills and also more human capital. Low skilled workers who have the lower marginal rate of return (MRR_L) and obtain lower units of human capital (H_L) earn less than high skilled workers (Figure 1).

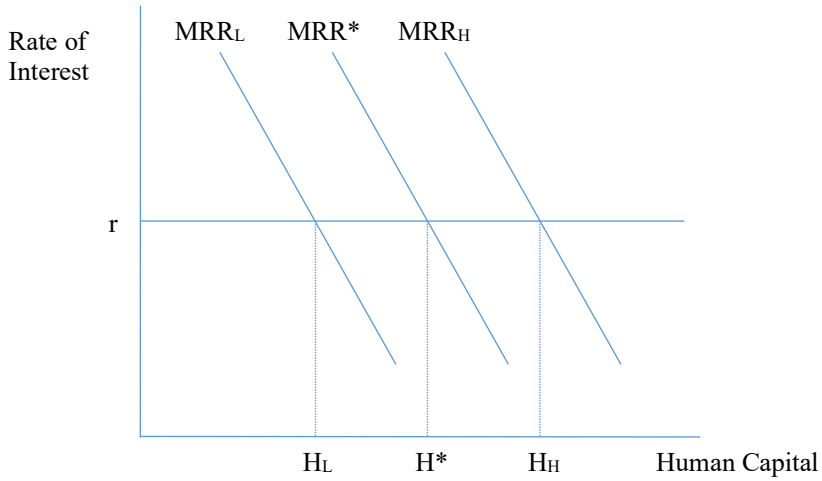


Figure1 Difference in wages when workers have different skills

Source **:** Borjas (2000)

On the other hand, the higher wage differences correlated with the difference occupations because some occupations have to have some special skills for high skilled jobs and other occupations have to take risks for the unskilled jobs (Dickens and Katz, 1987). They stated the wage differences caused by worker's ability sensitivity. For example, high ability workers gravitate towards sensitive jobs, and low skill workers gravitate towards with increased labor market experience. Several human capital characteristics or workers' qualification such as education, work experience and language are the relative important characteristics for improving immigrants' earnings. If immigrants have strong host countries' language skill, the higher educational qualifications and longer work experience years may have a much higher level (Kwon, 2009; Pozo et al., 2011). Butcher and Piehl (1998) stated that the low skilled workers have experienced a decline in real wages and the gap between the wages of high and low skilled workers increased because the range from skill-based technological changes to change of the role of labor market institutions to changes in labor supply. Language skills are necessary for immigrants to adjust to cultural differences and have a significant causal effect on wages among immigrants in most countries. Battu et al. (2011) found that people with better English skills can use different resources to find a better job than people who cannot. Moreover, the significant positive effect of English language skills is effective on wages and promotions among individuals who immigrated to Australia as children (Guven Islam, 2015).

Increases in earnings have been caused by the growing segregation of workers by skills, and these workers need the special skills required for individual jobs (Kremer and Maskin, 1996). Thrane (2008) reported that men received higher earnings than women on average because the gender earnings gap can be caused by human capital characteristics. For example, in many western countries, the education attainment of both genders are slightly different because some factors of women such as maternity leave or marriage resulting in women

accumulating market-valued work experience more slowly than men (Mincer and Polacheck, 1974).

In addition, geographical accessibility is a barrier for the immigrant groups because possible working areas depend on their skills and qualifications. Rivera-batiz (1999) examined the legalization impact on earnings and concluded the undocumented immigrants have lower wages than documented because they are illegal and also less skilled. Agricultural workers who had legal status earned more per hour and per week than illegal workers. For example, agricultural workers who had green cards received the highest weekly earnings across all groups in the United States (Isé and Perloff, 1995).

When workers are competing for jobs in the market according to their productive characteristics of their educational level and current job experience, a year of experience in the current work has more effect on the current wages than a year of experience at others job (Nancy, 1982). Farber (2010) explored that the high tenure years and long term employment can increase the job security.

