



The Economics of Prostitution: How Does Prostitution Affect Family Resilience?

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Keywords:	Abstract
Informal economic activities	<p>Objective: This study aims to formulate an ideal government policy that addresses prostitution comprehensively.</p> <p>Method: This study applies a qualitative descriptive-normative method. The data were obtained through secondary sources, document analysis, participatory and direct observations, as well as semi-structured interviews. Data analysis was conducted using an inductive approach through data reduction, classification, and interpretation. Triangulation methods were employed to ensure the validity and credibility of the data.</p> <p>Result: The study reveals that the prostitution business in Indonesia is supported by complex networks involving pimps, sex workers, clients, and other indirect actors. The practice is driven by multiple factors including economic necessity, social vulnerability, low moral awareness, and inadequate family resilience. Additionally, prostitution has created both positive and negative externalities in the surrounding communities, especially in urban areas.</p> <p>Implication: This study suggests that government policies must be integrative, addressing not only the legal aspects but also offering economic empowerment programs, family resilience development, and moral education. The findings highlight the importance of collaboration between state institutions, religious leaders, and community organizations to reduce the dependence on prostitution as a means of livelihood.</p> <p>Novelty: This research offers a comprehensive framework by linking the economic, religious, and sociological dimensions of prostitution. Unlike prior studies that focus on a single aspect, this study presents prostitution as a systemic issue within the informal economy that requires a multi-sectoral and ethically grounded policy response.</p>
Economic dilemmas	
The economy of prostitution	
Externalities	

INTRODUCTION

Prostitution is a social issue that continues to develop within society and remains difficult to eradicate. Along with the advancement of technology and media, the modes

through which it is carried out have become increasingly diverse. In the past, prostitution was conducted in secrecy, but today it can be easily accessed by anyone, at any time and from anywhere (Nurgiansyah, 2020). Various factors, both direct and indirect, contribute to the growing number of individuals choosing prostitution as a profession. Each worker has their own reasons; however, the primary goal remains to earn money to meet daily needs (Pascawati, 2019). This situation reflects a dilemma between the economic drive for survival and the personal cost of self-exploitation.

According to Hull, Sulistyaningsih, and Jones (1997), prostitution is a complex socio-economic problem with uncertain origins. Nevertheless, its presence remains evident in everyday life, both physically and mentally, whether overtly or covertly. Prostitution is therefore considered a form of crime that is difficult to manage and prosecute, as it is closely linked to economic factors within social life (Amalia, 2013). The government appears to tolerate this deeply rooted practice in Indonesian society, which poses serious threats to sexual morality, family stability, public welfare, and even presents governance challenges for local authorities (Amalia, 2016).

Several earlier studies have explored prostitution from diverse perspectives. For instance, Sciortino (1999) and Lim (1998) provided insight into the socio-economic and policy frameworks that shape prostitution practices in Southeast Asia. Other researchers such as Koentjoro (1996), Amalia (2016), and Rosyida & Sadewo (2013) addressed prostitution in Indonesia through a legal, psychological, and feminist lens. However, these studies often isolated prostitution from its larger economic ecosystem, overlooking how technological advancement, urban migration, and informal labor dynamics contribute to its persistence. In terms of religious and ethical implications, works by Mukramin & Nawir (2018) and Kenedi (2017) have examined prostitution within Islamic jurisprudence, underscoring the moral prohibition and social repercussions of sex work. Nonetheless, few studies have attempted to bridge these moral frameworks with empirical economic data and policy analysis. The present research advances the state of the art by integrating economic, social, religious, and legal dimensions into a comprehensive analysis of prostitution, offering a nuanced understanding of its underlying causes, persistence, and potential resolutions Arthani, & Citra (2023); Nugroho, et.al., (2025). Additionally, Sari et al. (2022) Big-Alabo (2023) analyze the intersection of poverty, education gaps, and urban unemployment as structural drivers of prostitution among young women in metropolitan areas. Nonetheless, few studies have attempted to bridge these moral frameworks with empirical economic data and policy analysis. The present research advances the state of the art by integrating economic, social, religious, and legal dimensions into a comprehensive analysis of prostitution, offering a nuanced understanding of its underlying causes, persistence, and potential resolutions.

Although the issue of prostitution in Indonesia has been widely discussed, most existing studies are limited in scope, primarily focusing on legal, moral, or public health aspects (Benoit, et.al., 2019; Hansen & Johansson, 2022). These fragmented approaches often overlook the fact that prostitution is deeply embedded within broader socio-economic structures, functioning as part of an informal economy driven by structural poverty, gender inequality, urban marginalization, and technological change. In addition, limited attention has been given to the role of cultural and religious values in shaping the persistence, perception, and negotiation of prostitution in society (Usman, & Budiman, 2024). This creates a significant gap in the literature, where prostitution is rarely analyzed as an adaptive, organized, and systemic economic network that operates in response to complex and overlapping pressures.

