

**“Nggak bebas” (Not free): Transnational Lives and Careful Longings of Left-Behind Children in Indonesia**

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The experiences of children of migration within the family can be vicarious, steeped in the ambient absence of one or both parents. In contexts where the freedom of movement for and care among migrant families is curtailed by a host of structural apparatus, care becomes all the more urgent. This paper analyses the (un)freedoms of children who are impacted by the ‘care-drain’ in the Global South. This is conducted in relation to their future goals that intentionally may/may not have migration on the horizon. Understandings and accompanying social costs (and/or rewards) of migration affect the future family plans that these children of migration aspire to, and their gendered and oftentimes negative views on parental migration. This paper draws upon the qualitative data gathered from the labor-sending country of Indonesia under the Child Health and Migrant Parents in Southeast Asia (CHAMPSEA) Wave 2 project which investigates, among other things, the changing fates and hopes of left-behind children. The analysis critically examines the lifeworlds of child transnationals ‘back home’ (Baldassar et al. 2007) with respect to their views on how parental migration affects their assessments of migration and family and, in turn, their future aspirations or avoidance of birth families of their own in migration.

Baldassar, L., Wilding, R., & Baldock, C. (2007). *Families Caring across Borders: Migration, Ageing and Transnational Caregiving*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

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