Methodology

Data collection

This study focused on Myanmar immigrants who had been working in agricultural sectors in Thailand, especially the main gateway between Thailand and Myanmar i.e., Tak province and Kanchanaburi province. Because these provinces are the top populated area of Myanmar immigrants, the special economic zones in the border areas, and also the first phase of the special economic development zones. Factories were situated in Bangkok and vicinities while Thailand's development towards industrialization and the labor demand was enough by local workers from rural Thailand, especially from the north and northeast. However, the economic boom in the middle east and east Asia pushed the Thai workers to immigrate due to do not filled up by local supply (Chantavanich and Vungsiriphisal, 2012). Funahashi (1996) stated the young people in the village stopped an interesting in farming such as wet rice cultivation and upland cropping, although they are attracted by the working in a factory particularly Bangkok because they believed they will earn much higher income than they would by farming in the village. Agricultural practices in Tak province are still labor-intensive. Hence, almost hundred Myanmar immigrants were hired for pre-harvest and harvesting activities in Thailand (Kulkolkarn and Potipoti, 2009). Data were collected from the agricultural workers who worked in crop production in Tak province and Kanchanaburi province. Using snowball sampling, the data were collected from a small group of agricultural workers and other participants who had the experience in crop production. This method was used in response to overcoming the problems related with hidden populations (Faugier and Sargeant, 1997). The snowball sampling method has several advantages in hidden populations

such as drug consumers, people with deviant sexual behavior, illegal immigrants, or people working in the black market (Dragan and Isaic-Maniu, 2013). Data were collected from November to December, 2016 in Tak province, and from March to April, 2017 in Kanchanaburi province for the daily wages of immigrant agricultural workers in 2016. Weinberg (2000) used 300 immigrant farm workers as the sample size. This study set their sample size as the standard sample size and thus used 311 immigrant farm workers as the sample.

Empirical Model

The long lasting differences in average wage rates among the groups of workers caused the economics of labor market discrimination. The inequality of wages or market discrimination caused by their demographic characteristics such as sex, race, ethnicity, and other characteristics (Cain, 1986). The empirical calculations are based on the investment of their human capital characteristics. This means that the calculations are based on comparison of earnings of workers with the differing amounts invested in their human capital (Mincer, 1975).

In the labor economics, the human capital earning function is one of the widely used matrices. The earning function is estimated by the regression technique and is presented to empirical application of theory (Kaufman and Hotchkiss, 2000).An investment in '*n*' years of human capital will yield a rate of return r_n, as follows:

$$r_n = \frac{Y_n - Y_{n-1}}{Y_{n-1}} \qquad 1$$

where

r_n = rate of return with '*n*' year of investment in human capital
Y_n= a person's annual earning with '*n*' year of investment in human capital
Y_{n-1} = a person's annual earning with '*n-1*' years of investment in human capital

The derivation of the human capital earning function is simple. The substitution results in the human capital earning functions,

$$\ln Y_n = \ln Y_0 + rn \qquad 2$$

The proportionate change in the annual earnings resulted from an additional increment of schooling equals to *r*. The earning function is still seriously incomplete. Mincer (1997) showed the base assumption is the experience years, meaning years that involve on the job training. However, this study is especially for the unskilled labor. Hence, the experience years will be the tenure years. Writing the earnings function in the form of a linear regression equation, this expanded model is;

$$\ln Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3 \ldots\ldots + b_nX_n + e \qquad 3$$

where

Y = the natural logarithm of earnings
a = initial earning
$b_1, b_2, b_3, \ldots\ldots, b_n$ = the rate of return from an investment of human capital
$X_1, X_2, X_3, \ldots\ldots, X_n$ = the investment of human capital variables or characteristics
e = unexplained differences

