

Women as Commodities, the Analysis of Local Culture Factor and Communication Approach of Women Trafficking in West Java, Indonesia

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The research is financed by Local Government, Province of West Java Indonesia, Indonesia

Abstract

Trafficking in Indonesia had emerged since the Japanese colonial era. Women were given promises to work as artist in the Sakura country. But in reality, they were held imprisoned and made the sex object in Japanese army camps in Indonesia. The stories of women trafficking eventually trapped the victims into prostitution.

West Java is the provinces with the largest trafficking victims. This time, counties and cities in West Java became the biggest of supplier women migrant workers. Many efforts have been made by the provincial and counties/cities. Starting from the attempt of preemptive, preventive and curative.

This paper is based on field observations and review of document reports (Metadata). The data have been collected through interviews and observations to the area of trafficking in west Java and sending areas such as Batam in Riau and Kalimantan border.

This study shows that poverty, low education, local culture (*mluruduit*) are the cause factors of women become a commodity in the trafficking. In addition, interpersonal communication approach through family members, couples and boyfriend by recruiters is the strategy in the recruitment of potential victims of trafficking.

Keywords: Women trafficking, West Java, local cultural, *mluruduit*, and interpersonal communication,

1. Background

Trafficking is a humanity crime that must be fought and stopped. Almost largely poor country with a large population, has a number of trafficking victims. Women as objects, has been traded and exploited sexually and economically. On the other hand, they do not get a strong legal protection, because most of their arrival through the services of smugglers of illegal foreign workers to other countries.

Trafficking in Indonesia had emerged since the Japanese colonial era. Women were given promises to work as artist in the Sakura country. But in reality, they were held imprisoned and made the sex object in Japanese army camps in Indonesia. Most cases of women trafficking, were related to economic problems. Recruiters promise jobs or careers, for example entertainment, tourism guides, hotels o bars. Field data showed that the victims were taken massively through an agents or labors services, in which the victim was selected to conform with the order from brokers or users (user).

The stories of women trafficking eventually trapped the victims into prostitution. They become sex objects, domestic workers without social security or insurance, economic and health care. Most of them, become illegal worker with allow wages, victims of extortion and violence, as well as the removal of their rights as human beings.

If six years earlier East Java is the province with the largest trafficking case. Now, West Java is the provinces with the largest trafficking victims. During this time, counties and cities in West Java became the biggest of supplier women migrant workers. They came from several areas, such as Indramayu, Cirebon, Bandung, Sukabumi, and Cianjur.

What's going on with Trafficking in Indonesia, especially in West Java. Are that data correlates with the high population of women in the productive age, the high rates of female labor dispatch from West Java to abroad, composition of female job seekers at low to medium levels higher, employment sector for women's smaller, or the dominance of "local culture" that considers girls have a higher economic value?

The questions always arise to measure the probability of a number of causal factors. It is ultimately always comes down to the problem of illegal dispatch employment of women as temporary answer. If this is used as a handle, there is a problem with the delivery. Women become commodities that was shipped and traded illegally. They sought, recruited, selected and finally sent to the suppliers in the region. After that they were reselected to be sent to the destination countries for reasons made household labor, industry, or entertainment. But eventually trapped in prostitution.

Many efforts have been made by the provincial and counties/cities. Starting from the attempt of preemptive, preventive and curative. At the provincial level, had been made regulatory of trafficking of women and children No. 3 of 2008 on the Prevention and Handling of Human Trafficking in West Java. Similarly, the counties and cities have created their own local regulations to combat human trafficking. Indramayu, Sukabumi, Banjar and Cianjur are some counties that have established and implemented the regulation.

This paper tries to explain; the macro conditions that enable the emergence of trafficking cases.