This study aims to address that gap by offering a comprehensive examination of prostitution not only as a moral and legal issue but also as an economic and social phenomenon. It analyzes the dynamics, actors, motivations, and mechanisms of the

prostitution business network in Indonesia, highlighting how economic necessity, digital innovation, and weak institutional enforcement interact to sustain the system. The study further seeks to propose policy recommendations that consider both the socio-economic realities and the religious-cultural context of Indonesian society. In doing so, it contributes to the development of more holistic, humane, and contextually grounded strategies to reduce the prevalence of prostitution while promoting family resilience and reinforcing shared moral values (Netrawati, Syukur, & Setiawan, 2023).

METHOD

Type and Design

This study uses an explorative qualitative approach with a normative study, where this approach is based on the rules of social and religious norms that apply in society along with the applicable laws and regulations, including a comprehensive description. This is done because the basis for consideration is a dilemma, whereby curbing the prostitution business network can create a negative stigma in society but legalizing the prostitution business network is not ideal. After all, it can cause negative economic externalities. This research is expected to be able to comprehensively identify the opportunities and challenges of the existence of a prostitution business network in the Government's decision-making process to socio-economically careful and deep.

Data and Data Sources

This study uses secondary data to support the analysis of prostitution business networks that are increasingly prevalent in society. The data were obtained from various reports, academic publications, and documents issued by institutions involved in regulating and examining prostitution-related issues in Indonesia. While previous studies have provided valuable insights, many of them tend to focus on specific aspects such as legal frameworks, moral debates, or psychological impacts, often overlooking the broader interconnections between economic drivers, technological developments, and institutional responses. There is a limited number of studies that examine prostitution as part of a complex socio-economic phenomenon influenced by multiple and overlapping factors. By drawing from a diverse range of secondary sources, this study aims to offer a more comprehensive understanding of the prostitution network and its persistence in contemporary Indonesian society. This broader perspective is essential for identifying more effective policy responses and uncovering overlooked dimensions of the issue.

Data collection technique

This research utilized a qualitative approach with normative-descriptive design, combining legal, economic, and sociocultural perspectives. The data were collected through secondary sources such as academic literature, government reports, NGO publications, and media investigations. To complement documentary analysis, the researchers employed participatory and direct observation of prostitution-related settings and actors, particularly in identified localization areas. Semi-structured interviews were also conducted with key informants, including former sex workers, pimps, service users, and community members. Interview protocols were designed to capture the complexity of prostitution practices, the motivations behind participation, the structure of the economic network, and the social interactions among involved parties. This triangulated methodology allowed for a rich and reliable understanding of the phenomenon, grounded in both empirical evidence and theoretical frameworks.

Data Validity

To ensure the credibility and validity of the data, this study employed both source triangulation and technique triangulation. Source triangulation involved collecting data

from multiple stakeholders across different roles in the prostitution network—such as pimps, sex workers, service users, and local residents—as well as from various institutions including government agencies and non-governmental organizations. Technique triangulation was applied by cross-referencing data gathered through literature review, field observation, and interviews. This approach enabled the researchers to corroborate findings and mitigate potential biases or limitations inherent in relying on a single method or source. The use of multiple data sources and methods increased the trustworthiness of the research and enriched the analysis of prostitution as a multifaceted socio-economic phenomenon.

Data analysis

Data analysis followed a qualitative interpretative framework informed by the Miles and Huberman (1994) model, which consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The process began with transcription and organization of interview data and observational field notes. These data were then categorized into thematic dimensions such as economic motivation, social stigma, religious conflict, and network structure. Categorical tables and matrices were developed to identify emerging patterns and relationships among actors, motivations, and institutional responses. Through iterative analysis and synthesis, the researchers constructed a conceptual map of the prostitution business network and interpreted its implications within the broader context of Indonesian society. This methodological rigor enabled the study to reveal both the systemic drivers and policy blind spots in addressing prostitution.

RESULT

Factors that cause the rise of prostitution in Indonesia

Prostitution remains prevalent in Indonesia and is widely regarded as detrimental to public morality. The government faces significant challenges in eradicating this practice, as it continues to evolve by utilizing various forms of media as intermediaries (see Table 1). Technological and informational advances have become a double-edged sword. While they offer numerous benefits, they are also exploited by sex workers to operate in more discreet and concealed ways. Today, prostitution increasingly relies on the internet as a primary platform for its activities, as it is perceived to provide greater anonymity and protection from law enforcement raids (Yanto, 2014).