Interpretation of the partial regression coefficients is as a represents the expected value of the earning (Y) when all the natural logarithm of human capital characteristics $X_1, X_2, X_3, \ldots\ldots, X_n$ are equal to zero and each $b_1, b_2, b_3, \ldots\ldots, b_n$ represents the amount of change in Y for a unit of change in the corresponding human capital variables X while controlling for the effects of other human capital variables in the model. The human capital variable is fixed over repeating sampling. The earning variable is approximately interval when the error 'e' is normally distributed. The covariance between a human capital variable and the error term is zero for all human capital variables and no human capital variable is perfectly predicted by the other human capital variables (Berry and Feldman, 1985). To identify the determinants on daily wages, multiple regression earning function was used. The dependent variables were daily wages in cash, and daily wages both in kind and in cash. The daily wages were converted into the logarithm because the logarithm transformation can reduce the effect of distribution of earnings from all other workers of a particular group (Petersen, 1978). Earnings attributes model includes the variables that impact on individual earnings and it is as follows:

$$\ln Y_h = a + b_{1h}Edu_{1h} + b_{2h}Speaking_{2h} + b_{3h}Reading_{3h+}b_{4h}Writing_{4h} + b_{5h}Tenure_{5h} + b_{6h}Age_{6h} + b_{7h}Gen_{7h} + b_{8h}Legal_{8h} + b_{9h}Area_{9h} + b_{10h}Diff_{10h} + b_{11h}D_{c11h} \quad (4)$$

$$\ln Y_i = a + b_{1i}Edu_{1i} + b_{2i}Speaking_{2i} + b_{3i}Reading_{3i} + b_{4i}Writing_{4i} + b_{5i}Tenure_{5i} + b_{6i}Age_{6i} + b_{7i}Gen_{7i} + b_{8i}Legal_{8i} + b_{9i}Area_{9i} + b_{10i}Diff_{10i} + b_{11i}D_{c11i} \quad (5)$$

where

$\ln Y_h$ = the natural logarithm of the daily wages (in cash) for agricultural workers

$\ln Y_i$ = the natural logarithm of the daily wages (in kind and cash) for agricultural workers

a = the initial earning capacity

$b_1, b_2, b_3, \ldots\ldots, b_{11}$ are estimators of explanatory variables. Variables in empirical models are shown in Table 1.

Table1. Variables, definition and unit of measurement for empirical model

Variable	Definition	Unit of measurement
Edu	School years	years
Speaking	Speaking skill of Thai language	0 if very poor, 1 if poor, 2 if normal, 3 if well, and 4 if excellent
Reading	Reading skill of Thai language	0 if very poor, 1 if poor , 2 if normal, 3 if well, and 4 if excellent
Writing	Writing skill of Thai language	0 if very poor, 1 if poor , 2 if normal, 3 if well, and 4 if excellent
Tenure	Years of working at current job	years
Age	Ages	years
Gen	Gender	0 if female, 1 if male
Legal	Legal status Legal immigrant farm workers are those who have immigrant farm workers workers who have the work permit documents or temporary residential card	0 if undocumented worker, 1 if documented worker
Area	Working areas	0 if Tak , 1 if Kanchanaburi
Diff[1]	Difficulty level of activities	0 if low difficulty level, 1 if medium difficulty level, 2 if high difficulty level
Maize	Working on maize	0 if no, 1 if yes
Rice	Working on rice	0 if no, 1 if yes
Vegetables	Working on vegetables such as tomatoes, chili peppers, cucumber, cauliflower etc.	0 if no, 1 if yes
Other crops	Working on other crops	0 if no, 1 if yes
Area*Legal	Workers from Kanchanaburi province with legal status	0 if no, 1 if yes

Note: 1 refers Table 2.

Different types of skill are needed for different work. We considered the average for workers to reach levels of skill or difficultly level for a range of jobs. The skill/difficulty levels were converted to numerical values from 0 to 2 (Yamane and Childs, 2013). This kind of information was combined with that on the crops and activities of the farm workers in Table 2. This numerical system was adopted from assigning the crops and activities.

Table 2. Assign the difficulty/skill level to different task and crops

Task	Maize	Rice	Vegetables	Others
Land preparation	2	2	1	1
Cleaning the field	1	1	1	1
Seedling	1	-	1	1
Mulching the seeds	-	-	1	1
Pull out the seedling	-	1	-	-
Transplanting	-	1	1	-
Trellis	-	-	2	-
Spraying chemical	2	2	2	2
Fertilizer application	1	1	1	1
Pruning or pinching	0	-	0	0
Harvesting	1	1	1	1
Selecting the size of products	-	-	1	1
Threshing	1	1	-	1
Delivery to the market	2	-	2	2
Unloading and loading the products	1	1	1	1

Notes: 0 means low difficulty level, 1 means medium difficulty level, 2 means high difficulty level, (-) means no activities in the crops.