Describes the type of socio-cultural factors that encourage women's growing out of the house. Furthermore, it also describes about the mapping zones through number of victim, and in cities of the latent trigger factors and counties. Lastly, I would like to describe approach communication about trafficking in women

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2. Description of the Research Results

2.1. Effect of Macro Conditions

The population of West Java in 2010 reached 43,021,826 people with the composition of the male population 21,512,996 people and female 21,180,955 people. The population density reaches 1157 people per km². From the BPS, the number of poor people in West Java at 4,852,520 people or 11.58%. The highest poor people population is in the Bogor regency, that is 446.04 thousand from the total population or 9.19% and the lowest is in Banjar, which is, 12.9 thousand people or 0.30%. If the data of poor people is analyzed by education level, they were relate very closely. The BPS data showed that the percentage of the poor people who are not graduated elementary school is 44.35%. Graduated from elementary school/junior high is 50.25%, and senior high school is 5.40%.

The next dimension to consider is job seekers and job opportunities. The BPS data in 2009, describe the total labor force in West Java as many as 18,981,260 people. Active worker as much as 18,981,260 people or about 89.42%. Unemployed as many as 2,079,830 people or 10.96%. While connected to the level of education, number of job seekers at all levels of education reached 4,676,721 people or 11.70% of the population. The number of female job seekers reach the 1,879,839 (41.00% from the total number of job seekers). Furthermore, the number of job seekers, with low educational qualifications to medium, reaches 3,909,792, or 83.60% from total job seekers. While the job vacancies available in West Java in 2010 only 242,793 vacancies available in 10 sectors. With limited job vacancies, causing job seekers with low educational qualifications and low skills are marginalized. So they look for works outside the region and even being Indonesian workers overseas (TKI).

Under these conditions, encourages illegal migrants worker recruitment practices. The recruiters utilize high job competition, regulatory weaknesses and the lack of job seekers information about the destination and the type of the jobs. Recruiters freely seek and easily find workers nominee.

In 2010, registered workers at the *Departmen Tenaga Kerjadan Transmigrasi (Disnakertrans)* or Department of Labor and Transmigration, West Java have been dispatch abroad about 6614 people. The number of institutions *Pelaksana Jasa Tenaga Kerja Indonesia (PJTKI)* as implementers Indonesian labor services, officially registered at the Disnakertrans are 41 companies. Largest destination country is Saudi Arabia with 5384 people, followed by Abu Dhabi about 540 people, Malaysia about 217 people, and Oman about 120 people. Meanwhile, recruitment of Indonesian workers who illegally unknown, though the number of deliveries are larger than the legal PJTKI. The illegal agencies are difficult to identified, of course, adding the factor contributing to the difficulties of tracing of women trafficking.

The data victims of trafficking in West Java is difficult to collected. However, reading the high number of commercial sex workers labor on the Indonesia border, it cannot be denied. It is time all parties concerned, so that cases of trafficking can be reduced or eliminated.

The task of local governments through the authorities is very significant in combating all those involved in trafficking syndicates. In addition to raise community awareness through the dissemination of information.

Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 21 of 2007 was passed. So the previous actors who apprehended by using ordinary criminal law can be sentenced to imprisonment of 3 years and a maximum of 15 (fifteen) years and a minimum fine of Rp. 120,000,000.00 (one hundred and twenty million dollars) and a maximum of Rp. 600,000,000.00 (six hundred million rupiahs).

The emergence of trafficking cases in West Java, showed lack of support system of women empowerment and child protection. Improving the quality of women's education, improved nutrition and health status of mothers and children, as well as the expansion of women's participation in political, social and economic support system are affecting the quality of development of women and children.

Indicators of women's social welfare development in West Java is quite low. For example, elderly women and women victims of violence and socioeconomic vulnerable are quite high. In 2003, the number of children, women and elderly who became victims of violence about 4674 people. In 2006 about 5335 people, thus the in the three years there had been an increase of 14.14%. While socioeconomic vulnerable women in the year 2003 as many as 116,218 people and in 2006 amounted to 128525 people, so there had been increase of 10.59% in three year time.