Table 1. Media of Prostitution Practices in Indonesia

Media	Information
Website	Used for self-promotion with details like photos, age, rates, and contact numbers. Transactions occur via phone, either directly with the sex worker or through a pimp.
Forum	More exclusive and interactive than websites. Requires registration, with limited access to information. Considered safer due to familiarity among members.
Social networking	Originally for social connection, but misused to promote prostitution. Now declining in use due to safety concerns.
Application	Used for real-time interaction via chat, voice, or video calls. Transactions are conducted by accessing chat rooms or direct communication.

Source: Malik (2019), modified

The chain of prostitution activities is quite broad in scope because the parties involved in prostitution can be directly involved in it or not. Online prostitution is slightly different from the conventional practice of prostitution due to the different media used.

Every worker in prostitution has various reasons that become the basis for carrying out the profession (Table 2). To trace a person's background is relatively challenging because the life problems surrounding it are diverse and closely interrelated from one cause to another (Balfour & Allen, 2014). However, broadly speaking, the existing factors can be formulated, among others:

Table 2. Factors Causing the Practice of Prostitution in Indonesia

Media	Information
Morals and morals	The practice of prostitution is contrary to moral and moral values in society because: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The existence of demoralization or low moral factors, individual piety to the teachings of his religion; 2. Educational standards in families that tend to below; 3. The widespread practice of spreading pornography.
Economy	Economic factors become one of the dominant motives of the practice of prostitution so that prostitutes without thinking long run their profession and justify the practice of prostitution, because: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fulfillment of the necessities of life; 2. The difficulty of finding work; 3. Hedonism attitude (want to look luxurious and glamorous).
Sociological	Sociologically, the practice of prostitution is an immoral act, which is contrary to ethics in society, because: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is an invitation from a friend who has previously pursued a profession in the practice of prostitution; 2. The existence of persuasion and deception from other parties (pimps or service users)
Psychological	Mental and mental health factors also influence a person to practice prostitution because: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Less harmonious family relationships; 2. Having a traumatic experience; 3. There is a desire for revenge with past experiences (failure of marriage, tainted by her lover and then abandoned)
Biological	Biological needs can influence a person to practice prostitution, because: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Abnormal lust (not satisfied with sexual relations with their partners); 2. Curiosity in channeling sexual desire
Laziness	The laziness factor is usually caused by psychic and low mentality, due to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do not want to fight more in the competition of life; 2. Only take advantage of physical capital (posture, beauty).
More supporters	Other supporting factors are related to the ease of accessing the practice of prostitution, due to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 The existence of supporting technology; Increasing pornographic films and VCDs, obscene images in society 3 There is a media practice of prostitution.

Sources: Marcius & Simatupang (2018); Sosiady & Ermansyah (2017)

The Development of the Prostitution Business Network

The prostitution business network is an organized trade in informal settings that is worth billions of dollars for women at home and abroad (Pitcher, 2015). According to Lim (1998) prostitution business networks are integrated into economic, social, and political life. So that directly or indirectly, this business contributes to a country's employment, national income, and economic growth. This is in line with the International Labor Organization (1998) Global Network of Sex Work Projects (2017), which shows strong evidence that the prostitution business has a significant impact on the national economy because the prostitution business network will affect the economy through tax revenue, income distribution, and other positive externalities (Ayres, 2003).

Most prostitution business networks are forms of abuse of women, which tend to be underestimated to be profitable, whether legal or tolerated through the international industry (Rosyida & Sadewo, 2013). Globally, there are 13,828,700 prostitutes worldwide, 80 percent of whom are women in the age range of 13-25 years (Scelles Foundation, 2020). Conditions in several countries then legalized prostitution business networks in the prostitution industry, a large-scale brothel industry that was regulated and supervised by the Government. So that, in the end, the creation of a massive prostitution business network point (Abas, 2017).

South Korea estimates that there are one million women in the prostitution business network and are estimated to be worth 4.4 percent of its gross domestic product, which is a more considerable contribution than the forestry, fisheries, and agriculture sectors combined (Hurt, 2005). In addition, the Netherlands, which has legalized its prostitution business network since 2001, is estimated to get five percent of its gross domestic product from its prostitution business (Daley, 2001). In China, the boom in the prostitution business network began in 1978, which is estimated to employ 10 million – 20 million women who contribute USD 700 billion or eight percent of the economy in China (Hurt, 2005). In the United States, it shows that the total income from the prostitution business network is USD 39.9 – USD 290 million (Dank & Johnson, 2014).

