

VICTIMHOOD AND AGENCY
IN THE SEX TRADE
Experiences and Perceptions
of Teenage Girls in Rural West Java



Atsushi Sano

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VICTIMHOOD AND AGENCY IN THE SEX TRADE

Experiences and Perceptions
of Teenage Girls in Rural West Java

SLACHTOFFERSCHAP EN AGENCY IN DE PROSTITUTIE
Ervaringen en gezichtspunten van tienermeisjes
van het platteland op West-Java

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Acronyms and Glossary

BAPPEDA	<i>Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Daerah</i> (Regional Agency for Planning and Development)
BIMAS/INMAS	a rice intensification programme introduced by the Indonesian Government from the late 1960s. BIMAS: Bimbingan Massal Swa Sembada Bahan Makanan (mass guidance for food self-sufficiency); INMAS: Intensifikasi Massal Swa Sembada Bahan Makanan (mass agricultural intensification for food self-sufficiency)
FAKABI	<i>Forum Anak Kabupaten Indramayu</i> (Indramayu District Child Forum)
ICMC	International Catholic Migration Commission
ILO-IPEC	International Labor Organization's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
Indonesia-ACT's	Indonesia Against Child Trafficking
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
LPA-Jabar	<i>Lembaga Perlindungan Anak Jawa Barat</i> , the Institute of Child Protection West Java
MCR	Mitra Citra Remaja (Adolescent Image Partner)
PAPUAN	<i>Peduli Anak dan Perempuan</i> (Concern for Children and Women)
RAD	<i>Rencana Aksi Daerah</i> , local plans of action
PERDA	<i>Peraturan Daerah</i> , local regulation (introduced by either provincial or municipal/district councils)
RT	<i>Rukun Tetangga</i> , administrative neighbourhoods

SC-US	Save the Children US
SMP	<i>Sekolah Menengah Pertama</i> , lower secondary school
<i>SMP-Terbuka</i>	<i>Sekolah Menengah Pertama-Terbuka</i> , open lower secondary school
Suara Kemayu	the Voice of Kemayu
TAF	The Asia Foundation
The Solidarity Center	the American Center for International Labor Solidarity
TDH-NL	Terres Des Hommes Netherlands (the Dutch branch of the international NGO)
USAID	the United States Agency for International Development
YJP	Yayasan Jurnal Perempuan, The Women's Journal Foundation
YKAI	Yayasan Kesejahteraan Anak Indonesia, Indonesian Child Welfare Foundation
YKB	Yayasan Kusuma Buana, Kusuma Buana Foundation



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Abstract

This thesis investigates the entry of teenage girls from rural West Java (Indonesia) into commercial sex work, with a focus on their experiences and perceptions of the forms of injustice they are exposed to. Research into the involvement of young women in sex work has been dominated by two opposing views. The ‘mainstream’ standpoint treats non-adults (below the age of eighteen) entering the sex trade as ‘passive victims’ who have little ability to either identify or effect solutions to vulnerable/undesirable circumstances. Studies of this type essentially present simplified portrayals of victimhood. The ‘minority’ standpoint questions the validity of this mainstream view and emphasises instead the individual’s capacity to exert willpower and react effectively in the face of adversities. This standpoint, or what can be called child-centred studies, treats children as ‘social agents’ in their own right, and describes the diverse and complex realities experienced by them. The thesis tries to show that the dichotomous ‘victimhood versus agency’ thinking implicit in most research does not fully capture the possibility of co-existing dimensions of vulnerability and autonomy in the lives of children exposed to the commercial sex trade.

By analysing the modes of recruitment and movement of girls into the sex trade and listening to how the girls themselves perceive things and understand their personal circumstances, the thesis critically questions the prevailing concept of ‘child trafficking’ and its underpinning assumptions. The study shows how this dominant thinking influences and shapes the on-going international counter-trafficking policies, and how such frameworks for intervention are activated in Indramayu district, an area which has long been a source of sex workers for urban Indonesia and to a lesser extent for neighbouring Asian countries.

A multi-sited approach was adopted during ethnographic research conducted in rural communities of Indramayu and red-light districts of Jakarta over a period of six years. The main aim of the research conducted with

adolescent girls was to record and examine their experiences on both dimensions: victimhood and agency. The intersection of these elements is analysed in relation to structural socio-cultural forces and the influence of gender, patriarchy, class and intergenerational power. A personal narrative method was used to decipher the processes by which girls cope with their entrance, involvement with and exit from the nightlife sector. In order to clarify these processes and contexts, the mechanisms of procurement of young women into the sex sector, and the organisational structure of particular types of sex establishments in Jakarta and Japan, are described. Recruitment for and movement into such establishments is also analysed in relation to changes that are partly resultant from the surge of international counter-trafficking initiatives.

In addition, primary data and secondary materials were collected from (inter-)government agencies and non-governmental organisations involved in anti-trafficking policy and intervention. These are used as the basis for critical analysis of the preventive intervention programmes implemented in Indramayu. The assumptions on which these measures are based are clarified and the (un/intended) consequences for the lives of teenage girls there are summarised and discussed.

The study finds that the recruitment and movement of young women from rural Java for organised forms of commercial sex work is closely linked to economic conditions and (structural) social changes in the wider society. A similar relationship is identified regarding the movement of women from rural Indramayu to urban sex sectors of Indonesia in the post-independence period of the last century. By focusing on the links between life circumstances in the study village and changing wider society, the study demonstrates that the means and strategies of living for poor households become structurally and socio-culturally conjoined with labour migration, particularly into the nightlife sector of urban Indonesia.

The research shows that procurement of young women for sex establishments in Jakarta is run and sustained by informal but well-established sex-trade recruiting networks with connections in both rural Indramayu and this particular segment of the sex sector. By describing the development of the recruitment systems through which young Indramayan women were moved/taken into the Japanese nightlife sector between the late 1990s and the 2000s, the study suggests that the integration of these women into the commercial sex sector overseas is closely linked to the changing interplay between Japanese immigration policy and the development of international supply networks.

Narratives of teenage girls who are exposed to commercial sex work suggest that their entry into it is, to greater or lesser extent, related to the social and cultural customs and practices regarding the use and appropriation of young women for the betterment of their parents and family. This implies the process takes place within and under webs of varying sorts of power relations comprising gender, generation and patriarchy.

The girls' accounts and experiences show how vulnerable to exploitation and ill-treatment they can be, and suggest their exposure to and involvement in the trade do undermine and degrade their wellbeing; being in a state of victimhood is thus an observable fact. The empirical evidence, however, also shows that autonomy and resilience are not entirely absent among such disadvantaged young people. Their experiences comprise both victimhood and agency: not as completely separate states but rather coexisting and intersecting. There are therefore questions of degree and continuum which need to be better understood.

The study finds disturbing evidence of the meagre results of well-intended counter-trafficking interventions implemented by both international and Indonesian organisations. One issue which emerged is that socio-cultural factors causing 'child trafficking' are little addressed; another is that the continuity or survival of intervention programmes at community and district levels is primarily determined by the political intent and presumptions of international donor agencies, rather than by basic and prevailing interests and needs of intended beneficiaries. The study further suggests that the approaches taken to prevent girls from becoming involved in the sex trade are inappropriate to the circumstances shaping the decisions and actions that these girls take for the improvement of the welfare and wellbeing of their parents and siblings. The implication is that interventions make little attempt to take into account the girls' own perspective or desires regarding the course their life shall take.



Samenvatting

SLACHTOFFERSCHAP EN AGENCY IN DE PROSTITUTIE

Ervaringen en gezichtspunten van tienermeisjes van het platteland op West-Java

Dit proefschrift gaat over tienermeisjes die afkomstig zijn van het platteland op West-Java (Indonesië) en in de prostitutie belanden. Hun ervaringen en hun visie op het soort onrecht waaraan ze blootgesteld worden staan erin centraal. In het onderzoek naar jonge vrouwen in de prostitutie bestaan twee tegengestelde zienswijzen. Het ‘dominante’ standpunt is dat jongeren (onder de achttien) die in de prostitutie belanden ‘passieve slachtoffers’ zijn die nauwelijks in staat zijn om oplossingen voor kwetsbare/onwenselijke omstandigheden te bedenken of te bewerkstelligen. In dit soort onderzoek wordt in wezen een gesimplificeerd beeld van slachtofferschap geschetst. De validiteit van deze dominante kijk op de zaken wordt in twijfel getrokken door aanhangers van het ‘minderheids’standpunt, die juist het individuele vermogen om wilskracht te tonen en effectief te reageren bij tegenspoed benadrukken. Dit standpunt wordt ingenomen in ‘kindgericht onderzoek’, waarin kinderen worden beschouwd als op zichzelf staande ‘sociale actoren’, en waarin de veelvormige en complexe realiteit waarmee ze te maken hebben wordt beschreven. In dit proefschrift wordt geprobeerd aan te tonen dat de tweedeling ‘slachtofferschap versus agency’ waarvan in het meeste onderzoek impliciet wordt uitgegaan, niet volledig recht doet aan de mogelijkheid dat de dimensies kwetsbaarheid en autonomie samengaan in het leven van kinderen die in aanraking komen met prostitutie.

Op basis van een analyse van hoe meisjes worden gerekruteerd voor en terechtkomen in de prostitutie en een inventarisatie van hoe de meisjes het zelf ervaren en hun persoonlijke omstandigheden opvatten, worden in dit proefschrift kritische vragen gesteld bij het heersende begrip ‘kinderhandel’ en de aannamen die daaraan te grondslag liggen. Het onderzoek laat zien hoe deze dominante denkwijze het heersende internationale beleid ter bestrijding van mensenhandel beïnvloedt en vormgeeft, en hoe dergelijke interventiemodellen worden toegepast in het district Indramayu. Dit district

levert reeds lange tijd arbeidskrachten voor de seksindustrie in Indonesische steden en – in mindere mate – voor die in de Aziatische buurlanden.

Er is over een periode van zes jaar een multi-sited etnografisch onderzoek gedaan onder plattelandsgemeenschappen in Indramayu en in de rosse buurten van Jakarta. Het belangrijkste doel van het onderzoek onder tienermeisjes was het vastleggen en onderzoeken van hun ervaringen op de dimensies slachtofferschap en agency. Het snijvlak van deze elementen wordt geanalyseerd met betrekking tot structurele sociaal-culturele krachten en de invloed van gender, patriarchaat, klasse en intergenerationele macht. Met een narratieve methode is onderzocht hoe meisjes omgaan met hun intrede in, betrokkenheid bij en vertrek uit de prostitutie. Om deze processen en contexten te verduidelijken worden enerzijds de manieren om jonge vrouwen te rekruteren voor de seksindustrie en anderzijds de organisatiestructuur van bepaalde typen seksinrichtingen in Jakarta en Japan beschreven. De werving voor en tewerkstelling in dergelijke bedrijven wordt ook geanalyseerd met betrekking tot veranderingen die deels voortvloeien uit de golf van internationale initiatieven ter bestrijding van mensenhandel.

Daarnaast zijn er primaire en secundaire data verzameld bij overheidsinstellingen en non-gouvernementele organisaties die betrokken zijn bij beleid en interventies ter bestrijding van mensenhandel. Deze gegevens vormen de basis voor een kritische analyse van de preventieve interventieprogramma's die zijn ingevoerd in Indramayu. De aannamen waarop deze interventies zijn gebaseerd worden uitgelegd en de (on)bedoelde gevolgen ervan voor tienermeisjes die daar wonen worden samengevat en besproken.

Uit het onderzoek blijkt dat de werving van jonge vrouwen van het Javaanse platteland voor de seksbranche sterk samenhangt met economische omstandigheden en (structurele) sociale veranderingen in de rest van de samenleving. Dit blijkt ook op te gaan voor de instroom van vrouwen van het platteland van Indramayu in de stedelijke seksindustrie in Indonesië in de periode na de onafhankelijkheid in de vorige eeuw. Door de focus op het verband tussen levensomstandigheden in het dorp waar het onderzoek plaatsvond en veranderingen in de rest van de samenleving, wordt in dit onderzoek aangetoond dat de middelen van bestaan van arme huishoudens en hun manieren om in het levensonderhoud te voorzien structureel en sociaal-cultureel verbonden raken met arbeidsmigratie, vooral migratie naar de prostitutiesector in stedelijk Indonesië.

Uit het onderzoek blijkt dat de werving van jonge vrouwen voor seksinrichtingen in Jakarta in handen is van informele, maar gevestigde rekruteringsnetwerken voor de seksbranche met connecties op zowel het platteland

in Indramayu als in dit specifieke segment van de seksindustrie. Het onderzoek beschrijft de ontwikkeling van de rekruteringsystemen waarmee jonge vrouwen uit Indramayu geworven werden voor de Japanse prostitutiesector tussen eind jaren 90 van de vorige eeuw en 2010, en wijst erop dat de integratie van deze vrouwen in de overzeese seksindustrie nauw verbonden is met de veranderende wisselwerking tussen het Japanse immigratiebeleid en de ontwikkeling van internationale toeleveringsnetwerken.

Uit de persoonlijke verhalen van tienermeisjes die in de prostitutie terechtgekomen zijn valt op te maken dat dit, in meer of mindere mate, te maken heeft met de sociale en culturele gewoonten en gebruiken ten aanzien van de inzet van jonge vrouwen voor het welzijn van hun ouders en familie. Dit impliceert dat het proces plaatsvindt binnen een netwerk van verschillende soorten machtsrelaties gebaseerd op gender, de generaties en het patriarchaat.

De verhalen en ervaringen van de meisjes laten zien hoe kwetsbaar ze kunnen zijn voor uitbuiting en onmenselijke behandeling, en wijzen erop dat hun blootstelling aan en actieve betrokkenheid bij de branche hun welzijn ondermijnen en aantasten. Het is dus aantoonbaar dat ze slachtoffer zijn. Uit de onderzoeksresultaten blijkt echter ook dat het deze kansarme jonge mensen niet geheel ontbreekt aan autonomie en veerkracht. Zowel slachtofferschap als agency maken deel uit van hun ervaringen: die twee staan niet volledig los van elkaar, maar gaan juist samen en overlappen. In welke mate en op welk continuüm deze toestanden zich tot elkaar verhouden, moet nog nader worden onderzocht.

Uit het onderzoek blijkt dat goedbedoelde initiatieven ter bestrijding van mensenhandel, genomen door zowel internationale als Indonesische organisaties, verontrustend weinig hebben opgeleverd. Een van de problemen is dat sociaal-culturele oorzaken van 'kinderhandel' nauwelijks aangepakt worden. Een ander probleem is dat de continuïteit of levensvatbaarheid van interventieprogramma's op gemeenschaps- en districtsniveau in de eerste plaats bepaald wordt door de politieke bedoelingen en veronderstellingen van internationale donororganisaties, in plaats van door elementaire en bestaande belangen en behoeften van de doelgroep. Het onderzoek wijst er verder op dat de maatregelen om te voorkomen dat meisjes in de prostitutie belanden niet afgestemd zijn op de omstandigheden die bepalen wat deze meisjes doen om het welzijn en welzijn van hun ouders en broers en zussen te verhogen. Dit betekent dat bij de interventies weinig rekening gehouden wordt met het perspectief van de meisjes zelf of met hoe zij willen dat hun leven zal verlopen.



Currency Equivalents

Annual Exchange Rate Average (2004–2011)

US\$1.00 in Rupiah

2004	8,929
2005	9,709
2006	9,163
2007	9,139
2008	9,692
2009	10,401
2010	9,087
2011	8,776

Source: Bank Indonesia

US\$1.00 in Yen

2004	108.16
2005	110.15
2006	116.28
2007	117.77
2008	103.33
2009	93.53
2010	87.77
2011	79.78

Source: US Dollar/Yen Spot Rate at Tokyo Market, Bank of Japan
(http://www.stat-search.boj.or.jp/ssi/html/nme_R020CV.21436.20120419040623.01.html)



Preface:
Teenage girls in Jakarta's twilight:
An inquiry into their biographies

It was a rather hot and humid evening in early January 2001 when I first came across adolescent girls involved in sex commerce, in an unlighted park close to Jatinegara train station (East Jakarta). Their front was selling bottled sweet tea and beer from carts alongside the path. Persuaded by my companions (two female university lecturers involved in the welfare of young sex workers) I spoke to some of these girls. Their answers to my questions were relaxed, frank and cheerful. During the conversations I had there, it soon became clear to me that roughly four out of five of these girls were from rural Indramayu and its adjacent districts. Some were only thirteen or fourteen; others were older but the greater majority were clearly teenagers. I asked them about themselves. It seemed that, knowingly though reluctantly and under great pressure from their (step-)parents, most had become part of the urban nightlife sector in order to support their poverty-stricken family back home.

Working in Indonesia as I was at the time, I became interested in comprehending their situation and the circumstances which had brought them into the urban 'twilight zone'. Through the following three years I went once in a while to the shanty town where they temporarily lived, to meet them and their workmates. During the afternoons these girls were given a certain freedom by their pimp or madam to hang around in the area close by their living quarters. They were not physically confined; yet to run away from there would be almost impossible since they were tightly bonded by cash loans which had been provided by a pimp to their parents. Each of these girls' lives was socially and culturally interwoven in small groups of Indramayan migrant communities organised by pimps/madams—usually from the same home villages, and in such a way that there was little opportunity for social welfare services to intervene.

Even though they had been living in the town for some time, their night-based life style and the line of work kept them out of social/cultural contact with other residents in the area. They tended to get up around mid-day, start their work only in the evening and return to their own sleeping quarters in the early hours—sometimes as late as 4 a.m. Through their period of transition between childhood and adulthood these youngsters were drifting between two worlds. Their natal village remained the real home where they could return to re-kindle the sense of belonging with immediate family and relatives and take a few days' rest. Yet they still always had to leave the village and return to their job in the urban nightlife. In time, some of them married or became mistresses of their regular customers; others remained in the work; some, through Indramayan networks, tried their luck in different nightlife districts.

From the perspective of child-related international treaties and child-centred multilateral government and non-governmental organisations, much of the experience these particular adolescent girls underwent would be considered as intolerable forms of transition from childhood through adolescence to adulthood. Their experiences clearly contradict the 'normal' or universalised childhood and adolescence models promoted globally. Such girls were, undoubtedly, underprivileged and occupied a vulnerable position in the hierarchy of the nightlife sector. What these girls recounted to me regarding the working conditions they put up with and other details of what their life involved, would seem likely to be detrimental to both their current and future wellbeing.

It is surely right and proper that attention be drawn to the voices of these girls who were exposed to such plights. I was given to know how they have mixed feelings of blame—toward their own (step-)parents and those who have appropriated them for the nightlife sector—and sorrow, even guilt, for their involvement in it. Conversely, some of them told me they found themselves having a sense of fulfillment and even pride when their earnings provided tangible improvement back home. The sentiment that making money this way was undesirable and degrading would every so often make most of them think about putting an end to it. Yet the choices open to them were very limited; and the fact of the matter was that getting themselves out of it all not only would be difficult to manage, but might—paradoxically—not always be viewed as advantageous either to the girls themselves or the family back home as well, which sometimes led them to consider remaining in the trade, even if there was an exit option. The course open to them, to (re-)gain some control over their lives, was to better themselves within the 'trade'.

The mixed (and complex) sentiments shown by these adolescent girls in the night-trade raise questions about the simplistic dichotomy ‘victim’/‘agent’; they are neither to be described as purely passive victims when under conditions of oppression and injustice, nor should they be overgeneralised as being themselves outright agents. It is to be inferred that they are in a state of vulnerability, at different levels of coexistence between victimhood and autonomy. The interrelations between these two dimensions need to be further explored. Detailed examination of specific states of victimhood and agency could lead to a re-picturing, and thereby redefinition of the status, vulnerabilities and capabilities of those so often lumped together as ‘child victims of sex trafficking’.

This is the reason why I have undertaken this study, which will be introduced in more detail in the following chapter. First however it is necessary to clarify my personal standpoint regarding the involvement of non-adults in commercial sex work.

My standpoint on non-adults exposed to the sex trade

The ill-treatment of children—particularly those exploited for commercial sex—provokes in most of us a strong feeling of disgust and outrage. Such indignation can make us react to the issue perhaps too emotively. My research has given me an understanding of the lives of these underprivileged teenage girls which, given that it countermands the prevailing view of them as passive victims, may arouse uneasy feelings among readers. To avert any potential misgivings about the intention of my study, I should explicitly clarify my ethical position on the issue. I do condemn the mistreatment and exploitation of children (and also adults) in commercial sex work. I acknowledge that the involvement of non-adults in sex commerce is essentially undesirable and can, to a greater or lesser extent, damage and degrade their current and future wellbeing. At the surface level, some may be able to avoid harm and perceive their financial gains within a certain moral parameter (of familial duty or individual ability to find a new identity). Such parameters are contextual and temporal and cannot be used to dismiss the urgency for action on this issue. Yet, understanding these parameters, I believe, could help international and national communities develop plans of action that show greater sensibility to the extremely complex realities faced by teenage girls engaged in sex work.

While sharing the outrage and sorrow expressed by persons who are concerned about the plight of such children, I none the less feel uneasy when passion and compassion—conjoining particular moral and political standpoints as they do—are uncritically used to influence and shape both

our understanding of the problems and approaches to protecting the children. Our thinking and effectiveness of intervention should not be constrained by the sentiments of well-intentioned persons and the current logic which underlies actions taken by intervening organisations: what is needed is more open-minded perspectives and insights. My study therefore examines the stereotypes and underlying assumptions about 'child trafficking' by having given ear to the accounts and experiences of girls in question, and learning just how their life is situated: geographically, socio-culturally and economically.

1

Introduction

1.1 Background and statement of the problem

Over the past two decades, involvement of the developing world's children in commercial sex work has become a much-discussed global issue. In most academic research being done these days, in policy debates, in the mass media and by activists concerned with the issue, this is labelled 'trafficking of children' (Kempadoo 2005: vii; also see 'Human Trafficking: Bibliography by Region' in Farquet et al. 2005). This international concern has absorbed resources to address the problem (O'Connell Davidson 2006: 5; Todres 2010: 2) and generated a growing body of 'child trafficking' literature.¹ Much of this literature classifies all those below the age of eighteen who enter the sex trade as 'victims of child trafficking', and portrays them as naïve, innocent and powerless minors who are forced or deceived by ruthless brokers—or impoverished heartless parents—into what is sometimes even called sexual slavery; who have passively to submit to circumstances from which escape is virtually impossible (see for example, Hechler 1995; Kristof 1996, 2004, 2005; Hughes 2000, 2003; Coalition Against Trafficking in Women 2001: 23; Bertone 1999: 10–13; Farley and Kelly 2000; Flowers 2001: 148; UNICEF 2001a, 2001b; Willis and Levy 2002: 1417; Williams and Masika 2002; Bales 2004; Malarek 2005; Cowan 2005; Hasegawa 2007). This literature is dominated by narratives of 'child trafficking' exclusively focusing on the aspects of betrayal, cruelty and mistreatment which girls undergo and which are widespread (see, Appendix 1 for a specific description in US Department State's Trafficking in Persons Report 2004).

These horror stories are premised on a notion of (specifically) girlhood² which primarily views these girls as immature, vulnerable and incompetent and therefore incapable of acting on their own initiative re-

garding their entry into the sex trade and control over their lives within it (Montgomery 2001; O'Connell Davidson 2005; Saunders 2005; Bourdillon 2006; Weitzer 2007). In other words the mainstream position is emphatic in denying the possibility of girls exercising agency. It has, however, become firmly grounded in the paradigm of current theoretical debate and policy intervention.

Several critical scholars consider this position to be one-sided, incomplete and not always supported by ethnographic accounts obtained from the experiences of the girls in question, and have expressed misgivings about these simplified portrayals and stereotypical presumptions (Montgomery 2001, 2008; Chapkis 2003; O'Connell Davidson 2005; Saunders 2005; Ansell 2005; Bourdillon et al. 2010; Huijsmans 2011; Huijsmans and Baker 2012; Molland 2010, 2012; Ford and Lyons 2008, 2011; Sandy 2012; Ford, Lyons and van Schendel 2012).

Among the problematic aspects and contradictions that have been identified in the mainstream discourse, there is a tendency to differentiate the recruitment and movement of children and adolescents into the sex sector from that of adults, considering them as two inherently separate phenomena (O'Connell Davidson 2005). This assumption implies that the former have no ability—and that the latter do have ability—to make informed decisions and choices (O'Connell Davidson 2005: 3; see ILO 2002a: 3; Willis and Levy 2002: 1417; Edwards 1995 in Walker 2002: 185). Such a dichotomous classification conceals the similarity and continuity of the problems faced by both the younger ones and those above eighteen (O'Connell Davidson 2005: 34). It neglects ample evidence that some adult sexual service providers from the third world, in fact, enter the sector in their mid-teens (see, Ennew 1986: 82–3; Black 1995: 7; Boonchalaksi and Guest 1998: 150; Lalor 2000: 228; Surtees 2003: 68; Saunders 2005: 179), and fails to explain adequately how their problems are specifically different from those of younger children. There is also a tendency to treat minors of different ages in different socio-cultural contexts as a homogeneous group who encounter essentially identical problems and therefore need the same sort of protection and assistance (Montgomery 2001: 9; O'Connell Davidson 2005: 23). Such categorization obscures the differences between pre-pubertal children who have little autonomy over their lives in the sex trade and those post-pubertal youngsters who—albeit within limits and probably without total success—are relatively capable of reflecting on and reacting to their situ-

ations (Lucchini 1994 in Lalor 2000: 229; Montgomery 2001: 90; O'Connell Davidson 2005: 54; Bourdillon et al. 2010: 165; Huijsmans 2011; Huijsmans and Baker 2012; Molland 2010, 2012; Ford and Lyons 2008, 2011; Ford, Lyons and van Schendel 2012). Then there is the argument that, while the autonomy and individual agency of 'adult' women to engage in sex work can be debated, for children these are both implicitly and explicitly negated (Doezema 2000; Bastia 2005; O'Connell Davidson 2005: 3; Bourdillon 2006; Montgomery 2008: 904; see Lim 1998: Chapter 6; Human Rights Caucus 1999: 5). This view focuses exclusively on children's and adolescents' experiences of victimization, paying scant attention to their resilience and active efforts to cope with adversity (see Farley and Kelly 2000). In short, much mainstream work blurs the complexities and diversities in the experiences of children and adolescents who become involved in commercial sex work and frames the subject too narrowly, into stereotypes.

A handful of ethnographic studies conducted in Southeast Asia have detailed the interrelated dimensions of (and tensions between) oppression and autonomy experienced by adolescent female sex workers and shown that these hardly coincide with the stereotypes held by the mainstream literature (see for example Phongpaichit 1980; Muecke 1992; Black 1995; Sedyaningsih-Mamahit 1999a, 1999b; Montgomery 2000, 2001, 2007, 2008; Surtees 2003, 2004; Taylor 2005; Rubenson et al. 2005; Aoyama 2007; Huijsmans 2011; Huijsmans and Baker 2012; Molland 2010, 2012; Ford and Lyons 2008, 2011; Ford, Lyons and van Schendel 2012). These studies suggest that, under greater or lesser degrees of oppressive circumstances, a many girls continue to demonstrate degrees of resilience, capability and autonomy in response to undesirable conditions. Though there is no intention to dismiss the suffering of, and the damage done by ill-treatment to, pubescent girls in harsh circumstances (see Black 1995: 46–9; Farley and Kelly 2000; Raymond 2004: 1175–7), these minority studies emphasise that their human agency is being exercised in the face of oppressive conditions.

The gulf between the mainstream view of 'child trafficking' for the sex trade and that of the outcome of minority research poses a set of questions: Why is it that the engagement of children in the sex trade is understood and debated in such different ways? What are the theoretical and empirical assumptions and bases for taking either of the two positions? Much of both mainstream and minority academic and policy-

oriented studies and journalistic work on ‘child trafficking’ for sex trade has reflected and is based on dualistic ‘victim vs. agent’ thinking, and has seldom attempted to reconcile the two poles. The present study hopes to fill this gap by examining the dimensions of both victimhood and agency and its entwined elements in the experiences of adolescent girls exposed to and involved in sex commerce.

1.2 Objective and research questions

The intention of this study, which does not hold *a priori* to either of the two opposed views, is to examine the two dimensions—victimhood and human agency—as a process experienced and described by those adolescent girls who were involved. The study analyses how far their experiences and views fit with both the dominant and minority accounts. It explores the extent to which different framings of ‘child trafficking’ are conducive or problematic for intervening with protection and support for ‘minors’. The study analyses these subjects in the setting of rural communities of Indramayu district in West Java, Indonesia. In this district, the problem of ‘trafficking in girls’ for commercial sex work has been receiving much attention during the last decade from both local and international organisations, as well as Indonesian government agencies.

To analyse the interrelationship between oppressive structures and restrictive circumstances, and individual agency in the lives of adolescent girls, the study focuses on two areas of inquiry: (1) to understand how adolescent girls experience both oppression/marginalisation and autonomy within inter-generational and gendered power relations at household and community levels in relation to their movement to urban areas or more prosperous countries for income-generating activities; (2) to look into how their agency is shaped and influenced (inhibited, weakened, developed or strengthened)—as well as exercised—during their involvement in, and after having moved away from, the nightlife sector. Based on the understanding gained from these inquiries, the study proceeds to analyse how the normative understandings of trafficking and the intervention measures—developed accordingly—have been implemented for the purpose of preventing girls being recruited into sex commerce.

The two main sets of questions emerging in relation to theoretical debates, and intervention policies and practices are as follows:

(a) Empirical debates

- How is ‘child trafficking’, as a policy concern, experienced and described by adolescent girls who grow up in a recruitment area for commercial sex workers? What are the similarities or differences between their experiences and stereotypical conceptions of ‘child trafficking’ in policy and scholarly discussions?
- How do the states of power/powerlessness and ability/inability to react to structured restrictive power relations and forces appear in the experiences of adolescent girls in the sex trade? What socio-economic and cultural conditions and personal factors inhibit or enable their agency?

(b) Intervention policies and practices

- What are the theoretical and empirical assumptions on which preventative interventions are grounded, and how are these policies and programmes implemented by international organisations, Indonesian government agencies and NGOs at district and village levels?
- What were the results of the interventions involved?
- Why have child-trafficking prevention interventions, up until now, so poorly reflected the experiences and views of the girls in question?

1.3 Justification for focusing on girls’ experiences in the sex trade and for the geographic location of research

The focus of this thesis is restricted to girls’ experiences of entry into commercial sex work. The main reasons for this are as follows. First, although cases of ‘child trafficking’ involving Indonesian boys have been mentioned in earlier literature (Irwanto et al. 1998; Sapardjaja 2002; Budiono 2002; Utami and Putranto 2002; Sanie et al. 2003; Rosenberg 2003; YKB 2003; YKAI 2003 in Herman 2005: 25; UNICEF 2004; Sagala and Rozana 2007; Mulyani 2007), they were almost entirely brought to work for the plantation industry, or for scavenging or begging on urban streets. While trafficking of boys in the sex trade undoubtedly exists, it is documented that the placement of minors for the purpose of sex commerce is predominately a girl-specific phenomenon in Indonesia (Irwanto et al. 1998; Sapardjaja 2002; Budiono 2002; Utami and Putranto 2002; Sanie et al. 2003; Rosenberg 2003; YKB 2003; YKAI 2003 in Herman 2005: 25;

UNICEF 2004; Sagala and Rozana 2007; Mulyani 2007). Second, in the selected research location of Indramayu cases of sexual trafficking of boys were not observed or mentioned by my informants (which suggests, while not proving that do not exist, that they must be at least very rare). A substantive concern is my recognition of the importance of disentangling the different moments of and the intersections between ‘victimhood’ and ‘agency’ in the process of entry into and exit from the commercial sex sector. By discerning how local gender norms have played a role in the process of their engagement with sex work, and how the girls, as social actors, can or cannot negotiate these norms should be helpful for redesigning of anti-trafficking programmes committed to ensuring the well-being of the girls at present and in the future.

Second, the lack of documentation (both scholarly literature and policy documents) on boys’ entry into the trade would considerably constrain this study from examining the discrepancies between the actual experiences and normative conceptions of ‘child trafficking’. Finally, although the word ‘child’ is used in child-trafficking prevention intervention programmes implemented in the country, they have implicitly and explicitly the aim of preventing girls being recruited into sex commerce. Thus, in order to examine how the policies and programmes are implemented, giving a full focus on the case of girls is relevant.

Indramayu district was selected as the location of research for the following reasons. First, the district has long been a major source of commercial sex workers for Jakarta and other parts of Indonesia and even for some other East and South East Asian countries; it therefore enables an understanding of both the domestic and international movement of young women into the commercial sex industry. Second, the district has attracted global and local counter-trafficking interventions since the turn of the century. This has generated a district-specific body of ‘child trafficking’ literature—enabling a textual analysis of how the issue has so far been documented and portrayed. Finally, I had already made contact with various persons in the district who were able to help facilitate my fieldwork.

1.4 Organisation of the thesis

The presentation of this thesis is structured as follows. Chapter 2 deals with theoretical issues and research methodology. There is an overview

of key conceptual approaches to childhood and adolescence which underlie academic debate on, and intervention policies and practices regarding, 'sex trafficking of children'. Both the premises and critiques of the particular concepts in use are discussed. The field research process, methods of data collection, ethical concerns regarding researching girls in sex commerce, plus practical limitations imposed on the field study, are fully set out.

Chapters 3 and 4 give a socio-historical background to the district and village studied, making particular note of the emergence and expansion of global and national sex sectors. Chapter 3 begins with a historical account of the integration processes of rural women into the economic and monetary structure of colonial Java and Sumatra. It is followed by a description of the social and economic characteristics of Indramayu district. Emphasis is given to aspects of commercial sex work within and beyond Indramayu. In Chapter 4 the economic and socio-cultural aspects of Cimanis village are detailed, beginning by outlining major changes and improvements which have taken place from the last years of Dutch rule into the first decade of the twenty-first century. A description is then given of the few livelihood opportunities open to the villagers, which explains the increasing involvement of young women in labour migration. In the final section of the chapter the ideas and actual attributes of childhood and adolescence are discussed along with recorded opinions and concepts of persons representing three generations (current teenagers, parents and grandparents).

Chapters 5, 6 and 7 are the main analytical part of the thesis based on empirical material. Focusing on the movement of young women to massage parlours in Jakarta's major red-light areas as well as to hostess clubs in Japan, Chapter 5 presents and examines the recruitment mechanisms of young women for, and the organisational structures of, these particular sex-related establishments. The strengthening structural relationships between the rural communities of Indramayu and these nightlife sectors are detailed. Chapter 6 sets out and analyses the stories of teenage girls who underwent exposure to and/or integration in sexual labour markets, highlighting the intersecting dimensions of varying degrees of victimhood and agency in the lives of these girls under the various constraints and circumstances.

Chapter 7, an examination of global and local counter-trafficking policies as carried out in Indramayu, explores how the involvement of ado-

lescent girls in sex commerce has been problematized and addressed in the district and its villages by government and non-governmental agencies. The divergence between the intended and the actual outcomes of their interventions is detailed, and the discrepancies and contradictions between the theoretical and empirical premises of such interventions brought out. Chapter 8 sets out the main findings of the study in relation to the central questions posed in Chapter 1. It posits the status, constrained choices, vulnerabilities and capabilities of adolescent girls and questions the key assumptions behind policy aiming to address ‘child victims of sex trafficking’ in light of the compounded elements of victimhood and agency.

Notes

¹ See, for example: Altink (1995); O’Neill Richard (1999); Flowers (2001: 148); Willis and Levy (2002: 1417); O’Grady (1992; 1994); Serrill (1993); Hechler (1995); Kristof (1996, 2004, 2005); Skrobanek et al. (1997); Lim (1998); ECPAT (1999); Bertone (2000); Doezema (1998, 2000, 2010); UNICEF (2001a; 2001b; 2003); Boonpala and Kane (2001); ILO (2002a: 15); Willis and Levy (2002: 149); Williams and Masika (2002); Abueva et al. (2002); Raymond et al. (2002); Satou (2003); Rosenberg (2003); Bales (2004); Shah (2004); Raymond (2004); Malarek (2004: 31–2); Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications of Sweden (2004); Kempadoo (2005); Stevens (2005); Roby (2005); JNATIP and F-GENS (2005); Tatsumi (2006); Rafferty (2007); Hodge and Lietz (2007); Kojima (2007); Desyllas (2007); Hasegawa (2007); Oono (2007); Lau (2008); CATW in Agustín (2006: 9); Aoyama (2007, 2009); Molland (2010).

² The same of course applies to male children and adolescents involved in the sex trade. I have limited the discussion here to girls since this is the focus of my study.

2

Theoretical Issues and Research Methodology

2.1 Introduction

The first part of this chapter outlines the theoretical and conceptual issues which guide the empirical analyses set out in Chapters 5–7. The concept of ‘child trafficking’ (currently and widely used) has historically been linked with anti-prostitution movements which arose at the turn of the twentieth century. The point is then to explain why girls of different ages involved in the commercial sex trade have been collectively labelled and treated as passive victims of sex trafficking in mainstream policy and academic literature. Three concepts which enable analysis of the experiences and problems of adolescent girls exposed to commercial sex work are reviewed. There is finally a discussion of the methods and also both ethical and practical limitations in respect of such field study.

2.2 The nexus of child migration and ‘trafficking’: legal and social constructions

2.2.1 Genesis of the first wave debate and activism in regard to human trafficking

Contemporary concern about trafficking in persons has been closely linked to the notion of mobility, entrance and involvement of women and girls in sex commerce as sexual exploitation (Bruch 2004: 2). This conflation has historical roots in the discourse created and favoured by a particular feminist movement against ‘white slavery’ which emerged in Europe and North America at the turn of the twentieth century (Doezema 2000: 23). The discourse about white slave traffic was exclusively centred on prostitution (Doezema 2000: 25; Wong 2007: 110). This concern emerged during the process and acceleration of capitalist industrialisation, urbanisation and the concomitant uneven distribution of wealth which led the proletariat—working-class men and women—to migrate both within and beyond national borders in search of work and

new, better, opportunities (Outshoorn 2005: 142; Kempadoo 2005: x). It was also the case that women looking for employment got sent or were sent through organised brokers of the Western European countries to their colonies, generally to serve (officially) as domestics while in fact (also) becoming the sexual partners of the male immigrants there (Kempadoo 2005: x, after Walkowitz 1980; White 1990; Guy 1991). Fuelled by increasing pressures from western feminist activists and social reformers such as Josephine Butler, this movement and trade of women for labour and sexual purposes was brought into international focus and termed the 'white slave trade' (Derks 2000a: 8). This is considered to be the genesis of the human trafficking debate.

By the end of the nineteenth century the feminist movement was including debates about 'white slavery'. There were two different approaches towards prostitution (Doezema 2000: 26–7). One was to regulate sex commerce by strictly imposing various regulations on prostitutes, such as compulsory medical check-ups and restriction of mobility. The idea behind (eventual) legalisation of sex-as-a-trade was that prostitution is a 'necessary evil'. The other approach was to abolish prostitution altogether. Women selling sexual services were looked on as victims who ought to be rescued and rehabilitated, rather than just treated as 'fallen women' (Guy 1991: 13) subject to policing and punishment (Doezema 2000: 26–7).¹ The abolitionist camp gained the upper hand over the regulationists by fostering public sympathy for prostitutes through spreading the accounts of highly traumatised 'innocent victims' who had been appropriated by 'evil traffickers' (Doezema 2000: 28; Weitzer 2007: 448). By rhetorical use of various phrasing the complex reality of female transnational migration for prostitution was delineated as a simple matter of victim and villain (Doezema 2000: 28, after Gibson 1986; Corbin 1990).² The anti-white slavery campaign, reinforced by sensational media coverage, contributed to legislation against prostitution in both Europe and the United States—resulting in a set of international treaties against the White Slave Traffic in the early twentieth century (Derks 2000a: 8–9; Kempadoo 2005: x; Wong 2006: 11, 2007: 110–11).³

In 1904 the *International Agreement for the Suppression of the White Slave Traffic* was signed in Paris by thirteen states.⁴ The focus of this first international agreement was to protect, rescue and repatriate victims of traffic from an 'immoral life' abroad (Nelson 2002: 558; see Article 1–4 of the 1904 Agreement). The *International Convention for the Suppression of the White*

Slave Traffic, adopted in 1910, included the cases of traffic in women and girls within their own national borders and colonial territories (Wijers and Lap Chew 1997: 20; Derks 2000b: 4).

The significance of the 1910 Convention was the binding of the signatories to penalise procurers (any persons who have procured, enticed or led away women and girls for prostitution) (Farrior 1997: 216; Nelson 2002: 558; see Article 1 of the 1910 Convention). These treaties were specific to white women and girls (Truong 1990: 86) who were procured for prostitution or what was ambiguously termed ‘immoral purposes’ (see Article 1 of the 1904 Agreement). Reference was to ‘the procuring of women or girls for *immoral purposes abroad*’ (Farrior 1997: 216; Nelson 2002: 558; Bruch 2004: 8, my italics).⁵ After the adoption of the 1921 Convention, the Committee on Traffic in Women and Children of the League of Nations was established to monitor and investigate the degree of compliance with the terms of the treaty among signatories. The committee was authorised to conduct worldwide studies on traffic in persons (both in the homelands of those signatory countries and in their colonies). The research resulted in a series of publications (see for example the list of literature in ‘League of Nations Publications on the Traffic in Women and Children’ (S.P.B. 1935); *Activities on Women: 1919–1945* (the League of Nations undated)). In 1933 one notable report entitled *The Commission of Enquiry into Traffic in Women and Children in the East: Report to the Council* was published.⁶

Under the auspices of the League of Nations in the post-World War I period, two conventions were adopted to address the worldwide problem of traffic in women and children: the 1921 *Convention for the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children*; and the 1933 *International Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women of Full Age* (Farrior 1997: 216). They were evolved from the two earlier treaties. While the two prior treaties concerned only traffic in white adult women and girls, the 1921 Convention included mention of ‘children’ of any race (Nelson 2002: 558; see Derks 2000b: 4). In the 1933 Convention the emphasis was given to punish offenders of trafficking in persons regardless of their consent to movement (Farrior 1997: 217; Bruch 2004: 9; Nelson 2002: 559; see Article 1 of the 1933 Convention).

In 1949 the *United Nations Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others* was approved by the General Assembly, synthesising and superseding all the five prior treaties

(Derks 2000b: 5). Though this convention is considered to be the first comprehensive anti-trafficking treaty and used for the next fifty years, the focus was essentially on penalising any persons involved in the procurement of women and children for sexual exploitation.⁷

Prostitution *per se* was not actually outlawed; only those involved in the operation and running of sex establishments (brothels) became subject to punishment (Farrior 1997: 218; Nelson 2002: 560; see, Article 2 of the 1949 Convention).⁸ These five treaties were basically intended to bring about the abolition of prostitution. During the first two decades after World War II, however, international attention to the traffic in women and children was nearly sidelined from the agenda of international organisations (Truong 1990: 87, after Barry 1984).

2.2.2 The resurgence of anti-trafficking drive: the second wave

Discourse regarding traffic in women and children for sex commerce re-emerged on the international political agenda in the 1970s–80s as part of a resurgence of a global movement for women’s human rights particularly in connection with the rise of sex tourism and the international mail-order bride service (Truong 1990: 19; Doezema 2000: 30–31, 2005: 68; Bruch 2004: 11). Fuelled by this feminist drive the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women* of 1979 (CEDAW) was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. One of the foci is the stamping out of ‘all forms of traffic in women and exploitation of prostitution of women’ (Article 6 of the 1979 Convention); it also binds the states parties to ensuring the rights of victims trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation. Under the growing feminist attention given to the transnational migration of women for labour and sex markets of industrialised countries (commonly referred to as ‘the feminisation of migration’), the spread of HIV/AIDS, child prostitution and sex tourism in less developed countries (Derks 2000b: 6, after Doezema 1998; Wijers and Lap Chew 1997; see Wong 2007: 111), the issue of traffic in women for sex commerce remained for the following two decades on the agenda of major international and regional Women and Human Rights conferences—notably the 1980 Copenhagen Conference, the 1985 Nairobi Conference, the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights and the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women (held in Beijing) (see Bruch 2004: 11–12). The UN decision to prepare the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (UNCRC) was made in 1979, the year the *Convention on the Elimination of*

All Forms of Discrimination Against Women CEDAW was adopted, and initiated 10 years of debate on children's rights until UNCRC was adopted in 1989. The UNCRC has been influential in many ways; almost all anti-child trafficking organisations claim to have adopted a 'right-based approach'. But different agencies and campaigns focus on different components of the CRC. Anti-trafficking campaigns invoke the 'right to protection', other 'child-centered' groups focus on 'best interests of the child' and the right of children to express their opinion and to have it heard (participation).

The second wave of the anti-trafficking movement maintained basically the same approach as the first anti-white-slave-trade crusade—recounting the narratives of innocent young victims of sexual exploitation (see Bruch 2004: 13); but the focus of their attention shifted from the victimised women of (West) European origin/birth to those from the former Western colonies and, post-1990, the former Eastern bloc countries (Doezema 2000: 31).