Meanwhile, social welfare issues (POM) for children showed that in West Java in 2003 there were 25947 people displaced children under five, the 5559 who live in the street, abandoned children 81719, and the brat 6028. In 2006, there were 29,161 people abandoned infants, the 8448 street children, abandoned children 280 389, and the brat 6679. In addition, other major problems must take into account when looking at the map of children development situations. For example, the number index of education participation school and drop-out rate at every level of education, level of Development of child health such as nutritional status, births and deaths of infants and toddlers, and child protection.

2.2. Local and Cultural Factors

The Research of PKPM Unika Atma Jaya-UNFPA (2003) exposed that poverty, low education, and culture of the people are the combination that causes women and children trapped in the "sex industry". The results from field data and comparative studies in the transitional region can be summarized that, the factors that cause trafficking are poverty, low level education, and culture.

Poverty is a macro factors that lead someone to find a job. Women of productive age who are poor, more easily trapped into the recruiter seduction. The research usually offered employment overseas, entertainers, babysitters and others.

Low levels of education seekers, causing them enable to understand the regulations, the information labor, traffic handling, destination countries, and culture. Moreover among of job seekers have minimal literacy. These conditions make it easier for recruiter and illegal employment, deceive, extort, and even harass of the victims.

The Culture. Culture is unique. Perspective people's behavior is influenced by culture. How do people make ends meet will also be affected. In West Java community, hiring girls to get money is influenced by culture. Some areas with a distinctive culture encourages the daughter to leave the house, even abroad, to earn money. Most of them work in the informal sector. More difficult, among girls works on entertainment world that closer to prostitution. In conditions such as trafficking cases easier to appear. The habits "*mluruduit*" in one of the districts in West Java, has been the driving factor girls seek jobs to abroad.

Mluruduit is the term. If defined literally, *mluru* means to find, collect and use the money for a better future. *Duit* is money, as a symbol of ownership. *Mluru* typical term is directed by parents to children. But even more special is used for girls. Girls become very important because of higher economic value.

In local culture, high school girls in the push off to get married, even through coercion. After that, they were divorced. Status as a young widow has more value, especially in sexual attraction. People call merry widow (very young widow)

The status as a merry widow encourage them to work outside the home freely. Usually chosen profession is the world of entertainment. Singing, dancing or other entertaining for men. ILO research (2003) shows that the location of sex workers in the northern coast extending from Karawang, Cikampek, Subang, Indramayu to Cirebon, scattered around 100 food stalls, cafes, and karaoke places that offer young girls mostly 14-20 years old. While in the Bandung city, the young girl working in the brothel, massage, karaoke bars, hotels and other types of entertainment.

Looking at this condition, on the level of the region, it is necessary for the prevention and elimination of trafficking handling. Prevention efforts involve many parties such as family, community, college and authorities such as the

Police, Immigration, Education, Public Health, BPMD, and Social Services. The most important is the preparation of guidelines for the prevention and protection of trafficking and the development of institutional networks for the prevention and elimination of trafficking.

In addition, the regulations will not be effective if there is no institution to disseminate, prevent, and deal with them. Each region should be tied to trafficking institutional networks.

2.3. Mapping Trafficking of Women

Trafficking cases in West Java continue to increase in quantity and quality every year. Although difficult to collect accurate data. Nationally, statistics trafficking of women and children are not available until now. But, hundred thousands of people estimated have experienced the trafficking. As stated Latifah Iskandar, Chairman of the Special Committee of the Parliament Act Eradication of Trafficking in Persons (PTPPO), that Medan girls trafficked as 'sex slaves' in Malaysia. Similarly Manado girls brought to Papua and girls Indramayu to Jakarta

The Government of Batam City studies of victims of trafficking, from 2004 to 2006, showed that in 2004 there were 75 victims, in 2005, 33 victims in 2006, 225 victims. Among the victims, West Java was in the second rank after East Java province. The data confirms that West Java is one of the sources of trafficking sender. See Figure 1.

The high number of victims of trafficking in women and children in some areas of the district / city of West Java is not only caused by economic pressure or poverty factor but also by other driving factors. In Indramayu, for example, cultural factors are loose on the position of women who 'work' is more dominant than the factor of economic pressures. While in some areas of the district /city in which the number of victims of trafficking in women and children are very little or even no, it does not mean the problem of trafficking of women and children as well not exist because the potential emergence of these problems is quite large. For example, if seen from the number (proportion) and an increasing trend of females, the situation and the conditions of each region, or from other driving factors.