In Indonesia, business practices are also not a new phenomenon. The existence of this prostitution business network is never finished, let alone abolished (Prasetyo, 2019). The Government later legalized several cases in the long history of this prostitution business practice in order to closely monitor the spread of the practice that could potentially be caused by this activity.

This prostitution business network illustrates many things from the dark side of humans. Because in essence, prostitution is not only about sexual relations, the spread of the disease caused and those involved in it, but there are also parties either directly or indirectly enjoying and taking advantage of the existence of this prostitution business (Prasetyo, 2019).). The same thing was also expressed by Koentjoro (2016), Murdyanto (2019); the prostitution industry is in a working economic and political system, which positions women as objects of sexual satisfaction and profitable commodities. This means that the existence of prostitutes and brothels is not just a localization and prostitutes, but there are a variety of interests and businesses behind it.

Various economic data show that the contribution of prostitution to the country's economy is relatively large. According to Sciortino (1999), in the early 1990s, the prostitution business network had generated a financial turnover of USD 1,180 million to USD 3,300 million, where this figure was equivalent to 0.8 - 2.4 percent of Indonesia's GDP in the same year. Data from the ILO (2016) also states that the prostitution business network in four Southeast Asia (Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand) is estimated to reach two percent to four percent of the total GDP. This figure continues to increase until it reaches USD 2.25 billion or around Rp. 30 trillion in a year (Havoscope, 2015). On this basis, Indonesia is ranked in the top 12 countries with the most significant business acquisition.

From the magnitude of this value, you can imagine that it is not easy to reduce or even eliminate prostitution in Indonesia. However, the Government of Indonesia has slowly begun to close localization points and trick prostitution workers not to return to their activities in the prostitution business network (see Table 3). The Indonesian Government then provided compensation in the form of productive economic business assistance of Rp. 3,000,000 per person and also life insurance of Rp. 5,050,000 as well as various vocational training (Kusumawati & Rochaeti, 2019).

Table 3. Distribution of the Number of Prostitutes and Localization in Indonesia

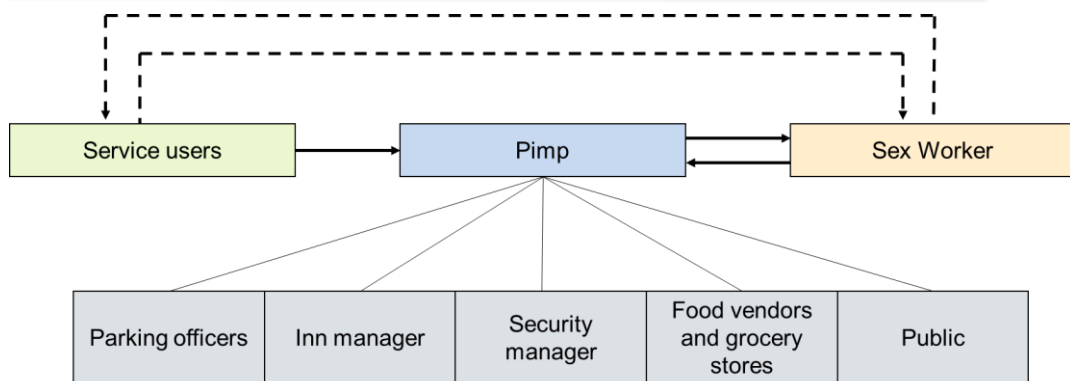
	2013	2015	2017	2019
Number of prostitutes	99,105 people	64,435 people	56,000 people	19,726 people
Number of localization	161	168	143	48
Localization deployment	19 provinces, 16 cities/ regencies	21 provinces, 25 cities/ regencies	17 provinces, 15 cities/ regencies	13 provinces, 10 cities/ regencies

Source: Murdiyanto (2020), modified

The closure influences the reduction in the number of localization and prostitutes carried out by the Government with the following considerations (Shively et al., 2012): (1) reducing the incidence of HIV and AIDS, (2) eradicating thuggery practices, (3) reducing the incidence of sexual violence (sex abuse); (4) a form of guarantee from the Government related to the fulfillment of human rights both for prostitutes and the community around the localization. According to the United Nations Children's Fund (2020), it is estimated that out of all prostitutes, at least 30 percent of them are prostitution workers under 18 years old, or even there is widespread news in the media about artists who are also involved in this prostitution business network.