Contemporary feminism in the anti-trafficking campaign has since developed two contrasting perspectives on the entrance and engagement of women in sex commerce (Doezema 2000: 33; Ditmore and Wijers 2003: 79–80; Outshoorn 2005: 145). There is now a worldwide division between two opposed factions of feminist lobbying organisations. One is referred to as 'radical feminists' or 'neo-abolitionists' who take a firm position about putting an end to prostitution (Doezema 2000: 33). Among this grouping prostitution is essentially viewed as 'the epitome of women's oppression' (Outshoorn 2005: 145; for some representative anti-prostitution literature, see Barry 1979, 1996; Hughes and Roche 1999; Jeffries 1997). The other set are the 'liberal feminists' (even critically called 'pro-sex-work feminists') who reject the former's approach of lumping all women in the sex trade together under the category 'victims' of sex trafficking; they instead differentiate the combined matters of 'trafficking in women' and 'forced prostitution' from 'voluntary prostitution' and 'migrant sex work' (see Doezema 2000: 33, 2005: 62; Kempadoo 2005: xi; Outshoorn 2005: 145; Miriam 2005: 1).

In the radical feminist discourse, prostitution is considered an extreme form of man's (sexual) violence against women and is therefore defined as 'sexual exploitation'. This view is premised upon no woman being likely to give genuine consent—of her own 'free will'—to the trading of her body (Ditmore and Wijers 2003: 81). They define prostitution

as violence against women *per se*; the idea of voluntarily consenting to be ‘traded’ is regarded as an impossibility (Bertone 1999; Doezema 2005: 82). Engagement in the trade is considered to be essentially an outcome of force and/or deception; thus the women are all regarded as outright victims—devoid of free will or agency—who ought to be saved from what radical feminists call ‘sexual slavery’ (Doezema 2000: 33; Outshoorn 2005: 145; Miriam 2005: 1; Desyllas 2007: 59). Both the abolition of the sex industry and penalisation of those who make profit by appropriating women for it would bring an end to the male mastery and female subordination, and oppressive treatment of women which characterise ‘sex-for-sale’ (see Outshoorn 2005: 145; Kempadoo 2005: xxii; Miriam 2005: 1, 10; Weitzer 2007: 450). Thus, given the whole sex sector is criminalised, the whole business of trafficking becomes automatically a target of elimination. The neo-abolitionist view of sex commerce/prostitution has been fostered and promoted by allied feminist organisations. The US-based Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW) founded in 1988 has been one of the largest international and most influential anti-trafficking lobbying bodies (Doezema 2000: 33; Desyllas 2007: 62). CATW and its allied organisations formed an international lobbying body called the International Human Rights Network and have played an important role in the development of current international legal instruments against trafficking. (see Doezema 2005: 67; Ditmore 2005: 111).⁹

The discourse of liberal feminists, in contrast, is based on the premise that the sex trade can be a possibly important livelihood strategy for (economically marginalised) women, particularly in the less affluent world (Outshoorn 2005: 145; see for example Bell 1994; Chapkis 1997; Pheterson 1989, 1996; see GAATW 1994 in Doezema 2005: 86). Though non-consensual forms of sex trade (i.e. forced prostitution) are, for them too, something which should be eliminated, sex work *per se* is not problematized (Weitzer 2007: 450). They consider the right to engage in it should be respected as long as women are in a position to exercise and act on their own (free) will (see Doezema 2000: 33; Outshoorn 2005: 145). What ought to be addressed, according to the proponents of this view, is the relatively weak, marginalised position of women and the less (or un-)regulated work conditions in the sex sector. Omitting to do so leaves women vulnerable to exploitation and ill-treatment. A compromised but down-to-earth approach is to legitimise sex trade as an ‘oc-

cupation'. It would thereby make it possible to reduce the degree of both potential and actual exploitation of and harm done to these women (see Outshoorn 2005: 145). It is thought that formalisation of such an approach could eventually help remove the social stigma commonly attached to these women (Outshoorn 2005: 145–6). It is therefore proposed that a distinction be made between sex work and (sex) trafficking (Ditmore and Wijers 2003: 81). This is the notion promoted by the coalition of liberal feminist organisations represented by the Bangkok-based Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women (GAATW). It was established in 1994 by female activists—mostly from Asian developing countries—who themselves are intimately aware of the degradation of being trafficked (Doezema 2000: 33; see GAATW website). Other feminist organisations which take a similar stance are those of the International Human Rights Law Group (IHLG), the Asian Women's Human Rights Council (AWHRC), Women in Law and Development in Africa (WILDAF) and the Network for Sex Work Projects (NSWP). All these combined to form what they have called the Human Rights Caucus. Following the development of a new UN anti-trafficking legal instrument GAATW played a central role under the Human Rights Caucus (Doezema 2000).

The view and approach proposed by the organisations in this grouping has, however, been narrowly interpreted by the neo-abolitionists as advocacy for prostitution—'pro-prostitution' lobbying—and morally controversial (see Weitzer 2007: 450). Their position has been one way or another discredited by the anti-trafficking policy of the United States Government—a major anti-trafficking donor—which was heavily influenced by American neo-abolitionist lobbying bodies (see Desyllas 2007: 69–71; Weitzer 2007: 450).¹⁰

As can be seen in the previous paragraphs, the names chosen by the various lobbying groups associated with the radical and liberal feminists show that both groups claim to be working under the banner of 'human rights', despite their very different starting-points and objectives.

2.2.3 Universalising the notion of human trafficking: the third wave

In the late 1990s the deeply divided assertions about commercial sex in the two feminist blocs came up against one another during the negotiations for a new international anti-human trafficking legal instrument un-

der the auspices of an intergovernmental ad hoc Committee of the UN Crime Commission. Between January 1999 and October 2000 a series of international meetings—held in the Vienna-based UN Centre for International Crime Prevention—resulted in the drafting of a new Convention and three Optional Protocols against transnational organised crime (Ditmore and Wijers 2003). The meetings were attended by delegations from more than a hundred nations and intergovernmental organisations along with representatives of notable feminist organisations. The result was the adoption of the *United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime* and the *Protocols Thereto* during the 15 November 2000 UN General Assembly in Palermo, Italy. The two Protocols adopted are the *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children* (the Human Trafficking Protocol), and the *Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air* (the Migrant Smuggling Protocol).¹¹

The Trafficking Protocol is the first international legal instrument with an agreed, authorised definition of human trafficking but the negotiation process—particularly for determining its definition—involved considerable controversy, being a ‘battleground’ for the two grouped sets of opposed feminists (see Gallagher 2001: 984–90; Ditmore and Wijers 2003: 79–85; Doezema 2005).

There was division in the Vienna negotiations between ideologies and approaches to prostitution of the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW) and the Human Rights Caucus (Doezema 2005: 62; Ditmore and Wijers 2003: 81). CATW, as already noted above, regard the institution of prostitution itself as a violation of women’s human rights and consider the women involved as victims. They lobbied the state delegations to adopt a notion which would conflate all movement, receipt and appropriation of women for sexual services with trafficking, denying any aspects of consensuality ever being involved (see Doezema 2005: 62; Ditmore and Wijers 2003: 81).

The efforts of the Human Rights Caucus—which aims to strengthen the labour rights of migrant women in the sex industry and views them as able to exercise a degree of agency in their lives—were directed to preventing ‘consensual’, ‘non-coercive’, prostitution or other forms of unforced sex-trade from being defined as human trafficking. They therefore advocated adoption of a definition which specifically would not put consenting migrant workers in the sex trade into the same category as

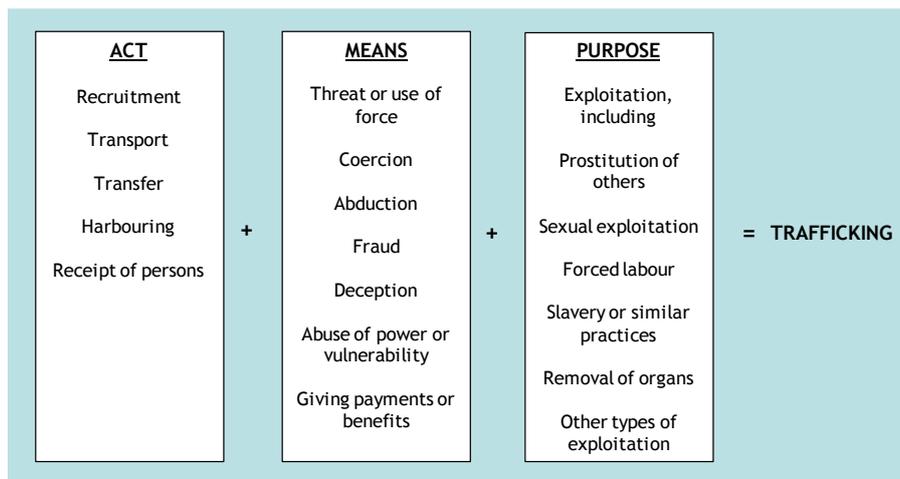
those trafficked into forced labour and forced sexual exploitation (Ditmore and Wijers 2003: 81).

Through the meetings in Vienna a final agreement was reached regarding the definition of 'trafficking in persons'. This is given in Article 3 of subparagraph (a) of the Protocol.

"Trafficking in persons" shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs

The Trafficking Protocol is the first international legal instrument with a comprehensive definition of trafficking (in persons) for the use of policy-makers, anti-trafficking activists and academics when discussing and addressing the issue (Huntington 2001; Truong and Angeles 2004; Smit 2004). The definition comprises three distinct but interrelated elements and aspects: (i) the *acts* of involved offenders/lawbreakers, (ii) the *means* used by involved offenders and (iii) the *purpose* of appropriating trafficked persons (Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1
Elements of Human Trafficking



Source: Adapted from UNODC (<http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/what-is-human-trafficking.html?ref=menuaside>)

‘Trafficking’ is thus an ‘umbrella term’ (O’Connell Davidson 2005: 72) which determines an action/process/outcome as trafficking if any of the elements stipulated in subparagraph (a) of Article 3 of the Protocol are identified. An additional point made in this Protocol—compared with the previous anti-traffic treaties—is the inclusion of movement of individuals for purposes other than prostitution such as forced labour/services and slavery-like practices (see Kapur 2005: 116).

There are those who consider the crucial terms used in subparagraph (a) to be ill-defined (see for example Gallagher 2001: 987–8; Williams and Masika 2002: 4; Anti-Slavery International 2002: 31; UNICEF Innocenti Research 2003; Ditmore and Wijers 2003: 84; O’Connell Davidson 2005: 72–3; Ditmore 2005: 115; Doezema 2005: 79–80). One is the Protocol’s definition of the term ‘exploitation’—the key element in constituting the crime of human trafficking. There is an ambiguity by which other crucial terms such as ‘prostitution’ and ‘sexual exploitation’ are non-specific. Ann Jordan finds these phrases insufficiently defined—both in the Trafficking Protocol and in other previous international treaties (2002: 32).¹² The lack of definitional clarity is considered to have

been a result of compromise sought during the Vienna negotiations allowing each signatory to interpret these controversial issues in ways appropriate to their own nations' management of them (Ditmore 2005: 115). Prostitution is linked to trafficking but whether or not it is established as a crime rests on the other elements (such as the use of threat, coercion or deceit) being identified along with it; or as to how 'exploitation' is construed. In other words, the phrases 'the exploitation of the prostitution of others' and 'other forms of sexual exploitation' can be understood variously, leaving it rather indefinite and obscure (Doezema 2005: 79). Such interpretative leeway is found in many multilateral treaties.

The inclusion of the threat or use of coercion or deception as a defining component of 'trafficking' is regarded by the liberal feminists as important in order to distinguish between prostitution that is forced (or involving deception) and prostitution which is voluntary (Ditmore and Wijers 2003). Should any of the means listed in subparagraph (a) be identified, those who have 'consented' to engage in the forms of exploitation as stipulated are defined as victims of human trafficking.

Subparagraph (b) of Article 3 of the Protocol reads:

The consent of a victim of trafficking in persons to the intended exploitation set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article shall be irrelevant where any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) have been used

Thus any (voluntary) consent of the persons is ruled out. Even where the movement and engagement of persons for sex trade does not involve any of the listed means it is essentially difficult to recognise and clearly differentiate between what is consensual/voluntary and what is non-consensual and involuntary (see Gallagher 2001: 987–8; Anderson and O'Connell Davidson 2004: 21; Outshoorn 2005: 146). It will always be difficult to determine to what extent the 'free choice' of individuals has been shaped under the influence of given socio-economic and cultural circumstances. It is equally important to understand that the exercise of agency or intended choice can in fact lead to a person landing in vulnerable, disadvantageous circumstances which may well diminish or negate their control over their own lives. It is also essential to acknowledge the possibility that both women who initially consent to, and women who are forced to, engage in sex trade might be exposed to similar exploitative and abusive situations. Likewise, while slavery-like conditions are defined as one of the outcomes of human trafficking, not all persons as

O'Connell Davidson argues are enslaved because of trafficking (2005: 72).

Separate from the Trafficking Protocol is the Human Smuggling Protocol. While recruitment, movement and engagement of individuals, without their voluntary consent, for exploitative purposes constitute the elements of trafficking, 'smuggled persons'—transnational migrants who are illicitly brought/taken across borders by other persons—are presumed to be willing/consensual subjects in their movement (see Gallagher 2002: 26; Ditmore and Wijers 2003; O'Connell Davidson 2005: 71).¹³ The Human Smuggling Protocol is based on the premise that (migratory) movement of smuggled persons can be neatly demarcated from that of trafficked ones, even though overlapping elements are clearly present.

In the Trafficking Protocol, trafficked persons (particularly women and children) are premised to be innocent, and outright, victims—devoid of agency—of the crime of trafficking. In the Human Smuggling Protocol those who illegitimately cross the border for employment by smugglers are considered to have agency in the matter, and therefore to be less victimised (Ditmore and Wijers 2003: 82; Ditmore 2005: 109). It is pointed out, however, that those who are safely smuggled into the intended destination country can end up in highly exploitative work conditions similar to the ones landed in by those who are regarded as trafficked (O'Connell Davidson 2005).

Another recurrent contentious point is the description of persons who are trafficked. In the Protocol the term 'victim of trafficking' is used rather than 'trafficked person'. The use of the term victim is nonetheless criticised. The term can be used to overgeneralise trafficked individuals as passive, powerless and battered, and by overuse can indoctrinate in the subject the undermining and degrading notion of being 'a victim' (see Anti-Slavery International 2002; Kempadoo 2005: xxiv; Dunn 2005: 16 in Oono 2007: 86). For example, trafficked persons, under Anti-Slavery International's research, found themselves re-victimised in the course of the assistance and treatment provided by the authorities (2002: 1). Not all of them in fact see themselves as 'victims' (of trafficking). As Anti-Slavery International puts it:

Despite their experience of being trafficked they generally see themselves as migrants or workers who have had some bad luck as a result of a bad decision or a bad contract. (2002: 32)

Over-victimisation might not only oversimplify the complexity and plurality experienced by the subjects who have opted to leave their home to pursue a better life, but also deflect attention from, or even deny, what capability and resilience they have shown during the migration passage (Ditmore 2005: 110, after Finkel 2001; HRW 2000; Skrobanek et al. 1997). A victim perspective thus obscures the dimensions and elements of both helpless victimhood and resilient agency possibly entwined or compounded in the subjects (see Shah 2004; Saunders 2005; Miriam 2005).

The construction of trafficking in children

The prevention and eradication of trafficking in women and children are primary purposes of the Trafficking Protocol but particular attention is clearly paid to ‘non-adults’: any persons below eighteen years of age.

Subparagraph (c) and (d) of Article 3 of the Protocol read:

(c) The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered “trafficking in persons” even if this does not involve any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article;

(d) “Child” shall mean any person under eighteen years of age.

The significance of subparagraph (c) is that any forms of recruitment, movement, receipt and engagement of children leading to exploitation are defined as trafficking in children even if the child ‘consents’ to any potential mistreatments. In other words, any persons who are legally considered as ‘non-adults’, by definition, cannot consent because it is assumed either that they are incapable of reasoning in regard to risky migrant work, or that the accord is made by force. Thus any children who are facilitated to enter and experience exploitative labour relations and work conditions are defined as victims of trafficking (see O’Connell Davidson and Farrow 2007: 34). Moreover, as far as children’s entry into sex commerce (prostitution) is concerned, the child’s rights to express his/her own views and to be heard (stipulated in Article 12 of the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*) are unconditionally denied (see Huijsmans and Baker 2012: 922-23).

Both the Trafficking Protocol and the UNCRC have influenced intervention organisations in many ways, shaping their approaches to child trafficking for sex commerce. While those anti-child trafficking agencies

claim that their interventions have been based on the UNCRC and adopted a 'right-based approach' (e.g. ensuring children's best interests, their participation and their rights to be heard), such an approach is restricted by Article 3 of the Trafficking Protocol. Thus, some inconsistencies could potentially be found in anti-child trafficking activities. This is one of the reasons why the current study does not incorporate the normative child rights perspective as a component of the conceptual framework to guide the empirical analysis of children's lives and experiences.

One premise implicit in the Trafficking Protocol is that the recruitment and procurement of children for sex trade are essentially practised by 'adults' involved in organised criminal groups. But empirical evidence suggests that not all of them become part of the sector through involved adults. For example, a study of girls who have traded sex in Addis Ababa shows that they were in fact procured by peers of their age who were already operating in the sector (Zelalem 1998 in O'Connell Davidson 2005: 48). Likewise, children in the sex trade are not always appropriated by involved 'adult' employers or pimps/madams but in some cases pimped by older children and even their own siblings (see Montgomery 2001).

The separation of children's engagement in the sex trade from that of adults in the Trafficking Protocol is a reflection of the clear-cut view about child sex trade shared by the two opposed feminist groups. Though the radical and the liberal feminists have disputed whether the distinction between consensual and forced sex trade should be made or not, both argue that the engagement of children in commercialized sex must be forbidden (see Flowers 2001: 147; Willis and Kevy 2002: 1417; ILO 2002a: 3, 15-19; Human Rights Caucus 1999 in Ditmore and Wijers 2003: 83; Shah 2004; O'Connell Davidson 2005: 3, 70; Kapur 2005: 117; Rafferty 2007: 406). In the feminist debate there is no dispute about whether or not to draw a line between voluntary and involuntary regarding children's entry into sex work, but instead a consensus on the principle of completely abolishing it (see O'Connell Davidson 2005: 29). The unreserved abolitionist view expressed by Vivit Muntarhorn at the first World Conference against the Commercial Exploitation of Children is a typical justification widely accepted among governments, inter-government organisations, and concerned feminist and child-centred agencies:

I do not pass judgement on the pros and cons of adult prostitution. However, child prostitution is inadmissible—it is tantamount to exploitation and victimization of the child because it undermines the child's development. It is detrimental to the child both physically and emotionally, and it is in breach of the child's rights. (Muntarbhorn 1996: 10 in O'Connell Davidson 2005: 29)

The opinion expressed above is premised on the assumption that children are devoid of autonomy and have no capacity to reason and consent to sex trade; their involvement in it is therefore essentially considered as exploitation and abuse. In other words, no matter how children themselves regard sex commerce as a necessary option and even as 'work' (see Montgomery 2001; Shah 2004), the right to self-determined engagement is set aside. The way in which children are treated as passive, powerless, outright victims is often justified by their vulnerability and being 'non-adults'. As Derks puts it:

The vulnerability of children, stemming from the bio-physiological, cognitive, behavioural and social changes taking place during the growth and maturation process, distinguishes children from adults (Lim 1998) and thus also their trafficking situation. (Derks 2000a: 14)

In treaties any persons aged 0–17 are lumped together as the social category 'children' but in reality they, particularly post-pubescent girls, are not passive or incapable of making decisions to migrate into sex trade before reaching the age of legal majority (O'Connell Davidson 2005: 83).

As discussed in the Introduction of Chapter 1, the experiences of children and adolescents who become involved in sex commerce have been oversimplified into stereotypes which neglect complex and plural realities and lump them together as a category of 'trafficked child victims'. Thus, the idea of 'child trafficking' blurs 'the complex interplay between structure and human agency in shaping that experience' (O'Connell Davidson 2005: 79). It also provides little insight into why underprivileged girls of various ages who are found in the most vulnerable positions and undesirable conditions in the nightlife sector may resist 'rescue and return' assistance offered by authorities and anti-trafficking organisations (see O'Connell Davidson 2005: 83). In short, the universalised idea of 'child victims of sex trafficking' does not provide a useful starting-point for analysing the states of victimhood and agency which may coexist in the lives of those adolescent girls.

2.3 Re-thinking the constructions of childhood: local and global perspectives

Children and young people occupy a relatively weak, structurally disadvantaged and subordinate position in society (see Yamashita 1989; White 1994; James and Prout 1997). Being young and presumed to have the attributes of immaturity and youthfulness, they are generally treated as what can be called 'junior' or 'semi-' citizens, able to enjoy only a limited involvement in issues and activities affecting both their present and future well-being. For the roughly one-third of the world population (31 per cent) that is under eighteen (UNICEF 2014: 65), the current or general consensus among international institutions is that 'children come first' or 'children should be listened to' (see Edwards 1996; Boyden 1997; Mayall 2000; White 2003; Yamashita 2003). It appears however that the social worlds of children are still designed, organised and overseen predominantly by adults who have full entitlement to set standards and regulations and agendas for their 'junior citizens'. This unequal power relation between adults and children seems to be understood as a 'natural' order, entrenched in society (see Qvortrup 1994: 5). What are the justifications among adults for treating non-adults in such a manner?

One approach to understanding the subordinate social position of children and the unequal adult-child relationship is to re-think the dominant notions of childhood in both local and global perspectives and to clarify their influence on social science, policy-making and practice (see White 2003: 7-8, after Mayall 2000: 249-53). This section explores and generates a set of guiding concepts of childhood and youth which makes it possible to approach the lives of disadvantaged adolescent girls and those exposed to commercial sex work.

This section includes literature and debates on both 'childhood' and 'youth' because concepts and definitions of 'child' and 'youth' overlap in the case of older children (in UN definitions for example childhood stops at age eighteen, but youth begins at age fifteen) and many, if not most, of the young rural people who are the focus of this study fall within this overlapping zone.

2.3.1 Globalisation of normative childhood and youth revisited

The lives of the Third World's children and young people have, since World War II, progressively become a focus of organised adult interven-

tion (see Mayall 2000: 243; Boyden 2003). The ideas and models of childhood influencing such intervention are rooted in the era of the European Enlightenment (during the seventeenth and eighteenth century) (Edwards 1996; see also Cunningham 1995: 61; Boyden 2003). This period produced a theorised concept of childhood as a distinct phase of life (Hendrick 1997 in Burr 2006: 7; Montgomery 2009: 51; see Ariès 1962: 128). French historian Philippe Ariès argued in his book *Centuries of Childhood* that before the fifteenth century there were no distinct adult–child categories (1962: 411). European children were represented as ‘mini-adults’ and once beyond the age of six or seven were absorbed into the adult world and shared most adult tasks and responsibilities (Ariès 1962; Hunt 1970; DeMause 1979 in Ennew 1986: 13; Edwards 1996; van Oudenhoven and Wazir 2006; Burr 2006).¹⁴

The idea and practice of separating children (specifically boys, in the literature) from adults was originally an upper-class phenomenon in the early modern period (roughly between the late fifteenth and the late eighteenth centuries) (Ariès 1962: 411–5; Ennew 1986: 14; Edwards 1996; Ansell 2005; Burr 2006; Hendrick 2009: 109). It was gradually extended to the lower classes—initially through the penetration of schooling promoted by the Protestant Reformation and, later, the progress of the Industrial Revolution in Western Europe and North America (Ariès 1962; Ennew 1986; Edwards 1996; Ansell 2005; Burr 2006).¹⁵

The idea that children were not ready to go into adult society subjected them to special treatment and gradually replaced the traditional apprenticeship with schooling (Ariès 1962: 413). Thus, while industrialisation initially increased the demand for child labour (Edwards 1996), the introduction of compulsory education—aiming to supply an educated and skilled workforce—led to children being removed from the manufacturing and mining sectors and restricted to school and home (Edwards 1996; Prout and James 1997; White 1994; see Ariès 1962).¹⁶ In short, the ‘brief’ length of childhood in medieval Europe was, in the following centuries, extended by socio-economic changes.

The ideas about what children ought (not) to do or how they ought (not) to be treated has become more explicit during modern times. The set of particular ideological notions of childhood which ‘quarantine’ or ‘ghettoise’ children from presumed morally and physically less protected (or unprotected) environments may be summarised as follows. First, waged work or income-generating activities outside home were no longer

seen as legitimate for or compatible with childhood, and came to be regarded as the specific domains of adults (see Zelizer 1985). Second, children's 'occupation' was primarily transformed into schooling and play (Ennew 1986: 16; Montgomery 2009: 149). The types of work regarded as acceptable were primarily restricted to family-related productive and reproductive activities (housework and home-based income generation). In other words, waged work and schooling were placed at opposite poles of the childhood continuum.

It is important to note that childhood is viewed as a specific and separate state from adulthood and is coloured with biological features about vulnerability, immaturity, incompetence and dependence (Ariès 1962; Ennew 1986; Edwards 1996). These are understood as the attributes of childhood and are embedded in the modern conception of it. These are the basic elements which constitute an ideal—or perhaps standard—childhood firmly held in and influencing current development policy and practice.

This thinking appears to increase the notional difference between adulthood and childhood regarding physical placing and activities. Adults are considered to take active and dominant roles in production, protection, nurturing, teaching, socialising and supervising; children are expected to remain passive and subordinate—being the ones who are protected, nurtured, taught, socialised and supervised (see for example, Mead and Wolfenstein 1955: 7 in Montgomery 2001: 55; Hardman (2001: 504 orig. 1973: 87). In other words, the 'normative' boundaries between adulthood and childhood define and reinforce children's relative powerlessness and the paternalistic relationships between adults and children in society (Edwards 1996, after Burman 1994). This set of historically and culturally specific norms of childhood has tended to be exported as a 'global yardstick' from the industrial West to the less developed world through the U.N. agencies and other international development organisations (Ennew 1986; Edwards 1996; Boyden 1997; Montgomery 2001: 56). Although commonly seen as a 'Western' ideal of childhood, it is probably more narrowly restricted to urban, upper/middle class social groups in the West (and has been quickly adopted by urban middle-class groups in the rest of the world). The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), ratified in 1989, has been one of the influential international vehicles of this 'globalisation of standard/ideal childhoods' (Boyden 1997).

Academic debates on childhood and youth

It is necessary to review the trends and development of how childhood and youth have been approached in the social sciences. Childhood (or youth) has been a relatively neglected or undervalued subject in sociology and anthropology (see Furstenberg 1993; Qvortrup 1994; Montgomery 2001; Hirschfeld 2002; White 2003). It has long been mainly studied within the disciplines of psychology, biology and medicine—specifically for understanding physical, cerebral and mental development (Alanen 1994: 27–30; Prout and James 1997; Boyden 2003; Ansell 2005; James and James 2008).¹⁷ The theoretical roots of the dominant perspectives on children and childhood in the social sciences are to be found in developmental psychology, particularly the theory of cognitive development put forward by the Swiss developmental psychologist Jean Piaget (see Boyden 2003; van Oudenhoven and Wazir 2006).¹⁸

The prevailing biological and psychological orthodoxies for approaching childhood and youth have recently begun to be challenged (James and Prout 1997; Boyden 2003). A growing body of anthropological and sociological scholarship points to theoretical and empirical discrepancies between the prevailing models of childhood and the actual lives of children and young people in different cultures and societies; also to the dangers of the emerging notion of universal, homogenised childhood or what has been called the ‘globalisation of childhood’ (White 2003: 4; see Nieuwenhuys 1998; Mayall 2000; Boyden 2003).

Major critiques of these orthodoxies can be summarised as follows. The model is grounded on universal ideas of childhood presumed to be essentially a natural process, biologically determined: children are distinguished from adults at a definite stage of physical and mental development (White 2003: 8, after Boyden 1997; Myers 2001; see Ansell 2005; Nieuwenhuys 1998). Given such biological determinism, children are regarded as ‘becoming’ or ‘incomplete’ persons *en route* to adulthood, rather than as (already) ‘being’ young people in their own right (O’Neill 2000; Lee 2001: 7–8; White 2003: 8; van Oudenhoven and Wazir 2006). Physical characteristics and cognitive stages are employed—both explicitly and implicitly—to explain the social aspects and relations of children’s lives, taking little account of socio-cultural elements (James and Prout 1997: 14). The model does not take into account the gendered nature of childhood (Nieuwenhuys 1998: 276); it also lumps together all persons below eighteen years (White 2003). Its notion of childhood en-

compasses the following presumed attributes: (i) a state of powerlessness, vulnerability and immaturity concealing the strengths, resilience and capabilities which do exist; (ii) being recipient of adult nurture; (iii) a target of discipline and socialisation (reinforcing the view about childhood as a time of dependency); (iv) economic worthlessness (while being 'emotionally priceless' to parents) (White 2003: 7–8, after Thorne 1987; Furstenberg 1992: 34–5; also see Zelizer 1985; Mead 1985: 7 in Ennew 1986: 135; Edwards 1996: 817; Mayall 2000: 245–6; Ansell 2005: 10–14; Burr 2006: 9; Montgomery 2009: 67). This particular set of standards for childhood is adult-centric and is based on Western, urban and middle-class norms which do not take into account diversities among non-Western children (or young people) (Edwards 1996). The model suggests a child's place is restricted to the nuclear family and full-time education; it ignores the fact that children have been and still are important contributors to family income and welfare (Edwards 1996: 815–6; see Montgomery 2001: 54–6). If all these yardsticks were strictly applied, children whose lives are different would be labelled deviant, inferior or problematic (White 2003, after Edwards 1996: 816). This is one of the main issues pointed out by Jo Boyden's influential 'Childhood and the Policy Makers' which claims that global models of childhood tend to 'pathologise' children (and their parents) whose lives do not match those standards (1997).

Aspects of biology and sociology

Current approaches of cultural relativism and social constructionism comprehend childhood and youth as a plurality of forms (O'Neill 2000), and consider they are not so much determined by conditions of biological and cognitive development but are constructs of society and culture (James and Prout 1997). Attention is drawn to how the physical and psychological immaturity of children—as a biological fact of life—is understood and accepted as a natural phenomenon (James and Prout 1997: 7, after La Fontaine 1979). But the interpretation of biological phenomena itself is a clearly non-biological process shaped by society and culture. Thus, 'images of children, attitudes towards them, expectations about them, understandings of who and what they are' are socio-culturally constructed, and what are taken for granted as realities are the products of human notions (Roger 2003: 26). O'Neill (2000: 6) emphasises that biological phenomena cannot define childhood and adolescence *per se* but

only provide the context for them, and sees biological conditions and socio-cultural elements not as mutually exclusive but intertwined through what can be called the social re-interpretation of biological facts.

A social constructionist approach makes it possible to re-think those ideas, beliefs and assumptions which are taken for granted about children and young people as well as their relations with adults. It also provides a helpful standpoint for exploring pluralities and heterogeneous natures of childhood and youth through different times and different cultures (Qvortrup 1994: 5; James et al. 1998).

The first set of dimensions to be viewed concerns the agency of children and young people. The idea of their agency—capability for and active involvement in shaping their own lives, the lives of those around them and of society—is absent in the biological determinist perspective (see Qvortrup 1993: 15; James and Prout 1997; Montgomery 2001). ‘Agency’ perspectives on childhood claim that childhood has a dual meaning: children can be regarded both as competent social actors and as individuals who are subordinated and constrained (Mayall 2000: 248). They interact variously with persons, structures and their environments, both being affected by and acting on these given conditions (Ansell 2009: 203). It is important to recognise that despite being in subordinate and disadvantaged positions children are not merely influenced by the adults around them but to some extent or another have an influence, themselves, on those adults (Giddens 1979: 129-30). This suggests they play a part in the maintenance of and, even, the changes in society.

Childhood is a relational concept and social category which is defined within generational hierarchies (Mayall 2000: 248). Children are structurally positioned as inferior in relation to adults. The idea of childhood as a social status is linked to the dimensions of time and space in the lives of children and young people. The time *of* childhood is considered determined by the process of aging and the periodization of the life course (James and Prout 1997: 230-1). How the time *in* childhood ought (not) to be spent (for play, school and work) is also partly determined according to age and gender (James and Prout 1997; White 2003: 13). The time of childhood is therefore socially constructed and determined by the ideas of periodizing life in terms of chronological age; the space of childhood—where childhood is, or is not, located—is also considered to be shaped according to gender and age.

Both social constructionist and cultural relativist perspectives make it possible to acknowledge pluralities of conditions and experience of childhood and youth; yet they are unable to describe these dimensions from the point of view of children themselves (White 2003: 13). Children are involved both in their own social worlds and in social relations with adults, in each of which they have their weaknesses and strengths.

2.4 Social and cultural reproduction of gender-based generational relations

Children and young people are born into and grow up in social surroundings which to a large extent are constituted and organised by generational orders of age (see Mayall 2000, 2002; Alanen 2001a, 2001b). Children and adolescents—everywhere in the world, though in varying degrees and modes as to times, ages and cultures—occupy a subordinate position to adults (White 2003: 13) who hold authority within the structural hierarchy, although the extent and details of such subordination may vary between societies and social groups, and over time. Such structured hierarchy relations are conflated with or constituted by gender differences and relations (Mayall 2002: 1). In many parts of the Third World where society and culture are patriarchal, girls are not only subordinated to adult men and women but are also treated less equally than boys of their age. In short, relations and power structures are as unequal between the two genders as between the generations.

To gain a more proper understanding of adolescent girls' entry into sex commerce—in respect of hierarchy and power dynamics within and beyond the individual household—it is important to combine gender with generational perspectives, thereby making it possible to define just how adolescent girls experience life and negotiate their way through gendered and parental moralities, expectations and controls; and the ways in which they fight for their own expectations and pursue their interests (see Punch et al. 2007: 211).

The concept 'generations' put forward by the Hungarian-born sociologist Karl Mannheim in his classic essay *The Problem of Generations* (1952 orig. 1928) is useful in exploring and enquiring whether the differences, inequalities and relationships between younger and older people are socio-culturally constructed phenomena or basically biologically determined (see Pilcher 1994; Mayall 2001, 2002). It has been used and fur-

ther developed as a guiding concept in much recent scholarship on childhood and youth (see for example Pilcher 1994; Alanen 1994, 2001a, 2001b; Koning 1997; Prout 2001; Mayall 2002; Punch 2002a, 2007; Naafs and White 2012).

The term ‘generation’ has three distinct but interrelated meanings. Generation in the first sense refers to a chronologically determined age-cohort of a population (Naafs and White 2012: 6); or the separate generations of grandparents, parents and children (see Pilcher 1994: 481). The idea of generation based on age cohort provides a useful way to analyse both shared and different constraints and opportunities experienced among chronologically differing generations during childhood and youth. This conceptualisation does not, though, explain either the process through which distinct generational identities developed among the same generational category of chronological periods, or how and why younger people are structurally positioned subordinate to older people (see, McDaniel 2002; Edmunds and Turber 2005).

The second meaning of generation emphasises the relational aspect, considering the behavioural differences and relationships between younger and older people as a social construct (Naafs and White 2012: 6, after Alanen 2001b:12; also see White 2003: 13; Pilcher 1994: 485). Along with gender, class, ethnicity and race, generation in this second sense is understood as relational—being a result of structural difference. It makes it possible to illuminate the social structures differentiating younger people from other—older—social groups, and the unequal power relations between them (Naafs and White 2012: 6, after Alanen 2001b: 13).

Generation in the third meaning is understood as ‘social generation’ which refers to a large cohort of people who develop and share a similar identity and consciousness among themselves through having lived through the same historical events and socio-cultural influences (Mannheim 1952: 290, 302–12; see also Pilcher 1994: 488; Corsten 1999: 253–5; Lamb 2001: 6045; Mayall 2002: 36–7; Naafs and White 2012: 6). Generational perspectives in this sense also help us to understand, for example, particular ideas, attitudes and behaviours upheld among different generations within a given world context. Mannheim’s insight into generational awareness and identity helps shed light on generationally shaped similar and differentiated consciousness regarding the operation of parental authority over adolescent daughters’ daily affairs and life courses (e.g. the length of schooling, employment and distant work, and marriage).

This notion also provides a useful way by which to recognise the power dynamics and relations between parents and adolescent daughters—these being unfixed, (re-)negotiated and various according to the degrees of independency or economic contribution made by the daughters. The generational approach can be extended to analyse differences and influences among the same age- or decade-based cohort of generation. The experiences of people in the same birth cohort, who have undergone the same historical events and social forces in their childhood and youth, may well differ according to gender, class, ethnicity and religion. The actions of young people (and the concomitant outcomes) in specific groups of the same generation growing up in the same geographical location could influence the lives and behaviours of others in other groups of the same generation.

Such intra-generational influences and pressures can, for example, be seen among the current generation of schoolgoing adolescent girls in rural Indonesia whose ideas about their lives have been affected by the visible material prosperity which some of their peers have already achieved through temporary migrant work. Visible improvements made by the remittances from such youngsters probably stimulate some parents in their home village to make their teenage daughters drop out from school and work for the family economy. The decisions and actions taken by many adolescent girls induce a change not only in the relationships between specific groups in the same generation but also across different generations. Human relations are therefore influenced and even shaped intra- and inter-generationally; the lives and acts of adolescent girls are in this sense woven into multi-generational power structures. By combining the dimensions of both gender dynamics and intra- and inter-generational relations, it is possible to gain insights into the workings of power in terms of gender and generational position which could directly and indirectly influence adolescent girls' understanding of their positions within the various power structures and relationships. This brings us to the issue of victimhood and agency, and the tensions between them, in the lives of children and young people, which will be discussed in the next section.

2.5 Agency of children and adolescents in structurally oppressive circumstances

Over the past two decades, the idea that children and adolescents exercise individual agency has been acknowledged as established fact (see, for example James and Prout 1997: 8; Panter-Brick 2000; Alanen 2001b: 12; Boyden 2003, 2005; Bourdillon 2004; Ansell 2005; Whitehead et al. 2007; Robson et al. 2007: 135; James 2009: 40; Bourdillon et al. 2010; Jeffrey 2011).¹⁹ It has influenced much current research on childhood and youth (Ansell 2009: 190), and a wealth of empirical studies focussed on social agency has detailed how children and young people who are oppressed or marginalised react to injustice and undesirable circumstances in differing socio-cultural settings.²⁰ This literature has strengthened a line of thought that children and young people are social agents who are able to take a certain control over their lives and have some role in shaping/reshaping the wider society (see Robson et al. 2007: 135). This evident shift of perspective—seeing them as social actors rather than merely as passive recipients of oppression or helpless dependents of adults—provides a useful means to gain better understanding of childhood and youth, and particularly regarding disadvantaged children and young people. While the idea of agency has increasingly been employed in recent childhood and youth studies, it has not sufficiently been discussed in the academic and policy discourse on ‘child trafficking’. It also appears that the notion of children and adolescents’ agency is understood and employed variously. In order to provide useful insights for analysing the lives of adolescent girls who are exposed to commercial sex work as well as their interactions with persons and their environments—their constraints, vulnerabilities, competence and resilience in oppressive circumstances—this section specifically explores the conceptualisation of non-adult agency. It also points to the importance of the interrelationship between social agency and victimhood for analysing the experiences and perspectives of such girls.

Theoretical approaches to children’s agency

The debate on the predominance of structure or agency in influencing and determining human behaviour is a central subject of the social sciences (see James and Prout 1997: xiv). It has generated three key theoretical approaches whose essence can be outlined as follows (see Walsh 1998). The first approach (in the tradition of Emile Durkheim) argues

that the actions of individuals and the very nature of human agency are shaped by social structures, systems and the physical environment. The main concern of the second theoretical approach, in contrast, is to emphasise social agency—being the capability of individuals to make independent effective choices and take concomitant actions; it views human agency as not essentially constrained by the given social structures. The third approach emphasises neither of these two positions; it acknowledges the interdependent relation of structure and agency and considers human behaviour to be both enabled and constrained by social structures which are themselves a product of human actions (see Berger and Luckmann 1966; Bourdieu 1977; Giddens 1984; Ortner 1996; Bandura 2006: 164, 2001: 15). In this view persons are '(re-)shapers' of socio-cultural structures and systems; and yet these structures and systems are in fact what organise and constrain individuals' choices and actions (Bandura 2006: 164). Both social structure and individual agency essentially exist and operate dialectically (Giddens 1979: 53). This middle-ground approach makes it possible to move beyond the dichotomous 'victimhood versus agency' thinking which gives a one-sided picture of social reality. It provides a useful insight into coping abilities and resourcefulness of adolescent girls in the sex trade which are ignored by the mainstream 'child-trafficking' literature. It also sheds light on the intersections of oppression and resilience, and powerlessness and capabilities, in the experiences of adolescent girls in sex commerce.

Agency here refers to '... an individual's own capacities, competencies, and activities through which they navigate the contexts and positions of their lifeworlds, fulfilling many economic, social, and cultural expectations, while simultaneously charting individual/collective choices and possibilities for their daily and future lives' (Robson et al. 2007: 135). It is considered to be either restricted or facilitated by socio-cultural and physical conditions, by the range of resources and opportunities open to an individual, and by the consequences of interactions among individuals (Bourdillon et al. 2010: 134; also see Robson et al. 2007: 136). The Canadian social cognitive theorist Albert Bandura considers agency to be distinguished by three modes: personal, proxy, and collective (Bandura 2000: 75, 2001: 13, 2006: 165). Personal agency is individually and directly exercised to influence a person's own life and that of persons surrounding them and the immediate society in which they live. Proxy agency is socially mediated and is exercised when people have no direct

control over their own immediate circumstances; it is understood as individuals influencing others, who are more able and in a better position to act on their behalf. The notion of proxy agency is a useful addition to the concept of personal agency, helping us to recognise indirect forms of resistance taken by, for example, disadvantaged adolescent girls. The concept of collective agency is involved when certain goals which individuals seek can be achieved only through concerted efforts made (collectively) by those who share common interests and objectives (see Alanen 2001b: 15).

Agency, of course,—like ‘victimhood’—is not something which is either fully present or completely absent, but a matter of degree or continuum. Klocker (2007) proposes the concepts ‘thin’ and ‘thick’ for analysing agencies of young persons as to whether it is reduced (thinned) or enhanced (thickened) by socio-economic and cultural factors such as age, gender, poverty and ethnicity (Robson et al. 2007: 136–7). ‘Thin’ agency is understood as ‘decisions and everyday actions that are carried out within highly restrictive contexts, characterised by few viable alternatives’; ‘thick’ agency refers to ‘having the latitude to act within a broad range of options’ (Klocker 2007: 85). These concepts are helpful for avoiding portraying oppressed and marginalised youngsters simply as powerless victims, and for taking into account those who do positively cope with daunting odds and bleak prospects. They enable a more comprehensive understanding of agency as having multiple forms and being of varying degrees and also as evolving through acquisition of knowledge and skills and according to given social networks (Klocker 2007: 85; Jeffrey 2011: 4–5).

Drawing from the narratives of battered women, some feminist scholars emphasise the equal relevance of both victimhood and agency perspectives (see, for example Schneider 1993; Mahoney 1994; Connell 1997; Pollack 2000; Dunn 2005; Nguyễn 2011). These elements are not exclusively in opposition but can sometimes be intertwined (Schneider 1993: 395). The idea of victimhood and agency as two sides of the same coin, in tension, points to the need to explore the intersections between—and co-occurrence of—oppression, resistance and resilience in adolescent girls in the sex trade.

Much of the current literature about childhood and youth gives focus to the courage, innovation and creativity of children and young people (see for example, Corsaro 1997). It is also important to acknowledge that

their agency is often exercised covertly. Their resistance may take muted forms: deliberately staying silent, holding back a retort and not reacting overtly to particular events or circumstances. This intentional passivity—what can be called ‘silent’ or ‘muted’ agency—needs to be incorporated into the analysis of agency.

The importance of acknowledging children and young people as social agents has become a sort of ‘mantra’ in current childhood and youth studies (Jeffrey 2011: 1, after Katz 2004; Durham 2008), but there is also an emerging body of critical literature which expresses misgivings about such agency-centred approach (Huijsmans 2011: 1308). This scholarship criticises the tendency to understand and employ homogenised ideas of children’s agency despite the analysis being conducted in a variety of social and cultural settings (see for example Gigengack 2000; Bell 2007; Punch et al. 2007: 218; Lund 2007; Skelton 2007; Hart 2008; Ansell 2009; Spyrou 2011; Lloyd 2005 in Jeffrey 2011: 2). A narrow focus on the positive aspect of agency can over-romanticise the capability to cope, and obscure the negative outcomes of some coping behaviours (Gigengack 2000: 94; Jeffrey 2011: 5–6). The idea of what Gigengack (2000: 94) called ‘self-destructive’ agency provides a useful insight into how capacities and behaviours of battered or marginalised children and young people can be detrimental to their present well-being and even threaten their futures. It is important always to take into account the dual elements of effectiveness/constructiveness and negativity/destructiveness.

2.6 Summary and implications for analysis

The main purpose of the conceptual discussions in the foregoing sections has been to provide the justification for the analytical starting-point for the research and understanding of the pluralities in the perceptions and experiences of teenage girls in the sex trade.