Results and Discussion

Characteristics of Myanmar's immigrant agricultural workers

In Thailand, most Myanmar farm workers are working especially in maize, rice, vegetables and other crops such as beans, and cut flowers. In this Myanmar farm worker samples, 51% were male and 49% were female, respectively. About seventy-nine percent of them are undocumented, and 21.22 % have temporary ID cards (Tor Ror 38/1) that allowed workers to move across the border for temporary work under the authority of governors of the border provinces. More than half the respondents,85% were married. Moreover, 14% of all Myanmar farm workers migrated to Thailand mainly due to political reasons, 46 % for social reasons, and more than 90% for job reasons and economic reasons. The main reasons of migration to Thailand were political reasons such as political instability with the presence of armed groups and fighting from time to time, social reasons such as poverty which pushed people to search for work and money to solve their problems, economic reasons such as target savings that means the immigrants want to remit and job reasons such as jobless or job searching.

The tenure years of legal status, the legal workers had significantly higher years in current employment than the illegal workers. The human capital characteristics such as education level and language skills were significantly different among workers. The school years were not significant between documented and undocumented workers. In addition, Thai language skills were categorized into speaking skill, reading skill, and writing skill in Thai. Thai speaking skill was significantly different in legal status. Moreover, Thai reading skill was

higher among legal workers. Workers were especially from Ayeyarwaddy region, Bago region, Magway region, Mandalay region, Sagaing region, Taninthatyi region and Yangon region as well as from KayinState, Mon state, Rakhine state, Chin state, Shan state and Kachin state. Among them, about forty-one percent of workers were from Bago region.

Table 3. Summary statistics of Myanmar's immigrant agricultural workers in Thailand,2016

	Undocumented		Documented		Overall	
Variable	**Mean**	**S.D.**	**Mean**	**S.D.**	**Mean**	**S.D.**
Tenure (years)	4.97	3.47	7.06	3.41	5.421	3.56
Age (years)	33.30	10.39	32.35	10.76	33.09	10.46
Remittance (USD/year)	18.97	42.48	27.61	53.42	20.19	44.45
Variable	**Freq**	**%**	**Freq**	**%**	**Freq**	**%**
Gender						
Female	131	53.47	20	30.30	151	48.55
Male	114	46.53	46	69.70	160	51.45
Total	245	100.00	66	100.00	311	100
Speaking						
Very poor	204	83.27	38	57.58	242	77.81
Poor	36	14.69	14	21.21	50	16.08
Normal	3	1.22	12	18.18	15	4.82
Well	2	0.82	1	1.52	3	0.96
Excellence	0	0	1	1.52	1	0.32
Total	245	100.00	66	100.00	311	100.00
Reading						
Very poor	242	98.78	60	90.91	302	97.11
Poor	3	1.22	5	7.58	8	2.57
Normal	0	0	1	1.52	1	0.32
Total	245	100.00	66	100.00	311	100.00
Writing						
Very poor	240	97.96	63	95.45	303	97.43
Poor	5	2.04	3	4.55	8	2.57
Total	245	100.00	66	100.00	311	100.00

Notes:1USD = 35.2964 in 2016 (Bank of Thailand).