Eight counties and cities in West Java is known as suppliers areas. Namely, Sukabumi, Tangerang, Bekasi, Indramayu, Bandung, Karawang, Bogor, Cianjur, Bekasi, Depok, Cirebon and Kuningan. While the city of Bandung and Losari-Cirebon indicated as a transit area in the trafficking. Areas with the highest population are Indramayu, Sukabumi and Bandung. (See Figure 2).

Based on the map of the problem of trafficking of women and children in the sending area (See Table 1), which is supported by a variety of quantitative and qualitative data available, if done grouping areas (zoning) according to the number of cases of trafficking in women and children can be grouped as follows:

- Zone I: the district / city in which the number of victims of trafficking in women and children carrying high (a lot) and the potential emergence of new victims is huge. This area includes: Indramayu, Subang, Cianjur, Karawang, Sukabumi, Cirebon, and district/city of Bandung.
- Zone II: the district / city in which the number of victims of trafficking in women and children is still carrying a bit but the potential emergence of new victims is great considering the population of women is quite high. This area includes: Sumedang, Banten, Regency/City of Bekasi, Garut, Tasikmalaya, and district/city of Bogor.
- Zone III: the district / city in which the number of victims of trafficking in women and children are not recorded but the potential emergence of new victims is quite large. This area includes: district / city of West Java beyond those mentioned above.

Meanwhile, the qualitative data from the fields explain the cause of the victims caught up in trafficking cases. Some trafficking victims were rescued by the police in the recipient provinces. For instance, Board Satreskrim Bintan Police rescued two women from Bandung who became victim in women trafficking. Data at the Embassy in Malaysia showed that 40% of migrant workers who are victims of trafficking come from district Karawang. They were a number of children and women, who were sent to be a housekeeper.

To become of housekeeper is the one reason of domestic women trafficking. When they will depart the victims promised jobs as domestics worker. In fact, they are employed in places of entertainment. One of the victims of trafficking from Karawang district were forced to work in entertainment industries in the area around Jakarta before deployment to Saudi Arabia.

The number of child victims of trafficking for prostitution purposes is increasing. According Sagala (2006) as much as 43.5% of trafficked children in West Java, was sold at the youngest age of 14 years, and the most vulnerable age is 17-year-old (LPA Jabar, 2003). Furthermore, according to Sagala, data from the Department of Social Welfare (2003) also showed that the number of sex workers in West Java is estimated at 22,380 people. Among them, 9000 children forced into prostitution. A number of areas in West Java as Karawang, Indramayu, Sukabumi, Cianjur,

South Bandung, Subang, and Kuningan, identified as the basis area of women and children who are trapped in prostitution.

Most of the field studies conclude, that young women or a children trafficked for economic boost. The young woman caught trafficking more easily when they seek for job to provide the needs of family life. Economic motive is the main cause. On the other hand, a child merchantability parents who involve children trafficking, because they are not able to care for and raise. According to the experience from Institute for Women's (*Institut Perempuan*), one of the NGOs, stated that poverty is not the main factor. Factors that should be considered is coercion and persuasion by the traffickers (syndicates). They were invited to expand career abroad. Despair, anger, broken home, and domination are the factors that leading syndicates to take advantage of them. Indiscretion factor of family, also initiated the trafficking incident.

The further factors are, the rule enforcement, the corruption, and the lack of work information in the destination country. Usually, the potential victims feel no need to double-check the job descriptions and employment contracts. Most of them believe to their friends, relatives, neighbors, boyfriends, and even husbands. It is from the Kementerian Pemberdayaan Perempuan Indonesia said that the phenomenon of 20 percent of all Indonesian migrant workers are victims of trafficking.