In the universalised concept of ‘child trafficking,’ widely used in academic and policy studies, children in the sex trade have hitherto been assumed as being passive, helpless victims of crime and exploitation. They have been presumed to be devoid of autonomy, being powerlessly restricted by social structures and oppressive circumstances. I have argued, as many others have done, that such ideas of trafficking do not provide a useful insight into the experiences and problems of girls exposed to commercial sex work.

To move away from the overgeneralised views of victims of child trafficking, the ideological notions surrounding childhood and youth influencing the idea of and prevention of child trafficking need to be revisited. The practice of separating and treating children differently from adults on the basis of age and biological and psychological factors take little account of socio-cultural elements. Normative childhood and youth are essentially defined by social re-interpretation of biological and cognitive development. A social constructionist approach is useful in re-thinking the common ideas and beliefs about girls in the sex trade.

The entry of teenage girls into the sex trade may well be better understood by recognising hierarchy and power dynamics within and beyond the household. A perspective that combines girls' gender and generational positions can help shed more light on their entry to, and possible exit from, the sex trade as a process driven by intergenerational power relations between parents and daughters. By using the idea of gender-based generational relations, it is possible to understand how teenage girls are exposed to, affected by and reacting to power structures and relations in rural communities of Indramayu.

In order to provide an insight into the constraints, vulnerabilities, competence and resilience of girls exposed to commercial sex work, it is important to move beyond dichotomous 'victimhood vs. agency' thinking. The elements of both victimhood and agency are not necessarily in opposition but can take a form of duality. Agency is a matter of degree or continuum which can be reduced or enhanced by socio-economic and cultural circumstances. It also takes multiple forms and can be evolved. These ideas are useful for acknowledging and exploring the girls' experiences of victimhood and agency, and their interaction, when they are exposed to commercial sex work.

2.7 Research methodology and fieldwork

This section first explains the terms used to describe commercial sex work in the thesis and then presents the research process, methods of data collection and the types of data collected. Certain limitations imposed on my field study are explained. The final section notes some potential shortcomings in the research methods and the primary data obtained.

2.7.1 Usage of terms regarding commercial sex work

A variety of terms and expressions are used to describe the issues/phenomena regarding the recruitment, engagement, employment and position of minors in the commercial sex trade. Terms which are widely used in the literature and newspaper articles as well as anti-trafficking campaign materials include 'child trafficking', 'trafficking in children for sexual purposes' and 'sex trafficking of children'. They are also found used synonymously with terms such as 'modern-day slavery', '(child) sex slave', 'sexual slavery', 'sexual servitude' and 'modern forms of slavery'. (see O'Neill 2000; Flowers 2001; Willis and Levy 2002; O'Grady 1992; Serrill 1993; Kristof 1996, 2004, 2005; Skrobanek et al. 1997; ECPAT 1999; Bales 2004; Hasegawa 2007).

Because one primary purpose of the present study is to examine the dominant discourse on 'child trafficking', influencing the modus of global and local policy interventions, more neutral terms have been chosen. These are: migration, recruitment, placement, procurement, entry into the sex trade and involvement of girls in this sector. For description of 'sex-for-money/in-kind exchanges', terms such as commercial sex trade, sex work, sex commerce, sale of the body, provision of sexual favours/services or sexual labour are used instead of 'prostitution', 'commercial sexual exploitation/abuse'.

When describing the places and sectors in which sexual services are offered, the words sex industry/sector are used. It should be noted, however, that 'the sex industry' or 'sex sector' can also include types of transactions or establishments/agencies which offer services other than vaginal penetrative sex. Not all the young women questioned for the present study engaged in penetrative sexual service; but in other types of 'sex-related services' such as erotic massage (offered usually in massage parlours or salons), striptease dancing and hostess/escort services. The alternative term 'sexual entertainment' is used to describe the activity of those who primarily engage in the hostessing and escort sector. 'The nightlife sector' is also used, synonymously, for all these activities.

Those who are involved in the recruitment and movement of young women for the sex sector are described as sex-trade brokers/recruiters or procurers instead of the widely used term (human) 'trafficker' (or 'pimp'). Those who are employed in the sex sector but in non-sexual activities (e.g. as cashiers, bartenders, waiters/waitresses, room servicers,

security staff, hairdressers, domestic workers) are described as support personnel.

Map 2.1
Indonesia and West Java



Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:IndonesiaWestJava.png>

2.7.2 Field research: strategies and methods of data collection²¹

My fieldwork took place in rural communities of Indramayu district in West Java and in three major red-light areas of Jakarta. Further data collection was made on anti-trafficking policies and activities, mainly in Jakarta and Bandung where organisations involved with projects such as those in Indramayu have their base. Such multi-locational research makes it possible to explore different contexts of sex work and everyday life experienced by teenage girls in question. The field research consisted of three phases spread over a period of six years between 2004 and 2010.

Seventeen months were spent, during this time, on an in-depth study in rural Indramayu.

The first phase from August to December 2004 (five months) was spent in orientating myself within the village situation and gathering general information on the study village and Indramayu. This initial period had three purposes: first, to obtain information on key aspects of households in the study village by conducting a household survey; second, to yield information on the nature and characteristics of the recruitment activities which have channelled rural people into various types of labour markets since the 1950s; and third, to identify and establish contacts with a wide range of potential key informants who would then be involved in the following two phases of the research. During these months I was assisted by a female upper secondary school graduate in conducting a door-to-door survey of 115 households. The households were selected on the basis of them having adolescent girls or young adult women who had already engaged in distant work during the previous five years. The types of migrant work covered are commercial sales work, factory work, domestic work and work in the sex sector both within Indonesia and abroad.

The second phase of the research was an intensive in-depth study carried out from April to November 2006 (eight months). It primarily involved obtaining detailed information on the nature of everyday life for adolescent girls and boys and also their interactive generational relationships in the broader socio-economic and cultural environment. Information was gathered about the constraints, options, dilemmas and pivotal moments in the lives of girls who had either entered, or kept themselves away from, the sex trade. Other information was gained about childhood and the transition to adulthood as experienced and remembered by older generations; also about the procurement operations of young women for the sex sector of Jakarta and Japan from early 1990. The views and attitudes of the different generations regarding education, marriage and ways of life—particularly making money by trading sex—were obtained. During this phase and the next one, two more lines of enquiry were followed: one involved data collection in the three red-light areas of Jakarta; another involved a study of anti-trafficking interventions taken by Indonesian governments, inter-governmental organisations and non-governmental organisations (both international and local).

The third phase of the fieldwork involved supplementary data collection in a series of shorter visits (3–7 days each) between February 2007 and early 2008. Follow-up investigations among some of my major respondents were conducted between July 2008 and August 2010.²²

My field work comprised multiple dimensions:

- 1) collecting the narratives of girls;
- 2) collecting the narratives of government and international donor agency and NGOs involved in anti-trafficking policy-making and activities through interview and analysis of anti-trafficking documents (the stories of child trafficking as told by these organisations);
- 3) collecting the narratives of recruiters and employers (although not much information was obtained) and the stories of various actors (how do they see the girls, how do they understand ‘child trafficking’; what is their story about being involved in the sex trade?).

In-depth village study

The village of Cimanis in western Indramayu was chosen as the focal point for an in-depth village study.²³ It lies in one of the recruitment areas of young sex workers to urban establishments.²⁴ As a practical consideration, an NGO based in Jakarta—the Kusuma Buana Foundation (*Yayasan Kusuma Buana*, hereafter YKB) which has run a community-based anti-child trafficking programme in the study village—was able to give me access to their field site and establish initial contacts with potential informants.²⁵

During the first twelve months in Cimanis I boarded at the home of a former sex-trade broker who turned out to have been taking part in an anti-trafficking community initiative since 2003. He was available to talk about village gossip, his understanding of recruitment and movement of girls into the sex sector, and his interpretation of their experiences in the trade. Though the anecdotal stories and information obtained from him may have been rather subjective in a sense (and therefore cross-checks were essential) they not only gave some insight into the nature and development of recruitment activities but also enabled me to get in touch with some brokers, both former and current. In the last five months of the field research I stayed at the house of a community leader (*tokoh masyarakat*) who also has taken part in YKB’s anti-trafficking project. He sometimes accompanied me to visit local authorities at various adminis-

trative levels, and other notable persons in the locality, which greatly facilitated my interviewing them.

A period of three to four months was spent on rapport-building among the villagers at large. Fostering a close relationship with young people was particularly essential for this study, so I participated in as many village events as possible including religious gatherings, community rituals and celebratory feasts related to individuals' affairs. Visiting primary and secondary schools and frequenting young people's gathering spots were good opportunities to develop friendships with them. Hanging out—on foot, bicycle or motorcycle—with teenagers in Cimanis and its surrounding areas was one of my routines throughout the fieldwork. My digital cameras greatly attracted village teenagers and I let one be borrowed by quite a number of them. They were open enough to show me the pictures they took, while talking about the images shown on my laptop. My voice recorder also attracted teenage boys and girls who were active in amateur band groups, so it was also borrowed for recording their music performances. These interactions helped me to gain knowledge of the daily activities of young people, and also some of their interests, aspirations or frustrations. I had sometimes taken part in YKB's anti-trafficking activities during 2006–07 and that involvement benefited me in establishing wide groups of contacts within and beyond Cimanis. In these ways I was able to foster a reasonable relationship and level of trust with the villagers in general and the younger respondents in particular. These processes (of rapport-building) also yielded substantial ethnographic data.

Establishing contacts with and interviewing young women and others who had become involved in sex work or made money from the sex business was no easy part of the fieldwork. A majority of the young women (except those who had been employed as 'entertainers' in hostess clubs in Japan or repatriated from Japan as victims of trafficking) were already my respondents before they actually became part of the nightlife sector. Though most were still available to receive me for casual talks even after their entry, there was an important psychosocial barrier between them and myself. I needed to be careful to pay adequate attention to their sentiments when further interviews with them were arranged. Others were those who had returned or been repatriated from the sex sector in Japan; most had then become involved in the nightlife sector of urban Indonesia either full-time or part-time after their return. Although

it took some time to reach a point which enabled me to raise the issues crucial for my study they were quite ready to speak with me. It was clear that both my nationality (Japanese) and their familiarity with Japan were important factors for developing rapport. The remainder of these young women were those who had already been in the sex sector (in Indonesia) before I began my field research. Some were very suspicious of my research; others were rather apathetic about my activities. The first two groups of these young women could be reached in their places of work in Jakarta; the others could only be contacted when they were back home, with the assistance of former sex-trade brokers living in or near Cimanis or near.

Contacts with others involved in the sex business were mostly established through the assistance of three former brokers and two (non-sexual) employees in the sex establishments. One of the two is currently a hairdresser for the women and another was a waiter.

A qualitative ethnographic study was made with a combination of four data collection methods: (1) semi-structured in-depth interviews; (2) direct observation with casual conversation; (3) telephone conversations and exchanges of text messages through mobile phones (particularly with young women who had left home for urban areas); and (4) 'exchange of notes' between nineteen teenage girls and myself.²⁶ The interviews and informal discussions were mostly carried out in Indonesian language, though the most commonly spoken language in Cimanis is the Indramayan language (a dialect of Javanese language also known as 'rough Javanese'). Except for some of the older persons (above 60) most inhabitants could communicate well in Indonesian.²⁷

In many cases the semi-structured interviews or informal conversations took place in or close to the respondents' houses. But due to the frequent presence of family members or friends during interviews, maintaining the privacy of the adolescent respondents was difficult. This affected the timing of the interviews. As a working solution I made a number of shorter visits rather than a few longer ones as first planned.

It was nearly impossible to record in-depth interviews and informal conversations using my voice recorder. Quite a few respondents implicitly or explicitly expressed their discomfort if their conversation was recorded. So I took careful written notes of what was told me as well as of my own observations at the time. When information came over in the course of casual conversation I tried my best to make some short note at

the time and remember the details to write down as soon as I could while they were still in my mind. Records were kept daily.

Processes of field research and constraints and dilemmas

Conducting research about and with minors in the context of socially sensitive issues has many practical and ethical limitations and obstacles (see Fine and Sandstrom 1988; Alderson 1995; Mann and Tolfree 2003; Save the Children Sweden 2004). Prior to initiating the fieldwork I prepared my own guiding principles of research ethics (Appendix 2) by consulting publications regarding 'child-friendly research',²⁸ as well as seeking advice from several university researchers and NGO consultants with experience of studying 'sexual trafficking' of girls.

In research of this kind specific difficulties are encountered in relation to the code of research ethics. One is the question of the researcher's moral obligations in respect of juvenile respondents who were clearly at great risk. Though one may suggest that taking as neutral a stance as possible is essential to scientific research, it certainly conflicts with the ethical responsibilities of researchers. Much of the literature dealing with 'child-centred research' suggests that researchers be prepared to make adequate arrangement for assisting children in the face of acute needs or hazardous situations (see Morrow and Richards 1996; Stanley and Sieber 1992; Mohon et al. 1996; RWG-CL 2002; Mann and Tolfree 2003; Zimmerman 2003; Zimmerman and Watts 2004). Other anthropological literature argues that researchers' well-intended interventions may prove to be less helpful and sometimes even detrimental to the lives of both the children under investigation and their families in which case a dilemma would be faced by the researcher as regards their moral responsibilities (see Montgomery 2001, 2007; Schepers-Hughes 1995).

In the actual context of my fieldwork I did come to experience dilemmas as to whether I should only observe or also react to the real and sometimes serious problems which many of my (former) respondents were facing. Eight underage respondents who found themselves in crucial circumstances asked me for assistance, directly or indirectly. There were also some adult respondents who sought my help for their daughters from whom they had had no news and were very concerned about their well-being, or whom they knew were being confronted with difficult situations elsewhere, away from the village.²⁹ I had initially made the decision not to allow myself to become involved in the interviewees' ac-

tual lives, but this proved to be less easy to hold to in certain contexts. On a few particular occasions I needed to contact local authorities and NGOs for provision of assistance to involved respondents who had sought my help. Being on the spot it seemed clear to me that interventions of government agencies and NGOs were often neither sufficiently prompt nor adequate in the eyes of these young persons.

I found there were neither accepted formulae nor sufficient available resources for responding to what would likely be their best interest. I undertook a case-by-case assessment of the responses. I was affected by their plights and their earnest wish to extricate themselves from difficulties, while aware of the limitations of a researcher becoming actively engaged in such problems. On several occasions (some of which are described in Chapter 6) I did intervene directly, at their request. A few of my interventions did in fact go awry, one of which can be briefly told as follows.

I had set out to arrange a rescue operation for a 16-year-old girl who had been deceived into working in a nightclub in Bali. The operation took place at her and her parents' request and enabled her speedy, safe return to her home with the assistance of the police and an NGO. Several other involved individuals, however, got into serious trouble. One of the brokers who took her to the club and a madam of the club were both arrested by the police. Three other teenage girls who had also travelled from rural Indramayu for employment in the same club were 'rescued' and taken back home, in fact against their will. Though both the girl and her parents appreciated the intervention I made on their behalf, I had to acknowledge that some villagers who knew little about what she actually had gone through saw her as a (humiliated) 'failed returnee' from the sex trade.

It should also be made clear that I did behave like a 'social worker' in the face of particular grave situations of the respondents, while still considering myself as a researcher. There were occasions when I did refrain from intervening in the lives of certain young respondents despite having foreseen a likelihood of their becoming involved in undesirable activities. In fact I was aware that some of them who had just completed lower secondary school were indeed being pressured by their parents or an older sibling to leave home for potentially harmful employment. A few did end up in the sex sector or harsh forms of domestic work abroad.

A few young women who had been repatriated from the Japanese sex industry asked me to suggest how they could settle their debts, or otherwise perhaps arrange their re-entry into Japan. All of them seemed to have bleak economic prospects at home, and most proceeded to become part of the Indonesian nightlife sector. My decisions to stay inactive in particular cases were made after having looked into the possible options and restrictions for them. It should therefore be noted that my presence and activity did affect the situation of some of the individual respondents, as well as influencing my understanding of their situation.

Whether a researcher should take action regarding the undesirable, even grim, situations of children who come under the purview of their investigation perhaps needs to be more generally debated for enhancing ethically sound scientific studies; but attention should be paid to the probability that advancing understanding of their predicament is largely a matter of, and is influenced by, the extent to which the researchers have involved themselves in the children's affairs (see Montgomery 2007: 427).

It is possible that in certain cases a measure of involvement might yield a more nuanced understanding of their experiences and comprehension. Irrespective of whether intervention is undertaken, involved researchers who inquire into the lives of such children could be questioned as merely 'using' these respondents for the benefit of their own research—being a form of what can be called 'academic voyeurism' (La Fontaine 1990: 17). In this regard, transparency about research methods, and openness about what in retrospect may have been mistaken action is essential.

The process and constraints of obtaining informed consent from the respondents—particularly minors—need to be clarified. The necessary research permit was obtained from the local authorities prior to initiating the village-level study. Having clarified the purpose of my visit and my status as a Ph.D. student I was able to undertake in-depth interviews and have informal discussions with respondents. Regarding the consent gained for the interviews and the actual reactions of some respondents the following aspects should be noted.

It was not always possible to secure 'prior' consent. In certain cases some important information came my way about individuals who may not have known much about the actual reason for me being in Cimanis. During my village routine I would often be quite offered a cup of tea by, or chance to chat with, villagers who were not actually involved in my

research. Information obtained through such talks was later recorded in my field notes and was a useful addition to the ethnographic data. It was also not always possible to interview only those individuals who had already given consent to participate in my research; there were times when persons who happened to join the conversation later became important informants. In such cases I would then need to clarify the purpose of my fieldwork to them.

A number of the teenage respondents did in fact take part in my research before or without obtaining consent from their parents or immediate employer.³⁰ Indeed, obtaining the latter's consent was not possible in certain contexts. The contact with some of the respondents working in Jakarta's red-light areas was established when they returned to Cimanis but some of the first interviews did take place in Jakarta; in such context seeking parental permission was unfeasible. A few of the girls who were hiding the facts about their work from their parents asked me not to say anything of it to the parents. Consent from their employer (pimp/madam/club manager) was not relevant for conducting this sort of interview since the respondents wished to keep the former ignorant of their interviews.

The greater majority of respondents participated voluntarily, though closer consideration should perhaps be given to how and in what context their 'willingness' was shaped. There is of course a power differential between the researcher and those interviewed. These individuals who became involved were clearly at a disadvantage given that I was seen as a well-to-do (Japanese) foreign male; this perhaps influenced their giving of consent. As the in-depth interviews took place after a reasonably personal relationship had been established, they may well have found it difficult to hold back information when they would have preferred to do so—even perhaps altering the true facts a little.

Five of my selected interviewees did refuse to participate or dropped out part-way. Three of them were (grand)mothers who had pushed their (grand)daughters into Jakarta's sex sector in the face of the latter's unwillingness. The other two were teenage girls who had been part of the nightlife sector for some time; one told me, 'Too many questions could get me into trouble'. I later learned that her workplace, a North Jakarta massage parlour, had had a police raid a few weeks before I approached her for interview. It should also be mentioned that the fieldwork was undertaken just at a time when a high level of attention on 'child traffick-

ing' was being paid by Indonesian authorities and international and local organisations. The press had exposed the plight of some Indramayan girls who had been taken into the sex industry. Those parents who had daughters in the trade (plus the daughters themselves) and who had drawn some advantage from the transactions, had become rather cautious about responding to questionings from those whom they saw as outsiders.

At one point someone made threats against me by sending text messages. It also happened that on one of my evening visits to a hamlet where adolescent girls had just been taken to Jakarta's red-light area, somebody deliberately drove a long nail into my motorcycle tire. A series of such 'warnings' was made at the time I was specifically collecting the information on the operations of particular sex-trade brokers in Cimanis and adjacent villages. Prioritising the security of the girls—as well as of myself—I had no option but to limit my research at that stage to brokers with whom I already had positive contact.

Particular effort was made to prevent causing distress to the respondents during the interviews. I considered what issues/questions might be sensitive to them and how these could perhaps be raised. It was also important to sensitize myself to questions which should not be asked at a given moment—given an assessment of the state of mind, personal history and current situation of the respondent. Even so two interviews did go amiss. One was with an elderly woman who had been deserted by her husband due to apparent infertility; she sobbed when the marriage issue was discussed. Another happened when an adolescent girl was telling about domestic violence she had undergone.

It was also necessary to avoid using words/phrases which have strong, negative moral overtones potentially making respondents uneasy and even feeling humiliated. A variety of terms are used in Indonesia to describe women who make money by providing sexual favours (Ford and Lyons 2008: 181; also see, Hull et al. 1999; Surtees 2003: 72–7; UNICEF 2004). Some of these terms are seen as unfavourable from the point of view of the women themselves (see Montgomery 1998a: 145; Surtees 2004; Rubenson et al. 2005: 402; Weitzer 2005: 936). Commonly used terms WTS (*Wanita Tuna Sulila*, women without morals), *pelacur* (whore) and *ayam* (chickens) were avoided. More neutral expressions were selected: *pekerja di sektor hiburan* (worker in the entertainment sector), *penghibur* (entertainer), *pelayan* (waitress), *job/kerja* (work) or *kencan* (literally 'date')

but used as a euphemism for sexual relations). Likewise the terms widely used among state officials, NGO activists and academics to refer to recruitment and movement of children for commercial sex were avoided throughout the village study: *trafiking anak* (child trafficking), *jual anak* (sale of child), *perdagangan anak* (child trade), ESKA (*Eksplorasi Seksual Komersial Anak*, Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children) AYLA (*Anak Yang Dilacurkan*, prostituted child). The terms to describe those involved in placement or employment of women were used the following ways: *sponsor/fasilitator* (facilitator) instead of *calo* (broker/procurer) and *trafiker* (trafficker); *papi* (father) and *mami* (mommy) or simply *majikan* (employer) instead of *germo* (pimp) and *mucikari* (madam).

Limitations of research methods for primary data

Literature about ‘child trafficking’ in Indonesia is mostly based on interviews conducted either with underage girls already employed in the sex sector or with those who had been ‘rescued’ or who had already returned to their homes.³¹ Some studies conducted in their place of work do not cover the actual circumstances faced by these girls back home; other studies are entirely based on the information gathered in their place of origin. The fieldwork for the present study covered both types of location. It therefore involved not only those who were already in the trade but also those who were exposed to the likelihood of being recruited into it, and includes information from the (grand)parents of the girls in question; this has made it more possible to understand their family circumstances and interactions, and to analyse experiences which these girls underwent before their becoming of a part of the nightlife sector. A comparative analysis of conditions under which girls either entered or kept themselves away from the sex sector was therefore possible. Because the fieldwork was conducted over nearly six years it was also possible to follow the various transitions experienced by the main respondents. The data obtained from the people who make money from the sex sector was piecemeal but does allow a picture to be gained of the organisational structure and dynamics. Ethnographic data regarding sex-trade brokers and those who run establishments as well as those who are employed as support personnel in the sector were also collected, enabling socio-economic links between the communities of origin and destinations to be drawn.

One of the disadvantages of the data obtained could lie in the chosen study village. Cimanis has been a locus for YKB's anti-trafficking interventions since 2003; it is possible the villagers in general and adolescents in particular had been affected in one way or another—and in point of fact nearly half of my main respondents and their (grand)parents had been specifically targeted. Because of that, though my status as a Ph.D. student was clarified for my respondents, they may have held back crucial information or, on the other hand, were perhaps too accommodating.³²

The present rural generation of young women in transition from adolescence to adulthood—from school to work and/or marriage—are these days relatively mobile. Quite a few respondents had been moving in and out of their natal village during the six years of my fieldwork. Their mobility rather limited my access to them. After completing (or dropping out from) secondary school some became involved in work elsewhere in Indonesia or even abroad. Others married and moved out from Indramayu. In some cases I was able to trace respondents to the Greater Jakarta and other urban areas, which was quite time-consuming but had its benefits. Meeting those who had become involved in the sexual work sector at their workplaces/lodgings (or in adjacent surroundings) helped me gain a grasp of their actual situations. The dynamics of what are, in fact, extensive Indramayan networks—comprising various combinations of gender, age, generation and occupation—became evident.

The village-level study focused primarily on one administrative area, and the number of samples taken within Cimanis is small. The picture(s) given by the experiences of my main respondents may not reflect the life of other Cimanis inhabitants or the population in a wider geographical context.³³

For a description of recruitment activities and the link between rural Indramayan communities and the urban red-light areas, some important though limited information was obtained from persons who make money from the sex business. The picture presented in this thesis was pieced together from various sources. The recruitment patterns described and personnel of the networks—including the rural-urban links—presented should be understood as specific to the time and locality. Nor was it possible to be wholly sure that all the individuals involved in the recruitment processes were identified, let alone met with.

Primary data derived from the village, the red-light areas and the domain of anti-trafficking initiatives cannot be assumed to be totally reliable. Information provided by my respondents could not be assumed to be 'objective' or unbiased. They shared information with me as they (selectively) remembered, observed, heard and interpreted particular events or issues. Gossip and anecdotes relating to the job placement of young women and the outcomes of their migrant work were likely just hearsay some of which took exaggerated forms. Their understanding and interpretation of the questions I asked will also have affected their answers. It became apparent that parents whose daughters were still in the nightlife sector—and also current sex-trade brokers and pimps/madams—often gave fragmentary information, avoiding any real talk about the crucial issue.

Cross-checking being indispensable for any acceptable degree of validity of data, further information was therefore acquired from different angles and sources, including direct observation. For example, in respect of a given household's situation, local YKB staff and female volunteers involved in the anti-trafficking initiative were able to give me their personal confirmation of the details told me by my respondents. In order to understand how the whole systems of recruitment for and employment of young women in the sex industry work, information obtained from the girl respondents was cross-checked with other sources directly and indirectly involved in such activities: their (grand)parents, sex-trade brokers and personnel who engage in non-sexual work within the sex sector. Though information regarding the experiences of the young women who went to work in the Japanese sex industry could not be cross checked with other primary sources I was able to collect secondary materials from both Indonesian and Japanese authorities.

Data collection in Jakarta's red-light areas

Indramayan girls and women can be found throughout the sex sectors of Java, Bali, Sumatra and Kalimantan (see Hull et al. 1999: 86; Irwanto et al. 2001; Rukmana 2001; Martini 2002; Surtees 2003, 2004; Ford and Lyons 2011, 2008), but Jakarta has been their primary destination. Three major sex-entertainment centres of Jakarta—Mangga Besar (West Jakarta), Jembatan Tiga (North Jakarta) and Kelapa Gading (North Jakarta)—were chosen as locations for data collection for practical reasons: these areas have been the destination hubs of young women from Cimanis and

its adjacent villages since the 1990s; they can easily be reached from Cimanis by taking an inter-city bus (3–4 hours), plus some of my village contacts who had inside knowledge of these areas were able—and spared their time—to orient me among the several establishments and introduce me to involved individuals in the sector.

The research there had three main objectives: to collect additional information to piece together the supply stream of various components of the labour force linking the study village to these red-light areas; to have a detailed picture of the operational structure of the particular establishments and the workplace dynamics; and to supplement and cross-check the information already collected from interviews conducted in Cimanis.

The interviews—being more in the way of casual conversation—took place during daytime in the lodgings of the respondents or a cafeteria/restaurant close to their workplace. Fifteen different establishments were visited by a few former brokers and myself for observation and conversation with those operating as managers, madams, bartenders, waiters or room servicers.

It should be noted that one important set of actors in the child sex work nexus—their clients, the sex consumers—were not included among those I tried to interview, although of course casual contacts occurred in the course of my visits to the establishments. Some information about consumers was indirectly collected from young sex workers, (former) sex-trade brokers and those operating as non-sex workers within the establishments. Sex consumers, the persons who seek commercial sexual service, are of course crucial for sustaining and transforming the commercial sex business; so they could have been included in the respondent categories of this research. While this category of actors is undoubtedly an important element in the complete picture of children's commercial sexual work, it seemed rather peripheral to the specific objectives of the present study, which does not aim to clarify the nature of the 'demand' side of commercial sex.

Primary data at village level and the red-light areas

The bulk of information collected during the village-level study and the series of visits to the red-light areas of Jakarta was from a total of 257 individuals. These respondents have been grouped into five categories according to age, generation, and profession/occupation: (1) teenagers; (2) adults under 30; (3) parent and grandparent generations; (4) facilita-

tors/support personnel in the sex business; (5) other key informants.³⁴ The major characteristics of each group and its subgroups are given as follows:

(1) Teenagers: ages 13–17 (76 persons: 64 female, 12 male)

Teenage girls

A total of sixty-four girls, living either in Cimanis and its adjacent villages/sub-districts or working in the red-light areas of Jakarta or returned/repatriated from the sex sector abroad were contacted, spoken with and data obtained from them. Of these, thirty-three were selected for in-depth interviews and became the main respondents for the study.

Selection of these main respondents was according to one of three criteria: (i) had not yet engaged in commercial sex services at the time of the first interview (May 2006) but would be, or had already been, exposed to the likelihood of being involved in it; (ii) had already become a part of the trade in Indonesia and/or abroad while still below age eighteen; (iii) grew up in a landless or land-poor household having few livelihood options. Setting such criteria for selecting respondents are necessary to avoid bias in research. A point was made of choosing girls from the many different types of home background and family.

The group fell into four general subcategories: (i) involved in the sexual entertainment sectors in Indonesia (thirteen persons); (ii) involved in these sectors both in Indonesia and other Asian countries (Japan and/or Taiwan) (four persons); (iii) ‘victims of sex trafficking’ rescued and repatriated from Japan (four persons); and (iv) those who either continued their education, went to work (in Indramayu, urban Indonesia or abroad) or married (twelve persons).

The respondents involved in sex commerce were identified and approached by me through the following methods and processes. A majority of the girls involved in the nightlife sector of Jakarta (and Bali) had first been contacted by me in Cimanis before they actually become employed in it. But in later months or years when they became a part of it, I identified the place of their destination and the establishment where they were employed. This was made possible through (1) gleaning gossips from the neighbours of the girls and Cimanis residents who had frequented to or lived in Mangga Besar in West Jakarta, and (2) obtaining assistance from former sex-trade brokers/persons who were able to access, or were still themselves a part of, social networks linking the rural

communities and the Jakarta nightlife world. The contacts with the four teenage girls repatriated from the Japanese sex industry were made possible through the assistance of the persons (based in Cimanis) who had collaborated with the International Organization for Migration's programme on return and social reintegration of trafficked victims.

Teenage boys

Information was also collected from twelve teenage boys who were either still attending or had already left school and were un/underemployed. Their views regarding childhood/youth and adulthood, schooling, employment and marriage, as well as 'trafficking' and sex work were collected. These data were used to explore and compare the gender-specific circumstances and experiences of girls and boys in household and community; therefore the gender comparisons regarding parental pressure on daughters and sons or different degrees of autonomy and constraints experienced by them, can be made. The experiences/views of boys regarding anti-trafficking programmes were also used for the analysis of these intervention activities.

(2) Adults under 30: ages 18–29 (20 persons: 10 females, 10 males)

Information was collected from ten women and ten men originating from Cimanis and nearby villages/sub-districts. The women were those who had been or still were engaged in commercial sexual labour in urban Indonesia and/or in Japan or Taiwan. Ten men were at the time either unemployed or irregularly employed and were therefore still dependent on their parents.

(3) Parent generation: ages 30–59 (55 persons); grandparent generation: above 60 (36 persons)

To complement the data on the intergenerational interactions between teenagers and older generations, accounts of experiences and perspectives of the parental and grandparental generations were collected. Of the fifty-five parents (25 females and 30 males) both spouses of fifteen couples were interviewed together. Ten wives and fifteen husbands were interviewed on their own owing to separation or disposition. Nearly half of the thirty-six respondents in the grandparent generation (17 females

and 19 males) were widows or widowers. The parent and grandparent respondents interviewed were those of thirty teenage girl respondents.

(4) Facilitators/support personnel in the sex sector (41 persons)

To throw light on the nature of recruitment activities and the dynamics between the migrant Indramayans in Jakarta's red-light districts and the rural communities of Indramayu, anecdotal information was gathered from thirty-three persons who were or had been involved in the placement of girls in the sexual entertainment sector. The individuals in this category comprised three sub-categories: (i) former and current sex-trade brokers (sixteen persons) who steer young women into the establishments; (ii) pimps/madams (ten persons); (iii) Indramayans (seven persons) who engage in non-sexual work within the sex sector: hairdressers, waiters, room servicers, housekeepers. The other eight worked for 'talent scout agencies' which supply girls specifically for the Japanese sexual entertainment sector.

(5) Other key informants (29 persons)

In order to gain the perspectives of individuals who are in a position to address the issues of 'child trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation', a wide range of informants were interviewed: local Muslim leaders (*ustad* and *kyai*) and school teachers of primary/secondary schools in Cimanis and its adjacent areas; local officials, police officers and medical professionals as well as activists known to be involved in anti-trafficking initiatives. Awareness-raising campaigns and workshops on issues related to human trafficking and sexual exploitation of girls were occasionally held (by both the local government and NGOs) during the time I was there. These events were very useful opportunities to gather further additional information.

Primary data related to anti-trafficking interventions

To gain insight into the various discourses around 'child trafficking' for commercial sex trade and anti-trafficking intervention policies and practices at national and district levels, information was collected from involved Indonesian government organisations, international development agencies and non-governmental organisations. Between June 2006 and December 2007 a series of interviews were conducted in Jakarta, Ban-

dung and Indramayu with representatives or managerial personnel of the following organisations listed in Appendix 3.

Secondary sources

Secondary data were collected covering issues related to human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children as well as intervention measures against human trafficking. Government policy and legal documents, official statistics, academic and policy-related reports on the trafficking issue were obtained from Indonesian government organisations, bi/multilateral development agencies and both international and local non-governmental organisations. Various kinds of project materials (leaflets, campaign kits and newsletters) produced for counter-trafficking activities were also available and collected from these agencies. Printed and electronic news articles related to the issue were constantly collected through the years from 2001.

In conclusion, it should be noted that owing to unforeseen circumstances, there has been a long delay between completion of the field research (2010) and the finalisation of this thesis. While the intervening years have seen a considerable decline in anti-child trafficking efforts in Indonesia, there have been no significant changes in the assumptions and approaches on which they are based; for that reason, I hope and believe that the findings and arguments of this study are still relevant and useful. It should also be noted that when the present tense is used in the presentation of data based on my field research, this ‘ethnographic present’ refers to the period of field research (2004-2010).

Notes

¹ The feminist group which endorsed abolitionism believed that the traffic in women would be maintained and even furthered by the system of licensing brothels overseas (Doezema 2000: 27).

² Innocent victim/evil trafficker became a popular theme which was played out in numerous novels, theatrical performances and silent movies; the issue received

extensive coverage in the press worldwide (Wong 2006: 11, 2007: 110, after Doezema 2000: 25).

³ For example, in Britain the campaign led to adoption of the *Criminal Law Amendment Act* of 1885 which was used to suppress the prostitutes, rather than the white slave traders (Doezema 2000: 30, after Walkowitz 1980). In the United States passing of the White-Slave Traffic Act of 1910, better known as the Mann Act, enabled authorities to criminalise consensual commercial sex trade (Grittner 1990 in Doezema 2000: 30; Melzer 2005: 21).

⁴ The first group of signatory countries were: Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Portugal, Russia, Spain, Sweden and Norway, Switzerland, and the Netherlands (see, the 1904 Agreement). The agreement was later signed by the US, Austria-Hungary and Brazil (Bullough and Bullough 1987: 360; see Derks 2000a: 8).

⁵ It was pointed out that these international instruments and the efforts made by the abolitionist movement provided no answer to the problem of prostitution (see Doezema 2000). Though the horrific narratives of white slave victims were considered to be 'literal truth' among numerous feminists (Irwin 1996: 4 in Doezema 2000: 25), quite a few studies conducted by contemporary historians who examined the extent of the white slavery gave that the actual number taken into 'white slave trade' was rather small (Doezema 2000: 25–6; see, for example, Walkowitz 1980; Rosen 1982; Bristow 1982; Corbin 1990; Guy 1991).

⁶ In 1923 the Committee on the Traffic in Women and Children of the League of Nations authorized a study of the traffic in Europe, the Mediterranean Basin, and the Americas. That study resulted in two reports which were published in 1927.

⁷ The signatories were also bound to introduce an immigration law to protect and repatriate the victims of international traffic. The repatriation of trafficked persons was, in fact, much commonly practised than the punishment of procurers and exploiters; such measures made it impossible to build prosecutable cases against sex traffic offenders (Truong 1990: 155).

⁸ More detailed analysis on the strengths, shortcomings and effectiveness of the 1949 Convention can be found in Farrior (1997: 219–21); Nelson (2002: 559–64); Bruch (2004: 9–11).

⁹ For further discussion on influence of the neo-abolitionist feminists on international anti-trafficking policy, see Ditmore and Wijers (2003); Desyllas (2007). Representative partner organisations of CATW are the European Women's Lobby (EWL) and the International Abolitionist Federation (IAF). Other feminist bodies having a similar view on the sex trade are: Equity Now, the Protection Project, Standing Against Global Exploitation (SAGE), Focus on the Family, National Association of Evangelicals, Catholic Bishops Conference, Traditional

Values Coalition, Concerned Women for America, the Salvation Army, International Justice Mission, Shared Hope International, Religious Freedom Coalition (Weitzer 2007: 449).

¹⁰ The anti-trafficking legal and policy framework in the US, developed under the powerful lobby of evangelicals, abolitionist feminists, neoconservative factions and organisations, resulted in Congress's enactment of the *Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000* (TVPA) (Block 2004 in Desyllas 2007: 64–7). One aspect of the TVPA ordains the US Government to monitor and require that other countries take the necessary measures to address this issue. Under the Bush Administration an amendatory law (the *Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2003* (TVPRA)) was introduced which required the US Government to fund anti-trafficking projects in foreign countries. This law, however, imposes a strict criterion by which grants be provided only to organisations who neither support nor promote the legitimisation or practice of prostitution (see USAID 2003: 9). More detailed description on this aspect can be found in *Trafficking in Persons: The USAID Strategy for Response* (USAID 2003), Melzer (2005: 20), Saunders and Soderlund (2003), Block (2004), Ditmore (2005: Chapter 6) and Kempadoo (2005: xxii).

¹¹ This Convention was also supplemented by the *Protocol Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition* (adopted on 31 May 2001) for eradication of the illicit production of and trade in (particularly) small arms.

¹² The terms 'slavery', 'practices similar to slavery' and 'forced labour' are defined respectively in Article 1 of the *Slavery Convention of 1926*, Article 1 of the *UN Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery of 1956*, and Article 2 of the *Convention concerning Forced or Compulsory Labour of 1932* (ILO No. 29).

¹³ Detailed discussion on this aspect can be found in Gallagher (2001, 2002).

¹⁴ The debates and critiques of Ariès's thesis are found in Vann (1982), Pollock (1983), Montgomery (2003, 2009: 51–2) and van Oudenhoven and Wazir (2006).

¹⁵ The introduction of public schooling legislations in Europe goes back to between the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries; modern schooling system emerged and developed throughout the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries (Therborn 1993: 106–8).

¹⁶ There is a continuing debate on the contributing factors to the decline of child labour in Western Europe. Other three factors, (i) the introduction of child labour legislation, (ii) an increase in household income and (iii) a decline in the demand for child workers due to technical advancement in production, are also mentioned (White 1994: 3–8). The discussion about the relationship between

child labour laws/regulations and the decline of child workers in factory and mining sectors of Britain is found in Burr (2006: 8–9). For a discussion on the influence of the Protestantism on moral separation of children from the adult world, see Ennew (1986: 12–6).

¹⁷ Sociological studies have previously discussed children (and young people) in relation to motherhood or in the context of mother–child relations (Mayall 2000: 243), and treated them as adjuncts to their parents and adult society (Edwards 1996: 822; White 2003: 9).

¹⁸ Piaget's theory of child development inspired the work of whole generations of developmental psychologists who tended to focus on only one aspect of his ideas (van Oudenhoven and Wazir 2006). The focus of their work in early childhood studies was to find out the universal tendencies, stages and commonalities of physical and psychological development which help children grow into adults (James 2009: 35, after Burman 1994: 12). He also had a great influence on the theory and practice of education in Western Europe and North America (O'Neill 2000; Ansell 2005; van Oudenhoven and Wazir 2006; see, Jenkins 2000; Kamii and DeVries 1993).

¹⁹ The shift to see children and young people as social agents or social actors in their own right dates back to the work of social scientists in the 1970s–1980s (James 2009: 34–40). These researches discuss dimensions of children's autonomy and active role in their socialisation and interaction with people and their immediate environment (see, Hardman 1973: 87, Rafky 1973, Marckay 1973, Willis 1977; Giddens 1979; Corrigan 1979; Bluebond-Langner 1979).

²⁰ The studies focussed on the developing world's minors who are exposed to extreme hardship include Montgomery's ethnography of pre-pubertal and adolescent prostitutes in an urban Thai slum community (2000, 2001, 2007); two works by Beazley: one on street children's autonomous decisions and actions when confronting undesirable conditions in Yogyakarta, Indonesia (2003); the other on active responses of young children left behind in rural Lombok, Indonesia by parents who migrated abroad (2007); Klocker's study of rural teenage girls who work as live-in domestic workers in Tanzania (2007); and Punch's study on young Bolivians autonomously and independently migrating to Argentina for employment (2007).

²¹ The research was undertaken by myself under the academic sponsorship of the Centre for Population of the Indonesian Institute of Science.

²² During much of this period I was employed as a researcher at the Japanese Embassy in Indonesia. Although the time available for data collection was limited, it gave me opportunity to gain insight into the eventful lives of my respondents over the course of two years following completion of the in-depth village study.

²³ In order to protect the confidentiality of my respondents, the names of persons and the village and sub-district in this thesis have been changed.

²⁴ The western area of the district has generally been a source of sex workers; the eastern part has tended to supply domestic workers abroad (Indramayu District Office of Social Welfare and Manpower 2001 in Sudrajat 2005: 55).

²⁵ Prior to the selection of the study village a series of reconnaissance trips to rural Indramayu was made during 2001–03. Three villages including Cimanis were identified as potential research sites. Through initial fieldwork conducted in July 2004 it became clear that potential research collaborators living in two other villages were unavailable to assist in identifying key informants and accessing households which sent teenage daughters into the sex sector.

²⁶ I encouraged them to write about themselves includes their aspirations, concerns and interesting events in their village life, while I enquired about some issues related to the present study. They also were free to respond with questions to me about my own experiences and viewpoints, or other matters. The content of these notes gave further insight on their ideas, ideals, positions and aspirations and constraints in regard to their lives both in Cimanis and in wider contexts.

²⁷ During November 2006 I conducted in-depth interviews with older respondents with the help of an upper secondary school graduate who interpreted the conversations.

²⁸ See among others: Lee 1993; Alderson 1995; Children and Young People's Unit 2001; Fine and Sandstrom 1988; Stanley and Sieber 1992; Mohon et al. 1996; Graue and Walsh 1998; Kimmel 1988; Mann and Tolfree 2003; Zimmerman 2003; Laws and Mann 2004; Steane 2004.

²⁹ Fostering good rapport and trust with young and adult respondents under my study was essential for obtaining reliable information but it might also have meant that they may have seen me as a potential accessible 'helper'.

³⁰ The common requirement in ethical protocols for children's, parents' or guardians' permission to be obtained, and sometimes that the interviews should take place on the presence of the parent/guardian, may be seen as contradicting the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child Article 13 on the child's (autonomous) right to receive and impart information.

³¹ See for example, Farid (1999), Suyanto (2002), Harkrisnowo (2003), Rusmil and Roediono (2003), UNICEF (2004), ILO-IPEC (2004a, 2004b), and Sagala and Rozana (2007).

³² Reliance on an NGO's anti-trafficking programme for the collection of the data—for a study of trafficking discourse and intervention practices—could well be criticised.

³³ For the limitations of the 'village' as a locus of field study, see Breman, J., P. Kloos and A. Saith eds., (1997) *The Village in Asia Revisited*. Delhi: Oxford University Press; P. Vandergeest and J. Rigg, 'The restudy "problem" and agrarian change: revisiting rural places in Southeast Asia', in J. Rigg and P. Vandergeest eds., (2012) *Revisiting Rural Places: Pathways to Poverty and Prosperity in Southeast Asia*. Singapore: NUS Press, pp. 1-24.

³⁴ Sex consumers, the persons who seek commercial sexual service, are crucial for sustaining and transforming commercial sex business; so they could be included in the respondent categories of this research. However, clarification of the nature of 'demand' for commercial sex is not one of the objectives of this study. Information which was considered to be necessary for presenting the aspect of consumers were indirectly collected from young sex workers, (former) sex-trade brokers and those operating as non-sex workers within the establishments.

3

Procurement of Sexual Labour: Linking Historical to Modern Practices in the District of Indramayu

3.1 Introduction

The name 'Indramayu' appears to evoke a rather disgraceful image among those who have heard any of the anecdotes related to Indramayan women in the nightlife sector of Indonesia. It is not known since when this district has been closely linked to young women who engage in commercial sex work but the words *pemasok pekerja seks komersial* (meaning supplier of commercial sex workers) are widely used in a rather exaggerated manner. Those Indramayans who know how their home district is disparagingly spoken of react defensively to such stereotyping, saying:

It is overblown! Not all women make money that way... The fact is there are non-Indramayan women in prostitution who use the name Indramayu to hide their home, damaging only the name of *our* home!