Table 3. Continued

	Undocumented		Documented		Overall	
Variable	**Freq**	**%**	**Freq**	**%**	**Freq**	**%**
Marital status						
Married	210	85.71	56	84.85	266	85.53
Otherwise	35	14.29	10	15.15	45	14.47
Total	245	100.00	66	100.00	311	100.00
Education						
No education	35	14.29	8	12.12	43	13.83
Primary	112	45.71	24	36.36	136	43.73
Middle	81	33.06	28	42.42	109	35.05
High	17	6.94	6	9.09	23	7.40
Total	245	100.00	66	100.00	311	100.00
Primary reasons to migration						
Political						
Yes	35	14.29	11	16.67	46	14.79
No	210	85.71	55	83.33	265	85.21
Total	245	100.00	66	100.00	311	100.00
Social						
Yes	114	46.53	34	51.52	148	47.59
No	131	53.47	32	48.48	163	52.41
Total	245	100.00	66	100.00	311	100.00
Economic						
Yes	232	94.69	59	89.39	291	93.57
No	13	5.31	7	10.61	20	6.43
Total	245	100.00	66	100.00	311	100.00
Job reason						
Yes	235	95.92	65	98.48	300	96.46
No	10	4.08	1	1.52	11	3.54
Total	245	100.00	66	100.00	311	100.00

Table 3. Continued

	Undocumented		Documented		Overall	
Variable	**Freq**	**%**	**Freq**	**%**	**Freq**	**%**
Remittance						
Yes	47	19.18	14	21.21	61	19.61
No	198	80.82	52	78.79	250	80.39
Total	245	100.00	66	100.00	311	100.00
Hometown						
Bago Region	102	41.63	27	40.91	129	41.48
Ayeyarwady Region	36	14.69	7	10.61	43	13.83
Kayin State	28	11.43	9	13.64	37	11.9
MandalayRegion	21	8.57	5	7.58	26	8.36
YangonRegion	22	8.98	4	6.06	26	8.36
Tanintharyi Region	6	2.45	7	10.61	13	4.18
Rakhine State	11	4.49	0	0	11	3.54
Mon State	5	2.04	2	3.03	7	2.25
Sagaing Region	7	2.86	0	0	7	2.25
Shan State	3	0.82	2	3.03	5	1.29
Magway Region	2	1.22	2	3.03	4	1.61
Kachin	1	0.41	1	1.52	2	0.64
Chin State	1	0.41	0	0	1	0.32
Total	245	100	66	100	311	100

Comparison of daily wages among Myanmar's immigrant agricultural workers

The daily wages (in cash and in cash plus in kind) of immigrant farm workers were significantly different between gender status and legal status as shown in Table 4. Wages of male immigrant workers and documented immigrant workers were significantly higher than those of female immigrant workers and undocumented immigrant workers. The daily wages of documented male workers were significantly higher than those of undocumented male workers and also higher than those of documented female workers and higher than those of undocumented female workers.

Table 4. Daily wage of Myanmar's immigrant agricultural workers by gender and legal status in Thailand, 2016

(Unit: USD/day)

	Daily wage in cash								
	Undocumented			**Documented**			**Overall**		
	Mean	**S.D.**	**t value**	**Mean**	**S.D.**	**t value**	**Mean**	**S.D.**	**t value**
Gender									
Female	4.28	0.85	-2.89***	4.73	1.47	-2.89***	4.34	0.97	-4.83***
Male	4.66	1.15		6.02	2.01		5.05	1.57	
	Daily wage in cash and in kind								
	Undocumented			**Documented**			**Overall**		
	Mean	**S.D.**	**t value**	**Mean**	**S.D.**	**t value**	**Mean**	**S.D.**	**t value**
Gender									
Female	4.94	0.88	-3.87***	5.41	1.44	-2.84***	5.01	0.98	-5.53***
Male	5.44	1.09		6.61	1.81		5.77	1.44	

Notes: 1USD = 35.2964 in 2016 (Bank of Thailand). *, ** and *** are significance at 10%, 5% and 1% level, respectively.