2.4. Networking and Communication Trafficking Victim Recruit

Search trafficked problem is a long chain. There are points communication link is typical in the search process, recruitment, collection and delivery of the potential victim abroad. There are circles of communication that difficult to express as a formal process of trapping the victim act. Most of the victim did not recognize that they are victims of trafficking.

The first pattern is a family approach. The Communication networks in trafficking, based on the analysis trafficking victims from West Java who rescued in Batam City. The network illegal recruitment agent is pretty neat. According to the victims report, they (recruiter) are usually a family member or neighbor. Even among the victims stated that they recruiter are their husbands or their own siblings.

In the first phase, the recruiters work and approached the microenvironment of potential victims. They approached the closest family members. Role of parents, siblings, and even the victim's husband (if still married) is very large. With the encouragement of looking for a job abroad, a candidate willing victim eventually shipped overseas after communicating with parents, siblings and their husbands.

They become “ambassadors” families to earn a living for their families, children, and even their husbands. They come from poor families, most of their husbands do not have a job and a steady income. Once abroad, the women each month to send money to their families. Arguments in encouragement messages to go abroad, solely is money. Then wrapped with a message to help the family to live fairly or desire to own a home, vehicle and land. In a boost like this, women were powerless and could not refuse to work outside the home or migrate to foreign countries. In addition to the parent, an approach by lover as a second pattern. Many of the recruiter act as a prospective lover or companion. They were persuaded to go abroad for work. Even among those giving promise to marry if you like to work abroad. Underneath it all they actually set up to be sold to the illegal labor recruiter. The third pattern is debt bondage through the parent or family. The recruiter normally offer financial aid to family members or parents.

They offer money and debt, but paid with their girls willingness to work abroad. Debt offered, always blooming quite high, and the debtor could not afford to pay. Finally, the girl child be guaranteed by his departure to work abroad, in order to help the family.

Communication network in recruitment rely more on interpersonal relationships as a step-by-step operations. In this case, the recruitment services of workers rely women myriad socio-economic situation of potential victims and the conditions or circumstances. But behind it all circumstances, employment fraud, extortion physically and economically are the final state received by the victims. The Figure 3 shows that the approach phase of victims generally; coaxed, threatened with physical violence and mental, until the act of fraud in the process of recruitment. In addition, other modes that appear in recruitment were giving promised to marriage, wages and other facilities. On the other hand, the condition of the victims easily giving up or be persuaded simply because they are in a poor condition. Even some of them involved in the debt that impossible to paid.

When the girls arrived at the workplace, many of them will be victims of sexual harassment. In fact, they are experiencing economic difficulties because their salaries have been cut down by an agent, among those reportedly illegal. The reason is that their documents are held by the employer or agents. Finally, they are hard to get out the house or leave the workplace to report.

3. The Conclusion

The conclusion of the research are:

- High-poor macro conditions are leading to a number of victims of trafficking. Furthermore there is a strong correlation between low levels of education of women job seekers in the area, with the desire to be illegal migrants. Eventually they get caught up in trafficking cases.
- Local culture (*mluruduit*) is a custom in suburban areas of West Java that assume that girls have a high economic value. *Mluruduit* habits have encouraged the children to work and raise money abroad.
- West Java region has three zones based on cases of trafficking, namely the red zone, yellow zone and green zone.
- Entrapment girls in trafficking cases, rely more on interpersonal communication networks. Message containing persuasion easy job, high salary, and a good life is a strong attraction. The actors involved are the closest people like neighbors, husbands, and their own relatives.

Trafficking in Indonesia, will continue to appear if the roots are not addressed. Several attempts can be exercised to handling the issue of trafficking in West Java, for example:

- Government programs sought to tackle the problem of trafficking from upstream to downstream. The program includes preventive, curative and rehabilitative.
- Developing the cooperation network in the provinces and between provinces. Data communications and networking services in handling trafficking requires intensive cooperation.
- Early treatment is necessary. The role of family, neighborhood, and local leaders and officials to be important in the early detection of cases of trafficking.