Such reactions are also shown by representatives of Indramayu district. A high-ranking official, delivering a complimentary speech at a graduation ceremony held in an upper secondary school in west Indramayu, said

I don't remember how many times I have felt humiliated when I go on a business trip outside Indramayu to attend meetings and conferences. During the break-times or after a meeting I might be asked by counterpart officials from other local governments: 'What are the specialities of your district, sir?' and I answer, 'We produce delicate mangos, *ikan asin* (salted fish) and of course *batik* Paoman'.¹ Then they usually reply: 'Oh, I see... Sorry, but in my district there are women involved in the night-time entertainment sector, many of whom are actually known to be from your home ar-

ea...’ I was told Indramayans are found in nightlife everywhere across Indonesia. That is slander (*fitnah*) against us! I earnestly hope the pupils who leave here will never involve themselves in activities which would bring dishonour to our home. (Indramayu, 1 May 2010)

Over the last two decades or so the district has received sensational media attention regarding sex commerce and sexual trafficking of girls; much of what is reported is based on anecdotal accounts which are inadequately verified and therefore not to be given credit.² Yet there is no real insight into how and why this district has become so specifically connected with the commercial sex sector. To understand the perspectives and experiences of teenage girls who are currently on the move to and fro between the district and the urban nightlife world, it is important to ascertain how the social-economic conditions of Indramayu—particularly those that affect the livelihoods of adolescent girls living in less privileged households—are linked to that of the nation as a whole and the structural changes through the last half century.

This chapter firstly gives a historical account of the procurement of rural women for organised forms of sex commerce in colonial Java and Sumatra, arguing that the development of the sex sector and associated recruitment activities emerged and became pronounced along with development of the colonial economy, the progress of urbanisation and the mobility of unaccompanied male labour. That is followed by a descriptive introduction to Indramayu in respect of its historical link to sex commerce within—and in fact also beyond—the district, showing how the district has become not only the source area of sex workers for urban establishments but also an operational ground of sex commerce.

3.2 The origins of procurement of women for the sex trade in colonial Java and Sumatra

The origins of recruitment of young women into the organised forms of the sex market in Indonesia can be traced back to the Dutch colonial period in which a demand for sexual services arose from the constant stream of non-natives (Europeans, Chinese coolies) in addition to native men. Men were brought to work in the Netherlands East Indies by the colonial businesses and governments (Hull et al. 1999: 3–4; Stoler 1985a: 646). The emerging needs for sexual gratification were a result not only of the growing colonial communities of civilians (traders and planters),

military and government officers, but also by the upsurge in numbers and mobility of male labourers—natives and Chinese coolies—as the colonial economy expanded (Hull et al. 1999: 123; Ingleson 1983: 455; Airries 1995: 79; Hesselink 1987: 218; Stoler 1985a: 650). The commercial sex trade increased dramatically in the second half of the nineteenth century, driven by a combination of far-reaching socio-economic changes taking place in the Netherlands East Indies along with rapid economic expansion back in the Western countries. The opening of the colonial economy to private enterprise after 1870 stimulated the expansion of plantations and the associated infrastructural development (specifically of land-transport) (Ingleson 1986: 123; Hull et al. 1999: 6). After 1890 there was a decline in the number of European men in the Netherlands Indies living with native concubines owing to a moral campaign in Holland which condemned this practice and aimed to root it out (Ming 1983: 70). During the last decades of Dutch rule there was an increase of native (male) labourers migrating into the colonial centres (Ingleson 1986: 124, 1983: 455).

In the colonial economy a demand for sexual services was created specifically among the (imported and indigenous) migrant male labourers. Fuelled by a booming export trade in primary products (rubber, oil palm, tea, coffee and tobacco) Java and Sumatra underwent notable structural changes: (i) the expansion of plantations particularly in West Java and the specific growth of the sugar industry in East and Central Java; (ii) the establishment of plantations in Sumatra; and (iii) the construction of roads and railways between towns and cities and also connecting plantations with the ports (Hull et al. 1999: 6; Ingleson 1983: 455; Koentjoro 2004: 63; Airries 1995). The huge rise in paid employment opportunities created by these developments was mostly met by migration of male labourers from the countryside (Hull et al. 1999: 6; Ingleson 1986: 123–4; Lewis et al. 1997: 207). The commercial sex trade thrived in this setting.

The recruitment of young women for sexual purposes became widespread (and generally evident) after 1870 when great numbers of unmarried male labourers were brought to work on the plantations established in Java and Sumatra. At the turn of the twentieth century Java became a major labour recruiting region for the booming rubber plantations in Sumatra because an enormous demand for rubber was created by the growing automobile industry in the United States (Stoler 1985a: 650).³ Tens of thousands of Javanese men were each year channelled into the

Sumatran plantation belts (*ibid.*).⁴ This constant labour supply became associated with the movements of young women (including contract workers), mostly for the purpose of prostitution (League of Nations 1933: 243; Purwanto 2002: 19). It should be noted that these women were brought there from the same Javanese districts from which groups of male plantation workers originated. The Commission of Enquiry into Traffic in Women and Children in the East established by the League of Nations (1933) reported cases of young Javanese women who were indeed 'trafficked' to provide sexual services for single plantation workers in Sumatra:

It appears that, not infrequently, cases occur in which young women in Java are deceived by traffickers with the promise of well-paid work on the plantations. There are also native women of the plantation district itself who go in for prostitution on the plantations; but, as a rule, when a large group of men from some particular part of Java goes to plantations outside their island—e.g., to Sumatra—they are followed by prostitutes from the same Javanese district, whether voluntary or deceived. (League of Nations 1933: 243)

Another aspect regarding such recruitment—mentioned by Stoler (1985b: 32) and Hesselink (1987: 218)—was that, as a means to ensure the supply of male labourers for the plantations, Javanese female workers (mostly prostitutes) were part of the bait used to attract and then retain them there under contract. The procurement of women was profitable—sponsored by managers, foremen and even some of the male workers (Stoler 1985b: 32). Recruitment agencies thus mushroomed in Java.

Prostitution also flourished during the development of the transport infrastructure linking the major Javanese cities. Strings of brothels were set up along the construction sites of roads and railway lines to cater not only for construction workers but also for travellers (van der Sterren et al. 1997: 210; Ingleson 1986: 124; Koentjoro 2004: 63). Brothel complexes also sprang up close to the bus terminals and railway stations in the cities (Hull et al. 1999: 6). There appear to be no accounts of how women were procured for sexual services at that time.

3.3 Indramayu and its historical link to sex commerce

3.3.1 Indramayu: an underdeveloped agrarian district

Indramayu, a rural district some 200 kilometres east of Jakarta, has long been known as a source of sex workers for other parts of Java and beyond (see Jones 1994; Hull et al. 1999; Irwanto et al. 1998; Irwanto et al. 2001; Koentjoro 2004). It lies in the lowland rice-growing tracts of West Java's northern coastal plain through which a trunk road and railway line connect the capital and several regional cities of the island (Bandung, Semarang and Surabaya). The coastal area of the district is dominated by inshore fishing, salt-evaporation fields and brackish aquaculture ponds (Jones et al. 1994: 410) where fish-processing factories and the building yards for wooden fishing boats are also found. The rest of the district is predominated by rice-growing areas.⁵

The district has two notable characteristics: a high proportion of landless households which are unable to make a living purely from agriculture, and limited water supplies meaning rice-growing is strictly seasonal and occupies the landless and near-landless population only for short lengths of time (White and Wiradi 1979). The seasonal demand for day labourers shapes the cycle of income and debt. During the dry, and growing, seasons landless farm labourers—including young women—migrate to the urban areas. Such characteristics are also found in other north coast districts of West Java (White and Wiradi 1979; Breman 1995). Wet rice cultivation in many upland districts (the *Priangan* region) of West Java, by contrast, is practised more flexibly owing to rich water supplies throughout the year. One notable difference between the lowland and upland districts is in the level and seasonality of agricultural wages: farm labourers in the lowland are paid more than those in the uplands, but work is available only at certain times of year.

Though the primary industry would appear to be the predominant productive activities of rural inhabitants they account for just 20 per cent of the Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) of the district (Table 3.1). The major economic sector is oil and gas production which represents roughly 54 per cent of GRDP (extraction 33%; refining 21%). Much of the employment generated in the oil and gas sector is filled by non-Indramayan personnel sent from the state-owned oil and gas company *Pertamina*. The economic prosperity of this 'enclave' energy sector is

thus siphoned off from the district, providing little improvement for the living standards of local inhabitants and communities. Poor economic infrastructure has limited the emergence of large-scale factories in Indramayu, resulting in the manufacturing sector accounting just two per cent of GRDP.

Table 3.1
Regional Domestic Product by Industrial Sector (constant price)

	Proportion of GRDP
Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry & Fishery	20,6%
Farm food crop	12,7%
Fishery	6,2%
Others	1,7%
Mineral Extraction	33,1%
Manufacturing Industry	20,5%
Oil and Gas Manufacturing	18,4%
Non Oil-gas Manufacturing	2,1%
Electricity, Gas & Water Supply	0,4%
Construction	1,3%
Trade, Hotel & Restautant	14,8%
Transport & Communication	3,3%
Financial, Ownership & Business Services	1,4%
Public Services	4,6%
Gross Regional Domestic Product	100%
Gross Regional Domestic Product without oil & gas	51,3%

Source: BPS Indramayu 2007, Table 9.2.

Among Indonesia's 340 Districts, Indramayu has among the lowest ratings in both the Human Development Index (HDI) and the Gender-related Development Index (GDI): in 2004 its HDI rank was 303rd and the GDI was 325th (BPS-Statistics Indonesia, Bappenas and UNDP 2004). Although the district government introduced free compulsory education for grades 1–9 during the early 2000s, and adult literacy improved from 66.7 per cent in 1999 to 76.2 per cent in 2002, the literacy rate is still well below the provincial average of 93.1 per cent.⁶ There is also a relatively wide gender gap in adult literacy rates: 85.1 per cent for men and 67.4 per cent for women (BPS-Statistics Indonesia, Bappenas and UNDP 2004).

There seem to be differences in the attitudes of parents towards children's education between east and west Indramayu. Though there are no statistics and much of the evidence obtained is anecdotal, people who live in the east are known to give more value to education. It is considered that a person's social status will be raised through attaining higher levels of education. On the other hand, parents in west Indramayu are known to show less interest in sending their children to school and sometimes even encourage them to drop out. One typical comment passed on by teachers based in east Indramayu is 'It is not uncommon in the eastern part that children raised by an impoverished *becak* (pedicab) driver complete upper secondary school, while the question "*What's education for?*" is frequently heard in the west'. Cultural and religious differences between the two areas perhaps partly explain these distinctions. It is generally said that the population in the east is characterised by relatively stronger beliefs in Islam because of the historical influence of orthodox Islam from the adjacent district of Cirebon which has been a centuries-old centre for Islamic education. Islamic education is considered to have a relatively strong hold in the east of the district as evidenced by the fact that roughly two-thirds of the District's *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools) are based there (see the religion index in BPS Indramayu 2007).⁷ Secondary schools have historically been unevenly distributed in the district. In the east both public secondary schools (including vocational upper secondary) and private Islamic secondary schools (MTs and MA) are outnumbered compared with such schools in the west (see the education indexes in BAPEDA and BPS Indramayu 2002; BPS Indramayu 2007). Both factors—Islamic education and better school infrastructure—may well contribute to the relatively stronger interest in education shown by the inhabitants of east Indramayu.

Other indexes actually show overall improvements in the education sector of the district. One is the participation rates in lower and upper secondary school, which increased from 65 per cent (2001) to 76 per cent (2006) for lower secondary level and from 27 per cent to 32 per cent for upper secondary level (Indramayu Education Office 2002, 2007). It is, though, important to mention that underreporting of the incidence of school dropouts has been widely ascertained (District education official, September 2004).⁸ Even so during the same comparative years the dropout rates in compulsory education fell by two-fifths (from 6.5 to 3.9 per cent) (Indramayu Education Office 2002, 2007). Unfortunately there

are no consistent statistics to show further development of the dropout rates after 2002. Alternative sources indicate that the number of dropouts from both primary and secondary education fell greatly between 2000 and 2006. The numbers were given as follows: for elementary schools, 1,547 to 169 persons; for lower secondary schools, 1,171 to 625; for upper secondary schools, 304 to 131 (BAPEDA and BPS Indramayu 2001; BPS Indramayu 2007; Indramayu Education Office 2007). This evidence suggests a marked improvement in both school enrolment and completion rates during the first years of this century. Another notable improvement is the general increase in the number of secondary schools. The number of lower secondary schools increased from 105 in 2000 to 131 in 2006; and of upper secondary schools (including vocational secondary schools) from 54 to 82 (BAPEDA and BPS Indramayu 2002; BPS Indramayu 2007). It can be inferred that children who previously would have been living too remotely to attend secondary education are in many cases now able to do so.

3.3.2 A source area of sexual labour

While the district has long been known as a major producer of mangos with a particular delicate fragrance, and thus is often called *Kota Mangga* (Mango City), the term 'Indramayan mangos' has also often been euphemistically used to describe young women from there working in the nightlife sector of Indonesia (see Kurniawan and Santosa 2002; Liputan-6 2003). Although the district has a population of about 1.6 million—being less than five per cent of the total population of West Java in 2007—(BPS Indramayu 2007), a disproportionately large number of Indramayan women are found in major red-light areas. The point is made in many publications and verified by my own field research.⁹ In the late 1980s a survey conducted in what was then the largest official brothel complex of North Jakarta (Kramat Tunggak, employing roughly 2,000 sex workers) recorded that more than half the sex workers there came from Indramayu (Wibowo et al. 1989: 5 in Hull et al. 1999: 82). An official brothel compound of Bukit Girang on the island of Batam, a manufacturing hub with adult-entertainment and resort complexes about 30 km south of Singapore, has a large proportion of women from Indramayu and neighbouring coastal districts (Tempo 1993 in Hull et al. 1999: 86). Other major red-light districts such as Mangga Besar in West Jakarta and Saritem in Bandung City are also characterised by the high propor-

tion of sex workers from Indramayu (Information obtained from staff of Kusuma Buana Foundation; West Jakarta Health Office, August 2004; social workers of BATERA Foundation, July 2004).

The feature may well be related to the fact that the district has long been marked by poverty, low levels of education, arranged marriages at young ages, and a very high incidence of divorce (Hull et al. 1999: 82). In Indramayu parent-arranged marriage around the beginning of puberty was widely practised until the early 1990s. The district has the highest divorce rates in Java and perhaps in Indonesia (Jones et al. 1994: 410). Available statistics on the ratio of divorces to marriages by district in Java during 1967–71 show that Indramayu had more than 50 divorces for every 100 marriages. By the late 1980s a decline in divorce rates had been noted in all districts of Java, yet Indramayu still had the highest, in the range of 30 to 40 per cent (Jones 1994: 190–2).

In the late 1970s various aspects of arranged marriage at young age, high divorce rates and entry into the sex trade in the Gabus Wetan sub-district of western Indramayu were described in a pioneering article by journalist Her Suganda. This sub-district has historically been known as a prominent source of sex workers for Jakarta and other parts of Indonesia (Jones et al. 1994). It was noted that ‘those who enter the [sex] trade are mostly young, divorced, uneducated girls’ (Her Suganda 1979 in Jones et al. 1994: 413). Suganda noted that the dissolution of very young marriage created no particular stigma or a greater degree of moral censure in local communities. The links between early marriage, high incidence of divorce and sex commerce in Gabus Wetan and other sub-districts were also discussed in the fieldwork of Jones, Asari and Djuartika conducted in 1991 and 1994 (1994: 410–4). Their research leads to the following conclusions. In general, though variations were identified across the different sub-districts, arrangement (by parents) of very early marriages seemed clearly conducive to high incidences of short-lived wedlock. Frequency of divorce is also linked closely to an easy attitude towards marital dissolution. A history of frequent marriage and divorce of a girl is, in fact, even considered a sign of her attractiveness among men, thus elevating her prestige; so pride is often to be discerned among such girls themselves and their parents. Even if it is a girl’s second or third marriage, weddings bring in gifts and contributions from the guests for her parents (Jones et al. 1994: 410–4). This could suggest that adolescent girls are, one way or another, capitalised on by their parents, thereby

confirming a widely-held tenet that young daughters are viewed by parents as an asset and even spoken of as their 'gold mine' (*tambang emas*) (see Irwanto et al. 2001; Mulyani 2007: 45).

By the early 1990s divorce rates had considerably fallen. Jones et al. suggest this was owing to an increase in levels of education and living standards; also a decline in arranged marriages at young ages—itsself an effect of the 1974 Marriage Law which attempts to restrict very young marriage (1994: 411; see Heaton et al. 2001). The presumed facilitating factors mentioned earlier alone cannot fully explain why Indramayu has continued to be the most major source area of sex workers for urban areas.

There are two other factors which could be considered to facilitate their entrance. One is that the inhabitants of Indramayu—though 99 per cent are recorded as Muslim (BPS Indramayu 2007)—are characterised by less adherence to orthodox Islam. Many—particularly those living in west Indramayu—are thus called *abangan*: 'nominal' Muslims who do not adhere strictly to the precepts of Islam (Jones et al. 1994: 410). The other is that access to the Jakarta metropolitan area is made very readily by improved public transport, particularly intercity bus services given the extension of motorways linking with Jakarta; it enables those Indramayan women employed in the sex sector return to their home village frequently without undue expense of money or time (Hull et al. 1999: 82). It should, however, be mentioned that the characteristics noted so far also apply to other districts of West Java from where the supply of sex workers is less marked (*ibid.*).

Other insights of Her Suganda (1979) about the lifestyles of returned sex workers and their influence on the other inhabitants of Gabus Wetan match the findings of both the research of Jones et al. (1994) and my own fieldwork conducted in 2004–08 in an adjacent sub-district. One common feature is that those employed in the urban trade return home before *Lebaran* (*Idul Fitri*, a Muslim feast which marks the end of Ramadan) or *Lebaran Haji* (*Eid al-Adha* or a feast of sacrifice associated with the pilgrimage to Mecca) and go back to the urban nightlife roughly a week after these festivities. The findings of Her Suganda are duplicated by Hull, Sulistyarningsih and Jones:

Enough of them [the returned sex workers] do well, especially by local standards, to attract the envy of other young women. Their clothes and make-up are 'flashy' ... their skin is relatively fair, and much admired by

their village friends. Some of them can set up house back in Gabus Wetan complete with colour TV and fine furniture. ... Sometimes when they come back they bring a man with them, sometimes a man with a car and other appurtenances of wealth. Many of them, indeed, continue to practise prostitution while back in Gabus Wetan over the holiday period (1999: 83)

There has been significant 'competition' among these young sex workers to build more modern/stylish housing and to acquire a rice-field plot to flaunt their success (Jones 1994: 257). The effect of such demonstrations on other young women, and their parents, is substantial; the sex trade has been an open secret in these communities (ibid.). These accounts give a glimpse of how the lives in rural communities are closely linked to the urban nightlife sector.

Further insight (and even more telling) into today's pronounced relation between Indramayu and the urban sex sector is derived from historical evidence: the district contains certain communities which had a long history in supplying young women to the royal household of a renowned Islamic Sultanate (Hull et al. 1999: 1–3). Between the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the greater Cirebon area was ruled by the Muslim Saint Sunang Gunung Jati, and beautiful girls were sent to his court from Indramayu together with local crops and rare animals (Faille 1971 in Dasuki 1977: 119). In the research of Koentjoro (1989: 3) eleven districts of Java—including Indramayu—are identified as being renowned as sources of women for the courts; these districts are currently noted supply areas of women for urban nightlife work.¹⁰ During the time of the Javanese kingdoms, the accumulation of *selir* (concubines) was considered to symbolise the extent of the ruler's power (Kumar 1980: 18 in Hull et al. 1999: 2). It is noted that 'some of the *selir* were daughters of noblemen given to the king as a token of their loyalty; others were tributes from other kingdoms; and many were lower-class women sold or given over by their families to take minor positions in the royal household' (Hull et al. 1999: 2). Thus, particular areas reputed for the production of beauty became the sources of *selir*. From such accounts it can be inferred that the sending of daughters from Indramayu for 'the trade' has roots in the time when young daughters were given as a tribute to the court of the Cirebon dynasty.

Such historical aspects, the development and the substantial degree of 'occupational specialisation' among Indramayan women in the urban sex

sector are fairly convincingly looked into by Hull, Sulistyarningsih and Jones (1999). A hypothesis drawn from a wealth of literature on migration patterns is that particular less-skilled jobs in urban Indonesia are comprised of a large proportion of migrants from the same region of origin. For example, a strong correlation between the occupational specialisation and the migrant workers from specific regions was identified among construction workers, *becak* (pedicab) drivers, bus conductors, kerosene hawkers, and vendors of *jamu* (tonic made of medicinal herbs) (Hull et al. 1999: 55).¹¹ One important aspect about the formation of occupational clusters is the role of kinship and friendship networks. Migrants who are already making a living in the informal urban economy help facilitate their kinsmen and friends from the same village to find work and lodging there (Hugo 1985a: 91–2; Azuma 2000: 12). The apparent regional specialisation of occupation probably stems from three interrelated factors. Papanek suggests the reasoning to be a matter of

... the preference given by those already employed, or in a position to give jobs to relatives and friends ... from the same [ethnic] group; the information provided to newcomers by established acquaintances; and the greater ease of allocating work ... in a group with a common background. (1975: 15)

It thus appears that the strong influence of regional ties in determining,—even, one could say, establishing continuity in—particular occupations is relevant to understanding of the outstanding occupational clustering of Indramayans in the sex industry. Those women who have been employed and become established in the sector are most likely to show other women from the same community how to earn money in a similar manner.

3.3.3 An operational ground of commercial sex

Indramayu has also for quite some time now itself been an operational ground of sex commerce (see Hull et al. 1999: 84–5; Irwanto et al. 1998: 21; Utami and Putranto 2002b; UNICEF 2004: 6; Sudrajat 2005: Chapter 3; Farida 2006: 128). Available literature and social statistics, however, give little account about the actual extent of the activities there. Data was thus gathered in 2001, 2004 and 2006 by conducting a series of visits to major nightlife areas and red-light ‘spots’ of the district, with the assistance of former sex-trade brokers and a social worker from the district’s social welfare office who works for *wanita tuna susila* (which translates

‘women without morals’, and is the term for prostitutes used in official parlance).

The nature and operational structure of the sex sector of the district is summarised as follows. Organised (unregulated) night-time establishments are spread across nearly all thirty-three sub-districts. Visible ones are mostly located along the northern coastal trunk road (*Pantura*) linking Subang and Cirebon districts, and in places close to railway stations and markets. In these areas are to be found what some interviewed local customers ranked ‘low-class establishments’—mostly sleazy, stifling brothels and bars. Indramayu also has two or more well-known red-light areas. One, known as Cilegeng Indah complex, is in the Haurgeulis sub-district (west Indramayu) which is only a few kilometres from a well-known Islamic boarding school (*Pondok Pesantren Al-Zaytun*). The development of this complex began roughly in the early 1980s. Before that there were only a few brothels situated between the trees there; the complex later grew to have as many as thirty establishments of various sizes. Since the early 2000s the Cilegeng Indah complex has experienced a gradual slow-down leading some brothels into bankruptcy. Circumstantial evidence suggests the development of new nightlife establishments in areas nearby the trunk road and perhaps the establishment of the Al-Zaytun boarding school have contributed to this.

The other red-light area is found along the main roadsides of Cangkingan village in Karangampel sub-district (east Indramayu) where dozens of *warung remang-remang* (dimly-lit drinking stalls/houses offering sexual assignments) are staffed mainly by local teenage girls. Such establishments are built side by side with residences and even mosques. This location has been sometimes described as a ‘breeding ground’ of adolescent girls to be supplied as ‘professional’ nightlife entertainers for the cities and even abroad.¹² Oral histories recorded during my site visits indicate that Cangkingan and its adjoining villages have historically been the enclaves of locally called ‘red communities’ (*komunitas merah*) surrounded by inhabitants with orthodox Islamic beliefs. During the colonial time these villages were known to be *daerah selir* (the place of concubines) or *pamasok selir* (supplier of concubines) for Jakarta; those women who went there usually became the mistresses of Dutch colonials (a Karangampel upper secondary school teacher, Field note, 10 Nov. 2006). There is strong (oral) historical evidence to indicate that Cangkingan and other specific villages continued to be ‘red-light’ communities during the

early post-colonial period (1945–the 1960s). Cangkingan and particular communities in adjacent districts (Krangkeng, Junitinyuat and Lohbener) were the areas to send groups of ‘dancing girls’ (locally called *dongbret*) who performed only after nightfall for the Indramayan rural communities. Each group of *dongbret* comprised a male head and five to eight (unmarried or divorced) girls likely in their early or mid-teens; they made a tour between villages during the rice harvest season. After the *Isyak* prayer (roughly 8.30 p.m.) in rhythm to the beats of a small tabor called *genjring* girls in skimpy skirts would appear in open fields and dance in a circle to entertain the menfolk. The hand of a particular girl favoured is pulled by the onlooker who first offers a *sawer* (money given to a performer) and then takes her out from the circle to a dimly lit place. There he would be allowed to kiss her and to touch just the upper part of her body but only for up to five minutes at the most.¹³ The former source areas of *selirs* and *dongbret* dancers have for some time now been the major red-light areas of Indramayu which is surely more than a historical accident.

Apart from the specific ‘red-light’ areas the organised sex sector predominately takes the form of small-scale brothels (often just an ordinary, likely unkempt, brick house) operating near paddy fields, riversides or graveyards some distance from a village centre. Many are family-run brothels staffed with three to five live-in sex workers; they have a stuffy small hall with piped music as a place to drink and dance, and three or four rudimentary bedrooms.

Relatively better-facilitated establishments—staffed with ten or more sex workers—are usually run by pimps/owners from the Greater Jakarta area who are married to Indramayans (second or third wife) and also have sex-related business there. The rest are owned by local pimps/madams who have either inherited the business from their own parents/relatives or bought it from the previous employers. Other owners are persons previously employed in urban nightlife sectors who began to run establishments back home. The sex sector of Indramayu is dominated by Indramayan women and those from Subang and Cirebon districts but women from other provinces, particularly Banten, are also found.¹⁴ Women below twenty-five or so are a clearly in the minority in the Indramayan nightlife; the vast majority are divorced women above thirty with little education who are sometimes mentioned as being ‘retired’ workers from the urban sex sector. The majority of their clientele

are made up of those living in Indramayu and neighbouring districts, but the establishments are also stopped at by truckers and inter-city travellers driving the main roads.

Regardless of whether establishments are operated on land owned by pimps/madams themselves or on previously vacant public lots, sex commerce itself has actually been prohibited by a local ordinance since the turn of this century (PERDA No. 19 of 1999 on Prostitution). During the surge of the national movement against commercial sexual exploitation of children (from the late 1990s to 2005) some efforts were made by the district authorities to stamp out the widespread business. But little change has resulted; the 'market' basically has been kept going and almost revitalised by reorganisations of the entire sector.

As is the case elsewhere, within and perhaps beyond Indonesia, night-time establishments of Indramayu have been closely linked to particular local government organisations. Cuts of the profits generated in the nightlife sector are channelled—both institutionally and individually—into state organisations. The practice of 'trade-offs' between the authorities and those operating in the establishments is an open secret. Local government agencies known to benefit from these 'privileges' are the police, municipal public order unit (*Satuan Polisi Pamong Praja*) and army units stationed at the district level. Pay-offs to given authorities are referred to variously: *sumbangan* (contribution), *setoran sukarela* (voluntary payment) or *uang bensin* (money for petrol). They are made in regular or seasonal payments. The former is a fixed amount picked up by specific officials either daily, weekly or monthly. In addition to these regular payments a big sum is expected to be sent a week before *Lebaran* and Christmas. The amounts depend on the business scale of each establishment and the degree of ties with the figures in the given authorities.¹⁵

The establishments owned by those who have shown reluctance or failed to make payments will sooner or later be raided; the owners end up in a jail and/or being fined. It is not uncommon that in some establishments free sexual service is offered, though reluctantly, to particular known officials both for 'protection' and for their turning a blind eye to the business. Such arrangements enable the owners to stave off police or municipal raids on the sale of alcohol and sex since the operation plan is probably leaked beforehand to the owners by disloyal officials.¹⁶ There are also other non-governmental—parasitical—figures who take advantage of the local night-time sector. For example, money is sometimes

paid to locally-based 'journalists' known for their intimidation of relatively small-scale brothel owners by threatening to expose the operations of sex commerce in the local press if no hush money is paid.¹⁷ The sex establishments are also harassed by groups of pious Muslims mobilised by local *kya'is* (Muslim preachers).

Apart from the relatively organised sex sector, unorganised forms of commercial sexual service are also known to be provided in Indramayu. Such operations are less visible for non-residents or even locals. The services are mostly offered clandestinely usually through local mediators who link 'call girls' with clients. Some call girls are those who temporarily return to their home village, others are divorced women, out-of-school teenage girls and even secondary schoolgirls. Sexual transactions usually take place at lodging houses nearby large sub-district centres or even the home of a particular woman/girl. In short, the operations of commercial sex in Indramayu have been prolific and an open secret. Such business can be understood to influence and strengthen a markedly apathetic and permissive attitude towards the commoditisation of young women's sexuality.

3.4 Concluding remarks

This chapter first provided a historical overview of the recruitment and movement of rural women for organised forms of sex commerce in colonial Java and Sumatra and explained how it was closely linked to the economic development and structural changes of the Netherland Indies as well as of western countries. These phenomena evidently took place concurrently under the expansion and acceleration of western capitalist investment, production and trade. It can be inferred that the development of the colonial economy, one way or another, stimulated and contributed to the commercialisation and integration of rural young women's sexuality into the colonial modes of living; meaning that the entry of women into commercialized sexual activities can be better contextualised and thereby understood by linking the process with the resulting sexual demand emerging along with the economic development and structural changes.

The chapter has also described the economic and socio-cultural dimensions of Indramayu and argued how the district has become pronounced as both an important source area of sex workers for urban areas

and an operational ground of sex commerce. It can be suggested that the present outstanding relationship between the district and the sex sector is, to a greater or lesser extent, rooted in the social and cultural customs and practices regarding the use and appropriation of young women—and particularly their sexuality—for the benefit and wellbeing of their parents and family. It can be further inferred that the lives and livelihoods of less privileged women and households are one way or another structurally embedded and entrenched in commercialized sexual activities. Under such structures and given the limited options open to them, the commercialization of women's bodies has become more pronounced, and thereby have the livelihoods of Indramayans become integrated in such markets within and beyond Indramayu. The next chapter describes the changing livelihoods and socio-cultural practices in the study village in the light of labour migration which has been more pronounced over the past six decades.

Notes

¹ A cloth that is made using a wax-resist dyeing technique.

² For example, see among others: Pos Kota (2002); Liputan-6 (2003); Iwan (2008); SCTV (2008); Samuel (2009); Pudjo (2009); the Fahmina Institute (2004, 2009); Sabarini (2009); Pambudy and Hartiningsih (2010); Fathurrakhman (2010).

³ Because the labour supply (for the plantations) from Sumatra itself and Java had become insufficient by the mid-1800s, planters in Sumatra had been recruiting workers from China. But especially after passing of the *Coolie Ordinance* in 1880, the high recruiting and transport costs and a newly imposed tax on imported coolies made this source increasingly unattractive, and planters turned to Java as a labour source (Stoler 1985b: 28-30; Airriess 1995: 79).

⁴ It is reported that roughly 20 to 40 per cent of the plantation male workers were married and accompanied by their wives (League of Nations 1933: 243).

⁵ In the 1980s–90s Indramayu was the largest rice producing district in West Java; 88 per cent (about 118,500 hectares) of paddy fields is irrigated (BAPEDA and BPS Indramayu 2002).

⁶ Since July 2005 the Ministry of National Education has allocated a School Operational Assistance Fund (*Dana Bantuan Operasional Sekolah*, widely called BOS) for primary and lower secondary schools to increase participation rates in the

compulsory grades. Since 2004 the Indramayu district government has offered extra contributions to the schools for pupils of poor families who attend lower and upper secondary schools.

⁷ From the late 1990s *pesantrens* began to be established in west Indramayu. One is *Pondok Pesantren Al-Zaytun* (in Haurgeulis sub-district) which is well-known for its large-scale campus (more than 200 hectares) with modern, luxurious facilities including a four-star hotel for visitors. As many as 5,000 pupils are taught in Indonesian, Arabic and English by 200 teachers. The entire premises are enclosed by high fences which prevent local inhabitants from accessing it. Many pupils are from wealthy Muslim families in urban areas (Field note, 22 Sept. 2006).

⁸ The high incidence of dropouts usually occurs during the first two or three months after the enrolment of new pupils in lower or upper secondary schools. Those pupils having parents unable to pay the required school fees usually stop attending school within the first months, so that even if the names of all newly enrolled pupils are registered in school annals the names of those pupils who continue to attend after the first few months will only then be reported to the district education office for the registration and the obtainment of a pupil registration number. The dropouts are therefore excluded from official records.

⁹ In 2001 the Indramayu Social Welfare and Manpower Office recorded a total of 2,526 Indramayan women operating as commercial sex workers elsewhere in Indonesia (Indramayu Social Welfare and Manpower Office 2004: 1). One official statistic shows that about 30 per cent of sex workers in West Java Province originate from Indramayu—more than from any other single districts (Social Welfare Office of West Java Province 2004).

¹⁰ Other source districts identified by Koentjoro (1989: 3) are: Karawang and Kuningan (West Java), Grobongan, Jepara, Pati and Wonogiri (Central Java), and Banyuwangi, Blitar, Lomongan and Malang (East Java).

¹¹ More insights into this aspect are found in Papanek (1975), Hugo (1985), Azuma (2000) and Jones (1994).

¹² From the mid-2005 the village authorities of Cangkingan has attempted to clamp down on *warung remang-remang* by introducing a village regulation and conducting large-scale raids. But it seems that such establishments re-start the business within only a few weeks after a raid has taken place.

¹³ Nine out of ten older men interviewed who had sought intimacy with *dongbret* dancers those days recalled that it was a form of night-time entertainment which differed from *pelacuran* (prostitution); But one elder in his 70s who was a great fan of this amusement remembered that some *dongbret* dancers clandestinely catered to the sexual gratification of folks after the performance. *Dongbret* was, those days, viewed as '*sekolah pelacuran*' (a school for prostitutes) or '*pelatihan dasar pekerja seks*

komersial' (training ground of commercial sex workers) (Field note recorded during 1–30 Nov. 2006).

¹⁴ Indramayu has a historically established link to some coastal districts of Banten Province at least from the late Dutch rule (the 1910s–30s). In the past groups of landless Indramayans migrated there to seek a plot of farmland for better life. Temporary farm labourers sent from Indramayu to these areas and fishermen (sailing wooden boats) were also found there. There are thus quite a few settlements comprised of the migrants who speak Indramayan and who still have maintained some degree of social ties with their places of origin in Indramayu (This information was supplied by an elementary school teacher, 9 Nov. 2006). Such networks could partly explain why the coastal areas of Banten have now also become sources of women for the Indramayan sex sector.

¹⁵ A brothel operating along the Pantura road makes a monthly payment of Rp 50,000 (US\$5.50) to the Indramayu District Office; Rp. 5,000 (US\$0.55) is paid daily to the sub-district police station (Madam, 13 Nov. 2007).

¹⁶ The *District Ordinance No. 30 on Prohibition of Circulation and Use of Alcohol* introduced in 2001 and then revised *Ordinances on Prohibition of Alcohol of 2005* have in fact been enforced precisely to take advantage of establishments for law enforcement authorities.

¹⁷ Some such 'journalists' are in fact bogus ones; unregistered in local or national journalism organisations. They are merely seen by the locals as *preman* or crooks who sometimes write concocted, sensational articles.

4

Generations of Change in Cimanis Village: Economic and Socio-Cultural Dimensions

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides more details on the households in the village studied. It begins with a brief overview of the socio-economic and cultural features of the village and the changes which have taken place since the late colonial period. This is followed by a description of the poverty and structural inequalities which shape livelihood opportunities and the process of integration into an informal urban economy and global labour market. A discussion follows on how the changes and constraints on poor households are seen and faced by current teenagers and their (grand)parents. The final section of the chapter focuses on the ideas and the lives of children and adolescents as seen and told by respondents among three generations. The shared and particular opportunities, constraints, ambivalences and tensions regarding education, employment, marriage and sex commerce are discussed in light of the family power structures which influence and shape the attitudes and behaviour of the young.

The village of Cimanis is located in Jatiwangi sub-district (west Indramayu) south of the main road along the north coast. The village was established in 1920 and administratively covered the current entire area of what is now the Jatiwangi sub-district which by 1983 had been divided into eight separate villages. It now comprises ten separately administered neighbourhoods lying around irrigated paddy fields crossed by two rivers. It has a population of roughly 5,600 living in some 1,600 households (Village Monograph 2007). Only three in ten households are landholders, and half of these own no more than half a hectare. More than half the

farm land is owned by people (in total 260 owners) who do not actually reside in the village itself.

4.2 Changes and improvements in standards of living

During the post-independence period, and particularly in the past three decades, Cimanis has undergone considerable change and improvement. Prior to the 1980s the means of transport linking the village and the trunk road was predominantly bicycle taxi (*ojek sepeda*); otherwise people walked the distance along dirt roads which took them nearly an hour and a half. Motorcycle taxis (*ojek*) gradually came into use and they have for some time now been the dominant means of transport; commuting villagers are able to go relatively speedily on paved roads. Though thorough road repair work is made every two years or so, the *ojek* ride is comfortable usually for only a few months after the re-paving because it is soon damaged by heavy rainfalls and over-loaded trucks, becoming muddy and pocked with potholes.

Radios, and TV sets powered by car batteries, were a luxury only for the few wealthy landlords—and only as from the 1970s (radios) and into the 1980s (TVs).¹ In 1993 the electric power grid finally reached the village which then stimulated the purchase of colour TV sets; by 2004 nearly one in two households had one. Refrigerators are still only owned by well-to-do households and/or those who run shops (*toko*). The use of mobile phones has been booming since the turn of the twenty-first century, nearly replacing the conventional land-line telecommunications system available at public telephone kiosks. In about ten houses public booths have been set up with video game consoles (the Sony PlayStation) for youngsters to use who are charged by the hour.

A motorcycle, which was a real symbol of wealth until the early 1990s, has increasingly become casual private transport (though currently only slightly more than one in five households have one). In 2004 there were only fourteen four-wheeled vehicles of which eight (Daihatsu pick-up trucks and a Toyota light truck) were owned by very wealthy landowning households and used for commercial purposes. The rest are private cars bought by the emergent rich including current pimp/sex-trade brokers and successful former sex workers who have married wealthy foreigners living in Jakarta.

Over the past three decades, the quality of housing has much improved, but unevenly, across the village. Though a good number of traditionally constructed houses—made from wood and woven bamboo walls with a dirt floor and no glass windows—remain, the building of brick houses with a tiled floor has become popular. Some, though, remain in unfinished state: floors are left unpaved and the brick walls left unplastered. A few dozen colourful and stylish houses are conspicuous among the others. Besides these, a few quasi-baronial residences are to be seen—most of them built by women who made their capital in the urban and/or foreign nightlife sectors, or former sex workers married to prosperous expatriates. Those inhabitants who, scornfully but enviously, consider making money in sex commerce a ‘deviation’ describe these houses as a ‘product of sex work’ (*hasil dari pekerja seks*). Other fancy houses are owned by pimps/sex-trade brokers based in Jakarta or elsewhere in Indonesia. More modest modern houses are also found; many have been built by the money sent from women (and teenage daughters) who became foreign domestic workers mostly in the Gulf States or in neighbouring Asian countries.

Apart from housing there have been some marked improvements in other aspects of village life. Such changes are best heard about from the older folk who have lived through them over the previous five decades or so. One elderly woman recollected:

Today is far more comfortable; life in the past was the time of scarcity... there was not enough food to eat, so often hungry... no clothes to wear... Those who had no paddy fields could eat rice for only a few months after the harvest. In the rest of the year we subsisted with maize grains, sometimes the roots of banana trees and even rice bran. We wore makeshift clothes pieced together from used sacks. There was only one public well but located in the village centre; many people fetched water from a stream for cooking and drinking, and took a bath at the riverside. For shampoo a particular soil or ash was used. Because the village had no medical doctor we went to the *dukun* (shaman/traditional healer) who offered a prayer and then gave us some holy water. (Field note no. 6, 4 Nov. 2006)

The sense of a more ‘comfortable’ or better life currently felt among the older generation is less shared by the following generations. Double cropping of paddy introduced in the early 1970s increased the yield to about twice the previous level, but many households continue to live in very modest circumstances. There are many who are passive or reluctant

vegetarians. During the unemployment season (*musim pengangguran*) it is not uncommon to have white rice with only *sambal lalapan* (chilli sauce and edible plants found on the land), and perhaps fried fermented soy-bean cake (*tempe*) and, at best, egg; thus what is locally called ‘*musim lapar*’ (hunger season) is still part of life today. Many Cimanis inhabitants are only able to have chicken or red meat on the occasions of festivities or when some extra money is earned.

Regarding education, before and for two decades after independence, schooling was only enjoyed by the children of wealthy families; thus many in the older generation are illiterate. This is how one of the few elderly men who attended three years of elementary education in the late 1930s described the schooling of those days:

I entered the *Sekolah Rakyat* (people’s school) in 1937. Four cents were paid every month for the tuition. There was no school building; the class took place in the house of Haji Nur Kidad which was near the mosque. Schooling there was offered up to the third grade; the next three years [of education] could only be had in the school close to the Parean market [some 20 kilometres from Cimanis]. Some of us attended classes only after goat herding. (Field note no. 21, 9 Nov. 2006)

Of the girls born before 1950 only daughters from the very wealthy land-owning households went to school. The vast majority of both boys and girls were already absorbed into farm labour and/or housework (including looking after younger siblings) by the age of nine. Only institutionalised free education was given in the evening Arabic and Koranic classes (*pengajian*) offered at the Mosques or *mushollas* (prayer houses).

Though the first six-year elementary school (*Sekolah Dasar*) was built in 1959, many less well-off in the generations born in the 1950s and the 1960s had no or only few years of elementary education. Among those who were born in the 1980s, school dropout was still prevalent but the completion of elementary education had become more general. Until the beginning of the twenty-first century, access to lower secondary education was very limited; the distance to the nearest public secondary school and most importantly the burden of school expenses prevented parents with no regular income having their children attend. A man in his mid-thirties who was privileged to go to secondary school recalled how hard it was to get to school during the rainy season.

Jatiwangi sub-district had only one lower secondary school located in the sub-district centre a few kilometres from Cimanis. During the rainy season

the dirt road to the school became muddy; so we had to take our shoes off to walk this trail, which made our classroom floor covered in mud. (Field note, 9 June 2006)

Over the past four decades compulsory education has become increasingly accessible and figures seem to show that children aged 7–15 who do not attend school are now in a minority. The introduction of free compulsory education for grades 1–9 during the early 2000s raised the level of secondary-school enrolment but until 2007 or so the high frequency of dropouts persisted. By 2010 attendance at lower secondary school had become close to a hundred per cent in Cimanis, and close to a third of lower secondary school graduates are now able to enrol in upper secondary school. Roughly half of them, however, are unable to complete it due to financial constraints and/or parental opposition.

4.3 Agriculture, farm labour and land tenure structure

4.3.1 Wet-rice farming and labour relations in Cimanis

Cimanis has a total area of 637 hectares of which 505 hectares are farm land and the rest is covered by homes, home gardens, common land and roads. The farmland comprises 430 hectares of well-irrigated rice fields and 75 hectares semi-irrigated fields. Though some plots of semi-irrigated farmland are used for vegetable and fruit cultivation, rice growing—with a cycle of roughly four months—is dominant in the two farm seasons. The double-cropping of paddy has been practised since the mid-1970s. Prior to the 1960s, as village elders recall, large plots of paddy fields were owned by the village elite (the families of village heads (*kamui*) and their relatives). In the 1950s roughly 150 hectares of farmland was owned by a single person (Hj. Nur Kisad), the elder brother of the village head at that time. There were also small plots of arable land (less than 0.5 hectare each) owned by other villagers who acquired them either through inheritance or by clearing back the growth of bushes at the edges of the village. Sales of farmland had gradually become a factor from the 1970s particularly after both the irrigation development and the intensification of wet-rice cultivation were made in rural Indonesia through government funded agricultural programmes (BIMAS/INMAS) (see Murai 1980).² The selling of land resulted from a combination of three factors: (1) division of farmland into smaller plots having been accelerated by inheritances, relatively smaller inherited plots of land began to be

sold off; (2) increased exposure to durable consumption goods and increased desire to build better housing stimulated the sales of a plot of the land; (3) the consequent rise in the land value meant that farmland became the subject of long-term investment among wealthy urban dwellers. The land tenure structure has thus changed over the last six decades; offspring of wealthy landowners of previous generations are not necessarily current large landowners.