Pimp Marketing

Pimping activities that occur in the localization are an option to earn a living that is used for the family's daily needs, even though it is only a side job because they have other types of work (Tahrus, Previo, & Abdurrahman, 2018). However, this was not confirmed by Prasetyo (2019), who stated that this other work was only done to disguise his work from the prostitution business. In order to run their prostitution business optimally, pimps utilize their socio-economic resources through various strategies, one of which is to build and maintain social networks for fellow prostitutes and other parties who can provide smooth access to their business activities (Artosa, 2018). This means that pimps carry out a form of social interaction with other actors, which as a whole they are connected as a complex prostitution business network (see Figure 1).



Source: Edlud, & Korn (2002); Artosa (2018) modified

Figure 1. Social Interaction of Pimps in the Prostitution Business

The pattern of interaction carried out by pimps becomes dominant and involves many parties. This shows that the prostitution business has an essential role in the lives of most community groups, both prostitutes and people living around the localization who also need to fulfill their lives. The role of pimps is as an intermediary and a supplier of commercial sex workers to their service users.

The role of the prostitution business network played by pimps is not merely transactional but also managerial and protective in nature. Pimps act as intermediaries who manage the flow of services between sex workers and clients while maintaining control over the business structure. Their primary goal is to protect both their economic interests and the well-being of the sex workers under their supervision, often referred to as their "foster children." This suggests that security and stability are central elements in maintaining the continuity of the prostitution enterprise (Pascawati, 2019). The pimp's role ensures that market demands are met, sex workers are able to operate with a degree of protection, and clients receive the services they expect, creating a semi-organized system that mirrors conventional service industries.

According to Prasetyo (2019), while pimps offer a degree of autonomy to sex workers in choosing clients and negotiating the terms of engagement, this freedom is still embedded within a structure that considers potential risks and benefits. This dynamic results in a complex web of social relations where each actor—pimp, sex worker, and client—performs a specific role that sustains the network. Such relationships are maintained not only through economic transactions but also through shared norms, mutual dependencies, and tacit understandings of boundaries and expectations. In this way, the prostitution business network operates as a form of informal governance, where power, protection, and profit intersect. These dynamics highlight the need to understand prostitution not only as individual behavior but as part of a wider socio-economic system that adapts and evolves in response to market forces, urban pressures, and regulatory gaps. If seen, how the mechanism of social interaction in determining how pimps work in running the prostitution business, especially in recruiting potential victims, is determined by:

Table 4. Pimping-style marketing in the practice of prostitution in Indonesia

Media	Information
Former victim	As a child trafficker for prostitution who has also been prostituted before, there is an element of revenge in recruiting victims who are not assisted by child trafficking syndicates for prostitution.
Pimps and family syndicates	To recruit victims, pimps collaborate with family members or relatives who also work as pimps in other places. This motif is

Human trafficking syndicate	considered adequate because it is familial, and the distribution of profits between pimps is flexible. Pimps who work in child trafficking syndicates for prostitution are organized to recruit their victims. Pimps who use this motif usually have different duties and responsibilities related to those in charge of recruiting at the area of origin, delivering, receiving victims at their destination using telephone communication networks and social media without the victim's knowledge. So it is difficult to trace its whereabouts.
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Source: Ulfiah & Hannah (2019), Yudha, Rahmatuniisa, & Sumadinata (2024) modified

The types and rates set either through pimps or directly to sex workers will depend on the variety of services provided. This tariff is dynamic, depending on the agreement between the two parties involved in the prostitution business transaction. In providing tariffs for each service provided, workers provide different rates. It depends on: (1) duration; (2) whether the demand is crowded or not; (3) the age of sex workers. The description related to the upper and lower limits of the variety of services provided on average is as follows:

People who have houses or buildings in the localization can rent it out as an inn. Where the manager of the Inn is usually referred to as “Mamah” or “Papa” which adjusts to the gender of the manager. The determination of the rental price of the house will depend on the area of the building and the condition of the house. In general, the income of innkeepers is relatively small, averaging one-fifth of the income of sex workers or pimps, but this nominal can be higher because each inn is not only occupied by one prostitute. In addition, there is a security service fee known as a withdrawal which is carried out twice a month with a nominal value of IDR 100,000. Some officers charge retribution to visitors of IDR 5,000 – IDR 10. 000 who want to enjoy the services of the available prostitution business. Because of this, the profit-sharing of the prostitution business is one of the potential businesses with an organized work system. The imposition of responsibility due to the size of the role in this prostitution business network will affect the magnitude of the determination of the results (Jakobsson & Kotsadam, 2013).

DISCUSSION

Economic Externalities of the Prostitution Business Network

Economic externalities arise because the prostitution business network is closely related to economic actions, both production and consumption carried out by one party to another (Mangkoesebroto, 1995). The same thing was also expressed by Nicholson & Snyder (2008); Mankiw (2010), which define the impact of one person's actions that can affect the other party's condition as reflected by market operations. So, in general, this externality means impact (positive or negative); in other words, it is called net cost or net benefit. If it is noticed that this prostitution business network will undoubtedly have an impact on externalities, it can be positive externalities or negative externalities directly or indirectly for the parties involved.