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Figure 1. The Cases of Trafficking, 2006 (The Sending Area Batam City)

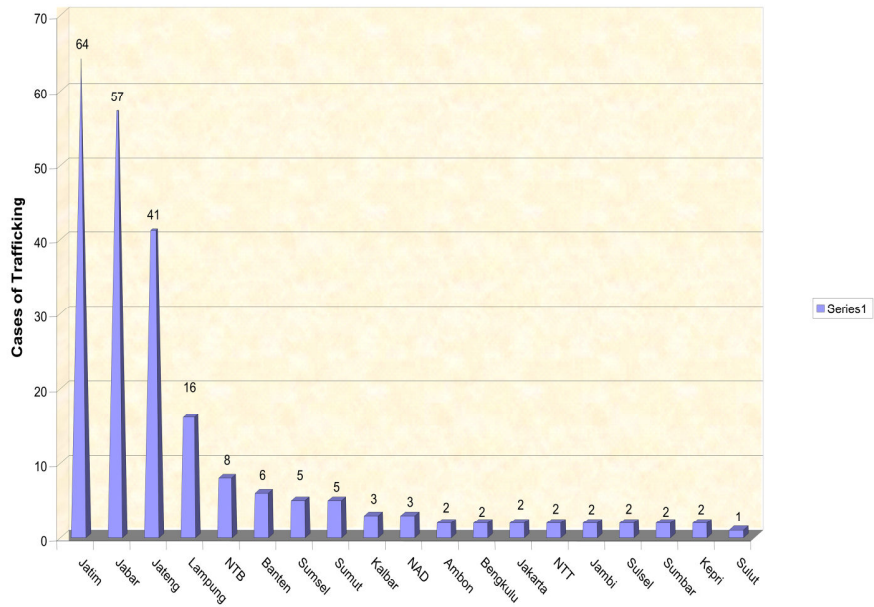


Figure 2. The Sources County and Cities of Trafficking Victim

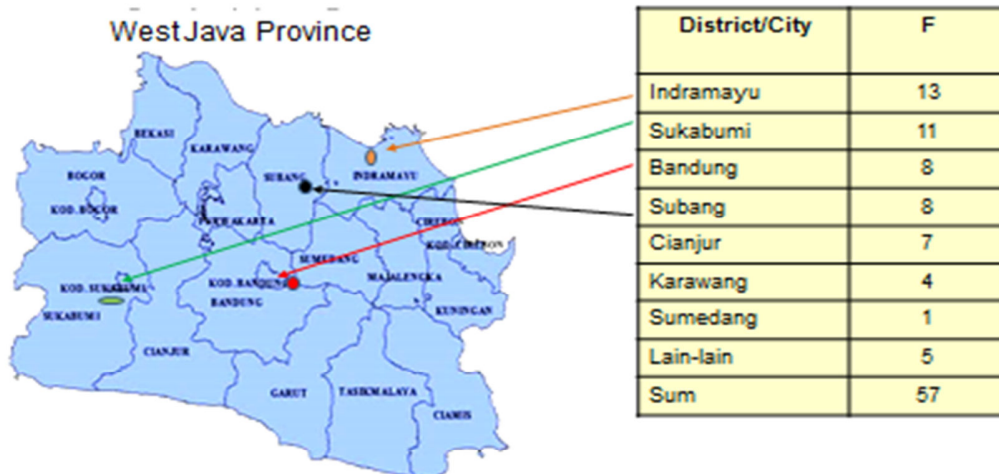


Table 1. Mapping of Zone of Trafficking Case in West Java

Zone I	Big number of population of Treffikey and have had high potency for new comer (victim)	Indramayu, Subang, Cianjur, Karawang, Sukabumi, Cirebon, dan regency and municipality of Bandung.
Zone II	Small number of population but have had latent trigger to produce new victim, especially the areas which have big population of women	Sumedang, Banten, regency and municipality of Bekasi, Garut, Tasikmalaya, and regency and municipality of Bogor.
Zone III	No population but have had an appportunity to produce trafficking	Other regencies and municipalities

Figure 3. The Pattern of Interpersonal Communication Approach in Recruiting Trafficking Victims