Land tenure and operation/cultivation systems are now roughly classified into three basic types. (i) Those who own more than three hectares of rice field usually rent out and/or sharecrop out plots of between a half and one hectare. In tenancy contracts all necessary expenses for cultivation are financed by the tenants themselves; in sharecropping the farming operational costs (seeds, fertiliser, pesticides, payment for the ploughing and harrowing) are provided by the landowner but the owner has a right to two-thirds of the harvest. (ii) Those owning up to two hectares usually operate some plots by using their own family labour and lease the rest to tenant farmers. (iii) Those owning less than three-quarters of a hectare cultivate the crops themselves.

In Cimanis there are two types of rice-farming labour arrangement. One is a labour contract called *ceblokan* which has been practised in Java from at least as far back as the nineteenth century (see, van der Kolff 1936 in Hayami and Hafid 1979: 97; White 2000; Breman 2001; Endo 2005). Those who carry out rice cultivation jobs such as transplanting rice seedlings for a particular landowner/tenant farmer will be given the right to also partake in the harvesting and thus receive their payment in kind from unhulled rice. Once the rice has seeded (in a small section of a large field) the ploughed field is first flattened by a number of male labourers who are then followed by larger numbers of women for the transplanting of the bunches of gathered seedlings. These personnel will be given only as little as Rp 3,000–5,000 (US\$0.33–0.55) cash each day—called *uang sabun* (literally meaning money to buy soap). Harvest labourers receive one sixth of the harvested crop as remuneration; the rest of the yield is for the landlords/tenant farmers themselves. The workers are from landless households but are usually relatives and neighbours. The *ceblokan* arrangement has long been the predominant practice in West Java. Regardless of whether plots of paddy are operated by the landowners themselves or by tenant farmers or sharecroppers, the land is ploughed and harrowed by hired male hand-tractor operators who are

paid Rp 25,000–35,000 (US\$2.85–3.82) a day. The routine farm operations—controlling water level, weeding, fertilising and spraying pesticides—are carried out by either the owner themselves (with their family labour) or sharecroppers. Sharecroppers usually work plots of land owned by large-scale landholders in order to pay off the debts (in cash or sacks of rice) that they have accumulated during agricultural off-seasons. During the two agricultural seasons of the year, landless agricultural labourers both male and female spend roughly ninety days in rice cultivation employment.

Another type of labour arrangement for rice harvesting is called *tebasan*, by which the right to harvest a standing crop of paddy is sold to buyers who then bring in a group of their own harvesting workers (*rombongan panen*) from outside the village (see White 2000).³ The *tebasan* system has been developed in the 1970s (along with the Green Revolution) but is less commonly practised than *ceblokan* and usually on the land owned by non-Cimanis inhabitants.

Animal husbandry (raising goats) and poultry farming (chickens and ducks) are also practised in Cimanis. Poultry breeding is mostly done by small-scale farming households using their own capital; goats are owned by well-off landlords but kept by trusted keepers—usually landless farm-labour households—in the latter's own small yard.

4.3.2 Agricultural wage-work

Rice-planting and rice harvesting work outside Jatiwangi sub-district is open to landless farm labourers (both male and female). During rice-planting seasons groups of 30–40 transplanters (called *rombongan tandur*) are organised by a village foreman (*mandor*) who has links with landowners in other parts of Indramayu and Subang districts where paid transplanting work (*borongan*) is predominately practised. The groups of recruited workers leave in a hired pickup truck at 4.00 a.m. for the planting sites and return to Cimanis around 6.00 p.m. They receive Rp 35,000–50,000 (US\$3.83–5.16) for a day's work. During harvest seasons in *tebasan* areas groups of workers undertake the cutting and threshing of the rice crop. They are paid about one-tenth (or slightly less) of the amount harvested.

4.4 Non-farm economy: rural-based occupations and earning opportunities

Various forms of non-farm occupations or income-producing activities are found in Cimanis. These fall into two categories. The first category of occupations/employment is dominated by persons from well-to-do households who completed upper secondary education or graduated from tertiary education. They comprise a small number of specialised professions such as village/sub-district officials, school teachers, Islamic teachers for *Madrasah* (afternoon Arabic and Koranic classes attended by children aged 7–12) and medical professionals (a doctor and a couple of midwives).

The second category consists of self-employed/private-sector entrepreneurs and informal sector employees who are stratified into two broad sub-categories by the levels of productive resource ownership: farmland, durable productive assets and capital. Year-round businesses in the first sub-category which requires relatively large amounts of capital include grocery stores (*toko*), a hardware store (*toko material*), rice-mills, pick-up truck rental service, motorcycle retailing, privately-managed telephone kiosks (*wartel*), (motor)bicycle repair shops (*bengkel*), (second-hand) mobile phone sales points, and a pawn shop. Then there are seasonal businesses, run by the wealthier households, and linked to celebratory feasts (*bajatan*) held for circumcisions and marriages. They supply or rent out feast-related requirements (tents, sofa sets, chairs, costume jewellery, the sound system and stage for performances); entertainment organising services (theatrical and musical performances); a photography service and a video-recording and production service. This sector of feast-related services is predominantly controlled by wealthy landowning households, and generates temporary jobs for both men and women during the two separate feast seasons. Regardless of whether year-round or seasonal, three characteristics are generally found in these business activities. (1) They involve the surplus money derived from agricultural operations being invested in the non-farm economy. (2) Being operated by actual landowners, the non-farm enterprises are secondary or tertiary sources of income. (3) Though the number of business establishments is very small, they absorb paid workers within the village either throughout the year or seasonally/temporarily.

This structure shapes other forms of labour-intensive and less-/unskilled non-farm income producing opportunities in Cimanis. Another sub-group of non-agricultural economic activities (both year-round and seasonal/temporal) are mostly run by households with little control of land and poor access to other productive resources. The economic activities operated by these households are small businesses: food stalls (*warung makan*); small general stores (*warung*, poorly stocked selling both food, drinks and non-food items); portable food stalls (*pedagang kaki lima*), selling cooked food from wheeled handcarts; petty hawkers of processed foods or small non-food items (*asongan*); cassava or rice cracker (*krupuk*) producers; (mobile) tailoring business; motorcycle taxi services; and masseurs who go to people's homes to give their service (*tukang pijit*).⁴ Labour placement service is also carried out by a few people who recruit women (and sometime teenagers) from land-poor/landless households for affiliated labour placement agencies to work either in the foreign domestic service market or night-time entertainment sectors of developed Asian countries.

Non-agricultural economic activities which can be regarded as temporary/seasonal fall into six rough categories. The first is those concerned with construction and repair of local facilities—roads, buildings. These are mainly run by persons who have kinsfolk or close friends in the village office or district government agencies. During the dry season quite large numbers of temporary jobs for wages are created through these projects. The second is private house construction and renovation which employs carpenters (*tukang kayu*) and less-skilled workers (*kuli bangunan*). The third is home industry: traditional small-scale craft production (mats, baskets and fans all made from bamboo); brick making; the production of feast-related invitation letters. The fourth is intermediary or brokerage (*calo*) service—for plots of farmland, second-hand purchases (particularly motorcycles) and non-institutionalised pawning. The fifth is vending tanks of pumped groundwater for households with no access to a well. The last non-farm activity is traditional gambling operated during harvest seasons by petty underground bookies (*bandar judi*). These non-agricultural economic activities are primarily self-employed operations which are carried out for either household survival or consolidation strategies.

4.5 Labour migration: an alternative source of livelihood

The migratory movements of persons from well-to-do families have always been for the purpose of taking better and higher levels of education or working in the formal job sector of the urban economy (private enterprise or civil service). For resource-poor households, on the other hand, seeking migratory wage employment in the rural or urban economy—and since the late 1990s overseas—has been an important means of subsisting during seasonal shortages, but also generally supplementing income and improving the standard of living.

4.5.1 Post independence into the 1960s

The patterns and characteristics of migratory movements from Cimanis, before the 1970s, to labour markets beyond Indramayu were told of in reminiscences by elderly persons interviewed. A senior couple in their mid-seventies who sought paid agricultural work in Banten recounted why and how they engaged in work at a distance in the 1960s.

Those days paddy was cultivated only once a year on the rain-fed fields; it took six or seven months to mature. During the dry season (*musim paceklik*) it was very hard to feed ourselves because no work was open to us landless farmers. A group of thirty to forty of us—men and women—in similar circumstances left the village all together by train for Banten or mountainous areas and found work there. The ploughing and hoeing were men's tasks while transplanting rice-seedlings was women's. We slept in the bush or grassland near the paddy field but were scared of attack by savage animals. We were paid Rp 100 a day and usually worked for a month or so and then returned to Cimanis. (Field note no. 8, 4 Nov. 2006)

Other elderly men who had also gone to Banten recalled that many of the women who joined the group for the distant agricultural labour were divorced and their children were being taken care of by their own parents back home. Married women who had children were the ones to remain home, their husbands going off to earn money away from the village. Other surplus seasonal labour from Cimanis was absorbed in the urban informal economy. A man in his mid-eighties recalled how he had striven to feed his family by frequently taking menial work in Jakarta.

During a long dry season I had to take sacks of rice from my landlord to subsist but if there was still a shortage I then left for Jakarta. Those who were like myself and went there became far more after independence. I

sometimes made money as a construction worker and other times worked as a porter at a market. There were other co-village men who became involved in pedicab (*becak*) driving or food-peddling. When a sum of money was saved I came home and stayed for two weeks or so, then I'd go back again to make more. (Field note no. 21, 9 Nov. 2006)

An elderly woman in her mid-seventies recalled:

I was still a child when I was first taken by my elder brother to Jakarta. The train fare was Rp 75. I worked as a domestic servant for a Dutch household and later for a Japanese family. After that I moved to Serang [a coastal town in Banten] again in domestic service. Every five months or so I came home. I carried on doing it for some time—having jobs in urban households; but I never looked to earn money through prostitution (*luruh duit*)! (Field note no. 19, 8 Nov. 2006)

Young women in cities those days mostly earned a living in domestic service or hawking (cooked) food at the roadsides, but there were of course those who did operate in urban red-light areas. The elderly woman above who emphasised that she never engaged in prostitution does more than suggest there were other Cimanis women involved in the urban sex sector. Other anecdotal evidence obtained from several elderly men who earned money as pedicab drivers in the 1960s confirmed that a brothel area in *kampung* Pejompongan (close to Tanah Abang station in Central Jakarta) recruited women from Indramayu (Field note no. 19, 8 Nov. 2006).

It is not known when women from Cimanis began to be found in the urban sex market. It is recognised that at least in the early 1960s the procurement of women already occurred but not, initially, on a scale as large as that of the following decades. The destination areas were limited mainly to Jakarta and major towns of West Java (Bandung, Bogor, Tangerang). Those involved at that time were usually divorcees between their late teens and early thirties. There was little censure shown in the village towards the entry of divorced women into the commerce. A man in his early eighties living in a neighbouring village recalled: 'Women who got divorced were little censured for looking for money through prostitution' (Field note, 6 May 2007). It is recalled that there were no established recruiters in Cimanis and adjacent villages; the women tended to be introduced to urban brothels through the mediation of those from Gabus Wetan sub-district—one of the noted suppliers—or current sex

workers themselves who originated from or had kinship in, Cimanis (Field note, 6 May 2007).

4.5.2 The 1970s and 1980s: feminization of labour migration

During the period 1965–96, the Indonesian economy as a whole grew at an average annual rate of 6.7 per cent (Thee 2002: 198). The annual growth rate of primary industries actually dropped an average of 4.3 per cent in the period 1965–80 to 2.8 per cent through 1990–96 but secondary and tertiary industries achieved rapid and sustained growth. The development of industrial and service sectors induced the integration of rural economies into the urban as well as productive regions where wealth was generated from oil and gas for example. The integration was characterised by two phenomena. One was that modern products and goods produced in urban centres and abroad flowed increasingly into rural areas. The appetite of rural inhabitants for more modern lifestyles was stimulated through these processes. The other was the resulting change in the traditional means of living among resource-poor rural households. Their primary source of livelihood transformed from farm work and other local activities into dependency on the earnings made through labour migration.

Economic growth along with development of the agricultural sector contributed to both the marked drop in the level of absolute poverty (from 40 per cent in 1976 to 11 per cent in 1996) and the decline in the number of those considered as living below the poverty line (from 54 million in 1976 to 23 million in 1996) (Thee 2000: 225–6).⁵ Despite the visible improvement in the material conditions of land-poor/landless families generally shown (e.g. better quality housing and possession of durable consumer goods), studies indicate that large segments of the rural working class households living close to or in a state of poverty have only marginally enjoyed the benefits of economic development (Breman 1995: 16–7). In other words, economic growth appeared to provide little answer for the poor to improve their limited access to agrarian resources and non-agrarian capital.

The marginalisation of women, a general fact in rural Indramayu, particularly affected Cimanis. It was clearly evidenced by the number of young Cimanis women who sought a living in urban or other affluent areas of Indonesia noticeably increasing from the early 1970s to the point that they outnumbered male migrant labourers. Surplus manpower

was absorbed into the construction sector (of public infrastructure, factory and housing development) but relatively few women became part of the emergent manufacturing and informal service sectors. The 1970s were also the time when relatively larger numbers of young women began to enter the urban nightlife sector. Many were the daughters of the landless workers who subsisted through labour migration before the 1970s.

Their inflow into the nightlife sector is seen to be closely linked to the demand for commercial sex and the creation and development of sex-related establishments which were, to a lesser or greater extent, resultant on the development and expansion of manufacturing and services sectors, the production and accumulation of wealth and growth of urban areas. Many of the Cimanis women who became involved in the sex sector of Jakarta were to be found in the Kramat Tunggak official brothel complex (*lokalisasi*) of North Jakarta which was set up in 1970 under a decree of Governor Ali Sadikin (see Hull et al. 1999: 26–7; Sedyaningsih-Mamahit 1999b: 32).⁶ Ample evidence obtained from interviewed persons over sixty suggests that recruitment activities in Cimanis and adjacent villages had become noticeable in the 1970s. From the 1980s onwards, women moved further and operated in establishments on the outer Java islands. These newly emergent destination areas are characterised by either oil/gas producing regions (Sumatra and the Indonesian territory of Borneo) or shipbuilding and electronics manufacturing hubs (Batam) where large numbers of relatively young single and unaccompanied male migrants are employed (see Ford and Lyons 2011).

4.5.3 The early 1990s–1997/98 (the Asian Financial Crisis)

During the previous two decades, female labour migration—particularly earning in the urban nightlife sector—had become firmly established as the most viable livelihood option open to poor households of Cimanis. One marked phenomenon in the 1990s was the increase of young divorcees engaging in the sex trade. A small landowner—a man in his early thirties who was already divorced—recounted in 2009 how his former wife eventually ended up in a Jakarta red-light area in the mid-1990s.

It was just after I completed lower secondary school when our marriage was arranged by the parents. She was only thirteen, having just completed elementary school. I lived in her parent's house. Roughly two years after her giving birth to our child we were forced to divorce against our will. I

still remembered how my mother-in-law drove me out from the home: 'You are a poor lot, not really earning anything for my family'. My wife [then sixteen] was forced to look for work in Mangga Besar. [This was—as it is now—a business and night-life establishment complex in West Jakarta] (Field note, 5 Aug. 2010)

There were very many cases of young couples who broke up this way; the length of some marriages was even as short as one month.⁷ The money earned by these divorced daughters in the urban areas or elsewhere in Indonesia was pumped back into Cimanis, resulting in significant material changes in their parents' households. A 62-year-old *Hajjah* (female who has made the pilgrimage to Mecca), originally from a wealthy landowning elite, recollected how her surroundings were changed in the 1990s.

Before 1990 or so nearly all houses standing in my neighbourhood were shabby, just made of wooden pillars with woven bamboo walls. But after their young daughters had been working in Jakarta, the look of the area really altered. Almost all houses are now nicely rebuilt using the money these daughters made in commercial sex work. See my house—it's the only one that's still ugly! (Field note, 8 April 2007)

A few parents are not inclined to display wealth this way. A father of three young daughters, living in what tended to look like a shack, told:

When a new house has been built with money sent by a daughter working in Jakarta [nightlife sector], a neighbouring couple becomes green with envy (*panas hati*) and it prompts their daughter into the same sector. (Field note, October 2006)

It is said that heated competition can be seen among poor households to build houses and buy a motorcycle or other ostentatious durable goods. These phenomena were not unique to Cimanis but common among adjoining villages and sub-districts of west Indramayu (see Hull et al. 1999).

4.5.4 The post-Asian Financial Crisis—the 2000s: gendered-occupational structure

The East Asian financial crisis which began in July 1997 became more pronounced and prolonged in Indonesia triggering political turmoil (McCarthy 2003: 3). The monetary crisis (called *kerismon*) resulted in severe economic contraction in 1998 and caused large-scale job losses and

layoffs particularly in construction, manufacturing and modern services sectors in the urban areas (Thee 2002: 239). It plunged huge numbers—especially urban poor and temporary migrants from rural areas and their families back home—into poverty. The livelihoods of Cimanis households who relied greatly on the earnings from those who had migrated to the Greater Jakarta areas were undermined.

Although the Indonesian economy made a recovery and the construction sector began to pick up again, construction jobs became actually less accessible for Cimanis men because the practice of trucking workers in to the workplaces did not get re-continued. Though the revived garment factories and the growing services sector began to re-absorb young women, village women previously employed in these sectors were no longer able to enter the labour market given that, by then, a minimum of a lower secondary school diploma was required.⁸ While there continued to be young women from rural Indramayu who have become involved in the sex-related sector of Indonesia, others began increasingly to try their luck abroad either by becoming domestic workers in the Gulf States and elsewhere in Asia or by involving themselves in the night-time entertainment sector of Japan, Singapore and Taiwan. Increasing numbers of women leaving Indonesia for work meant a decline in the flow of women in their 20s–early 30s to Indonesian urban establishments. The post-crisis was therefore the first period when many unmarried teenage girls entered sex-related markets of urban Indonesia.

The closure of the Kramat Tunggak brothel complex after the Jakarta Governor's Decree No. 6485/1998 enacted in December 1999 caused a reorganisation of the low- and middle-class sex-related labour market of Jakarta because many women who were displaced from the complex were increasingly employed in other red-light areas (see Yamin 1999; Witular 2002). Mangga Besar—currently the area which has the greatest number of night-time entertainment establishments—has since then absorbed a large number of women from Cimanis and the rest of west Indramayu. The new forms of sex-related establishments (steambaths, nightclub, discothèques, or what can be called one-stop entertainment nightclubs⁹) and call girl/street walker operations developed in Mangga Besar and other red-light areas of the Greater Jakarta region have usually employed women no more than twenty-five years old. This newly-expanding night-time sector has also become the employment market for mid- and upper-teenage girls.

The increased number of teenagers from Cimanis (and adjoining villages and sub-districts) traveling to the more developed Asian countries/regions to work in the sex entertainment sectors there is related to the Japanese immigration policy introduced in the late 1990s to stem the burgeoning inflow of ‘entertainers’ from the Philippines to the night-life sector of Japan, which led involved placement agencies to search for alternative sources.¹⁰ Under this reorganisation Jakarta’s major red-light areas such as Mangga Besar and the Blok-M area (a South Jakarta upper-class entertainment district), where many Indramayan girls are employed, also became a recruitment ground for the Japanese nightlife sector. Consequently Indramayan villages began to be visited by recruiters involved in the procurement of ‘entertainers’ for sending to Japan. There are also, nowadays, local persons who have become involved in recruiting for Japanese placement agencies in Jakarta.

The degree of integration of Cimanis teenage girls (and adult women) into the sex labour market at both national and Asian levels has become greater through the last four decades. Social and economic changes have, in one way or another, created and reshaped the structure of the main means of livelihood. It is thereby to be inferred that labour migration in the sex sector has become a viable source of income as an alternative means of living now structurally open to Cimanis girls with a poor background.

4.6 Class differentiation among the households with a daughter working in the sex sector

In Cimanis the notion of wealthy (*sugih/kaya*) appears to be closely linked to farmland ownership. Land tenure/landholding is seen by the inhabitants to be a source of income and prosperity. Those who live in fancy houses but own no paddy field are still seen as common persons (*orang biasa*) and even spoken of as ‘have-nots’ who own nothing (*orang tidak punya*), because many might be hard put even to feed themselves (*susah cari makan*). On the other hand, landowning villagers living even in shabby houses are regarded as ‘haves’ (*orang punya*).

Those who have more than two hectares of land are usually spoken of as the rich. Landownership is therefore the main defining indicator for class positions. Class differentiation among the working-class households made through a daughter’s involvement in the sex trade is generally well

noted in the village. Following is an illustration of the stark contrast in the levels of wealth among three classes of households.

Accumulating working capital

Tarwa and Daria (a couple) were previously landless agricultural labourers but have been able to access farmland and other productive resources through capitalising on the sexuality of their two daughters. The first contributor is Dewi (the first daughter) who was made to divorce when she was in her late teens and plunged on her own accord into Jakarta's sex sector. Her earnings not only improved the economic level of her family but also enabled Sumiyati (second daughter) to attend secondary school. When Sumiyati completed lower secondary school, Tarwa sent her to the nightlife sector of Japan through a Jakarta-based entertainer recruitment agency.

HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS	AGE	YEARS OF SCHOOLING	PRIMARY WORK	SECONDARY WORK	TERTIARY WORK
Tarwa (father)	49	1 year	Farmer (owner-operator)	-	-
Daria (mother)	40	4 years	Jewellery trading	-	-
Dewi (♀)	26	6 years	Medium-scale <i>warung</i>	(Previously earning in the urban sex sector)	-
Sumiyati (♀)	19	9 years	Hostessing work in Japan	Masseuse in a Jakarta bathhouse	Hair salon
Simon (♂)	9	2 years	-	-	-

Note: The ages of household members are at the time of first interview in October 2004.

During 2002–06 Sumiyati travelled to and fro between Jakarta and Japan, working as a night-club hostess.¹¹ Every time she returned to Indonesia after having being employed as an 'entertainer' on a six-month contract, she brought US\$4,000–5,000 home. Sumiyati worked abroad over three years (six excursions). Her earnings initially enabled Tarwa to rent and cultivate 1.5 hectares of rice field; it also made it possible for Daria to start a small-scale jewellery trade, though the business did not produce much profit owing to mismanagement. Tarwa's household eventually bought some two hectares of farmland of its own.

Sumiyati was refused further permission to travel to Japan due to the Japanese government tightening its immigration policy specifically to reduce the influx of ‘entertainers’ from Southeast Asian countries. So from time to time she became involved in the nightlife sector of Jakarta; but she has still maintained a distant relationship with one of her former regular customers in Japan (a married wealthy business man in his early 60s) who once in a while travels to Jakarta to meet (and enjoy intimacy with) Sumiyati. He has financed the building of a rather posh house for her in Cimanis in which she set up and has since 2009 been running a hair-dressing salon.

The kind of upward social mobility shown in this household has also been attained by other households whose young daughters become involved in the nightlife sectors of urban Indonesia or of the developed Asian countries. These households can be called ‘emergent rich’. While some people in the district might consider them ‘upstarts’ this is a clear example of how less-educated, working-class families were enabled to make a remarkable breakthrough and elevate their economic standing within a matter of just ten years.

Consolidation of livelihood

Abnur and Wulan (a couple) owned no farmland and used to live in a house made from wooden pillars and woven bamboo walls with a dirt floor. They earned a basic living doing seasonal agricultural work. Abnur also earned a little money as a masseur in Cimanis. Their first daughter married a man from outside Cimanis and now lives in Bandung with her husband.

When Budiwati (their second daughter) was seventeen—having completed her lower secondary education—she was sent to Japan to earn money as a nightclub hostess. Her earnings from the first and second periods she was there were spent by her parents on building a brick house and buying a motorcycle; the money earned from her third time working abroad as a hostess enabled her father to rent half a hectare of farmland which he operated himself to meet the family’s basic food requirement. Her later earnings were invested in setting up a chicken and duck raising business (with some 200 birds). When Budiwati became no longer eligible to re-enter the Japanese nightlife sector she became involved in a Bandung establishment as a masseuse and could send money home.

Through Budiwati's earnings in Japan this household was thereby enabled to improve the quality of housing and invest in activity which led to a typical process of consolidation and modest upward social mobility.

Subsistence households

Iwan and Erni live in abject poverty with three children in a tiny and shabby brick house which has no windows. Iwan used to peddle clothes as an itinerant vendor in various parts of Java during the slack seasons. He is sometimes unable to provide even for the family's minimal basic needs. He refers himself as a person who owns nothing (*orang yang tidak punya*) or not enough (*tidak cukupan*). Electricity bills are often left unsettled for some months.

His household economy is characterised by cycles of income and debt primarily shaped by the seasonal demand for agricultural labour. During the dry season both money and sacks of milled rice are borrowed from neighbouring wealthier households; otherwise food and non-food items are bought on seasonal credit from the nearby little general store. Monthly instalment payments for kitchen equipment and furniture need to be made. Living in a state of indebtedness is thus business as usual.

When Yuyung (his first daughter) was fourteen—having only completed her elementary education—she was pressured to sell her virginity (for roughly US\$240); the transaction was arranged by Iwan's cousin who found a customer in Jakarta. Since then she has worked in the nightlife sector to support her family back home. Every half year or so she has changed her workplace, moving from a brothel in Sumatra to one in Jakarta, and again from the one in Jakarta back to another in Sumatra. Despite having worked in the sex sector for some years, her earnings amount to little; insufficient to improve the quality of housing and the standard of living of her family back home. So the parents still continue to take on farm work and remain hard pressed to make ends meet, living slightly above or below the poverty line. This marginal household can be categorised as poor class. The case exemplifies how not all households with a daughter earning in the sex trade are able to move out from the subsistence level of living and continue entrenched in poverty.

4.7 Marriage and divorce, and the quest for romance and intimacy

Marriage practices have radically changed through the previous five or more decades. Until the 1960s very early marriage of children locally called ‘hanging marriages’ (*kawin gantung*)—nominal ceremonial marriage—was arranged for those only seven or eight years old. This was in fact rather more an engagement (*pacangan*); the child ‘couple’ did not live together as actual husband and wife until they reached age twelve or fourteen (for more insight on this aspect, see Her Suganda 1979; Jones et al. 1994). Though this practice is unheard of among the current generation of young people, cases of parent-arranged marriages for girls in their early teens were commonly practised until the early 1990s. A widow in her mid-80s who has been married four times recalled the time when her first marriage was arranged: ‘When I declined to marry a man who was selected by my parents they literally spat on me.’ (Field note no. 9, 4 Nov. 2006).

In earlier times the norm for a first marriage was for the man to be 15–25 years old and the woman 13–18. Young adolescents often got married without courtship and newlyweds usually lived with the bride’s parents, with the son-in-law having to sleep in a separately built hut beside the house, and so their marriage would remain unconsummated for one or two years after the wedding until it was allowed to be by the father-in-law; yet such wedlock often broke up within the first year—even within a few weeks. A widow in her mid-sixties recalled why she got divorced four times during her youth.

It was in 1954 when I was first forced to marry by my parents. I was only twelve, even hadn’t had a period. In just a few months our marriage ended. I was what’s known as a flower divorcee (*janda kembang*), I was made to marry three more times. Because they were not my own choice I couldn’t love the fellows at all, unlike he of my fifth marriage. (Field note, 15 Sept. 2007)

It is not uncommon for elderly men or women to have had five or even more divorces; they were made to marry by their own parents but were given a degree of leeway to divorce. The prevalence of divorce appears to have slightly declined among the following generations, yet staff at the Marriage Registration Office told me that cases of three or four divorces are still quite common in Jatiwangi sub-district but that many

remain unreported because of the practice of a traditional Islamic ceremonial marriage (*nikah sirih* or *nikah dibawah tangan*) which is legitimated by a Muslim leader but unregistered at either the Religious Affairs Office (KUA) or the Civil Registry Office. An important consequence is that many children grow up with at least one and often more step-parent.

Adolescent girls these days adamantly affirm their right to marry a man of their own choice. A 16-year-old girl who had completed only elementary school said, 'The present time is an era of liberation in which we can choose a partner on our own' (Field note, 27 Nov. 2007). Most adolescent girls—and even some rather progressive parents—now oppose the marriage of girls younger than fifteen saying that they are not mature enough to handle family matters, and they should carry on at school instead. The appropriate age range for marriage suggested by most girls is 18–23 with a man aged 25–30. There is, however, a shame or a fear felt among unmarried young women who turn eighteen or twenty because of being called 'old virgin', spinster (*perawan tua*).

Marriages of mid-teenage girls still occur, mostly because of premarital pregnancy. Such incidents are now called an 'accident' (*kecelakaan*) or even actually 'MBA' which literally stands for 'Married By Accident', the title of an Indonesian film portraying the story of a pregnant schoolgoing girl in Jakarta, which has since become used by youngsters to refer to any teen marriages. If parents hear any gossip suggesting that their daughter already has sexual relationships they quickly attempt to identify her boyfriend and compel him to marry her. This is the sole solution available to prevent degrading the family's honour. Because they then marry regardless of the economic standing of the groom, the new couple is more than likely to break up. Premarital pregnancy is not a new phenomenon in Cimanis, and was also mentioned by the older women whom I interviewed. However, as premarital sexual relationship—and without proper contraceptives—is clearly on the rise, teenage pregnancy prior to marriage has become more prevalent. An old man in his late seventies commented humorously: 'Youngsters nowadays mix first, then get married. It is said to be more pleasurable' (Field note no. 3, 3 Nov. 2006).

Pregnancy outside marriage (*hamil diluar nikah*) is seen as shameful. Some parents who have daughters just turning thirteen or so begin to keep an eye on the daughter's movements particularly after sunset. It is common for a curfew to be set and the daughter allowed to meet male friends only in front of her house. But some daughters develop tactics to

avoid parental control. A 17-year-old girl told how intimacy was sought among her friends when they were still in lower secondary education.

A week or so before an end-of-term exam, we would ask each of our own parents if we could get home late or even stay overnight to join a group preparation which will take place at the house of a girl schoolmate. But that house will usually have no parents owing to their working away from the village or other reasons, so boyfriends can also join there and on some occasions things could go the whole way, as they say. Perhaps because of letting something naughty happen there, at the time of the examination some of us were a bit tired! (Icha in Chapter 6, Sept. 2009)¹²

'Free sex' (*pergaulan bebas*) is one form of modern courtship which has been considered as an emergent social problem of Indonesian youth, though 'letting things go the whole way' is still just as unacceptable to many of the younger generation as it is to the older generations. One code of conduct, passed on through generations, imposed on unmarried young women is that they ought not to visit a boy's home; that has generally been regarded as improper and shameless. A mother of two adolescent girls said that if her daughters are known to have visited their male friends' houses she would be very embarrassed. A similar sense is felt among teenage boys and girls who appear to be more imbued with the tenets of Islam and/or uphold a rather conservative attitude about courtship. One 17-year-old boy told how he felt offended when he saw girls meeting male friends just in front of one of the boys' houses.

Unmarried girls (*gadis*) shouldn't roam around after, say, 8.00 p.m.; going to the boyfriend's home is out of the question. Girls are supposed to wait for boys to visit them. What I see today is Cimanis girls hanging out at night in tight clothes and squealing together with their boyfriends. They should be mindful about guarding their honour. (Field note, 28 March 2007)

Those girls who are sympathetic to the concern and idealism shown by this teenage boy usually form their own group—a 'gang' (*geng*)—for sticking together at school and after school hours. Their behaviour is primarily based on their own group identity and principles, so one particular *geng* may well avoid associating with the others whose activities and behaviours are in conflict with their own ways. Suci is a member of a *geng* with a rather conservative culture. She told about another *geng* of the girls which is considered naughty.

We are incompatible with Indah's *geng* ... being together with them would be difficult because we have not much common to talk about ... their ways of spending time and associating with boys are apparently different from ours. Indah is available to be picked by any boy who has a large motorcycle. That's unthinkable to us! (Field note no. 3, 24 Sept. 2006).

In earlier days thoughts and behaviours of unmarried young people were more restricted by the social mores which made it impossible for them explicitly to seek a romance. This is how a man in his late seventies recalled life with no courtship when he was a youngster.

There was little opportunity to have direct contacts or even walk together along the village roadside. Life outside the home was segregated into groups of young men and women. A female group would move away if we [young men] got close to them. The girls were usually at home helping their mothers but could be seen when working in a rice field. At night they were caged up (*dikandang*) in the house. (Field note, 19 June 2006)

Commercial sexual service has always been accessible for village men; it is offered either in local brothels (including one in Cimanis) or by freelancers. But it appears that the local sex establishments are rarely visited by teenagers, but single adult men and those whose wives are working away from home or who '*jajan*'—which literally translates 'snack' but is also humorously used to describe the married men who cheat on their wives. A form of commercial sex sought and enjoyed these days by a minority of young men is the (freelance) service offered by either young divorcees who have become sex workers, or sex workers who are temporarily back home.

4.8 Religiosity and associated extravagant ceremonial expenditures

Islam is the dominant religion in Cimanis, though several Islamic prohibitions are quite openly flaunted. A retired religious teacher moaned about disrespectful practices prevailing in the village: 'Many are superficial Muslims. The drinking of alcohol, gambling, and even involvement in prostitution, are nothing unique here' (Field note, Aug. 2004). There are a few Muslim leaders who have forthrightly tried to redress irreligious behaviour among the villagers. One out-spoken Muslim figure recounted his efforts as follows:

Over the last fifteen years or so—to stop girls becoming involved in prostitution or leaving for abroad—I have really tried to preach the tenets of our religion. Parents whom I admonished not to let their daughter earn illegitimately sometimes have rebuffed me, saying: ‘So, will you provide for my family?’ I have no way to answer them. (Field note, 20 Nov. 2007)

It appears that the degree of religiosity and daily religious practices are of little concern for the majority of Muslims; their primary interest is whether the social status of person and family can be elevated through attending specific religious events and fulfilling duties. For example, a widow who came to own ten hectares of land through the earnings of a daughter working in the Japanese nightlife sector eventually made the pilgrimage to Mecca, since when she flaunts her *Hajjah* title. Several notable pimps from Cimanis (and adjacent villages) who run establishments in Jakarta, yet who have also made the pilgrimage to Mecca, are addressed as *Pak Haji* when they are back home.

Indramayu, together with adjoining coastal districts of West Java, is well known for holding lavish celebratory feasts for life-cycle events such as circumcision and marriage.¹³ Cimanis is no exception; after each of the two rice-harvest seasons two or more ceremonies are held nearly every day. This practice sometimes leaves the host family in ‘ceremonial bankruptcy’ when the contributions received from guests in no way meet the expense (see also Sudrajat 2005: 90–1).¹⁴ Even so, holding superfluous ceremonies is considered as a way to elevate a family’s social status. Despite the widespread poverty each household spends about one million rupiah (US\$109) in cash and 100 kg of rice (valued at about US\$87) annually on contributions to ceremonies hosted by neighbours or acquaintances in other villages. (A typical motorcycle taxi driver earns US\$2.00–4.00 a day while the average daily wage for seasonal agricultural workers is between US\$3.80 and US\$5.20 a day). During the festive seasons criticisms such as ‘*boros*’ (extravagant) or ‘*pemborosan*’ (wasting) are often heard because a considerable amount of rice and cash earned from agricultural or other labour is instantly lost by attending the numerous feasts.

Regardless of any specific (familial or other) relationships between host and invitee, if the host was previously invited to the other and took, for example, three kilos rice and a sum of rupiah along as gift it will have been noted—an actual written record made—and it will be expected that they receive at least the equivalent when they host a ceremony. This reciprocity is considered obligatory. Villagers are thus embedded in the fab-

ric of local celebrations. If a large enough surplus remains after the expenses for the feast have been paid it may well be possible for the host to then purchase such a thing as a new motorbike.

4.9 Childhood and adolescence: evolving perspectives and experiences through three generations

4.9.1 Rural childhood, youth and adulthood: continuity and change

The concepts of childhood (*masa kanak-kanak*), adolescence (*keremajaan*) and adulthood (*kedewasaan*) have been understood variously among different generations and even among the different genders and social classes of the same generation. Each phase has its own attributes but the three have some shared, overlapping elements. The ways in which each period and the interconnected phases were or have been experienced are described based on the subjective ideas and narratives obtained from three generations in Cimanis. These aspects—both the differences and the similarities—will be described based on the ideas and episodes told by the respondents in three generations living in Cimanis.

Compared with younger days of earlier generations, present rural adolescents in Cimanis, as widely seen in Indonesia and probably many other parts of the developing world, have been exposed to global structural forces while undergoing marked changes in various aspects of their life. Five key dimensions of changes are noted here: (1) a greater degree of integration into the national and global economy and culture; (2) shifts of livelihood from their own locality to wage labour opportunities outside their home village; (3) more years spent in school education; (4) a trend towards later entry into paid work and (5) older age at first marriage more likely involving marriage to a person of their own choice. Some of these aspects will be discussed in relation to the perspectives and experiences of three generations in Cimanis.

4.9.2 Local concepts of child, youth and adults

The ideas of ‘child’, ‘adolescent’ and ‘adult’ predominating among the over-sixties in Cimanis are different from those of their grandchildren who are now in adolescence. Formerly chronological age had little to do with when the person was considered adult. Children of age eight or nine

were already able to help their parents in either agricultural work or household chores.

An elderly man recollected his childhood in the early 1940s: 'At age ten or so I was already able to herd goats or water buffalos and to work in the paddy field, so I was reckoned to be adult. Those days a boy who became able to do physical work was seen as being adult' (Field note no. 3, 3 Nov. 2007). A girl who could manage household work—manual rice milling work (*nutuh*), house-cleaning (*nyapu*), washing (*cuci*) and cooking (*masak*) and also the transplanting of rice seedlings (*tandur*)—was seen as adult, and thus ready to marry.

An elderly woman, when asked how Dewi (her 13-year-old granddaughter who happened to be present at the interview) would have been regarded in the past, answered: 'Nowadays Dewi is still seen as a child but in those days she would have already become adult'. Dewi herself replied to the question of how she sees herself: 'I am adolescent (*remaja*), just being *ABG* (*Anak Baru Gede*, a 'newly grown-up child')! (Field note 3, 3 Nov. 2007)

From the recollections of the elderly persons interviewed it can be inferred that the length of childhood in earlier generations was shorter than that of these days; many children from landless households were absorbed into subsistence or income producing activities and housework when before their teens. The ability of a child to cope with the work was the measure of a young person reaching adulthood.

The following generation (age at 30–59 at the turn of this century) appears to hold similar ideas to those of their parents' generation—with one difference, that marriage does basically separate childhood from adulthood.

The ideas of child, youth and adult in the minds of current teenagers are not entirely connected with actual age. Although the legal age of majority (seventeen in Indonesia) is now seen as one basis for child/adult demarcation, socioeconomic and cultural elements and aspects are more important. This was emphasised by the interviewed teenage girls and boys. 'Adult', in their account, has interwoven criteria comprising: (1) achieving economic independence from their parents; (2) sensing and exercising a certain degree of self-control and responsibility for their own conduct; (3) gaining the ability to make a substantial contribution to the welfare of their parents which is typically described as making parents

happy (*mampu membahagiakan kedua orang tua*) or being dutiful to one's parents (*berbakti kepada kedua orang tua*). A 16-year-old girl, who is a local singer, gave the following account:

An adult is a person who is capable of making a moral judgement—deciding between good and evil—before taking action, and also able to anticipate future consequences. A child often behaves according to what they want with less awareness of the potential consequences and how these might affect other persons. (Field note, 17 April 2007)

Such views were widely shared among the teenage respondents during the 2006–07 fieldwork, but it should be regarded as a temporal perception which would be developed or altered according to experiences as they grow up. A young woman, interviewed when she was fifteen, stated that 'One who becomes able to contribute to the family economy will be regarded as an adult' (November 2007); but for four years later she said: 'Though I am now sending money to my parents from Taiwan, I don't really see myself as an adult yet. Because I am sometimes wishy-washy...unable to find my own position...' (Ria in Chapter 6, Communication through Facebook, 5 Oct. 2011). Another important aspect is that a sense of maturity might develop in teenagers through their undergoing particular experiences societally linked to adulthood. This is how a 16-year old girl sees herself after she was repatriated from the Japanese sex industry: 'If I hadn't gone to Japan I would probably still be a schoolgirl. But I don't feel like attending school any more because I feel I'm already an adult' (Field note, Nov. 2007).

Among teenage girls the concept of adolescence or youth (*masa remaja*) is now understood more abstractly. It is mostly regarded as a period and phase of transitional maturity on the way to full adulthood. The common points which emerged among those aged 13–17 were that the time of *remaja* is considered to begin when a child of twelve or thirteen becomes able to recognise both visible and invisible changes within themselves and in their daily social relationships. A girl enters the 'adolescent' stage when physical and psychological changes are made such as their first menstrual period and a definite consciousness about feelings of love towards boys. *Masa remaja* is also characterised by sensing more autonomous feelings and self-reliance in regard to potential harm and danger rather than relying on parents' warnings.

The *remaja* phase, according to the interviewed girls, is differently experienced by girls and boys. Though—compared with earlier genera-

tions—current adolescent girls grow up in a less restricted family and community environment there are still many wider societal restrictions on the notionally greater freedom. Girls who have reached puberty are expected to exercise their sense of freedom and autonomy in a more modest manner than do boys. Such restrictions are considered to be a reflection of moral values and images attached to girls such as vulnerability and purity. To protect themselves from potential harm and degradation such as incidences of pregnancy outside marriage and sexual assault, tight controls need to be in place. This is seen as a way to maintain self-respect (*menjaga kehormatan kita sebagai perempuan*) and to protect the family's good name (*menjaga nama baik keluarga*).¹⁵

Other attributes of adolescence in girls are also mentioned by respondents in relation to boys. One is that compared with a son a daughter is more circumscribed by obedience, dutifulness and submissiveness to her parents. Another is that daughters are more expected to perform household work such as meal preparation and laundry, while a son is given more leeway regarding such tasks because his real duty is considered to become the provider and the backbone for the family. Such delineations are generally made by those who are reinforcing their cautious stance towards what they think 'bad' or 'naughty' regarding daughters. A 17-year-old girl who was repatriated from the Japanese sex sector said, 'Youngsters in the past were mostly controlled by the traditional customs; they obeyed their parents' instructions. But young people today are freer to go their own way; we don't take much notice of sermons given by our parents' (20 Nov. 2007).

4.9.3 Schooling vs. employment: intergenerational tensions

One important aspect in the lives of the current (early 21st century) young generation is that school has become inseparable from their childhood and youth; it influences the formation of their generational identity.¹⁶ The lives of schoolgoers are in one way or another restricted and affected by curricula and school rules and regulations.

Another marked difference is that the present youngsters are more conscious about the importance of education than their (grand)parents' generations. Schooling is realised to be a crucial process, a path leading them to adulthood. They are aware of its potential benefits. School is not merely a place for self-development and knowledge acquisition, it is also

tied to their sense of satisfaction and identity as being teenagers. Rizma, an upper secondary school girl, told what education means to her.

I go to school because I am eager to acquire knowledge which will lead to a good future. I think a diploma may make getting a job somewhat easier. (16 Nov. 2007)

Her opinion—linking a secondary school diploma to better job prospects—could sound rather naïve and five years later was indeed negated by Rizma herself after her unpleasant experience as a maid in Singapore.

Nowadays an upper secondary diploma seems to be no use for getting a formal job in the city. If there are no relatives or friends one can stay in Jakarta or friends in a prospective workplace how one could get in? Even if one does have we still have to bribe the insiders. That's why I made off abroad. (16 April 2012)

Although that is the reality which present-day schoolgoing teenagers will sooner or later face, many of them firmly believe that current young generations should at least have a minimum of upper secondary education. They also even say that those who can afford it should be encouraged to continue through into tertiary education. An aspiration for learning is being fostered among the young people. Respondents who did not continue secondary education beyond the nine compulsory years are heard to mutter 'I only completed lower secondary school'—giving a listener to understand that it is felt to have been insufficient.

Among the previous generations education is now looked upon variously. Some in the parental generation of the adolescent respondents show progressive attitude saying: 'Schooling is crucial for the future of our children'. In Cimanis there are poverty-stricken parents who tried hard to accommodate their daughter's aspiration to continue education. This is the experience of Jasmina (a 15-year-old pupil) when she had just completed elementary school at age twelve:

I initially wanted to continue my education in the [established] Jatiwangi Public Lower Secondary School but I was convinced by my Mum to go to newly-opened one which required no fees. I firmly resisted the idea. When Mum cried, and said, 'How can 700,000 rupiah (US\$78) be got for sending you to that school?' I felt very sad for her, which made me give up my wish. (15 August 2006)

The importance of education was also acknowledged by a current pimp (in his mid-fifties) who has a brothel in Jambi province of Sumatra;

he once said after having being encouraged by a group of Cimanis inhabitants to run for election as a village head:

I am feeling very good these days as I am called a boss by my supporters. But I am not qualified to run for the position since it requires candidates who must have a minimal of lower secondary school diploma. I stopped my education at the third grade of elementary school because I was asked by my father: 'Why do you want to attend school and what do you want to be? A teacher? Look, we already have teachers here! A police officer perhaps or a sub-district head (*camat*)? They are all here. We your parents own nothing, why don't you just help, instead?' As a little boy I was persuaded to stop going to school. It is too late but I now realise my parents lacked a long-term vision regarding the importance of education. (14 April 2007)

A majority of (grand)parents seem to show a lackadaisical or even resentful attitude to their (grand)children's interest in continuing their education to higher levels. The following opinion is fairly prevalent:

Education does not help one earn money. Extra expenses for schooling can't guarantee better job prospects. What is essential to us is that our daughter now brings in money for the family. If she is able to do so today, why do we need to postpone the time of gaining it? (A father of two daughters, August 2004)

Given the very limited jobs available in rural areas (or elsewhere for that matter) a secondary school certificate provides little guarantee of material returns in the short run. Relatively less educated young women who enter the sex trade flaunt their purchased goods and assets. In other words, having a higher level of school diploma does not show visible evidence of leading to material gain, and this partly explains why the neglect of education still prevails among the older generations in Cimanis.