The prostitution business network provides a positive externality due to the socio-economic life of a diverse society. In general, the location of the prostitution business is close to community settlements. This is used for the community to open a shop business, laundry, parking, or rent a house in a boarding house or rental house to facilitate guests who arrive. So that the multiplier effect is not only felt by prostitutes but will also improve the community's standard of living around the location of the prostitution business that is developing in their area.

Related to the average income of the surrounding community, this location of prostitution arises as a result of informal profit sharing that is forced or voluntary. This is confirmed by Sciortino (1999) from 100 percent of the prostitution economy, where 50 percent is a share for prostitutes, 50 percent is a share of 25 pimps, and the rest is for the community around the location of prostitution. This indicates that positive externalities affect various parties' socio-economic conditions directly or indirectly (Tahrus, Previo, & Abdurrahman, 2018). At this time, the condition of the prostitution business network is developing more complex and broader in scope due to the use of digital media and the emergence of more luxurious prostitution. According to Davis (1937), Armstrong (2019) explain the causes of prostitution activities is one of the widespread commercial activities, especially in the economic field, among others: (1) the causes of the prostitution business network itself; (2) the cause of the rampant prostitution business network; (3) the causes of people working in the prostitution business network directly or indirectly where the proceeds of this prostitution contribute to the income of the local government budget treasury.

Therefore, policies in dealing with prostitution are not easy to create and implement. according to Wagenaar, Altink, & Amesberger, (2017). The prostitution policy is paradoxical, where curbing a prostitution business network can create a negative stigma attached to prostitutes who violate applicable norms. However, legalizing prostitution is also not an ideal step because the prostitution business network has implications related to other facilities that can affect the development of the prostitution business network as a form of negative externality (Tadie & Permanadeli, 2014).

As it grows, it demands quantity more and more prostitutes. This encourages people to get relatively short and fast profits because the income earned from the prostitution business network is more than enough to meet their daily needs (Irwansyah, 2016). The process of recruiting prostitutes is carried out using various available media, even from outside the region. In addition, brothels and other facilities such as karaoke, discotheques, massage parlors, apartments, and hotels began to appear. Even some luxurious and expensive facilities become a new offer in the prostitution business network. Sexual objectification that occurs in the prostitution business network can occur if a woman's body is considered an object that can be enjoyed by sight and touch; moreover, the service user has paid for prostitution services by the agreement, which means that the service user is entitled to the prostitute himself (Jared Justice, 2019). The interest in the prostitution business is meeting the needs of clothing and housing and spiritual pleasure, meaning that it is not only sensory pleasure but also includes freedom from pain in the body and freedom from mental anxiety (Syamsuddin, 2013).

Therefore, the increasing number of prostitutes in the prostitution business network increases the potential for physical and psychological violence to the risk of death of prostitutes (Farley, 2004). According to Avert (2013), Rahmawati (2019), prostitutes are more likely to be exposed to the Human Immunodeficiency Virus and Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome 13 times compared to adults in general. The same thing was also expressed by Noviana (2015); Widodo (2016), where the prevalence of prostitutes is experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder due to verbal violence.

Prostitution between Supply and Demand

One factor that encourages this prostitution business to develop in the community is a desire for recreational romantic relationships. According to Kumar (2015), by introducing the term sex tourism (sex tourism), tourists who travel to buy sexual services for local

women. The same thing was also expressed by O'Connell-Davidson (2004); Hope (2013) which describe sex tourism in a broad scope as part of the sex tourism experience, so many people who do this activity, hope to enjoy sex more while on vacation. So that localization emerged, which then offered prostitution services to migrants or temporal residents on the grounds of fulfilling satisfaction without any long-term ties (Kibicho, 2009; McMillan, Worth, & Rawtorne, 2018).