Effect of farm workers' characteristics on daily wages

The education level of workers positively affected daily wages including in cash which is the similar result of Li and Sweetman (2014). The rates of return to education level in the destination country's labor market are positively associated with the immigrants' wages. Moreover, the language proficiency variable is important for individual who working in host country and enhancing the immigrants' productivity (Dustmann & Van Soest 2002). In this study, especially, Thai speaking skills of immigrants' farmworkers positively influenced on the daily wages in cash. The same result as Guven and Islam, 2015 as higher levels of destination language proficiency have a significant positive effect on wages and promotions among immigrants. Among farm workers, tenure years can influence positively on the wages especially in cash and the combination of in kind and in cash. Altoniji and Williams (1992) also found that that daily wages tend to increase according to the years of tenure. Location influences the wages when an influx of immigrants moves into an area, due to oversupply depressing wages in that area, thereby affecting the industries or work places situated in the high wage location (Lipsey and Sjöholm, 2004). This study focused on the two border provinces of Tak and Kanchanaburi, and it was found that the earnings of workers were influenced by the working locations. The earning of farm workers who were working in Kanchanaburi province is higher than those who worked in Tak province possibly because workers working in Kanchanaburi districts had more legal status than those in Tak province. The legal status of farm workers who worked in Kanchaburi province affected their daily wages in cash and combination of both in kind and in cash positively. The gender effect and legal status were positively significant on wages both in cash and combination of in kind and in cash because males had a higher percentage of host destination language skills than female workers and about 25% of male workers had legal status, which was a higher percentage than female

legal status workers. The skill or difficulty levels for a range of activities in crops were converted to numerical values. In this result, the skill-required activities positively affected on daily wage in cash and the combination of in cash and in kind. The rate of return studies was assigned an identification numbers and measurements according to the characteristics likely to influence the measured returns to wages. The rate of return estimated of education rates of return, the speaking skill and tenure years significantly increased that showed in table 5.

Table 5 Analysis of wage differential among Myanmar's immigrant agricultural workers in Thailand,2016

Variable	Ln daily wage in cash	Ln daily wage in cash and in kind
Edu	0.0095***	0.0055**
	(0.0027)	(0.0026)
Speaking	0.0120**	0.0024
	(0.0045)	(0.0043)
Reading	-0.0118	-0.0097
	(0.0193)	(0.0187)
Writing	0.0296	0.0076
	(0.0230)	(0.0222)
Tenure	0.0029***	0.0025***
	(0.0008)	(0.0008)
Areas	0.5761***	0.4939***
	(0.0069)	(0.0067)
Gen	0.0534***	0.0733***
	(0.0046)	(0.0044)
Age	0.0002	-0.0003
	(0.0002)	(0.0002)
Legal	0.0821***	0.0716***
	(0.0052)	(0.0050)
Diff	0.0954***	0.0824***
	(0.0046)	(0.0044)
Maize	-0.0045	0.0035
	(0.0068)	(0.0065)
Rice	0.0009	0.0101
	(0.0072)	(0.0069)
Vegetable	-0.0025	-0.0028
	(0.0071)	(0.0069)
cons	4.8155***	5.0002***
	(0.0112)	(0.0108)
Number of obs	2871	2871
R-squared	0.7787	0.7375

Note: Standard error is in parentheses. Other crops used as base. *, ** and *** are significance at 10%, 5% and 1% level, respectively

Conclusions and Recommendations

Among Myanmar immigrant farm workers in Tak and Kanchanaburi provinces during 2016, there were about 79% unauthorized workers, and the numbers of male and female unauthorized workers were nearly the same. The highest percentage of workers in speaking skills, reading skills and writing skills in Thai language were very poor, and the average of tenure years of Myanmar immigrant workers were more than 5 years. The highest share in education level of workers was the primary level and followed by middle level. The results of wage determination were found that daily wages of Myanmar immigrant workers were influenced by their characteristics. Male farm workers' daily wages were significantly greater than those of female farm workers'. Daily wages of authorized workers with work permits and residential cards were significantly higher than those of authorized ones. A successful registration program would attempt to process the maximum number of unauthorized immigrants while investigation of person ineligible to legalize because they threaten public safety and national security. Other human capital factors such as formal education and tenure of immigrants affected their earnings. The difficulty levels of activities that require skills were divided into three levels i.e. high, medium and low. The higher the skill-required activities, the higher wages workers can earn. Myanmar immigrant workers, despite working in unskilled sector, should invest in formal education, and improve skills in farm activities. The paper is recommended that Myanmar immigrant workers should consider obtaining work authorization in order to increase their daily wages both in cash and the combination of wages in kind and in cash.

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