Some parents clearly exercise their authority by having their daughters drop out of school in order to work outside the village. The following account is typical of intergenerational tension between parents and adolescent daughters attending an Islamic secondary school (*pasantren*).

One evening when I asked my mother to pay the school tuition fees, it triggered her anger. She said, 'Why don't you just leave school and go to work abroad?' That made me a bit cross and I said, 'Education means a lot to me!' and I carried on going to school. (May 2006)

Any initial support which may be shown by parents for their daughters' desire to continue education is not always maintained. This is how

Jasmina's mother reacted to her when Jasmina told of her wish to continue upper secondary education in an Islamic boarding school (*pesantren*).

You are almost completing lower secondary school. Why don't you look for money instead of continuing education, so that your younger brother will then be able to go to a *pesantren*? (15 August 2006)

In earlier times sending children to school was seen as a luxury, only for landowning families. Post-pubescent children who did not go to school were not thought badly of in the village since it was not considered essential for their lives. To many present-day teenagers going to and staying longer at school appears to be a matter of great concern. Belonging to school, on the one hand, associates with a sense of ease and security; on the other hand it also causes a sense of insecurity or what many schoolgoers called '*kebingungan*' (confusion). *Kebingungan* is caused and felt variously. Schooling requires not only school expenses (entrance fee, tuition fees and charges for exams and extracurricular studies) but also other school-related costs (buying school uniform, shoes and text books, money to buy a snack at school). These costs put a big burden on parents who have no regular income. School is a place where inequalities among the pupils are seen and felt. Those who have only shabby-looking school uniform might cast looks of longing at fellow pupils who wear smart clothes. Being able to take pocket money each day (usually no more than US\$0.50) is important for them to spend enjoyable break-times between classes having a snack with schoolmates. Those who are behind in payment of school fees get called over the loudspeaker intercom to come the office, which often humiliates and makes them feel miserable. They sometimes find themselves stranded in an in-between pressure: one is their own aim to be an ongoing pupil and the other is having to face the lack of funding—which may make them take the decision not to continue their education. The pressure is particularly felt by girls in the final year of lower secondary education. Another conversation exemplifies the situation:

I am desperate to go on to upper secondary education and if it is possible to study at college. But it's only a dream because my mother won't even allow me to continue into upper secondary. One evening she told me: 'You should go abroad to work as a domestic servant after completing lower secondary school, like your elder sister went to Saudi Arabia'. Yet I don't know what I should do... I'm confused, whether I must leave home to

work or stick to my thinking to continue my education for a better future... Perhaps go in to medicine; become a doctor that's my dream. But where could I get the money for it? My parents are hard pressed to make ends meet... So I probably have to bury my wish. I am very sad because my mother and father frequently quarrel with one another about money. I don't understand why they are always talking money, money and money. Shortage of money, and debt ... their quarrel never ends. I hate it! When can we just be a happy family again? I really do wish to help my parents; get this problem sorted out as soon as I can by working away from home. Then my mother would no longer feel so miserable. Because I love her very much. (A 14-year-old schoolgirl, 15 April 2007)

Compared with the youthful days of their (grand)parents, adolescents have few opportunities to earn money in the rural setting these days, but there are more things on display which they would wish to buy. Back-breaking work such as rice-seedling transplanting, harvesting, brick-making are still open to young persons but those earning this way are now in the minority. During festive seasons some adolescent girls perform as *dangdut* singers and make roughly US\$10 a day, but this relatively better paid work is only open to a small number.

The choice between school and migrant work often creates tension in the home. There are (step-)parents who appeal to their daughter to fulfil her filial duties by bringing in money for the family. A 15-year-old girl in upper secondary school tells how gender-specific obligations impinge differently upon the life of the sons and daughters:

Parents in general believe that a daughter is better able to discharge her filial obligations than a son. In fact a son is rarely expected. (Nov. 2007)

Daughters are often regarded as a source of help to their parents in household maintenance, provision of care, and income generation; sons sometimes come to be viewed as a drain on the family resources. Daughters are imbued with the concept of filial duty from childhood. The care and love which they have received are regarded as a 'debt of honour' which needs to be repaid when they become competent. Adolescent girls as well as their parents often use phrases which connote this concept such as 'settling a debt of gratitude' to the parents and practising filial piety. 'One day I will make my parents happy' is often heard. The following conversation epitomises the situation of today's schoolgirls who are being pressured to work away from Cimanis.

I was watching TV and my mother started asking me ‘What do you want to do after completing lower secondary school?’ I answered ‘I want to continue my education.’ Then she asked me ‘What would happen if we have no money?’ I told her ‘I would just stay home’. Finally she said, ‘Why don’t you go to Taiwan or Japan for work? There is nothing to do here.’ (Karina, 22 June 2006)

Some schoolboys are also exposed to similar parental pressure, but a more lenient attitude is typically shown. They might at most be asked to leave school but rarely to go to work outside Indramayu, they are often given pocket money. The account given by a man in his late thirties explains the tolerance for sons staying in un(der)employed.¹⁷

We parents of course want our sons to get a decent job; but what can be done if we have no acquaintances or relatives in Jakarta to help find employment for them? We love them. It is better having them here with us regardless of whether we’ve enough to eat or not. (7 Feb. 2007)

Unlike sons, daughters’ earlier entry into the labour market is to a greater or lesser extent favoured by parents because delaying it will likely reduce their total earnings. One 32-year old mother told me:

Those who aspire to make a good sum of money should persuade their daughter to work overseas before marriage. I have witnessed several tragedies of married women who return from work abroad. They found that the money they had sent home had been wasted by their husbands. Also it became clear that the husband had played around with other women or even taken a second wife during their absence. (18 June 2006)

To avoid such problems and to protect parental interests, daughters are urged to enter the labour market before marriage. In other words it appears best to capitalise straight away on a daughter’s proto-adulthood. The idea is generally that the young women engage in domestic work abroad and partly explains why the extent of unmarried teenage girls’ entry into the sex sector has become more pronounced over the last decade or so.

Regarding labour migration by young adolescent girls, conflicting views were voiced by the girls themselves. With very few exceptions both the schoolgirls and the out-of-school girls were against the idea of working away from home. They stressed that their immaturity would make it difficult for them to manage potential hazards at the work destination. Some of those spoken with who had dropped out of school said

that teenage girls should be prevented from risky migrant work; they thought types of employment which they would be less harmful should be open to them. Examples cited were domestic work within their home country, baby-sitting, factory work and shopkeeping. This group of girls regarded commercial sex as the thing to be most avoided, followed by domestic work overseas. Two lower secondary school leavers made the point that the right of migration should be granted to those not yet of age who feel they are adequately capable of protecting themselves while engaged in distant work. One of them emphasised that every daughter aspires to make her parents happy but national regulations—meaning specifically the legal minimum age for taking up work both within and beyond Indonesia—do not allow it at the time they may well wish to pursue this goal fully.¹⁸

4.9.4 Sexuality, sexual morality and commercialisation of sex

In Indramayu in general and certainly in Cimanis, the sex trade has always been something of an open secret. The matter of whether a (female) person is below or above eighteen years old is not regarded as a great problem. It is often heard that sex workers—both current and former—are accepted as ordinary people with little discrimination. A 50-year-old man, a frequent customer of local night-time establishments, remarked: 'In my village commercial sex work is not associated with a sense of disgrace' (Field note no.7, 7 April 2007). It is also heard that parents who receive money made by their daughter in the urban nightlife sector sometimes proudly tell the neighbours about the prosperity they enjoy. But the ways in which sex work is ostensibly spoken about and perceived by village people appear to be narrowly and superficially interpreted by many local authorities and NGO activists who are concerned with the problem of 'child prostitution' or 'child trafficking'. It is thereby suggested that the placement and involvement of teenage girls and young women in the sex industry is a cultural tradition which has been practised in the area for several generations (see ILO 1998: 91). It is further pointed out that local people are quite prepared to look upon prostitution as not an immoral or criminal activity but rather a sort of 'occupation' or a reliable means of livelihood which enables upward social mobility (Sudrajat 2005: 76–7; Mulyani 2007: 45). In other words, sex work is understood to have been 'normalised' in the context of Indramayu's history and a lack of alternative livelihood options.

Such understandings/views, however, appear to pay little attention to the two-faced attitudes surrounding sex work and sexuality. There is something of an unconscious double standard shown by men, and also women who have no experience in trading sex. For example, the 50-year-old man above, who has an opinion that no dishonour is attached to sex commerce, at another time gave a contradictory remark: 'I don't let my daughter become involved in prostitution; it's unbearable' (Field note no.7, 15 April 2007). There were some adult respondents who echoed such opinion which suggests a moral separation is unconsciously or implicitly made by those parents regarding the commercialisation of sex of their own daughter and of others'. This opinion suggests that sex work is possibly not conceptualised as something completely separate from sexuality of girls/women who keep out themselves from sex commerce. In other words, in the common understanding of those who keep themselves out of the sex trade, selling sex is morally inseparable from norms on sexuality.

Some feelings of alienation expressed by women previously or currently involved in this line of work suggest that they have been variously stigmatised and thus, to a greater or lesser extent, shunned in their home communities. The sentiments aired by several respondents in the trade who confided their feelings during the interviews showed that isolation and uneasiness are felt, to an extent, when they are back home. A 16-year-old, currently a masseuse in a Jakarta nightclub, told: 'I was improperly received by young village men because I am known to be working in Jakarta ... so I spend much of my holiday at home, avoiding my peers' (Field note no. 7, 27 March 2007). Young women like her tend to go out after sunset usually with their fellow workers (from Cimanis or adjoining villages) who are also briefly back home. From the short accounts and behaviour it can be inferred that they may feel alienated by others in the community. This is an indication of their being treated differently from other girls and women in their home communities.

Sex work is, on the surface, spoken as something separate from sexuality of young women but actual attitudes suggest that the differences may be less clear-cut. Those parents, whose daughters are not involved in the sex trade, appear to show different degrees of (in)tolerance towards sex work/commercial sexual relations. For example, the entry of divorced women (including teenage girls) into the trade appears to be more tolerated (or less morally censured) than that of unmarried women.

On the other hand, when a rumour about unmarried girls taken to the nightlife sector is heard, a sympathetic sign is often shown among such parents.

There are, of course, some exceptions regarding understandings of and tolerance towards sex work. Pious Muslims, for example, explicitly regard sex work as *haram* (illegitimate), considering it a deviation and evil. A similar thought is shared by well-to-do individuals (long-standing upper-class families) and better-educated persons who believe such work debases humanity. This suggests that people's social status and degree of religiosity differently influence their norms about sexuality and sex work.

A daughter, as already discussed in Chapter 3, is often regarded as 'wealth'. A woman who was in the sex sector of Jakarta during her late teens emphasised the point.

In my home district [Indramayu] parents rejoice at the birth of a daughter because she is believed to bring a source of wealth into their home. She will someday be ordered to look for money, to build a house and to buy a plot of rice field or a vehicle. (North Jakarta, March 2010)

Not all parents, however, see their daughters as an 'asset'; some explicitly oppose the idea of letting them get involved in the sex trade. One poverty-stricken father who has a wife and four daughters to provide for said: 'Even though we are poor I never think of trading our daughters for this line of work. It's better we stay as we are' (Field note no. 9, 26 June 2007).

Among village children awareness about sex commerce comes around age ten or so through overhearing conversations of their parents, older siblings, or peers. Some adolescent girls who do not engage in the commercial sex trade expressed pity for those of their age who are involved. A 15-year-old girl said.

The fact that girls are made to prostitute themselves makes me very sad. They should have the freedom to choose their own future and should be given the chance to acquire knowledge and skills. Engagement in prostitution destroys their prospects; it only brings a gloomy future. (20 Nov. 2007)

Though they show great sympathy for their peers in the trade and the occupation is understood to be an easy way to make money in a relatively short period of time, those who are not involved often associate it with images related to filth, impurity, sinfulness, shamefulness, evil and

haram (religious taboo). For example, when women known to be involved in the trade pass by dressed in skimpy clothes riding a motorcycle insulting words (such as whore and prostitute) are called after them. Nonetheless it appears that compassion in fact intersects with the antipathy. Such dual attitudes shown to the girls in the trade suggest they are seen and positioned as both victims and immoral girls.¹⁹

Another aspect of dual or conflicting views and attitudes found in those teenage girls (and also boys) who are not involved in the sex trade towards those in it is that the latter are seen as both the victims of exploitation and agents who choose to earn money from this line of work. This reflects the different perceptions and attitudes coexisting in the village at large. Girls in the sex trade are seen as miserable and innocent victims (who are marginalised and exploited by parents, brokers/pimps, sex consumers etc.), while also being claimed as immoral, or as a threat to local moralities. They are also seen by the villagers as agents who are aware of taking risks but actively seeking to earn money this way to help their parents or attain a more modern lifestyle or a better life. Such contradictory/conflicting views, it seems, are unchallenged.

In Cimanis and its adjacent villages, the sex trade has been something of an open secret. The matter of whether a person is below eighteen is not regarded as any great problem.

Many local authorities and NGO activists who are concerned with the problem of 'child trafficking' or 'child prostitution' are aware that the placement of teenage girls and young women in the sex industry is a cultural tradition which has been practised in the area for several generations (see ILO 1998: 91). Local people are therefore quite prepared to look upon prostitution as not as an immoral or criminal activity but rather a sort of 'occupation' or a reliable means of livelihood which enables upward social mobility (Sudrajat 2005: 76–7; Mulyani 2007: 45). It is fairly clear that in Indramayu in general and certainly in Cimanis, sex workers—both current and former—are accepted as ordinary people with little discrimination. A 50-year-old man, a frequent customer of local night-time establishments, remarked: 'In my village commercial sex work is not associated with a sense of disgrace' (Field note no.7, 7 April 2007).

An opinion often heard from young men who show interest in those girls known to be returned from an urban nightlife is that 'The Cimanis

girls returned from Jakarta [meaning the sex sector] are good-looking but arrogant; it is not easy to associate with them' (6 April 2007).

4.10 Concluding remarks

This chapter has described the changing conditions and life circumstances in the study village over three generations. These changes have been linked to the dynamics of the wider society, making it possible to understand how the means of living for poor households have become structurally connected to labour migration, particularly into the nightlife sector of urban Indonesia and neighbouring Asian countries.

The socio-economic and cultural factors underpinning and circumscribing the lives of current teenage girls are different from those of earlier generations. One important aspect in the transition from youth to adulthood experienced by earlier generations is that their earlier lives were preoccupied by the concern and struggle for subsistence. Lives in their younger times were one way or another constrained by uncertainties and traditional norms and systems practised under an influence of family and inter-generational power structures. There was thus little chance for younger ones—particularly pre-pubescent and adolescent girls—to negotiate with their parents regarding their aspirations to explore their own ways of living. Teenage girls these days are relatively privileged to have a prolonged length of adolescence and be able to negotiate the length of schooling, their own marital partner, and the time to marry or work away from home, though their autonomy and freedom is not entirely unrestricted. Their feeling of autonomy, even while still economically dependent on parents, can perhaps tend to go hand-in-hand with a sense of confusion (*kebingungan*) particularly regarding their own aspirations versus those of their parents.

One further attribute could be the greater degree of exposure of today's younger generation to the national and global economy through labour migration. The likelihood of their integration into commercial sex work appears to be culturally and structurally shaped; it causes a sense of confusion and ambivalence among adolescent girls when they become increasingly aware of the stark reality they have to face, given the few options open to them. A family's economic standing and the attitude of parents towards the current and future wellbeing of a daughter and her

potentiality to provide a better livelihood often create inter-generational tensions.

The current situation is that teenage boys are becoming less able to access earning opportunities either in rural or urban areas, or abroad, with the result that opportunities for girls to enter a lucrative labour market are welcomed; and therefore for many adolescent girls growing up in households with little or no access to farmland and other productive resources, working away from the village—and the more especially in the sexual entertainment sector—is become part of the experience of transition from adolescence to adulthood.

Notes

¹ An elderly man recalled a radio set being bought by a Cimanis landlord in 1963 for two tons of unhulled rice. That was when a bicycle could be bought for seven tons of unhulled rice.

² The BIMAS/INMAS programmes are the Indonesian version of the Green Revolution which introduced improved irrigation systems, new rice seed varieties, chemical inputs and improved farming techniques which have made it possible to more than double traditional yields (see Murai 1980). Roughly seven tons of unhulled rice is yielded per hectare from the cultivation during the rainy season (*musim rendeng*) and five tons is harvested during the dry season (*musim sadon*).

³ *Tebasan*—the sale of a standing crop just before the harvest—was a common practice in the late colonial period for the sale of cash crops such as sugar cane and fruits but was rare for paddy (Hayami and Hafid 1979: 95; White 2000: 83).

⁴ Nearly a dozen *warungs* are found in every neighbourhood. They are relatively easily set up (outside a house against the wall under the projecting roof) with a small initial capital (minimum Rp 500,000/US\$56) but also often go out of business owing mostly to poor management and shortage of capital for further procurement. The profit gained from such retailing is very small.

⁵ The absolute poverty line, used by the Indonesian Central Bureau of Statistics, is defined by the expenditure required for attaining a food energy consumption of 2,100 calories per day. There continued to be academic debate on the measurement of poverty by consumption expenditure; more on this aspect is found in Bidani and Ravallion (1993: 39–41).

⁶ Jakarta Governor Decree no. Ca.7/1/13/70 of 27 April 1970 on Implementation of Enterprise Localisation for Women Without Morals, and the Divisions of Duties and Responsibilities (*Surat Keputusan Gubernur nomor Ca.7/1/13/70, 27 April 1970 tentang Pelaksanaan Usaha Lokalisasi Wanita Tuna Susila serta Pembidangan Tugas dan Tanggung Jawab*). A detailed description about Kramat Tunggak including the local regulations on prostitution and the lives of sex workers is found in Sedyaningsih-Mamahit (1999).

⁷ In the Marriage Law No. 1 of 1974 women who reach sixteen have a right to marry; those who do marry are 'legally' adults regardless of being under seventeen. Obtaining a marriage certificate (*buku nikah*) or authorised divorced paper (*surat cerai*) is an important prerequisite for young women working in official brothel complexes where only legally 'adult' women are permitted to be employed.

⁸ The advancement/increased participation and completion of upper secondary school among girls after 2008 appears to have opened a way for some of them to access garment and service industries of urban areas. But it should be noted that they are small in number and many of the jobs were arranged by either their relatives already working in these sectors or are purchased—for about Rp 500,000–1,000,000 (US\$55–110) by persons who mediate between personnel managers of the given factories and the applicants.

⁹ Where karaoke, massage parlours, bars, clubs, baths and casinos are all operated under one roof.

¹⁰ Discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

¹¹ What is involved in 'hostessing' is explained in Chapter 5.

¹² Some adolescent girls who have only one parent, and one who works away from Cimanis, will live with their grandparents (or other elder relatives) but being more educated than the grandparents and more able to exercise autonomy over their lives.

¹³ Feasts are held for the female form of circumcision called *rasulan* but it is just a ceremonial one which does not involve any mutilation of a girl's vulva. Nor do pious Muslim families hold extravagant ceremonies marking a boy's circumcision.

¹⁴ Staged concerts, dance parades called *singa depok* (electronic keyboards, drums and guitars being pulled on a cart) and theatrical shows are popular forms of entertainment. A fully elaborate party costs about twenty million rupiah (US\$2,183). Such an extravagant ceremonial is normally held only by wealthy families. Eight million rupiah (US\$873) is considered to be a minimum. Elderly persons interviewed recalled that prior to the 1980s it was uncommon to have entertainment at feasts; wealthy landowning households might afford a shadow puppet show

(*wayang kulit*) or mask dance performance but otherwise just played music on tape recorders.

¹⁵ Several sexual assaults have been reported in Indramayu. A police detective based in the Indramayu District Police Station suggested that reported assaults are the tip of the iceberg. There are cases of girls being offered a drink laced with a narcotic or aphrodisiac to make them sexually compliant. Rape committed by fathers and/or step-fathers has also been reported. This is sometimes done in order to push the daughter into the sex trade by stripping them of self-value and dignity.

¹⁶ A certain social coherence develops among those who attended the same school in the same year; they form and retain a common identity. For more on this aspect see Naafs and White (2012: 6).

¹⁷ There are young men in their late teens and twenties who go to the Greater Jakarta area and temporarily take up menial work—usually in the construction sector or fish processing. They are likely to receive US\$1.60–3.30 a day. There are less than five upper secondary school diploma holders employed as security guards of luxurious apartments but being paid only US\$70–80 a month which was below Jakarta's minimum wage of US\$117 in 2010.

¹⁸ In reality such state-led labour migration controls result in the unauthorised migration of undocumented non-adults and create a space for unreliable recruiters and job placement agencies.

¹⁹ There are, however, girls who do stay friends with peers who have become involved in the nightlife world.

5

Entry into the Sex Trade

5.1 Introduction

This chapter explores two interrelated subjects: (1) the mechanism of procurement of young women into the sexual entertainment sector and (2) the organisational structure of particular types of sex establishment in Indonesia and Japan. Through an examination of these structures and mechanisms two aspects are clarified: (i) that the recruitment and movement of young women into the trade is not simply a one-off event but an institutionalised system created, maintained and reproduced through interactions between socio-economic and cultural contexts—of people in the communities of origin, of those in recruitment activities, of local and global demand for sexual service and of macro-level policy changes; (ii) that structural and institutional forces profoundly affect the direction of the life of those young persons recruited. The chapter examines cases involved in procurement operations during the 1990s up till 2010, from the study village and adjoining areas, for massage parlours in three red-light areas of Jakarta as well as for the nightlife sector (hostess clubs/sex-nightclubs) of Japan.

Selection of these particular national and international placement activities for study was based on the following reasons. As described briefly in the methodological section of Chapter 2, since before the turn of this century many young Indramayan women, particularly from Cimanis village, have been employed in massage parlours of Mangga Besar (West Jakarta), Jembatan Tiga and Kelapa Gading (North Jakarta); focusing on these areas thus makes it possible to exemplify predominant forms of recruitment practices for organised sex commerce and thereby gain a better understanding of how the study village is structurally linked to urban nightlife sectors. During the period of fieldwork the mobility of

young women between Cimanis and the nightlife sector of Japan became more pronounced. Shedding light on international recruitment activities may well help ascertain the emergent relationships between the village and the international nightlife labour sector. By so doing the structural aspects and processes of integrating young Cimanis women into the sex markets of developed Asian countries can be analysed concomitantly with the on-going recruitment for the Indonesian sex sector.

5.2 From the village to red-light areas in Jakarta

5.2.1 Procurement mechanisms and recruiting networks

Seven out of ten girls from Cimanis village involved in this study and who are working in the red-light areas of Jakarta and other parts of Indonesia were procured through brokers. Procurement activities were typically carried out by more than one person, but recruitment patterns varied among the brokers depending on a combination of factors: (1) the numbers they intend to procure; (2) their geographic coverage for recruitment activity; (3) the locations of the establishments; (4) the means of transport for transferring procured girls; and (5) the particular nature of the employment and for which segment within the sex industry.

Recruitment activities from Cimanis to particular massage parlours (*panti pijat*) and sex nightclubs (*klub malam*) in Jakarta have broadly two patterns. The first is direct procurement primarily carried out by the pimps themselves with the assistance of a local informant living in the recruitment area. The second pattern is procurement involving a group of recruiters who are assigned to supply or even 'market' girls to given pimps. This second pattern can be divided roughly into two processes: (i) a pimp assigns employees, including sex workers themselves, who are originally from Cimanis and its adjacent villages to recruit their relatives or friends of similar age to themselves; (ii) procurement is carried out by an independent, locally based, broker called *calo* or *channel* (the specific term for sex-trade brokers used among those involved in the procurement of girls for urban establishments). In the latter case (and regardless of whether or not the procurement is an assignment) a *channel* typically works through sub-*channels* and informants—who are also then responsible for escorting the recruited girls to the destination. These recruitment teams commonly comprise an informal group of local men, but sometimes also women. Members of a recruitment group are generally

loosely connected on the basis of mutual trust deriving from friendship and kinship, or have certain social ties within the locality.

It should be noted that there were also cases of girls who had arranged their entrance into the sex trade through their own network, friends or former school mates already working in the trade. There were also placement cases initiated by parents and older relatives of the girls. In some cases parents themselves approached either a pimp or a reliable *channel* originating from Cimanis (or its surrounding villages) about employing their daughter.

Regardless of the particular process by which girls enter the trade the pimp/supervisor involved will usually make an advance payment in cash—called *kasbon*—to the parent(s) or even to the girls themselves. The pimp pays out (in advance) money which will be paid back through the given girl's work. The amount varies from Rp 2 million to Rp 20 million (US\$218–2,188) depending on the pimp's financial state, the marketability of the girl and the level of trust between pimp, broker and her parents.¹

Various reasons can be given to explain why such provision of *kasbon* is a common practice in procurement throughout Indramayu. From the point of view of the parents a sum of cash in advance has the twofold merit, first of enabling them to cater for more than mere basic needs—such as purchasing a motorcycle or building a more modern house or perhaps purchasing a paddy field; and second, of creating circumstances which keep their daughters (to some extent) financially obliged to the given pimp. From the point of view of the pimp this payment system makes it easier to maintain a certain control over the girl at an establishment. According to some of the (former) brokers and pimps interviewed, parents usually do not want to let their daughter go unless such mutual obligation (the *kasbon*) is part of the arrangement.

Procurement activities are basically carried out throughout the year but tend to become intensified during festive seasons following the two rice harvests of April–May and September–October, *Lebaran* (*Eid-ul-Fitr*, the day of celebration at the end of Ramadan) and the month between the end of a school year and the beginning of the next (June–July). As previously mentioned in Chapter 4 celebratory feasts sometimes have the host family ending up in 'ceremonial bankruptcy' when the amount of contributions received from the guests is far below the expenses. Having to settle the bills often puts the host family in need of obtaining a sum of

quick money so that something such as a *kasbon* will provide the answer. This could therefore lead to negotiation with a *channel* or pimp about their daughter entering the sex trade, or even to a *channel* making an approach to a couple (the parents) known to be in financial difficulty having hosted a feast.

The festive seasons are therefore the times when *channels* (brokers and recruiters), pimps and supervisors attend the ceremonies held by family members, co-villagers and even some of their former colleagues who live in Cimanis or nearby villages. Festivities take place during the day and the night; and teenage girls become particularly visible among the guests, who include such visitors mentioned above, enabling them to get background information about—and even have direct contact with—likely recruits.

It is said that during the festive seasons premarital intercourse increases among the youngsters owing to the occasion for open, frequent contact and a relaxing of social control. Gossips about a girl's loss of virginity and a pre-marital pregnancy circulating within the village may destroy her family's good name and sometimes therefore lead to her parents and the girl herself considering it permissible to enter the sex trade.

During Ramadan and *Lebaran* the sex establishments, including the massage parlours, are generally closed or operating only for restricted hours. This slack period is the time when quite a few sex workers may well prepare for a change of workplace within the sector, and a given establishment may therefore need to ensure a new supply of girls. Recruitment activities reach a peak between June and July because female school leavers from both primary and secondary education are in a stage of transition and are targets for the *channels*.

5.2.2 Operational structure of the sex sector

The sex sector of Jakarta today can be roughly classified into three types by organisational nature: organised, semi-organised and unorganised. It is also stratified based on the fees charged for sexual favours: the low-class end of the market, the middle range, the upper range and the very top end of the market as described in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1
Classifications of the sex industry in Jakarta

Fixed locations where the sex transaction can be performed	
Brothel complexes (<i>lokalisasi</i>)	Both state-controlled & illegal
Massage parlours (<i>panti pijat</i>)	Likely including gymnasium, steam bath & cafeteria
Brothel houses (<i>rumah bordil</i>)	Converted low class residences having just a few
Established locations where initial contact can be made (the sex act taking place elsewhere)	
Nightclubs (<i>klub malam</i>)	
Discotheques (<i>disko</i>) & Dangdut bars	
Snack and drinks stalls (<i>warung remang-remang</i>)	Operated in slum areas, parks & alongside the railway lines where there is make shift (tent-style) housing
Hairdressing salons (<i>salon kecantikan</i>)	
Call-girl agencies	Girls are sent to the client's hotel or house
Independent operators who can be contacted in various places	
Call-girls (<i>wanita panggilan</i>)	
Streetwalkers (<i>wanita jalanan</i>)	
Precocious teenagers/experimental girls (<i>perek</i>)	Upper secondary school students/young women who go with chosen men, for pay in cash or kind (gifts)

Source: Compiled from Hull et al. 1999: 45-6, 92-5; Emka 2003; and field data.

This study focuses on the procurement of Indramayan girls for work in ‘massage parlours’ (doubling as nightclubs) in the middle and upper strata of the market. Regardless of their scale and the forms of facilities and services provided in each establishment, the organisational structure of these particular types of establishment is usually as follows.

Middle and upper-middle class sex establishments are located in various segregated night-life districts of West and North Jakarta. The buildings of these establishments are three or four storied. At the entrance there will always be a man (security staff/doorman) on duty. The ground floor is a nightclub where there are more than a dozen tables, a bar counter and a stage. A customer can have drinks and select his girl there. One of two systems is generally adopted by these establishments. Either a customer selects a girl from the more than two dozen photographs of the girls displayed on the counter or an appointment is arranged through a supervisor who escorts and directly introduces a girl (or girls) to the customer. Supervisors—called either *papi* (for a male) or *mami* (for a female)—are commissioned by either the owner of an establishment or a pimp to oversee both the business and private life of the girls.

Under either of the appointment systems a regular customer can make a booking of a particular girl on the phone prior to his visits; or on his arrival at the establishment he just asks the supervisor if his favourite girl is available.

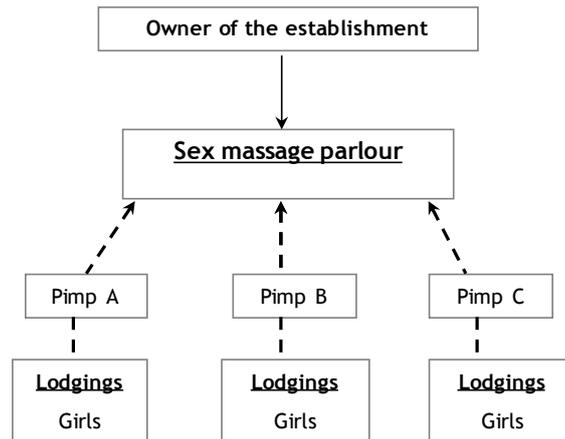
After having chosen the girl the customer can either continue to drink with her or proceed directly to the first floor with her. At the cashier there he pays in advance a fee based on the length of the service and the type of the room. The charge for short-time service (usually 60 minutes) in a standard room ranged from Rp 200,000 to Rp 300,000 (US\$22–33) at the time of the field research in 2006–07. It should be noted that an extra tip between Rp 50,000 and Rp 200,000 (US\$5–22) is usually given to the girl by her customer. This money can be kept by the girl herself regardless of whether or not the *kasbon* provided by the pimp to her parents (or even herself) has yet been repaid.² The second floor contains executive rooms; the top floor is used for changing rooms for the girls (and other employees) and as the place where the girls wait to be called.

In this particular type of sex business the workplace and the living quarters of the sex workers are in separate buildings. As regards the management of the business one of two systems is adopted: either direct management of the establishment, the separate girls' lodgings, and the girls, by the owners themselves; or the separate girls' lodgings and working places under different managements.

In the first system the entire business—both the establishment itself and the lodgings for the girls—is run under the auspices of the owner who is at the top of the hierarchy (Figure 5.1) Day-to-day operation of the establishment is assigned to a manager by the owner; the running of the dormitories, including provision of daily meals, cleaning and laundry services and control over the girls' private lives, is managed by a 'supervisor' (*papi/mami*).³

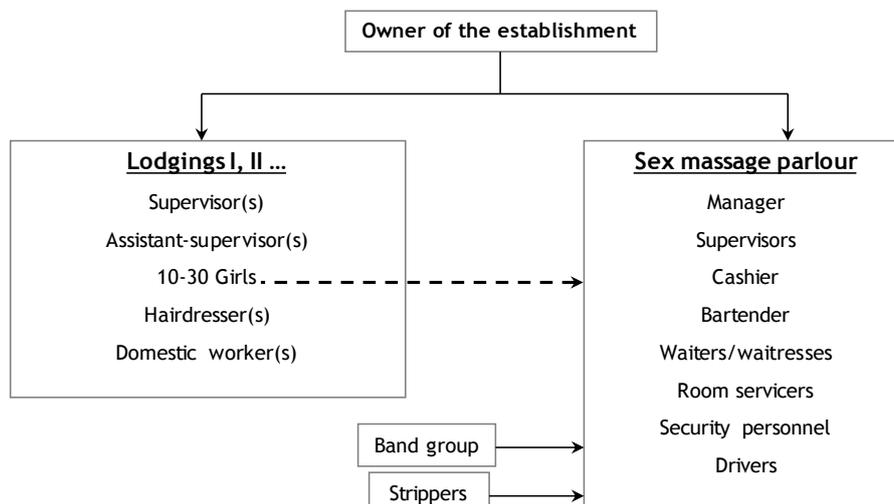
These supervisors are the owners' loyal hench(wo)men. The whole running expense for the lodgings—rent, utility costs, meals and wages for the employees (domestic workers and hairdressers)—is paid by the owner. The owner also has a responsibility to provide the girls with protection including getting them out from wherever they may have been detained if the authorities have raided that establishment.

Figure 5.1
Direct management by the owner of the establishment



The second system is that the establishment and the girls' lodgings are separately managed by more than two parties: the former facility being run directly by the owner but the latter by independent pimps who specialise in delivering girls from their housing to a particular establishment (Figure 5.2). An establishment adopting this outsourcing style receives girls from more than one pimp. A given pimp may have more than fifty girls in lodgings—housed in two or three separate residences—and dispatch them to more than one particular establishment; they even rotate them among establishments in both Jakarta and other major cities of Java or Sumatra. The dormitories are managed by supervisors, as under the direct management system, but the running expenses of the houses are paid by the pimps themselves.

Figure 5.2
Supply of girls by multiple pimps to an establishment



Owing to the clandestine nature of this business a detailed account of the relationships between owners and pimps could not be gained directly. Data obtained from former and current *channels* who have kinsmen operating as pimps suggests that some mutually obligatory arrangements are certainly made between them. For instance when a pimp faces a shortage of funds for the provision of *kasbons*, to procure a number of new girls at one time, he borrows a sum of money from the owner who will employ these girls. It should also be noted that some large establishments, those with more than fifty girls, adopt a combination of direct management and outsourcing. Both management systems have their merits for the girls since both provide them with facilities and services: contacts with customers, accommodation, daily meals, laundry, transport and protection. The arrangement makes for an easy entry to this occupation; it requires neither initial down-payment for lodgings nor for the girls to put effort into contacting customers. During the days they have no customers they still can get meals and keep their living quarters. From the point of view of owners and pimps the system makes it easier for them to maintain a certain control over the business and private lives of the girls.⁴

In the direct management system the service fee paid by a customer is usually allocated as follows (though some variations were ascertained): the largest cut of 56 per cent goes to the owner (as a room charge); 20 per cent is for the supervisor (*papi/mami*); the remaining 24 per cent is for the girl herself. In the second system the proportion of revenue sharing between the owner and the pimp is usually fifty-fifty.

The payment to a *channel* for procurement services is always made by a pimp/supervisor and there are two different commission systems. The first is that a one-off payment ranging from Rp 300,000 to Rp 1,000,000 (US\$33–109) per girl is made to a *channel* by a pimp/supervisor at the time of each supply. The second system is that the pimp/supervisor only pays the *channel* a small amount of local transport expense at the time of the receipt of the procured girl, but the *channel* thereafter receives a fixed cut of the money earned by that girl's work. The actual amount ranges from 2.5 per cent to 5 per cent of the price paid for short-time sexual service. It is paid to the *channel* by the pimp/supervisor once or twice a month. The result is that amount of the cut received depends on the performance of the girl at the establishment and the *channel* is entitled to re-

ceive the commission up until the given girl pays off her *kasbon* or quits the job or moves from that pimp to another.

The number of sexual transactions of each girl is recorded by a cashier of the establishment but cheating in the recording process may occur, so some established *channels* tend to assign a trusted person to monitor both the record and the operations of the procured girl. The field evidence suggests that the second payment system is widely adopted among the brokers originating from Cimanis and nearby villages. There is no fixed remuneration for other actors involved in the procurement process on an ad-hoc basis but no less than Rp 100,000 (US\$11) is given by a *channel* case by case.

5.2.3 The emergence of bogus brokers and changes in modes of recruitment

Since the turn of the century there have been various changes in the manner of recruitment and it has become less visible in many parts of rural Indramayu as a result of the surge of government attention given to the ‘sexual trafficking’ of girls. The third wave of the global movement against human trafficking, with a particular emphasis on children for commercial sex work, affected the regulatory frameworks of the Indonesian government (as discussed in Chapter 2).

New legislation (which has led to alterations in regulations) has brought about an increase in policing throughout Indramayu district.⁵ This resulted in some established *channels* being arrested. Thereafter bogus *channels*—backed up by particular police officers—emerged and began to undermine the traditional supply mechanisms. These bogus *channels* deliberately deceive a regular pimp for their own benefit, by using experienced girls as ‘decoys’ to get *kasbon* from that pimp. Those decoys are women who have returned to the rural areas after some years in the trade and who are contacted by a bogus *channel*—someone aware that the woman has already been in the trade, but may be willing to return to it. Acting as a usual intermediary the bogus *channel* contacts a pimp to supply a girl, in this case the experienced ‘retiree’. The usual arrangement is made for the pimp to meet the ‘girl’ to give *kasbon* and transport her to the city. Either at the location of the transaction or on the journey back to that pimp’s establishment a police raid takes place which is the result of the bogus *channel* having given information to the police officers as to where and when they can make an arrest. So the trapped pimp will lose

the *kasbon* to the *channel* or into police coffers and may even have to pay a further fine. The woman who has acted as a decoy will receive her cut from the 'stolen' *kasbon* and in most cases be transported home again.

Those pimps who are trapped in this way tend to be non-Indramayan, having little connection with the Cimanis area brokers. Because of such practices pimps have become more cautious about procuring Indramayan girls through the mediation of unknown *channels* and rely on those brokers known to be honest within the trade. Sometimes pimps assign their supervisor to go to the recruitment ground with *channels* for reconnaissance. Pimps have also become more careful in providing *kasbons*: a smaller amount is given for a first-time girl or it is only given when the girl has arrived at the destination. Further recent risk avoidance behaviour is to be noted by the fact that use of a minivan to transport the recruited girls to the destination has become less common, being largely replaced by use of public transport which travels through the night and early morning. The movement of girls has thus become less evident.

5.2.4 Occupational migration chains and social ties

The stream of sex workers from Cimanis and nearby villages to specific massage parlours in Jakarta is associated with a broader flow of labour from the same rural communities to the same destinations. The majority are employed within the sex sector but as non-sex workers. They include the waiters/waitresses, security personnel, room servicers and drivers at the establishments as well as domestic workers and hairdressers for the lodgings (Figure 5.1).

The bulk of them get jobs through the mediation of either kinsmen or co-villagers who had already been employed or are in a position (as pimps/supervisors) to offer jobs to them. A substantial degree of occupational niche clustering comprising sex workers and related employees (in the sex sector) from well-defined rural areas of Indramayu can be observed. Such clusters in both the workplace and lodgings are comprised of groups of kin and co-villagers. The members of such groups are socially tied to one another and function to extend important support to persons during trouble such as sickness, a shortage of money or family crisis (also, see Hull et al. 1999: 54). Evidence from the fieldwork suggests that similar configurations are formed across major sex-entertainment centres in Jakarta.

The high concentration of Indramayans in this particular sector of Jakarta resulted in the development of some other business activities: (1) small-scale mobile phone trading (run by Indramayans); (2) food stalls (*warung makan*) which sell Indramayan dishes in and nearby the red-light areas; (3) the operation of inter-city bus services supplying a direct link between two major red-light districts and the main source region (for workers in the urban sex industry) in the northern coastal districts of West Java, Indramayu included.

Regarding the mobile phone trading business and its social functions two points are worth mentioning. The business, run by Indramayans or by Chinese-Indonesians married to former-Indramayan sex workers, makes money by selling both new and second-hand goods primarily to Indramayan sex workers and their customers. The shops and selling points serve as a hangout for those originating from the same or nearby villages: the girls, support personnel employed in the sex business, and temporary visitors who include *channels*, parents of the girls and some youngsters.

5.3 Placement into the sex-related entertainment industry in Japan: its structure and mechanism from the 1980s to 2008

The procurement of young Indramayan women for the international sex market has not reached the same scale as that for the domestic market; it has however certainly become more prominent since the turn of the century. Recruits from Indramayu have been found in the red-light areas of Singapore, Malaysia, Japan and Taiwan operating as hostesses and/or sex workers.⁶ The focus of this section is to understand the emergence and development of procurement operations from rural Indramayu to the Japanese sex sector in relation to the broader process of policy change from the late 1990s to 2008.

5.3.1 Historical context

Japan has for some time now been one of the major destinations for young women from Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe entering the sex-related entertainment industry (Skrobanek et al. 1997: 49; Derks 2000a: 29; ILO Office in Japan 2004: 2; US Department of State 2004: 96; DAWN 2005: 38; Tatsumi 2006: 52).

The 1980s—the late 1990s

The flow of women from Southeast Asia into the sector became more prolific during the last two decades of the last century—with the Philippines and Thailand being major supply countries (Gotou 1999: 62; Okamura and Ogasawara 2005: 4; JNATIP and F-GENS 2005: 8; Sakanaka 2005: 74). Many entered Japan on either so-called ‘Entertainer Visas’ or Temporary Visitor Visas obtained through the assistance of recruitment agencies or Japanese organised crime syndicates (*bouryoku-dan* or widely known as *yakuza*) (Gotou 1999: 63; ILO Office in Japan 2004; Yoshida 2005: 37; US Department of State 2004: 96). Regardless of the types of entry permit granted most were actually employed as hostesses for night-clubs/bars, some of which required them to engage in the sex trade or to perform other forms of (sexual) services including stripping or escort work (Gotou 1999; ILO Office in Japan 2004; Yoshida 2005; US Department of State 2004).

The dismal conditions experienced by some Asian women have received wide public attention since the early 1990s largely owing to the high-profile cases, between 1991 and 1994, of murder committed by Thai women in the hope of escaping from dire abuse and exploitation in the sex industry (Miki 1998: 25–7; Gotou 1999: 64–5; Miyochi 2004: 40; Sugawara 2004, 2005: 24; JNATIP and F-GENS 2005: 44). One of the most outrageous cases was that of a Thai female *mama-san* (madam)⁷ at an Ibaragi prefecture nightclub who was stabbed to death by three Thai women who had been virtually locked into inescapable harsh situations, being trapped in debt bondage, brutally abused and made to sell themselves (Miki 1998: 27; Gotou 1999: 65; Miyochi 2004: 40; Sugawara 2004; JNATIP and F-GENS 2005: 44).

Such notorious extreme conditions might not represent the circumstances of the majority of women operating in a diverse adult ‘entertainment’ industry at that time, as there is always a tendency to report exclusively on the most shocking scenarios (see Matsuda 1988; Satou 2003: 14; US Department State 2004; Sugawara 2004; JNATIP and F-GENS 2005: 8–9; IOM Indonesia 2008: 66–8). There is also a tendency to view such women as ‘victims of human trafficking’ rather than illegal migrant workers or criminals (see Matsuda 1988; Satou 2003; Sugawara 2004; JNATIP and F-GENS 2005). Criticism has been directed at Japan by foreign governments and non-governmental organisations as well as feminists and human rights activists because of Government reluctance

to address the problems associated with the procurement of foreign women into the thriving national sex industry (Matsuda 1988; Satou 2003; Sugawara 2004; JNATIP and F-GENS 2005).

In contrast to the swelling media attention directed at the issue during the first half of the 1990s there was a noticeable loss of interest by the turn of the century (Satou 2003: 22–3; Sugawara 2004; JNATIP and F-GENS 2005: 10–11). The Government of the day (in the late 1990s) did undertake a set of countermeasures to combat the illicit procurement of foreign women into the industry and priority was given to the establishment of a specific legal framework and tighter enforcement of the regulations. This involved a series of amendments to laws and regulations related to the entertainment business, organised crime, immigration control and child prostitution as well as a clampdown on illicit international recruiting activities (Gotou 1999: 72–7; Fujita 2000: 26; Sakanaka 2005: 79–84).