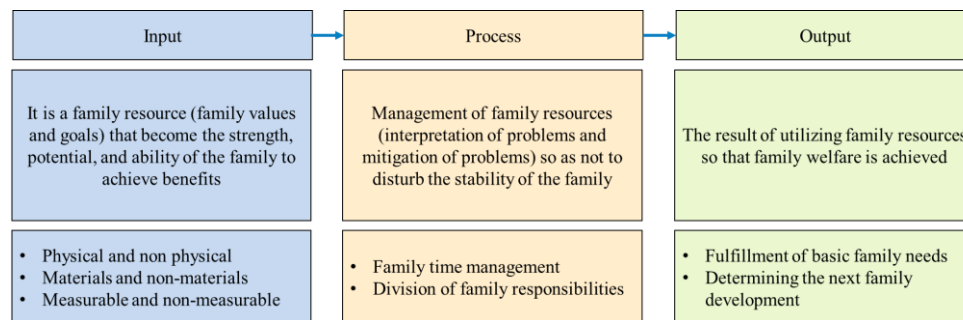
Suppose you look at the supply aspect, the prostitution business network supported by the gap between the low quality of individuals to enter the labor market and the inability of individuals to meet their daily economic needs. So as a quick way with common education conditions, working in the non-formal sector and working in prostitution, which offers a relatively high income, is a choice (Kibicho, 2005). In addition, the media used in this prostitution business network has developed following technological developments. Initially, conventional methods through localization began to switch to digital-based prostitution by utilizing various social media alternatives to sell themselves. This trend developed alongside the emergence of multiple policies to close several localizations in the regions (Rama, 2015).

The presence of pimps also contributes significantly to increasing the volume of transactions in the prostitution business, where these pimps actively market and seek prostitution service customers. Nightlife venues such as karaoke, discotheques, and massage parlors also increase prostitution business transactions, with many nightlife workers also serving as prostitutes. In addition, complementary transactions from the prostitution business such as apartments, lodging, hotels, condoms, potent drugs, beer, and other pornographic transactions (magazine-based, VCD or DVD, or online) can also increase the transaction value of the prostitution business (Anindia & Sularto, 2019).

The increase in the prostitution business network can come from the supply side and is also influenced by the demand side. Data from the Ministry of Health (2013) shows that as many as 6-7 million men buy prostitution services. This figure has increased by 150 percent in 2009, which only reached 3.2 million men who are customers of prostitutes. In the same year, it was recorded that there were 230,000 thousand women who became prostitutes. This means that the ratio of supply and demand reaches 1:30. If this ratio imbalance is not addressed quickly, it will increase the supply aspect. As a result, it can re-fertilize the practice of prostitution.

Family Resilience System

According to Ulfiah & Hannah (2018), found several mechanisms for recruiting prostitution business networks, including (1) promising jobs with relatively large salaries; (2) approaching the parents of the potential victim; (3) pretending to be looking for a potential victim. In this case, the family becomes the main medium in socio-economic interaction, in understanding the behavior to be carried out, because it is the initial milestone in introducing community culture to family members. That is, the family will shape a person's characteristics through personal recognition and the nature of others outside of himself (Ulfiah & Hannah, 2016). Within the scope of the family, a person is then raised, resides, interacts with one another, forms values, patterns of thought, and habits. So that the emphasis on family resilience is the key to success related to conditions of adequacy and sustainable access to income and resources to meet basic needs (Singarimbun, 1997). This is in line with Sunarti et al (2003), where food security will later include the ability of families to manage resources and problems to achieve prosperity (see Figure 2).



Source: Ulfiah and Hannah (2018), modified

Figure 2. Family System Approach

The family resilience system approach provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the dynamic conditions within a family that enable it to adapt, persevere, and effectively utilize its internal resources. This capacity for resilience supports the development and well-being of all family members, with the ultimate goal of achieving a more harmonious life both physically and mentally (see Figure 3). Within this approach, the fulfillment of key dimensions in the family system produces a multiplier effect in strengthening the family's ability to withstand external pressures—including the risk of involvement in prostitution networks.

When these dimensions are adequately fulfilled, they act as protective factors that reduce the likelihood of family members, particularly women and youth, being drawn into the prostitution business. The family resilience system emphasizes four core dimensions (Rahma, Fazrin, & Tamba (2025): (1) legality and family integrity, which refers to the presence of lawful and stable family structures; (2) physical and economic resilience, which encompasses health, housing, and sufficient income; (3) psychological resilience, including emotional stability and mental health; and (4) social and cultural resilience, which involves social support systems, adherence to cultural values, and community engagement. Strengthening these four dimensions not only enhances family resilience but also functions as a preventive measure against social vulnerabilities, including entry into exploitative or risky economic activities such as prostitution.

Prostitution and Religion Business Network

The prostitution business is a phenomenon that is not following the prevailing religious norms in society. The prostitution business network continues to develop in the community, which is caused not only by the high demand from consumers for sexual activity services but also the increasing level of prostitution business service offerings with various media used (Mukramin & Nawir, 2019; Rosdiana, 2022).