There is hardly any literature available which comprehensively verifies the actual impact of the crime control measures on such illicit operations. Anecdotal evidence revealed by the regulatory authorities and the press suggests that a number of major law-breakers with regards to labour, immigration and prostitution were arrested (National Police Agency of Japan 1994–2002; Gotou 1999: 67–9; Sakanaka 2005: 79–84; Sugawara 2005: 24–7). The official number of sex-related business crimes involving foreign women halved from 2,405 cases in 1993 to 1,190 in 2000 (National Police Agency of Japan 1994, 2001). The number of cases of assistance sought by allegedly trafficked foreign women to three major private shelters also declined sharply during that period (JNATIP and F-GENS 2005: 10) but there is no reliable literature available to gauge whether the working conditions for and treatment of such women generally improved or not.

Despite the confirmed decline in the number of women recruited for the industry it has nonetheless persisted though gradually altering its character, becoming less visible (Sugawara 2004). In fact there was an increase in the annual number of ‘entertainer’ visa holders between 1993 and 2000 particularly from some Southeast Asian countries. Their numbers rose by 73 per cent from 77,500 to 105,700 persons (Ministry of Justice of Japan 1994, 2001).⁸ Many were employed by club/establishment owners who had shifted or expanded some of their main operational grounds from the metropolitan regions to other pro-

vincial areas (National Police Agency of Japan 2001; Sugawara 2004). The supply routes for young Indonesian women into these establishments in rural Japan evolved in the context of the operational and structural changes which the industry was then undergoing, and this will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.3.2.

After 2000

A surge in the global movement against human trafficking put the Government of Japan in an inescapable position requiring to it undertake more comprehensive countermeasures. It appears that action was accelerated in 2004 when the country was explicitly condemned by the US Government as being lenient in this matter (US Department of State 2004: 96; Sugawara 2004; Kimura 2006: 8; Nagashima 2006: 72). In its assessment of counter-trafficking initiatives taken by other nations the US Department of State placed Japan in the 'Tier 2-Watch List' of the Trafficking in Persons Report published in 2004 stipulating that 'the Government of Japan does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking... The government needs to increase its efforts to combat severe forms of trafficking in persons...' (2004: 96). No developed country other than Japan was placed in this rank. Various prompt actions were taken in 2004–05: (1) the establishment of the Inter-Ministerial Liaison Committee for Anti-trafficking Efforts within the Prime Minister's Office (April 2004); (2) the adoption of a Comprehensive National Action Plan of Measures to Combat Trafficking in Persons (December 2004); (3) the Diet's approval of the conclusion of the UN Trafficking Protocol (the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children) supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (June 2005); and (4) amendments to five laws and regulations including the criminalization of human trafficking by revising the Penal Code and tightening the issuance of 'entertainer visa' to foreign women particularly Filipinas.

One of the noticeable outcomes from such countermeasures was a sharp decline in the flow of entertainer visa holders. The annual entry number in 2004 (135,000 persons) had fallen to one-quarter of that number (about 39,000) by 2007 (Ministry of Justice of Japan 2004–2008). The decline of persons from Southeast Asian countries was significant (from 100,000 to 13,000).

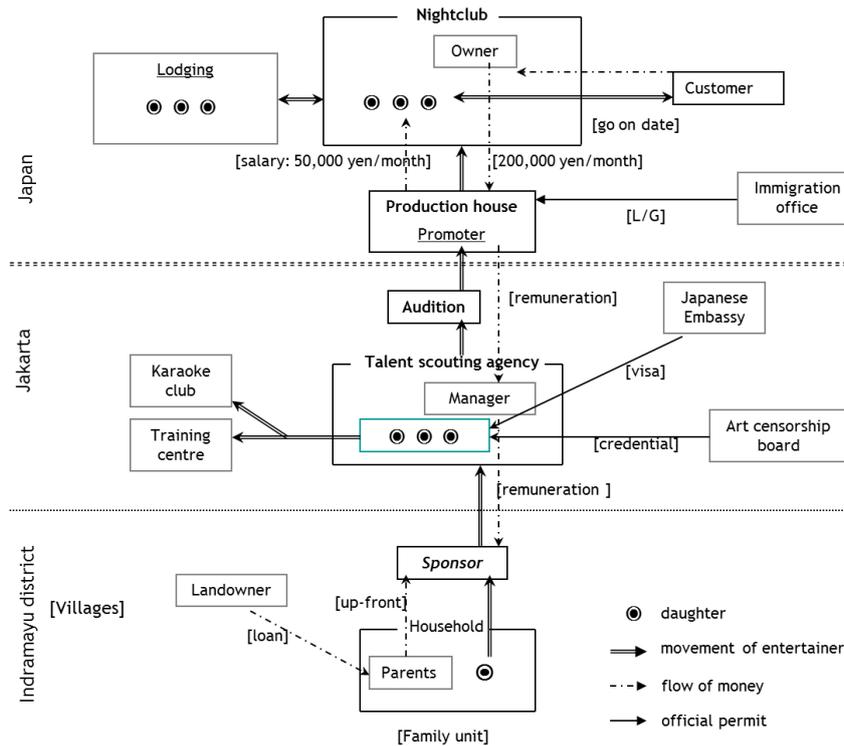
5.3.2 Supply mechanism of 'entertainers' from rural Indramayu

Compared with Filipina and Thai women, Indonesian women were not prominent in the Japanese adult-entertainment sector until the turn of the century. Their number rose almost five times from 760 persons in 1998 to 4,100 in 2005 but its proportion of the entire number of entertainer visa holders was still below 5 per cent (Ministry of Justice of Japan 1998–2006). The rise took place concurrently with the period of steady growth in the total number of foreign entertainers entering the country. But the accelerating counter-trafficking measures taken by the Japanese government had the number of Indonesian entertainers dropping to 1,430 in 2006 and falling as low as 78 in 2009 (Ministry of Justice of Japan 2007–10).

The late 1990s to 2005

Recruitment and placement of young women from Indramayu for the Japanese sex market has a more complex operational structure and mechanism than for the domestic one. Some variations can be observed but typically more than half a dozen individuals and institutions are involved in the entire supply processes (Figure 5.3).

Figure 5.3
Recruitment structure of entertainers



An entertainer visa or an official permit called Residence Status of Entertainer (*kougyo shikaku*) is granted by Japanese authorities for those foreign nationals who intend to engage in amusement performances in Japan. Actors, singers, musical performers, dancers and athletes are, by definition, entitled to get it. Such a permit is only granted if individuals or groups are invited by either public or authorized private institutions based in Japan. In the context of supplying ‘entertainers’ for the sex-related entertainment industry, licensed recruitment agencies called ‘production houses’ manage the operations of entire supply chains in collaboration with one or more ‘talent scouting agency’ operating in Indonesia. The agencies are responsible for recruiting girls, preparing the necessary papers, providing pre-departure training (e.g. Japanese language and performing arts) and then sending ‘entertainers’ to the production houses in Japan. Most agencies are located in the Greater Jakarta area and run by Japanese male nationals with their Indonesian spouses (former ‘enter-

tainers') or Chinese Indonesian entrepreneurs. There appeared to be no fewer than sixty scouting agencies running the recruiting business in 2007, each of which were promoting their recruits to a given production house.⁹

Such scouting agencies are usually licensed by the local authorities (Tourism and Cultural Office, and Labour Bureau). They have more than half a dozen recruiting agents scouting young women from rural districts of West Java such as Indramayu, Subang and Karawang in the northern coastal region as well as Cianjur, Bandung and Sukabumi in the upland region (*Priangan*). Such recruiters are usually not actual employees of the agencies but work as contracted suppliers, locally called *sponsor*. They include former male migrant workers who have returned from Japan, former male *channels* (brokers) who used to procure local girls for the domestic sex sector and parents of former 'entertainers' returned from Japan. While some engage in recruiting service on a full-time basis, most are part-timers who also engage in farming or non-farming activities. It should be noted that some full-timers diversify their recruiting business, not only scouting girls for entertainment work but also recruiting women for domestic service abroad in collaboration with other employment agencies.

Likely recruits are usually approached by agents with the assistance of an intermediary living in the rural communities. A combination of recruitment methods is used: direct home visits, distribution of leaflets and job advertisement on local radio stations.

Agents will usually give a description of the kind of occupation, terms of employment, criteria and application procedures as will appeal to likely recruits and their parent(s) but refrain from specifying further as regards the exact nature of the 'work'. Three elements are emphasised by the agents: (1) the offered occupation is described as a performing arts work, entertaining job or even a job as 'Ambassadors of the Arts' legitimated by both Japanese and Indonesian authorities; (2) the lucrative aspect of the job (a minimum of Rp 4 million (US\$437) monthly salary with opportunities to get tips and bonuses); and (3) free arrangement for meals and lodgings, and free transport including return air ticket. Some agents give an explanation—explicitly or implicitly—of the 'entertainment' work by suggesting the job may also require engaging in hostessing and waitressing work in nightclubs/bars apart from the cultural performances.

Although the age criterion, usually set in a range of 18–25 years, is explicitly written in the flyer as one of the requirements for the application, it is often ignored by the agents. Date of birth can be easily manipulated by obtaining false (legitimate) or forged documents. So in reality quite a few girls below the minimum age requirement also apply for the job. Some were aged 14–15 at the time of their application. Regardless of age applicants usually take the following procedural steps before leaving Indonesia for Japan.

Except for some (returned) entertainers who directly apply to scouting agencies, the applications of first-time girls/women (with their C.V., school diplomas and photos) are sent to a scouting agency by a *sponsor*. Those who pass an interview may either go directly on to an audition or take intensive lessons in Japanese, performing arts and etiquette in the workplace. These are arranged by the agency for about three months prior to going on to an audition. The audition is arranged by the involved agency who arrange for representatives (called *promoters*) from the Japanese production houses (who travel to Jakarta) to make the selection. No performances are usually required; well-dressed recruits just show up and introduce themselves to the given *promoters*. Those who pass the audition are then asked to prepare various documents such as birth certificate, family register and health certificate. Because quite a few recruits have in fact a falsified identity as advised by given *sponsors*—particularly the date of birth—to meet the criteria for the application, further forgery or purchase of ‘legitimate’ official documents is also necessary at this stage. While the papers are being prepared, those recruits who have not had pre-departure training take intensive courses. Some scouting agencies have their own instructors and facility while others outsource such tuition to a traditional performing-art studio (*sanggar seni*). It is common that language lessons are given by experienced former entertainers or returned male migrant workers from Japan. Since the actual work of those who will be employed in Japanese establishments will be hostessing and waitressing some Indonesian agencies encourage them to get on-the-job training in high-class Japanese karaoke clubs in the Greater Jakarta area. Such club owners have affiliation with the owners of given scouting agencies. In some cases both the club and the agency is run by the same owner.

It should be mentioned that not all candidates who pass the audition are able to go to Japan. Prior to them applying for an entertainer visa

from the Japanese Embassy in Jakarta, both production houses and Indonesian scouting agencies will have handled the paper work for obtaining permission from Japanese and Indonesian authorities on behalf of their recruits. The visa is granted based on the issuance of a landing permit from the Japanese immigration authorities called a Certificate of Eligibility of Residence Status of Entertainer (hereafter L/G). An L/G is only issued for those ‘entertainers’ who will be employed by organisations (i.e. nightclubs/bars) which meet criteria stipulated in the related laws and regulations. The recruits themselves must also fulfil one of the following three criteria: (1) possession of a credential certifying them as a qualified arts performer by either foreign national/local authorities or legitimate organisations; (2) a minimum of two years’ experiences in the field of their pursued activities in foreign countries; (3) a minimum of two years spent at a foreign educational institution learning subjects relevant to what they perform (Ministry of Justice of Japan 2003; Cameron 2003: 5; JNATIP and F-GENS 2005: 27).

It is clear that these qualifications are hardly met by the ‘entertainers’ originating from rural districts in West Java in general or Indramayu in particular. Nearly all certificates or recorded career documents submitted to the Japanese authorities are forged. Credentials can also be bought from a local Art Censorship Board—a self-governing body comprised of officials from the Department of Tourism and Culture, the National Police Department and the National Intelligence Bureau. This board is formed under the auspices of a local office of the Ministry of Tourism and Culture specifically authorised to verify qualification of entertainers. Scouting agencies which assist candidates for obtaining their passport from immigration authorities make sure it will be consistent with their falsified identification on official documents. After the necessary papers are obtained the production houses then apply to the Japanese immigration authorities for an L/G of entertainers. Since the applications undergo close scrutiny the process can take anything from six to fifteen months. The issue of an L/G in principle assures a grant of ‘entertainer visa’ for the applicants but only on the premise of no contradictions being found by the Visa Section of the Japanese Embassy. It can take between eight and twenty months from the time they passed the audition for first-time entertainers to get an L/G.

Most recruits who reach this phase are in debt back home—outstanding debts being up to maybe Rp 17 million (US\$1,855). Such

debt may inflate commensurately on the basis of their waiting period for an L/G. Apart from what has been paid out to their *sponsor*, other expenses which were not covered by scouting agencies (e.g. medical check-up, the obtainment of legal papers, local transport) will have been paid by the recruits using borrowed funds. In most cases their parents will have borrowed money from a bank; otherwise they have probably sought loans from well-to-do neighbours which carry annual interest rates of 100–200 per cent. During the waiting period some recruits will have waited at home; others leave to begin work in local urban entertainment/sex sectors. Some of the girls in these sectors eventually choose to become a contract mistress for a male patron in exchange for receiving a sum of money and lodging. A prolongation of the waiting period means an increase in pressure to settle the debt. Many have therefore to drop out from the process altogether. Some whose L/G application is rejected then try their luck by asking other scouting agencies. The course which life has taken for such dropouts has been various, including marriage; trying their luck as a maid overseas; hostessing in upper-class karaoke clubs; entering into urban sex commerce. Because cases of failure to enter Japan and then turning themselves to sex workers were quite prevalent in many parts of Indramayu in 2003–06, their life-paths were sarcastically described as: ‘Those girls who intended to go to Japan but who turned off to Mangga Besar [red-light area in West Jakarta]’. Or ‘Girls who make money by trading sex on the way to Cengkareng [Soekarno-Hatta International Airport]’, or in shorthand as ‘*Belok ke Mabes*’ (turn off to Mangga Besar).

Prior to their departure to Japan an equivalent of 50,000 yen (US\$430) is paid in rupiah by the agency to the recruits. This is an advance payment of their first month’s salary there. Some *sponsors* may ask a reward from them behind the back of the scouting agencies; an amount between one and two million rupiah (US\$109–218) is usually given. A commission is usually paid by the agencies to the *sponsors* when their recruit is granted the L/G. The form of payment is stated in the contract between them but has two patterns: a one-off payment ranging from one to two million rupiah (US\$109–218); or one million rupiah paid to the *sponsor* monthly through a period of six months.

‘Entertainers’ usually travel to Japan in a group of three to five persons without an escort from the agencies. They are received by the employers of a production house at a Japanese airport and taken to their

workplace. At this stage the production houses are taking on the role of employment agents supplying nightclubs/bars. The entertainers at this stage are employed by a given production house under contract for a maximum period of six months.

Prior to travelling to Japan many 'entertainers' have by and large been aware that the jobs offered them may involve giving 'hostess' service in nightclubs/bars, but most found disparities between what they were told about the nature of the work and labour conditions and what actually is involved. This is usually the case among the first-time entrants.

There are diversities in the types of service provision and operational structure of the work, but in actuality they are hostesses catering to male customers of the nightclubs. Cultural performances are hardly ever held there. Some establishments even have no stage. Some clubs offer hostesses in lingerie; others hold striptease shows. The 'hostesses' are usually required to engage in other types of service such as cleaning and/or attracting and bringing in custom from the street; and other 'escort' work.¹⁰ Escort services make money for club owners because customers are charged by the hour for spending time with hostesses outside the establishments. A 'carrot-and-stick' approach is often used by which to increase the takings. Monthly quotas are usually imposed on the hostesses to perform escort services. In some clubs those who fulfil a quota set by the owners are given a bonus, while in other establishments a penalty is imposed on those who fail to reach it.

Bonuses are generally given to the well-performing hostesses who reach a certain norm of drinks and refreshments sales made and the frequency they are requested to join a customer for a drink with them (*shimez*). In some establishments a penalty is imposed on hostesses who gain a certain amount of weight. For instance, a fine of 5,000 yen (US\$43) is imposed for every 3 kg of increase in their weight (Kubo 2001: 7). Such fines are usually refunded if the gained weight is lost.

Lodgings and utilities are provided by the clubs. Five to seven hostesses live there as a group and prepare their own meals themselves. A living allowance of about 15,000 yen (US\$129) is given every month; but cosmetics and other necessary items need to be bought from it. There are rules affecting their living quarters. For example, a penalty is imposed on those hostesses who go out without obtaining permission from the club or unescorted. Some lodgings are located in the proximity of the

clubs. Those living in accommodation far from the workplaces are picked up by the club's vehicle.

In order to retain leverage over entertainers various techniques are practised, including: (1) retention of passport and return air ticket; (2) threat or use of verbal and physical violence; (3) the withholding of the promised salary until the completion of the labour contract. Ample anecdotal evidence on the plight of such entertainers has been documented, making it clear that institutional controls and structural pressures are heavily imposed on them (for example see, Matsuda 1988; Kubo 2001; Taufik et al. 2002; Setiyardi 2003; Bektati et al. 2003; Cameron 2003; Saitou 2003; Rosenberg 2003; ILO Office in Japan 2004; Ida and Muramatsu 2004; DAWN 2005; Sakanaka 2005; JNATIP and F-GENS 2005).

These labour management systems often prove oppressive to the young entertainers. Their family circumstances back home (e.g. poverty or the pressure to repay debts) combined with their aspiration and moral obligation to support their family by bringing home a good sum of money impinge on their decisions and behaviour in particular constraining ways. Most of the entertainers are in a similar situation. Many of them often cheer each other up and help each other to confront and handle the difficulties. A resilience towards the work often emerges. It is important to mention that their active engagement in hostessing work, escort services and even commercial sexual services—against their moral value and will—is exercised under strong pressure and with limited support. Pragmatic but compromised behaviours are widely observed among first-time entrants.

Not all entertainers can handle and adjust themselves to the circumstances they face. In such cases they usually take one of the following actions: (1) running away from the establishment to a police station or the Indonesian Embassy; (2) contacting private protection shelters to seek help; (3) running away and moving into another establishment through underground recruiting networks and (4) requesting to be sent back to Indonesia by the production houses.

Entertainers are by regulation entitled to receive a minimum of 200,000 yen (US\$1,720) monthly salary from their employers during a six-month period of contract (Ministry of Justice of Japan's Ministerial Ordinance to Provide for Criteria Pursuant to Article 7; the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act). But the actual amount paid rang-

es between 50,000 and 70,000 yen (US\$430–602) a month; their five months' salaries are given as a lumpsum by production houses at the airport on the day they fly back home. Club owners do pay 200,000 yen to production houses but in reality the rest (130,000–150,000 yen) is subtracted as a charge for a provision of the placement service. It is allocated for those involved in the supply business (Figure 5.3). Below is a typical revenue sharing mechanism. Of the 150,000 yen two-thirds (100,000 yen or US\$860) is kept for the production houses themselves and one-third (50,000 yen or US\$430) is paid to Indonesian scouting agencies. Money spent for auditions, training, the obtaining of papers and a return air ticket are also usually covered by it. A total of between 20 and 25 million rupiah (US\$2,188–2,728) is spent in the supply of one entertainer. A commission for scouting 'entertainers' is paid to *sponsors* based on their business contract. The amounts of pay taken home by returned first-time entertainers range from 200,000 to 300,000 yen (US\$1,720–2,580); between six and eight hundred thousand yen (US\$5,160–6,880) are taken home by re-entrants. The latter usually make extra money by actively engaging in escort services. Some make money clandestinely by doing escort work, or going to a hotel for sex in exchange for a good sum, behind the back of club owners.

Events after the post-counter trafficking measures in Japan

As discussed in Chapter 5.3.1 the countermeasures to human trafficking taken by the Japanese Government at the turn of the century greatly restricted the flow of foreign entertainers. Such policy changes had a profound impact on scouting agencies, local recruiting agents (*sponsors*) and the life-courses of those active job seekers to Japan. The years 2006 to 2008 were a period when agencies attempted to find loopholes to maintain the supply of young women for the Japanese market. For example, some relatively competitive agencies began to apply strict recruitment policies and techniques: not accepting recruits below eighteen years old, and instructing recruits how to respond to questions raised during their visa interview (Japanese Embassy personnel, October 2007). Many agencies failed to survive or became inactive. Indramayan women who were still actively pursuing an entertainer's job during this period therefore had a hard time to (re-)enter Japan.

Some could get themselves there by marrying a Japanese through the facilitation of mail-order bride agencies. Others went there with a tem-

porary visitor visa—knowingly or unknowingly—through the hands of criminal syndicates. These were all then nearly trapped into inescapable harsh circumstances once they arrived in Japan—being heavily indebted and forced to provide sexual services. Those who abandoned the idea to work in Japan have followed various courses: (i) leaving for employment in the sex industries of Singapore, Taiwan or Macao; (ii) entering the entertainment/sex industries in the Greater Jakarta area and Bali (e.g. in Japanese karaoke clubs or upper-class massage parlours); (iii) marrying an Indonesian and becoming a housewife and (iv) making a living by investing the money earned from previous work in Japan in business (e.g. ownership of paddy fields or retail business).

5.3.3 Operational mechanism of procurement of sex workers

This section examines the operational mechanisms of underground procurement of Indramayan young women for the Japanese sex industry, and contextualises how the *de facto* closure of the night-time entertainment labour market in Japan reinforced the recruitment activities of such hidden networks in both Indonesia and Japan.

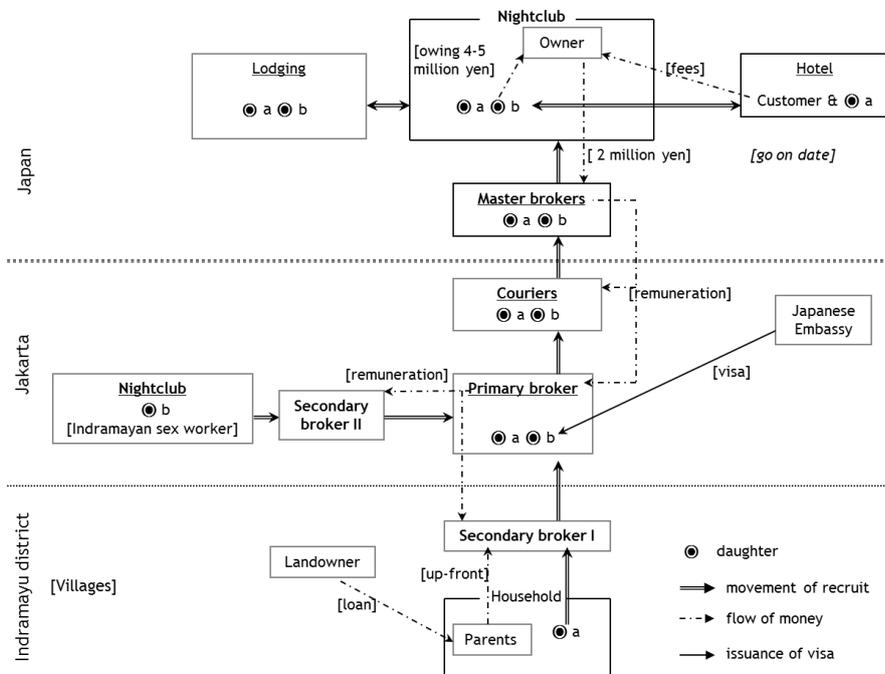
As mentioned in Section 5.3.2, the supply of young women from rural Indonesia for the Japanese adult-entertainment industry had primarily taken a form of legal placement of entertainers, but other types of illegal placement operations came to light after 2005. There had been cases involved of young women who arrived there with a ‘temporary visitor visa’ and then were in effect being sold by brokers to club owners for forced sex work. A total of sixty-five Indonesian women were officially identified as victims of human trafficking for sexual exploitation in the period 2005–07 (National Police Agency of Japan 2009). It is noticeable that the cases involving Indramayans make up about 70 per cent of the trafficked Indonesians between 2006 and 2007 (17 of the 25 persons). They were all channelled into the sex sector by illicit procurement networks which connected rural Indramayu to Japanese clubs in rural Japan.

The modus operandi for supplying them is profoundly different from that for the entertainers described in Section 5.3.2. Typical features can be summarised as follows: (1) a temporary visitor visa was used for their entry; (2) all cases involved took less than two months to supply the Indramayans from the time they were first approached by brokers; (3) no language or performing arts training was given prior to the departure; (4) a huge (fictitious) debt was imposed on them by club owners after the

receipt of the recruits from brokers and (5) psychological threatening techniques were used to make the women repay this debt by their engagement in hostessing services and sex trade.

The procurement chains from rural Indramayu to the clubs comprise roughly three types of supply brokers in Indonesia as well as a recipient broker and a buyer in Japan (Figure 5.4). Supply brokers consist of (i) a local recruiting broker (secondary broker) living in rural Indramayu, who establishes a contact with prospective young women there to lure them away with an offer of a lucrative job in Japan; (ii) a primary broker, who receives the recruits from given secondary broker(s), arranges travel documents and a visa in coordination with recipient brokers in Japan; (iii) courier(s) assigned to take recruit(s) from Jakarta to an airport in Japan (this task can also be carried out by a primary broker) and (iv) recipient brokers (master brokers) who take newly-arrived recruits to final buyers (usually owners of illegal sex-related nightclubs which are run with criminal syndicates).

Figure 5.4
Procurement of sex workers for the Japanese market



The seventeen Indramayan women, identified as trafficked victims in Japan, were aged 15–22 at the time they were first offered the ‘job’ by the secondary broker(s). Thirteen were already operating as sex workers in urban Indonesia; the other four, including one returned entertainer from Japan, were unemployed and lived in rural Indramayu. Fourteen of them, therefore, initially knew the offered ‘job’ could mean the commercial sex trade; three only had an idea of hostessing jobs in clubs. Some did try their luck despite knowing they would bear huge expenses for the labour placement arrangement. They were all basically unaware of the actual conditions they would undergo once arrived in Japan.

Temporary visitor visas were obtained in line with scenarios made up by primary brokers. For example, a recruit makes an application for a visa, under pretence of visiting Japan with her ‘bogus’ Japanese husband for a full wedding ceremony there after having obtained a marriage certificate from the Indonesian Registry office. This bogus couple come with the bride’s (bogus) ‘sisters’ who are invited to attend their wedding in Japan (see the case of Wiwit, who appears in Chapter 6). Or a recruit may obtain a visa by operating as a babysitter who will be accompanying her ‘employer’ (primary broker/courier) and his family on vacation in Japan. Some make up the tale of being invited to travel Japan as kin of a female Indonesian broker living with her Japanese husband there. Official documents such as a birth certificate, a family register, diplomas and an identity card can be forged for recruits in line with each outline designed for entrance.

Little is known about the mechanisms of ‘profit-sharing’ among the brokers. But piecing information together which was obtained from the returned Indramayans, the Japanese and Indonesian Police Agencies and the International Organization for Migration, suggests that they were all debt-stricken both at home and in their workplaces. An initial fee of about five million rupiah (US\$546) was charged by primary and secondary brokers for preparing legal documents. The money was paid by recruits themselves or their (step-)parents by borrowing from a landowner in their home villages. The recruits were received by buyers (club owners) paying out an amount of about two million yen (US\$17,200) paid to master brokers. These owners then imposed a debt of four to five million yen (US\$43,000) on the girls, adding an extra two to three million yen. The debt would be settled by their engagement in the sex trade. No

salary was paid to them until it was all cleared. The sole earnings they could have were tips given by generous customers which could amount to 5,000–10,000 yen (US\$43–86). The provision of such extra money did motivate them to offer sexual services for customers. Some managed to send money home several times.

During the time in Japan both the business and private lives of the women were tightly controlled by those running the establishments. Some were threatened by *mama-sans* (madams) with being reported to the Japanese authorities about their ‘illegality’ in Japan, making them believe brutal treatment may await them if they were to be detained. Others were made to believe those who run away from the club would be tracked down by the *mama-sans*’ patrons (members of criminal syndicates) and their little finger then chopped off. Primary brokers in Indonesia frightened them in phone calls, saying their flight will only jeopardize the safety of their family back home. It is clear that their agency was heavily restricted in such circumstances, lacking any language proficiency and thus unable to seek support from the Japanese authorities.

Nevertheless, after half a year or so, learning about their surroundings, some did manage to escape to a police station or even to the Indonesian Embassy; others remained working until rescued in the course of police raids.

5.4 Reflections on the findings

The foregoing sections have given an account of young women’s entry into the sex-related entertainment industry, describing both the supply mechanisms and the operational structure of specific types of sex establishment in Jakarta and Japan.

It becomes clear that procurement for Jakarta’s establishments should not be seen as a patchwork of separate events. Rather it should be understood as an informal but well-established system which has long been socially embedded both in the communities of origin in Indramayu as well as in particular segments of the sex market. Such a system is primarily run and sustained by sex-trade recruiting networks through the course of their interactions both with (likely) recruits and their parents, and those who control the sex establishments. These recruiting networks—comprised mostly of persons having kinship or local ties—tend to supply the girls to those pimps or massage parlours which have strong

ties with their home sub-districts. Each specific parlour is therefore likely to have a cluster of girls originating from a given community.

Compared with entry into other forms of menial work (e.g. live-in domestic work, factory work) both in urban areas and abroad, work in the particular segment of Jakarta's sex sector is more accessible and in some ways more attractive because the specialised recruitment networks, as described above, conveniently cater to or arrange for the immediate needs and interests of young women and their parents. They arrange a door-to-door job placement service (including transport from their home to workplace and lodging) which requires no up-front fee but instead even brings advance money in cash paid by a pimp to the parents of the recruited daughters. The networks and connected workplaces also function as a sort of informal 'social security organisation' which provides necessary protection and support for the women in the trade and their parents back home.

The specialised procurement networks stretching from Cimanis to the red-light areas are structurally open to any young woman. The existence of such a supply structure helps us explain why the teenage girls in this locality—and their parents—make the decisions they do about bettering the family economy. The steady flow of young Cimanis women to the urban sex sector and its outcomes impinge not only upon the life of young women themselves but also on life in the village and its upcoming generation.

A further finding is that the efforts of the Indonesian government to monitor and stamp out the practice of sex trafficking of girls appear to have had little impact on the flow for the trade; they have actually driven recruitment activities underground, making it all the less likely for legal impositions to have any real effect.

The account of recruitment and movement of young Indramayan women for the Japanese night-time entertainment sector includes an explanation of both their integration into and their exclusion from this emergent sexual labour market in relation to the changing policies. The flow of 'entertainers' from Indramayu into Japanese nightlife which became especially pronounced in the late 1990s (and up to 2005) may well be understood as a result of interplay between the changes in Japanese immigration policy, the development of supply networks (scouting agencies and local recruiting agents) and an increase in prospective recruits in source communities. An emergent link between Cimanis and the Japa-

nese nightlife through the legal supply chains has notably influenced the lives of teenage girls; the opening of opportunities to make money in Japan has reshaped the structure of labour migration.

The findings suggest that anti-trafficking measures implemented by the Japanese government, in response to the US Government's demand to comply with its annual Trafficking in Persons reports, did reduce the supply of entertainers—including those from Indonesia—but the near-closure of the legal recruitment routes in fact resulted in the young job seekers being handled by illegal supply networks. The suggestion is that exclusion of legitimate job seekers for the entertainment labour sector is tending to lead to the rise of a more risky process of labour migration.

The account of recruitment channels, actors and practices in this chapter may appear to give a rather one-sided focus on girls' victimhood, as if they were mainly passive actors in the process. My study certainly does not deny victimhood, but at the same time does not frame agency independently from victimhood. Rather, it hopes to point out that the dichotomous/binary victimhood-agency masks process ridden with tensions (based on gender and generational position in the family and society, and the narrow range of labour market options and income earning opportunities).

The narratives of teenage girls who are recruited into the nightlife sectors of urban Indonesia and Japan which we will present in the following chapter hopefully will provide a more balanced understanding of how these girls have faced and tried to cope with constraints, oppressive social relations and structures, observing the elements of both victimhood and agency and the intersection of the two.

Notes

¹ In this chapter the annual average exchange rates of 2006 are used: US\$1.00 = Rp 9,163 and US\$1.00 = 116.28 yen.

² Tariffs for any extra hours spent with the given girl in the private room will be settled afterwards with the cashier on the first floor. The charge for drinks, refreshment and a given table is settled on the ground floor.

³ *Papi* (papa) and *mami* (mama) are also called as *pengasuh anak* (caregiver or guardian) who play a supervisory role in the business and private lives of the girls who

are called *anak asuh* (foster child). One may point to the use of these notions misrepresent actual power relations between those controlling and those being controlled; nevertheless despite varying levels and patterns of exploitation are acknowledged their relations involve certain degrees of care and protection for obtaining profits.

⁴ Some girls do not work through these systems, but rent their own room as freelancers. The greater freedom and earnings are offset against the greater associated risks and less stability. If they are not successful they ask a pimp whom they know to let them then stay in their lodgings and work in their establishment.

⁵ These are: the Child Protection Law of 2002; Counter-Human Trafficking Law of 2007; Presidential Decree No. 87 of 2002 on the National Plan of Action for the Eradication of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children; and Presidential Decree No. 88 of 2002 on the National Plan of Action for the Elimination of Trafficking in Women and Children.

⁶ Information obtained from (a) Indramayan women who returned/repatriated from these countries between 2004 and 2007; (b) Indramayu district police officers interviewed in 2006; (c) a former staff of Save the Children US in Jakarta interviewed in March 2005. Also see Soedirham and Puspita 2003.

⁷ A *mama-san*, the term used in East Asia, is the person—always a woman—who is the basic supervisor of brothels, bars, nightclubs and similar establishments. It is derived from the Japanese word for ‘mother’, is considered to be the equivalent of a ‘madam’ (see Kojima 2011: 153).

⁸ The number of Entertainer Visa holders declined in 1995–06 (61,400 persons and 55,800 persons) owing to measures taken by the immigration authorities to reduce the scale of Filipina entrants.

⁹ The number of scouting agencies (as of 2007) is calculated from those recorded in the Japanese Embassy and ones told by former sponsors whom I interviewed between 2004 and 2007.

¹⁰ Two types of escort services are usually offered for customers: a hostess meets and dates with her regular customer outside the club and then takes him to the establishment (*dohan-shukin*); and a hostess goes on date with customers during business hours (*tengai deito*).

6

Navigating between Victimhood and Agency: Narratives of Adolescent Girls

6.1 Introduction

A number of ‘child trafficking’ studies have used the narrative method to describe the workings of socio-cultural, legal and economic processes in the individual lives of adolescent girls in the commercial sex trade. Public concern for children in the trade has led, to a great extent, to a nearly exclusive focus on the exploitation and abuse they experienced and/or the detrimental consequences of such experiences.¹ Adolescent girls in sex commerce are mostly described as naive, innocent and helpless, forced into or trapped in the trade and passively submitting to circumstances (see Montgomery 2001; O’Connell Davidson 2005; Bourdillon 2006). Such illustrations confirm a general understanding: it is unlikely that girls have the capacity to choose and act to direct their life course nor are they likely to have control over their own lives once exposed to the sex trade (O’Grady 1992; 1994; Serrill 1993; Kristof 1996; Lim 1998; ECPAT 1999; Coalition Against Trafficking in Women 2001; UNICEF 2001a; 2001b; 2003; Flowers 2001; Abueva et al. 2002; Bales 2004; Stevens 2005; Rafferty 2007; Lau 2008; CATW in Agustin 2009: 9).

A few critical studies, however, do challenge such a ‘mainstream’ view as being partial, incomplete and not always supported by evidence obtained from the minors in question (Montgomery 2001; Chapkis 2003; O’Connell Davidson 2005; Ansell 2005; Batista 2005; Bourdillon et al. 2010; Kojima 2011). They point out that the elements of immaturity, incompetence and vulnerability of girls are overemphasised; the fact that they show a degree of resilience and agency in the face of adversity is improperly acknowledged or even ignored. In short, using narrative method to pinpoint the elements of victimhood as seen in much of the

literature helps neither in gaining better understanding of the dynamics and diversities in the girls' lives nor in prompting a more open-minded analysis of the actual problems they face. The nature of constraints, detrimental conditions and consequences faced by girls in this situation should be described along with how the given situations are perceived and dealt with by them.

The above remarks are not intended as a critique of the narrative method as such, but of the conscious or unconscious biases in both researcher and/or narrator which may influence the content or interpretation of narratives. This chapter also uses narrative method to explore the complexity and diversity in the lives of ten adolescent girls from Cimanis and adjacent sub-districts, of whom seven entered and three resisted entering the sex trade during 2004–10. It reveals on-going social processes, by recording the main aspects and the critical moments of decision-making that shape the life trajectories of the girls. It is hoped that insights generated from the cases can help open up new areas for debate on the notion of 'childhood' and 'trafficking' in order to give more significance to the 'child' as a social subject situated in socially and culturally complex circumstances that foster their agency in constrained ways. By shedding light on their perceptions, decisions, actions and the outcomes, the chapter attempts to ascertain how these adolescent girls experience both the particular and the shared constraints, alternatives, dilemmas, and pivotal moments in their lives, pinpointing aspects that either weaken or develop their competency, resilience and agency exercised under what may be even harsh and oppressive conditions.

6.2 Navigating the transition from school to work and marriage

This section illustrates the individual and family circumstances of three adolescent girls who prevented themselves from becoming a part of the sex trade. It explains how and why they were able to keep away from the nightlife sector by looking into three inter-related aspects: (1) forms of power structure within the family, and ways in which (step-)parents exercise authority over their (step)daughter in relation to job prospects; (2) girls' capability and autonomy to control the direction of their lives—reacting to the parental power relation (and preventing their becoming involved in the sector); and (3) the social attitudes and moral views of both the girls and their parents towards employment in the sex sector.

Filza: Altering family power relations through subtle resistance

Filza, aged fourteen and in her second year of lower secondary school in 2006, is the first child of a former sex worker. Having a retired sex worker as a mother is nothing unique in the village. The mother had married a man in Jakarta (being his second wife) who died in 2004. Two years after his death the mother remarried a motorcycle taxi driver in Cimanis. From that point Filza's mother and stepfather began to treat her very badly.

During the first half of 2006, she attended school irregularly, being prevented by her stepfather's attempts to make quick money by getting Filza into the sex trade. In late June of that year, she heard a stranger asking her parents whether they would be interested in her becoming a waitress in a restaurant in Mangga Besar, a neighbourhood in West Jakarta. She was well aware that the 'waitress job' would mean becoming involved in sex work. She refused her parents' offer. When she indirectly opposed another plan made by her parents to send her to Japan to work as a nightclub hostess, her stepfather locked away her school supplies and books and tore her school uniform to shreds. She was confined to the house most of the time; their intention was to isolate her from her friends, classmates and even relatives.

She was in a desperate state of mind and wished very much to escape from her home and village. Filza told me, 'My situation is living hell. If I'm to go on suffering all this I'd rather just die'. After talking to me she described her plight in writing and gave me what she wrote; then a few days later, following another big quarrel with her stepfather, she ran away. Within two days, however, her mother had tracked her down and made her return home. During the week before she ran away she was given only one meal a day.

Between May 2006 and January 2008, she made several courageous attempts to improve her circumstances. I learned that she had recounted her plight to her classmates and teachers on several occasions. As a result, some of her teachers visited her parents but their attempt to mediate was rejected. Eventually she asked me to speak to the village head on her behalf; to do so herself was too bold behaviour for a girl of her age. My attempt was not successful. Her stepfather became even more violent. He would raise the volume of the radio so that neighbours could not hear what was being said in his outbursts. He started to show anger

by breaking things in front of her, denying her food and forcing her to sleep in a storage area which had no door. One midnight in early May 2007, the stepfather crept into Filza's 'room' and attempted to rape her. She managed to run to her grandmother's house, screaming. He continued his attempts to rape her over the course of several days. She was very upset to see that her mother ignored these sexual assaults. After that, Filza would not come home if her stepfather was present.

Despite these harsh experiences Filza completed lower secondary school. But she faced obstacles to continuing her education: the need to obtain permission from her mother and to pay her own school fees. She even sought my support and persuaded me to meet her mother to discuss her aspirations. The social workers of YKB prevailed upon her mother to agree that she could continue her education under the condition that Filza herself must meet all the school expenses. Some financial assistance was promised by YKB. Filza continued her education at a local upper secondary school. But when her stepfather eventually learned about the financial assistance, he punctured her bicycle tires to stop her getting to school.

Her mother's siblings, including a younger brother who is an *ustad* (Islamic teacher), encouraged her mother to divorce the stepfather.² They did, in fact, separate in mid July 2007; but within a week the stepfather sought a reunion. Filza's uncle (the *ustad*) continued to oppose reconciliation. As a result her mother and stepfather decided to move house, taking Filza's two younger brothers with them. Since then Filza lived on her own in the old home. Her parents took the cooking stove and other equipment from the house while she happened to be visiting their neighbour. She then had basically to depend on relatives.

Even after the mother and stepfather ostensibly left her, the mother frequently came to see Filza. The purpose was to persuade Filza to give up her determined position against entering the sex trade. The mother repeatedly asked her: 'So when do you intend to repay me for the love and care you have received from me?' Filza did not openly show her resistance because she wanted to avoid provoking rage. In early November 2007 her mother went to Filza with the suggestion that she and her husband come back to live there again. There were several reasons. One was that she had created gossip about her own daughter: 'Some villagers witnessed you frequently receiving young men in the middle of the night'. The tale was clearly concocted, but it reflected the intention of her

mother and stepfather to compel her to concede by ruining her reputation in the village. Fortunately Filza had adult relatives with her at the time who supported her in the face of her mother. Filza's silent but persistent resistance eventually discouraged both her mother and stepfather from further oppressing her; and instead her mother herself soon left the village for a maid's job in the Gulf States. In June 2010 Filza completed upper secondary school; subsequently she has continued her education at a college as a part-time student while working in a garment factory.

Filza's courageous resistance is rather exceptional for a girl of her generation in Cimanis, but there is much about her story that is typical of the dilemmas experienced by girls who end up in the sex industry because they are unable to resist parental pressures. Her experiences manifest that during the process of facing varying parental pressures there were some moments when her agency was considerably inhibited or 'thinned', while in other moments it was strong enough to effectively resist oppression. It suggests that individual agency of girls takes various forms and is exercised in varying degrees in the face of undesirable circumstances.

The next story illustrates how an adolescent girl, having grown up in a broken family, supported her family by selecting an acceptable job despite opportunities to earn fast money.

Agnes: Balancing aspirations and duties

Agnes is a child of her mother's second marriage; she has a brother from the same parents. By the time she was fifteen her mother had divorced and re-married twice more. Her father's marriage to her mother was his first; after their divorce and by the time Agnes was fifteen he had been married four times. Her father is a local guitarist and her biological mother used to be a performer of *dangdut* (a traditional genre of singing that is usually accompanied by gyrations and suggestive facial expressions).

In early May 2006 Agnes returned to her home village from Jakarta after 8 years' separation from her immediate family following her parents' divorce which had taken place during her second year of elementary school. Agnes had then been taken to a slum in Jakarta where her maternal grandparents lived. Also living with them was a half-sister of hers (one year older than she) who engaged in the sex trade. Their shack was located along a railway track in Central Jakarta. Early in her third

year of lower secondary school she dropped out. She was offered a job as a maid by a well-off family in South Jakarta but she failed to adjust to the circumstances and took off back to the slum after only one week at it. With the help of a young adult woman there, who had also originated from Cimanis, she eventually returned home to her family in the village.

Agnes's return put an additional burden on the paternal grandmother there who had been unable to work for several years due to ill health. This grandmother had been widowed in her early forties in the late 1990s. She received a small government pension because her husband had been a civil servant (a security official of a public elementary school). The sum was insufficient to keep herself and two grandchildren (Agnes and Rio). Early in 2005 Agnes's father, Toto, by then in his mid-30s, had married a teenage girl (his fourth marriage) and was living with their newborn baby in a neighbouring village. It was obvious that he was unable to contribute much to the welfare of his family in Cimanis. Toto told me that he has never asked his mother about the amount of her monthly pension, because if he did she would expect him to increase his contribution.

Soon after Agnes's return to the village, she got a seasonal job as a singer in the local band in which Toto played guitar. From May to September, the festive (dry) season in rural Indramayu, she performs as a singer at circumcision and wedding ceremonies and manages to earn a living that way. This job clearly brought her gladness and joy with the newly-won freedom and renewed life with her family.

It had been Agnes's intention to complete her last year of secondary school in the village before starting her job as a singer. Toto disagreed with her plan and insisted that she had to give priority to her family, ignoring his own responsibility to provide for her needs. In the context of village culture, his attitude is considered as realistic and morally acceptable. She described her thoughts on the benefit of continuing school in comparison with her joy working as a singer:

I understand that education is important. But do you think a secondary school diploma will help me find a better job? In my view education does not guarantee prosperity. Since I was a small girl my dream has always been to become a singer. It gives me a radiant feeling. During the days I do not work as a singer I only waste my time at home, and my day becomes boring. I hate it.