In religious norms that are rooted in God Almighty, thus strictly prohibiting the practice of prostitution business networks, because it is tantamount to legalizing adultery. According to Islamic teachings, carrying out sex acts must be based on a legal marriage bond and can only be done with a married partner (Kenedi, 2017). If it is done outside of that context, it falls into the category of adultery which is a heinous act, violates the value of decency, and is in a bad way according to what is written in QS Al-Israa: 32, which states that:

لَا الرَّبِّيَّ اِنْ اِحْسَةً اءَل

Meaning: "And do not approach adultery, indeed adultery is an abominable act. And a bad way." – (Surah Al Israa, verse 32)

Prohibition of this prostitution business both logically and naturally because it violates the rights of Allah, the rights of the wife, and the rights of the family which has the potential to damage the sanctity of marriage, disrupt the lineage, and cause dirty diseases and violate other orders. As explained in QS An-Nur: 2, where a woman who has sexual relations with a man who is not her mahram should be punished according to Allah's law without having to feel sorry for her.

لَرَأَيْنِيَهُ لِرَأَيْنِي لِدَوَا لَ اِنَّهُ لَدَدَ لَا اِ فِي لِلّٰهِ لِلّٰهِ لَيُؤْم لَءَاخِرَ وَلَيَشْهَدُ اَبَهُمَا طَائِفَةٌ مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ لِمُؤْمِنِينَ

Meaning: "The woman who commits adultery and the man who commits adultery, then lash each one of them a hundred lashes, and do not be merciful to both of them prevent you from (carrying out) Allah's religion, if you believe in Allah, and the hereafter. and let their punishment be witnessed by a group of believers." – (Surah An-Nur verse 2)

If you see the prostitution business network as a profession of choice, then according to Islamic teachings, apart from advocating hard work, however, it must also be based on moral, moral, and ethical values. In practice, all professional activities have norms or rules that apply to regulate good or bad behavior in the economy. By implementing moral, moral, and ethical values, will be able to guide the perpetrators to carry out economic transactions properly. As explained in QS An-Nisaa: 29.

اَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ اٰمَنُوا لَا تُلَاقُوا اَمْوَالَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ اِلَّا اَنْ اَرَدْتُمْ اَنْ تَتْرَكُوْا اَنْفُسَكُمْ اِنَّ اللَّهَ اَنْ رَّحِيْمًا

Meaning: "O you who believe! Do not eat each other's property in a false way (not true), except in trade that is carried out based on consensual between you. And don't kill yourself. Indeed, Allah is Most Merciful to you." – (Surah An-Nisaa verse 29)

The teachings of Islam also provide an opportunity for its people to be able to choose a profession that is following their skills, abilities, according to their pleasure, and brings benefit to themselves and others. So Islam recommends for each of its people to work and seek sustenance and income for their survival (Aziz, 2013). This means that Islam provides freedom in choosing a job, as long as the job is not tied to disobedience or encourages others to fall into immoral activities. This is as explained in HR Ath-Tabarani, by working in a lawful place, will protect the person's self and the person's honor.

لَبَّ الْحَلَالِ اِجْبُ لِي لَ لِيْم

Meaning: "Seeking lawful (wealth) is obligatory for every Muslim." (HR at-Tabarani).

Therefore, the obligation to look for work in a legalized place is a suggestion from Allah that must be obeyed by his people. Because illicit property will have its impact on its owners and Muslims, among others (Ma'arif, 1985): (1) is a characteristic of the Jews; (2) illicit treasures that enter the stomach will bring disaster and plunge into hell, and (3) is one of the humiliations and downfalls of Muslims.

CONCLUSION

Novelty and Contribution

This study reveals that the prostitution business network in society is sustained by broad and complex interactions involving pimps, sex workers, users, and other actors. Pimps play a central role as intermediaries and coordinators. The persistence of this network highlights the limited effectiveness of current moral, ethical, and religious-based policies in addressing prostitution. To minimize involvement in such networks, policy efforts must focus on fulfilling basic needs, improving welfare, and strengthening moral education. Prostitution remains a social phenomenon that contradicts prevailing religious and moral norms, often seen as immoral and economically exploitative.

Limitation and Future Study

This study is limited to certain areas (e.g., Karanganyar Regency) and relies heavily on secondary data, with a short observation period. Future research should broaden its geographical scope and adopt longitudinal designs to assess policy impact over time. Collaboration across disciplines—public health, law, and urban studies—can enhance future analyses and policymaking.

Implications and Suggestions

Integrated policies are needed to address root causes such as poverty and lack of education, rather than focusing solely on criminalization. Support programs like vocational training and entrepreneurship should be prioritized. Moral and religious education must be strengthened to build resilience at the family and community levels. Regulation of digital platforms facilitating sex work is also essential. Further research should explore the relationship between informal and moral economies to develop ethical, context-sensitive interventions.

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