She is paid twenty thousand rupiah (US\$2.00) for each stage performance. *Saver* (small sums of cash donated by the audience during the show) are shared among the members of the band. They are called on to perform about 45 times a month during the height of the festive season.

Several months after Agnes returned from Jakarta her younger half-sister (age 8), who had been brought up in an adjacent village, came to join the family in Cimanis. For Agnes and the grandmother this meant they had another mouth to feed. Outside the festive season she could not find work as a singer; her grandmother managed to borrow money and sacks of rice from wealthier relatives, neighbours, and shopkeepers.

This situation made Agnes wonder whether she should sell her mobile phone and jewellery in order to supplement her income and obtain pocket money for her younger siblings. With the start of the next festive season she would have income from singing and repay her debts. Toto did also share the costs of living through the off season, but his contribution was far from sufficient.

Although Agnes could increase her income by taking a job in the sex trade, she knew her father and his mother fully opposed that course of action. In the view of Agnes's father and grandmother, poverty could not be traded for commercial sex; such work would destroy the dignity of not only Agnes herself but her whole family. In November 2007 Agnes was offered a job as a nightclub hostess by two men from a neighbouring sub-district. They asked Agnes and a friend of hers (Ria) whether they would be interested in going to the resort island of Bali to work in a nightclub. She declined their offer because she did not want a job which is known to attract propositions to engage in commercial sex. Her father and grandmother had both also argued against it. In Toto's view if Agnes accepted even one offer to earn money through the sex trade, she would get caught up in the problems of the 'twilight world' (*dunia malam*) and seriously risk losing her freedom and dignity. They each had warned her that although she might make good money as a hostess it would definitely be preferable for their whole family to 'feel hunger in the village' than for her to become one.

That was not the only time Agnes was offered such a job. She had already been encouraged by some village women operating in the sex business to take work in an establishment. She continued adamantly to refuse to enter the sex trade. But because of the persisting economic necessity she eventually did turn to being a singer in a nightclub in In-

dramayu which was run by a former sex worker from Cimanis married to a Singaporean. After working there one year or so Agnes had an intimate relationship with a man in his early thirties and got pregnant. She was made to marry by her father and settled as a mother with a child in another district.

In view of the active recruiting networks, rural Indramayan adolescent girls whose biological parents are divorced and who are brought up by their grandparent(s) in poverty are most likely to encounter propositions to work in the nightlife sector, and often end up there. But Agnes's story illustrates the importance of upbringing and the teaching of (grand)parents(s) which foster a girl's own ethical protection of her personal worth, thus offsetting the inevitability of becoming involved in sex commerce. The concerted attempts made by Agnes and her (grand-) parent to keep her away from potentially detrimental activities is, as Bandura (2000, 2001, 2006) described, an exercise of 'collective agency' for attaining common objectives.

The next story describes the dilemmas of a lower secondary school leaver unable to continue her education, nor to find a '*halal*' job' (one permissible according to Islamic law) either in her home village or beyond. It also illustrates how such a job-seeker exercises her agency to protect herself from the offers of what would be impermissible work.

Suci: In pursuit of a '*halal*' job

Suci was thirteen years old in 2004 when we first met in Cimanis; she is an eldest child with two younger sisters. In 1985 her parents had migrated from Cimanis to the province of East Kalimantan (Borneo) under a state-run transmigration programme in the hope of a better life. Suci and her sisters were all born there. Despite their aspirations the family remained at subsistence level which led her parents to give their third daughter up to a married couple for adoption.

In 1997, during the last period of Suharto's New Order regime, severe ethnic violence broke out between local (indigenous) inhabitants and the migrant settlers of Kalimantan. Suci's family fled back to Cimanis. Suci completed her elementary education in the village but due to financial constraints she could not continue at school. She remained idle at home for almost a year. Fortunately a free-tuition policy introduced in 2004 enabled her to go to a public secondary school. Every day after school she worked as a housemaid at a wealthy relative's house. She was given

150,000 rupiah (US\$17) per month but was well aware she was being underpaid.

Suci graduated from lower secondary school in July 2006. Although she very much wanted to continue her education it was clear to her that her parents could not afford to let her continue into upper secondary school (where a tuition fee continues to be required). 'I am very bored!' she told me emphatically in early September 2007. She was frustrated by her situation: unable to continue education and with nothing to do. 'I am looking for a job outside the village, preferably factory work, but I do not get to see any recruiters during Ramadan,' she told me during the fasting month. In her parlance 'recruiter' means a friend or adult acquaintance who can arrange a job in an urban area. She did once take a job as a live-in housemaid in a small town in a neighbouring district, Subang, but disliked the work and returned home after only four days.

After her return to Cimanis, mid-2007, a recruitment agent from another village offered her work as a maid in Singapore. She knew she was not yet old enough to apply for international migrant work but decided to try her luck because the recruiter insisted he could supply her with legal documents—confiscated from someone else. In reality this was not possible. Suci said:

These days it has become more difficult to obtain false legal documents... Well, I will wait until I'm old enough. Till then I'll get work experience in Jakarta.

In villages of Indramayu district, secondary school leavers of her age are frequent targets of brokers for commercial sex. This is how Suci described her experience of being nearly recruited into the night world.

I was almost taken to Bali. Two recruiters from another sub-district came to offer me a waitress job there. They had learned through my girlfriend, Cicih, that I was keen to find work. Cicih's older sister had already obtained a job in a Bali nightclub with the assistance of these two men. I was told I could earn 25,000 rupiah (US\$2.74) per hour but only when I was picked up by a customer.

This explanation about the nature of the 'waitress job' rather mystified her; the parents were also very suspicious of such an arrangement. So Suci did not take up the offer.

In mid-November 2007 Suci left for Jakarta to take a waitressing job there. She found this job through a former classmate who introduced her

to an adult woman in an adjacent village. This woman—a former sex worker who married one of her clients—operates a small cafeteria with her Chinese-Indonesian husband in the area round Mangga Dua train station in North Jakarta. Suci's mother told me, 'Suci asked my permission to take this job. Because she was determined about it my husband and I only told Suci to take care of herself there in Jakarta. For example, be suspicious of strangers; don't consume any drinks offered by strangers.'

When I asked Suci's mother why she had not agreed to Suci taking the job in Bali, she replied that 'offered' work seemed not correct; earning money that way—she was implying commercial sex—was not acceptable to her. She said,

Suci's present work in Jakarta is as a waitress, serving food. Although it is very tiring and low paid (400,000 rupiah or about US\$44 per month) the money is clean, unlike what it would be from that job in Bali.

In answer to her mother's very earnest request, I visited Suci at the workplace to observe her situation. She worked together with her best friend from Cimanis. The cafeteria is located along a main street close to the red-light district.

In mid-January 2008 Suci returned to Cimanis. She said she had quit her job as waitress in Jakarta. She looked different from when I had last seen her in September. Her hair was partly dyed red and she wore short pants and a tank top. She vividly recounted the stimulating work experiences and romances she had in Jakarta during the two months; in fact she liked the waitress job in that cafeteria but she was annoyed by her male employer's frequent verbal abuse.

Before returning home Suci had looked for other jobs. There were several offers for domestic work and joining an office cleaning service. The former was not her ideal option: 'Being a domestic helper is a tough occupation for people my age because our movements are highly controlled. We can't just hang around away from the workplace during our free time'. Although the cleaning service job was the type of work she was hoping for, the salary was too little for her to live on in Jakarta. 'Without connections, getting a job is not easy', she said. She has continually been on the look for one in Cimanis and had found three possibilities. In our last interview she told me she did intend to get a proper job, not a form of work involving the sex trade.

But Suci remained unemployed for almost a year. She gave up the idea of getting a job; instead, she went to East Kalimantan to marry the man with whom there had been an arrangement for marriage since childhood. In 2010 she gave a birth to a baby girl.

Suci's story proves that some teenage girls from poverty-stricken households—even in source areas of sex workers—do have the ability to discern which employment opportunities fit their own ideas of what they want to do, and to make decisions on that basis. They can show a wariness about the job prospects offered by a broker and find ways to cross-check the employment information when they think that is probably necessary.

Reflections on individual agency in transition

The three narratives reflect how adolescent girls with very limited life options exercised individual agency to defend themselves from being recruited into the sex sector. They also illustrate how the course each girl took was shaped by the interplay between various parental and external forces and their own reactions to these influences. They highlight the commonalities and differences in social structural and cultural forces which surround the girls' lives and their individual and family circumstances, and analyse the interplay between these influences and the girls' individual agency. They bring out the fact that poverty, the lack of opportunity for continued education and of decent job prospects in both rural and urban contexts are shared conditions among rural Indramayan girls.

To improve the family economy and possibly enjoy modern consumer products, migrant work in urban Indonesia or abroad is seen as a viable means for such movement up the social ladder. Engaging in migrant work has increasingly become one of the potential directions which girls can take after they reach their puberty, and thus one important factor influencing the life course of rural girls. However, the types of migrant work opportunities open to them are highly gendered and therefore restricted to certain labour markets: domestic work (both in urban areas and overseas), factory jobs, and occupations within entertainment sector including the sex sector. These conditions have an important influence on the decisions and actions which the girls and their parents take regarding ways of making a living.

As described in the biographic narratives, the degrees, forms and lengths of time in which the girls were exposed to the likelihood of being involved in the sex trade were different between the individual girls. These differences could partly be explained by looking into the nature of parent-daughter power relations and the ways in which parents exercise their authority over their daughter. Intra-household power structure takes various forms but parents are almost always in a superior position in the rural Indonesian context—a hierarchy in which daughters are expected to remain obedient. A few girls do find the ways their parents exercise power over them oppressive and even damaging; others find it supportive for their present and future well-being.

As shown in the narratives of Filza and Suci, for example, the experiences of exposure to the offer of job prospects in the nightlife sector by brokers appear to be quite different. While Filza was under a great deal of parental pressure to engage her in the sex trade, Suci was given leeway and parental protection to explore and judge what offers would be acceptable or unacceptable to her. At a household level they experienced different degrees of autonomy and restrictions in their responses to the job prospects in the nightlife sector. These cases suggest the agency of girls can be both enabled and suppressed by existing power relations between parents and daughters, and the way these power relations are exercised.

Filza's story tells how the pressures put upon her to join in the trade came from step-father and mother who wanted her to make quick money for them. It appears that her parents saw Filza as their property and an important source of wealth; therefore they tried to push her into the trade. Filza underwent a series of maltreatments: denial of proper food and living space, sexual assault, disconnection of social ties beyond the immediate family, and threats regarding the consequences of her continued refusal. Such actions are not uncommon in girls' experience of parental attempts at control prior to taking up work in the nightlife sector. The continued parental pressures placed upon girls in the absence of viable alternative options can be described as an exercise of oppressive or destructive parental agency which could considerably inhibit or 'thin' the girls' agency. The process of girls being pushed away to the sex sector could be understood as interactions or clashes between parents' and daughters' agency.

Parental power does, though, sometimes take the form of guidance, support and protection, during the time of decision-making about whether or not their daughter becomes involved in any potentially detrimental activities. This reflects moral principles of the parents regarding how money should be earned, giving consideration to their daughter's personal respect and interests. The careful attention Suci's mother gave her during the job-hunting process is an example of a parent's protective attitude. During the period Suci was employed in a cafeteria in Jakarta, her mother regularly contacted her by sending text messages from a mobile phone owned by a neighbour, and she even asked me to visit Suci to inquire about her welfare. At the time Suci was approached by procurers who send girls to Bali's nightlife sector, her mother was on the alert against their activity and tried to protect her from an untrustworthy offer. Similar protective action was taken by Agnes's father when these same brokers made an attempt to lure her with promises of a lucrative job. Her father had wanted her to choose to discontinue her schooling and become a singer in order to support the family, an example of power being used overbearingly.

Suci's and Agnes's experiences suggest that a facilitative relationship between parents and girls, which provides them with a degree of guidance and protection, enhances and even strengthens girls' individual agency which help them make a more effective decision regarding job prospects offered by sex-trade brokers. Parental influence taking a form of support and protection could be described as 'facilitative parental agency'. The evidence thus suggests that girls who have grown up in families where parental influence is protective are unlikely to go into the sex trade.

The three girls experienced different degrees of oppressive or protective parental power, but there are similar characteristics in their own agency: a capacity to make an assessment of what the opportunities and potential risks are for them, along with an ability to maintain autonomy over their lives under unfavourable conditions, and the courage to engage (if necessary) with oppressive power relations to improve their conditions and circumstances.

Girls like Filza are not in fact easily influenced by oppressive parental control. During the time Filza underwent harsh experiences, described by her as 'living hell', she resisted her stepfather and mother both overtly and covertly. She recounted her plight to her school friends and teachers,

and even asked me to appeal to the village authorities. This series of actions made can be understood as a moment and process of development of her individual agency as a result of her exposure to dire circumstances.

Her actions to draw attention and possible help from outside the family made her stepfather even more violent, but such tactics were the only available means to break away from the situation. This resistance introduced external social power into the family ranks in the hope of counteracting unfavourable pressures. With the help of her uncle and other older relatives she continued her subtle resistance which eventually discouraged the intentions to plunge her into the sex trade. In other words, the intra-household power relations were restructured through her own actions. Not all girls under similar potentially violent parental pressures are in a situation enabling them to seek out appropriate social support from their older kin or other adults in rural communities; nor do they all manage to develop and exercise their individual agency within their personal conditions and circumstances.

It should be noted that an important similarity between Filza, Agnes and Suci is their emphatic stance against commercial sex for money. They uphold strong moral values, considering that trading their body debases and destroys their own worth and dignity; the potential monetary and material benefits they could gain from it are never seen as an acceptable trade-off. Such definite moral values are brought to bear in assessing and reacting to any questionable jobs arranged by brokers and/or their parents. Strong willpower and resilience to unwanted pressure are a common characteristic of these girls.

6.3 Experiences of recruitment into the sex sector

This section illustrates different trajectories taken by seven adolescent girls who entered the sex industry in Indonesia and/or Japan. It aims to obtain a comprehensive understanding of their situations constrained and influenced as they are by structural forces and individual and family circumstances, and also to understand their reaction against or conforming to the situation.

Ria: Keep moving on within the scarcity of choice and opportunity

Ria, aged fifteen, dropped out of vocational upper secondary school in late 2007 and soon went to work at a Bali nightclub. She is an eldest

child and had a younger brother who died in early 2007. Her family is a landless household residing in her grandmother's house. Her father engages in seasonal ploughing work in the rice paddies and her mother is a seasonal agricultural day labourer.

Ria's dream is to become a flight attendant, but she is aware that this cannot be more than just a dream. She had been eager to continue her education at least to the completion of upper secondary school. Since elementary school she has aspired to work in Taiwan or Hong Kong in the hope of earning a good sum of money to build a house for her parents. To her this is a realistic goal. She believes she would then bring great happiness to her parents. Although Ria's family was clearly poor and falling into debt at certain times of year, her parents did attempt to enrol her in a vocational upper secondary school. But the burden of school expenses led her to drop out after six months. She told me she had decided to look for a '*halal*' job' in Jakarta while waiting until she was of sufficient age to enter the international migrant labour market. But she apparently abandoned this intention, as evidenced by her move to Bali.

Two male brokers from an adjacent sub-district offered Ria a job as waitress in one of Bali's nightclubs. The offer was appealing because they promised she would be paid about three million rupiah (US\$328) a month with free meals and accommodation. She learned that some young women in her village had previously gone to Bali for work arranged by these brokers. Ria was not suspicious of the job arrangement—unlike Agnes and Suci—and finally convinced her parents to approve her departure. Her parents borrowed a million rupiah (US\$109) from a well-off landlord, about half of which was paid to the brokers as their fee and the rest given to Ria for her initial living expenses in Bali.

Ria joined Wanto (one of the brokers) on an inter-island bus with three other teenage girls from nearby villages. The next evening Ria called her friend, Agnes, on her mobile phone to tell of their safe arrival in Kuta (a popular beach resort area of Bali). Within the very next days she made separate calls to Agnes and to her cousin (a teenage girl named Sri) telling of the desperate situation at her workplace. Agnes and Sri showed me a text message sent by Ria, which can be translated as follows:

I can't stand to be here any longer... I am in tears about this place... it is like torture... The promised allowance is not being paid by *Mami* [the

madam], but instead I am forced to work to clear my supposed debt to her...

I was urged by both Agnes and Sri to find out her circumstance, so I promptly called Ria on the phone. She explained that when she arrived at the destination she realised Wanto had lied to her. She said she was made to wear a sexy costume while drinking with male clients. *Mami*, Ria's employer, told her she owed about one million rupiah (US\$109). The charges for her lodgings and meals would be deducted from her earnings. Ria begged me to help facilitate her immediate withdrawal from the workplace. It was clear she was hugely concerned about the debt which she allegedly owed her employer as well as the debt which her mother owed their neighbour.

I obtained consent from both Ria and her father to seek assistance from the Indonesian authorities and in coordination with the staff of YKB I reported her case to the Women and Child Protection Bureau of the Bali Provincial Police. Within two days Ria was rescued. Following up on the evidence Ria gave, the nightclub where she worked was raided. The three teenage girls who had travelled with Ria from rural Indramayu to Bali were also released. The four were returned to their home villages with an escort of police officers. It should be noted, however, that the other three girls who were also taken back (one aged fourteen and two aged fifteen) in fact expressed their unwillingness to be withdrawn from their workplace. They even attempted to escape from the Child Protection Centre of the Bali Provincial Police. It appeared they had had no intention of quitting their jobs as hostesses, and were cross with Ria because they knew Ria's withdrawal had caused the police raid. After they learned that Wanto, the broker, was in a police holding cell they begged the police escort: 'Please don't treat him badly, he is a good man.' Some weeks later all three had separately left to return to the nightlife sector.

After Ria returned home she said she would never work as a hostess again but she maintained her aspiration to work overseas: 'I am eager to work, but my age does not permit me to carry out my plan yet.'

Three years later (November 2010) she came back home from Singapore having worked as a maid but her total savings over the 15 months were only five million rupiah (US\$550). So she then began to prepare to leave for work in Taiwan.

Despite her preference for a job that is *halal*, Ria did, in fact, find herself working, against her will, in the nightlife sector. This story illustrates how a strong sense of filial duty—as Ria showed—often has ambitious young women snatching at an informal opportunity for employment without giving it sufficient consideration. Ria did remain autonomous and in a position to steer the course of her life after literally and, by definition, being ‘trafficked’ into the red-light area. It should also be noted that the needs, and hopes of girls in the nightlife sector differed depending on their specific situations and backgrounds. Girls such as Ria, who are deceived by brokers and want to move out from the nightlife culture, can well have the ability to redirect the course of their life if proper assistance including ‘rescue operation’ is offered them. Others such as the three girls who were unwillingly made to return home along with Ria are unlikely to be helped by support similar to that which Ria received. It further suggests that provision of the kind of support informed and shaped by normative concepts of child trafficking could not only be rejected by the girls but also even bring unfavourable outcomes to them; these girls seem to see themselves as victims of counter-trafficking activities.

This highlights the dilemma facing intervening individuals/organisations who are obliged to respond to the contrasting manifestations of agency among the girls they try to help, but with few bases to support and respect such agency beyond the premises found in normative models of girlhood and youth.

The next story specifically illustrates the way in which an adolescent girl’s own decision to enter the sex trade is shaped by interaction between the girl, her parents and the family’s socio-economic circumstances.

Karina: Reacting to a desperate family crisis

Karina, aged sixteen in April 2008, is an eldest child with a brother in lower secondary school and a sister thirteen years younger than she. For some time her mother had been urging her to enter the sex trade. In October 2006 her father (a motorcycle taxi driver) had a serious traffic accident. This disabled him to the extent of being unable to earn a living anymore (he had been earning the equivalent of between US\$2.00 and US\$4.00 a day). Karina’s mother was pregnant. When she came to give birth to this third child she had to be taken to hospital. The cost of the

delivery, added to the ongoing treatment of Karina's father, was beyond their means. A local authority subsidised part of these medical costs but the rest was settled by borrowing money from Karina's relatives and neighbours. Karina's parents had virtually no income for almost ten months. Her mother had to borrow extra money and sacks of rice to feed her family.

Early in July 2007, several days before Karina was officially due to leave lower secondary school, she was taken to a Jakarta sex establishment in the hope of settling the outstanding debts (amounting then to about twelve million rupiah or US\$1,313) and earning additional money to support the family. This job was arranged by her aunt (an older sister of Karina's mother and a former sex worker in Jakarta) who was acquainted with a pimp. Karina was well aware that she would be trading sexual favours for money; she was neither forced nor tricked by her aunt, in fact it was she who initiated the idea of this job in the hope of saving her family from destitution.

My parents asked me to help them clear the debts and contribute to the survival of our family. They were crying as they spoke to me. I felt so sorry for them, and that's why I decided to go to Jakarta.

She confided to me that she would feel great shame if her friends and neighbours found out that she engaged in such work. We were talking just a week or so after her starting, and she still had some hope she might be able to withdraw. Late in July she sent me the following text message: 'Please take me away from this dirty world immediately... I cannot bear to live here, please rescue me.' A speedy but temporary solution would have been to seek assistance from the police but she rebuffed the idea. She showed great fear because that outcomes her parents would be adversely affected if the authorities were involved. In the end she chose to remain in the trade.

There was a noticeable change in the power relationship between her parents after her father became disabled. It was obvious that he lost his authority in the family, and her mother began to take over the decision-making. Her mother played an important part in arranging to borrow money and rice as well as placing Karina in the sex sector. Accepting his powerlessness, Karina's father said there was no choice but to 'sacrifice' Karina for his family's survival. One time Karina's mother interrupted the conversation between her husband and me rather crossly, saying: 'You see to our needs and settle the debt, and then Karina can leave that

job.' Karina's aunt said firmly: 'There are quite a few girls who have not even completed elementary school before engaging in the sex trade. Karina should be grateful that she completed lower secondary school and is better off for it.' This remark by Karina's aunt would seem to show an opinion that commercial sex can be justified for underage girls in terms of their duty to save the family from destitute circumstance; that poverty can be overcome by engagement in the sex trade. In such socio-economic contexts parental or familial involvement in the process of inducting (schoolgoing) girls into commercial sex is not seen as a crime or as sinful.

Despite Karina's unwillingness to continue in the job she soon accepted her plight as her fate. After about one month she said, 'You don't need to worry about my problem; nobody can help me out of this despair.... I've already got used to the work; if I keep hoping to quit I'll suffer worse. So I'm forgetting the whole idea. Even if I could get out and return home I would anyway be called *jablaj*³ by my friends'. By this time she had some regular customers. She sometimes was to be seen with her workmates in a mobile phone sales point (in Mangga Besar) run by a former sex worker from Cimanis. Such freedom of movement indicated she had gained a degree of trust from her pimp.

A few months later some material changes could be seen in Karina's parents' home. Her mother had purchased a new motorcycle and the latest model of mobile phone. Her mother and her baby sister wore prominent jewellery (bracelet and necklace). Her father had started to engage in petty gambling in the village. He had once in a while visited Karina's pimp in Jakarta to receive her earnings. After about one year in the trade she did leave the job to become mistress of one of her regular customers, a wealthy middle-aged Chinese Indonesian, and lived in an apartment in Jakarta. Her family now receives two million rupiah (US\$206) as a regular 'monthly allowance' and the man bought them two hectares of paddy field, an amount of land enough to place them among the wealthy households of Cimanis.

Karina's story illustrates the situation of adolescent girls who plunge into the sex industry purely as a means for obtaining money. Karina's primary intention was just to cope with her family crisis; but her parents took advantage of the chance to cater for more than mere basic needs. Though, to begin with, she greatly suffered from the trading of her body, she coped with her dislike of the job and the unpleasantness of the situa-

tion in order to improve her family's circumstances. One may suggest that she is an 'active' victim of inevitable circumstances; but as evidenced in the narrative her autonomy was by no means entirely effaced.

The next story is an example of a girl who entered the nightlife sector autonomously and who eventually moved out also of her own accord, redirecting her life into different employment.

Julia: veering away from the sex trade

Julia, aged sixteen, was still making the transition from rural life to the urban nightlife world at the time of the first interview in mid-2006. She is her parents' second daughter and her father was employed on the temporary staff of the local government. Some months after completing lower secondary school in 2005 she tried her luck by applying for a job as an 'entertainer' in Japan; this was arranged by a nearby village recruiter who had approached both Julia and her parents. Having passed an audition arranged by the involved scouting agency she first worked as a hostess at a high-class Japanese karaoke club in South Jakarta, waiting for a permit to work in Japan. No work permit having been granted after more than a year, she withdrew the application and returned home in October 2006.

It was seen that Julia dressed more stylishly than before; and she began to hang around at night with adolescent village girls who were already working in the sex sector. One night she proudly told her girlfriends how she had liked having a glass of vodka and taking a puff of a cigarette at the club.

Within less than a couple of months after her return to the village she went back to work as a hostess in a karaoke club in Bekasi, a Jakarta suburb. But she could not make ends meet and explored ways to be able to go and work abroad. She applied for domestic work job in Taiwan but failed the medical examination. She then applied and gained permission to work in Singapore but the conditions for and during the pre-departure training for the job, there in Jakarta, were so bad that she gave up the idea. The following January she went to stay with her cousin Cindy who had lived and worked in the red-light area Mangga Besar. Cindy and Julia went to a discothèque every night, with other freelance friends from rural Indramayu, to pick up customers and make money. Some of the freelancers made their own approach to male customers, but Julia did not do that; she only went along if the customer approached her. Such passivity

sometimes caused tension between her and Cindy. Cindy told me rather crossly: 'Julia was too selective of the customers—rejecting them for being too old or for other reasons. Since she could not earn enough money I finally had to pay the rent, food bills and even mobile phone credits'.

Julia tried to be careful to avoid the actual work she was doing in Bekasi (and later in Mangga Besar) becoming known to her parents. This was how she and her mother were communicating while Julia was away from home:

When I was working as a hostess in Bekasi I did so secretly from my parents. One day, though, my mother found out and rang and asked me 'Are you working in the club?' and I answered 'Yes'. My mother said only 'Hmmm'; nothing else. I did not reveal to my parents what I was actually doing in Mangga Besar. My mother called me again, wanting to visit; but I kept making excuses to prevent her coming.

Comparing Julia with her elder sister the father expressed frustration at the inconsistency of Julia's career choice:

My first daughter is smart and dutiful. She had excellent results at lower secondary school. She would have liked to continue her education but she was feeling we had worked so hard to send her to school, she chose to go to work in Taiwan so she could help us and went off. Julia—so different—said 'Middle school is enough', and has kept moving without settling into any steady job. Once she thought about working in Singapore but because she could not come back for a few years and the work was probably going to be backbreaking, she decided against. She said she had heard that if she could work in Japan for only about six months, she could earn good money. Julia is still dreaming of going to Japan. I gather she has recently moved to Jakarta and is working in a restaurant making Rp 600,000 a month. Now that she is getting paid for hard work perhaps she will understand the value of money.

Nearly half year after living in Mangga Besar Julia decided to pull out from the Jakarta nightlife sector altogether. This is how she told of her future aspirations, recalling her life in Jakarta:

I really understood how difficult it is to make a life in Jakarta. I could not earn enough to pay my own rent and always had to rely on friends for support. Recently a broker came to me talking about a contract marriage to a Taiwanese. He said there were ways to work over there, but I refused because it seemed too risky. I decided once again to try to go and work in Japan.

Julia finally decided to go to Japan as an entertainer though she had not really understood what an ‘entertainer job’ meant. Her particular concern was being ordered to have sex with the customers. A few months later, realising all possibilities to go to Japan were gone, she decided to go to work as a maid in Singapore and embarked in October 2007. Within a year she had returned home. In 2009 she applied for a job as a maid in Hong Kong and went off there.

Quite a number of adolescent girls in rural Indramayu make an autonomous decision to try their luck in the adult-entertainment sector abroad. The choice is apparently influenced by the ‘successes’ demonstrated by young women returning from hostess or sex work overseas. It is not unusual that such job seekers, when failing to achieve a similar posting, give themselves into the domestic sex industry as a second choice. Some are able to cope with the decision they made; others are not, and shift to taking other options open to them. Julia’s story exemplifies how a way of thinking, and acting on a decision made, are sometimes be shown by rural adolescent girls who have initially become involved in the sex trade. It also shows they exercise a degree of agency to seek out their preferred type of job and conditions of work in a continuum of constrained choices.

The next story tells how a girl made her way through the nightlife sector, acquiring and developing skills for the betterment of her life.

Icha: In search of better options

Icha left for Jakarta’s nightlife sector shortly after completing lower secondary school in June 2008. She is an eldest daughter with a sister one year younger than she (who has been in the sex sector since dropping out from secondary school after her first year) and a half sister who is seven years younger than she. During her early childhood her mother divorced and then married a man from a village near Cimanis. She recalled her mother and stepfather were supportive about her schooling but Icha felt she was falling behind others in the class. So during her third secondary school year, she was already thinking of looking for a job in Jakarta instead of going on to upper secondary school.

She went back and forth between her village and city workplaces. From the time she first left the village to the point she settled in as a masseuse at a family health spa in a North Jakarta three-star hotel she had changed her workplace at least five times. Her first job was hostess

at a sleazy nightclub in Central Jakarta. She went there because her girlfriend from an adjacent sub-district already operated at that establishment and mediated Icha's appointment. For the following year and a half she worked at the club, making between one and two million rupiah (US\$96–192) a month. Hostesses who operated there neither got paid a basic salary nor were supplied lodgings by the club owner. Their earnings were only from the sale of drinks (ten per cent of the charge for drinks), tips given by customers and an 'extra fee' they could charge their customers for going out for sex. The choice to offer 'extra service' was left to the hostesses. Icha preferred not to.

Icha got by on small earnings but because the establishment had been gradually losing business throughout 2009, she occasionally had to borrow money from her friends to pay her rent. She began to look for other places. Though finding it difficult to support herself in Jakarta she still had a clear vision about her further career. She told me about it:

Working as a maid in urban Indonesia or abroad was not my choice; could only be a last resort. I want a job which will give me fun, some freedom and of course cheerful and helpful relationships with fellow workers. I think my experience here in the nightclub could be used in other workplaces.

Icha had tried her luck in a couple of karaoke bars in Bandung and nightclubs in Jakarta using her own networks, but lasted for only a week or so at each place. She nevertheless got training in therapeutic massage (for a month) and was given a position in a high-class men's health spa in Bandung. She was entitled to free lodgings, meals and transport service between the living quarters and the workplace. At the establishment masseuses such as herself were called 'therapists' and were actually expected to perform sexual services at the request of their customers. She had tried to adapt to the new circumstance but a couple of months on she asked her manager if there was a way out from being involved in this type of extra service. Since the establishment where she was is one of a 'health spa' chain run by the same owner, options were open to her. Fortunately she was transferred to the branch in North Jakarta which only offers body treatment massages for male and female customers.

Compared with the time operating as a hostess in Central Jakarta's nightclub, the work in North Jakarta provides her with a steady income plus social space. It enables her to explore and follow up 'symbols of

modernity' such as adorning herself in the latest fashion and using a Blackberry phone to develop her cyber friend network.

Icha's story is a not uncommon illustration of initiative, resiliency and capability among adolescent girls who consciously direct themselves into the urban nightlife sector. It also illustrates how girls initiate the course into the nightlife sector as their own choice despite options to continue schooling being still open to them, and not being exposed to oppressive parental power relations. Icha is one of such youngsters who made her own decision to become part of the sex sector. It is noteworthy that Icha could maintain a sense of control over her life and even raise the standard of her life—as evidenced by the constant assessment and handling of potential risks and difficulties she made during the time in the metropolis. It would seem that the degree of vulnerability and restrictions of adolescent girls earning from the nightlife sector is various and variable; they can even be reduced by the decisions and actions they themselves take. Some girls involved in sex work develop a capacity to negotiate with her employers and choose conditions of work which they find more fit to them, while others such as Julia are less capable of adapting themselves to a workplace and then move away from it.

The next story describes the interplay between an orphaned adolescent girl and her adoptive parents which had her, knowingly though reluctantly, being pushed into the Japanese sex industry.

Wiwit: Responding to imperative duties

Wiwit, aged seventeen, was repatriated from the Japanese sex sector in mid-2007. She had grown up in a village about five kilometres from Cimanis. She was the fourth child of the five in her family. Her father died about a month after her youngest brother was born. The thirty-day-old baby was adopted by a married aunt, the younger sister of Wiwit's mother and a former sex worker. Wiwit was then six years old.

During the 5th year of her primary school Wiwit's mother died and then she moved to her eldest sister's house. From that point quite a number of her older relatives tried to engage her in the sex trade. She recalled one of the unpleasant experiences she had undergone.

One day when we were alone in the living room my aunt began: 'I heard our neighbour just had a modern house built by their daughter. This was possible because the daughter sacrificed herself by working in Jakarta.' I knew what she would go on to talk about, so I left the room.

Though she was pressured by her relatives to enter the commercial sex sector, she felt it was not a wise option. It would only destroy her self-esteem and dignity; so she resisted their attempts at persuasion.⁴

During Wiwit's first year at secondary school, when she was still thirteen, her eldest sister died of disease. Given their marginal economic situation her remaining siblings (two older brothers) could not afford to provide food and accommodation for her. Her mother's younger sister eventually took her home to join Wiwit's younger brother. After less than one year she had to stop going to school because her aunt fell several months behind in paying the monthly tuition fee (15,000 rupiah (US\$1.68)).

She got a job in Jakarta, being then fourteen. She was ostensibly recruited for a baby-sitting job but it basically involved doing routine household chores. The workload was heavy; she was denied proper meals. After a week or so she quit and returned home. Sometime later Yanto, a recruiter from another village, asked whether Wiwit was interested in a hostess job in Japan. Her aunt initially disagreed with Wiwit taking this offer but having seen and appraised successful women who had returned from working in Japan, her aunt began encouraging her to go there. Wiwit passed an audition arranged by a talent scouting agency in Jakarta. She took an intensive Japanese language course plus dance lessons for three months. When her work permit as 'entertainer' was granted by the Japanese immigration authority, Yanto helped Wiwit acquire a false legal document which enabled her to get a passport showing an age inflated by six years.

She took a direct flight from Jakarta to Nagoya. Her Japanese employer operated two nightclubs, and she rotated work between them. On her first day Wiwit did not even know how to offer a drink in Japanese to her first client. During the first few months she managed to communicate by using gestures and referring to a Japanese conversation booklet which was given her by a regular customer. The job was stimulating and pleasing. She had no feeling of being cheated by either the recruiter, the scouting agency, or the employer, because the actual work was very close to the conditions stipulated in the contract which she had signed in Jakarta.

She returned home with about 30 million rupiah (US\$3,274). Of this sum she kept only two million (US\$218) for her own use, giving the rest to her aunt by which her aunt and uncle (effectively her foster parents)

were able to repay a loan which they had taken from a bank. Wiwit's older brothers and other relatives came to request some cut. If she refused they nagged her: 'Remember who gave you something when you had no pocket money?' Wiwit did feel obliged to offer them some of her money. Bringing back a good sum brought about a dramatic change in her aunt's attitude. Her aunt now offered to wash Wiwit's clothes. Wiwit was neither asked to assist in meal preparation nor to clean the house. Nobody interrupted her even if she slept past 11.00 a.m. This was the first time she ever felt warmth, care and attention at her aunt's.

It was not long before Wiwit's money was spent. She reapplied for new work in Japan, and passed an audition; but no work permit was forthcoming from the Japanese immigration authority. A middle-age broker named Cecep who lived near her aunt's house came to see Wiwit one day, asking whether she was keen to work in Japan again. He told her: 'There is still a way to get a hostess job in Japan. Fifteen million rupiah (US\$1,637) is promised as a monthly salary if you are prepared to provide all-in services'. She knew that 'all-in services' means providing sexual services, so she refused this offer at once. Her aunt, however, encouraged Wiwit to go to Japan again, saying 'What's wrong with you? You would be paid such good money.'

Wiwit was thrown into despair. Her overt resistance triggered great anger on the part of her aunt. Wiwit recalled how had it had been after her older sister's death. She had depended completely on her aunt and uncle for her upbringing. It struck her that this was the time for her to submit and repay the debt, in gratitude, to her aunt and uncle; so she finally decided to take the offer.

Cecep took Wiwit to Jakarta and introduced her to a Chinese-Indonesian called Tommy who explained that it was no longer possible to work as a foreign hostess in a legitimate job. However, there were loopholes which enabled entry into Japan. Tommy explained that one loophole was to marry a Japanese citizen. A while later she was introduced to Koji, a Japanese in his early 60s, who served as her bogus fiancé. Tommy created the following courtship scenario they could use:

Wiwit would say she had met Koji at the nightclub in Nagoya where she worked as a hostess during her last stint there, and that their relationship had evolved after she returned to Indonesia, and that they had got married in Jakarta. They acquired a bogus marriage certificate from the civil registry (*catatan sipil*) in Indonesia. Though their 'marriage' was not registered with

the Japanese authorities, Wiwit was still entitled to visit Koji in Japan. In order to obtain a temporary-visit visa from the Japanese Embassy in Jakarta, they would say that they planned to have a wedding ceremony in Japan. Such joyful occasion would mean taking her family members to Japan. Tommy recruited three Indramayan sex workers who wanted to engage in such work in Japan. He acquired fake documents to prove Wiwit and these three women were sisters so that Koji could invite the bogus sisters to attend the wedding.

Using that story Wiwit and the three bogus sisters managed to obtain visas. Wiwit was informed by Tommy that this job arrangement now left her with a big debt—four million yen (US\$34,400): equivalent to nearly two years of work at the salary Cecep had promised. She would be able—in fact was required—to settle this debt by performing sexual favours in Japan. Because she had never engaged in commercial sex, Tommy encouraged her to start it prior to setting off for Japan. Rather than taking up this suggestion she chose to have sex with her boyfriend.

At this point she felt confused because she did not want to engage in commercial sex—yet there seemed to be no other option: there was no escape from this reality. She needed to prepare herself to accept the situation she would encounter in Japan. Her aunt was ignorant of what Wiwit had gone through before departure. So Wiwit made up her mind to go on with the job placement plan in the hope of accomplishing what she called ‘repaying her debt of gratitude to her aunt and uncle’.

Wiwit and Koji took a flight to Nagoya. Upon arrival they travelled to Tokyo. Next morning she met her employer, a Taiwanese owner of a nightclub. Wiwit was taken to Ibaragi prefecture where this *mama-san* (‘madam’) operated with assistance from a member of the Japanese mafia (*yakuza*). Several days later her bogus sisters were brought to the club. Wiwit and her ‘sisters’ were told to prostitute themselves in order to settle the debt which they owed the *mama-san*.

Wiwit received no wages during her stay in Japan. She calculated the amount of money generated through her provision of sexual services to be roughly 500,000 yen (US\$4,839) per month. Her single source of income was the tips given by her generous customers. Wiwit earned the trust of the *mama-san* because she was obedient, had a good command of Japanese and most importantly attracted many regular customers. But because the *mama-san* showed something of a preference towards Wiwit, her bogus sisters turned hostile towards her.

There were opportunities to leave the workplace. One of her regular customers, a widower in his early 70s, encouraged Wiwit to quit. He even proposed clearing her debt if she would marry him but she declined this offer. Another opportunity to run away from the club came through a Chinese-Indonesian customer who said he lived in Japan and offered to manage an escape for her and her bogus sisters, and to arrange a better place for them. Trusting him they showed great interest in his plan. To their surprise and horror the very next day Wiwit and her sisters were threatened by Tommy on the phone. He said he would kill their family in their home villages. Wiwit realised that the offer had been a trap set by Tommy to test the four girls and discourage them from attempting an escape.

In May 2007 Wiwit was in an upbeat mood because most of her outstanding debt had been paid and she imagined earning a good sum of money for her family by continuing her job. Suddenly there was a police raid; Wiwit and her (bogus) 'sisters' were taken to a state-run protection centre for women.

Wiwit returned home with only 1,600,000 rupiah (US\$175). She gave it to her aunt but whose response was a harsh: 'What do you mean bringing such a small sum of money?' This callous reaction broke Wiwit's heart; she ran into her bedroom and sobbed for a long time. She told me what was going on in her mind: 'I finally could return home safely.... Why does my aunt not give me a word of sympathy, which is what is normally shown by parents.... Parents give thanks to God when their daughter returns safely'.

She and her (bogus) sisters entered a social reintegration programme in Cimanis village run by YKB in collaboration with the International Organization for Migration. While participating in this course two days a week for three months, she did not earn anything. In fact her aunt and uncle were burdened with a large debt. This was because they had taken a loan from a bank in order to help Wiwit's second migration to Japan—financing the wedding with her bogus fiancé, the preparation of bogus documents and domestic travel costs.

Wiwit was in agony because of their debt. The rainy season was a slow time for her uncle's food business, so it was difficult for them to make the monthly payment (500,000 rupiah or US\$55) on the loan. In addition her aunt revealed that she had financed the medical expenses of Wiwit's ailing mother before she died. These expenses were covered by

taking on debts. So Wiwit was under pressure to repay her aunt. It was apparent to her that her aunt wanted Wiwit to engage in commercial sex again in order to settle the debts.

Wiwit now hoped she might find a job as a shop-keeper, or waitress in a Japanese restaurant, in Jakarta; but when another aunt heard of this idea she scorned it: 'Are you aware of the paltry amount of money you would get from a waitress job? It's better to sell yourself to men; it will earn you a better sum'; Wiwit refused the suggestion.

Her bitter experience working as a domestic in Jakarta had entirely turned her against becoming a housemaid again, yet it seemed there were no other options except for commercial sex. She was often offered a job in that sector. She told me frankly: 'I want to escape to a place far from home. I have never received proper attention here.' Although, at that point, she was also enjoying the company of a boyfriend in the village, it was obvious that she was still in a dilemma, for nobody could mitigate the agony of the constraints she had lived under. In April 2008 she turned to the sex trade and worked in Patok Beusi's red light area (Subang district), although she realised she was pregnant. In January 2009 she left the job to give a birth to her child. Now a single mother, she determined to make money in a Bali 'massage parlour' to be able to bring up her son. Despite the ups and downs at the workplace there she has managed to earn some five million rupiah (US\$481) a month. After working there a little over two years, she built her own house in Indramayu.

Wiwit's story exemplifies how rural girls are inculcated with the concept of 'dutiful daughter' from pre-puberty and deal with the expectations of their (stand-in) parent(s). It also illustrates the ways in which inter-generational power structures in particular family settings and circumstances significantly reduce and constrain the agency of adolescent girls. Some are able to resist parental pressure; most, like Wiwit, are not able to do so and eventually navigate their life course to the nightlife sector, putting their own aspirations and sexual morality aside. Feelings of degradation or debasement are reckoned to be offset by fulfilling their supposed moral obligations in the family. It should be noted that some of those girls do gain a certain power and standing within their household once any marked financial or other material gains accrue, back home, from their work—even be it from the sex sector.

Wiwit's first and second entry into the Japanese sex industry initially appears to be quite similar; both times she was faced an inevitable choice under her aunt's overwhelming power. However, the degrees of autonomy or restriction experienced by her in each placement were different. During her first engagement as an 'entertainer' at the nightclub, even though she was bonded to the establishment where she was dictated to conform to her working conditions, she seemed to maintain a degree of individual autonomy, which appeared to be strengthened in the process of her work there and after her return home. Meanwhile, however, her succeeding experiences in the sex sector of Japan involved a series of deception, harsh treatment, and loss of control over her life.

In the next story, Lina tells how she underwent harsh experiences both at home and in the sex sector yet exercised her own agency to improve her conditions and circumstances in a way to suit herself.

Lina: mobilizing adult support through forceful agency

Lina, a returnee from the commercial sex industry of Japan, was once labelled by both the Japanese authorities and an international aid agency as a 'victim of child trafficking'. She is the eldest daughter of a former sex worker and grew up in a village some 20 km southeast of Cimanis. She completed lower secondary school in June 2005 having turned fifteen. She was then made to sell her virginity in Bali. The transaction was arranged by her stepfather with a local man who supplies girls from rural Indramayu to that tourist region. Somewhat later she was taken into the Japanese sex industry. Again the plan was initiated by the stepfather together with another local broker allied with a Chinese-Indonesian broker (Tom) living in Jakarta. Accompanied by Tom, Lina arrived in Japan in late August 2005 with a temporary visitor visa and was introduced to a Taiwanese madam, named Ko, who paid Tom 2.3 million yen (US\$20,881) for her. This madam took Lina to Gunma prefecture's hot spring resort town where she was running a nightclub. Lina was told she owed the madam five million yen (US\$45,393) and needed to settle it by 'selling her body' there. The fee for sexual transaction paid to the madam by Lina's customers was 20,000 yen (US\$182) per hour. No cut was given Lina but the personal tips given by some of her generous customers could be kept as her own earning. These varied between fifty and a hundred US dollars. She worked at Ko's nightclub until there was a police raid in late March 2006.

On 17 April Lina was repatriated to Jakarta and was taken to the Centre for Protection of Women and Children of Police Central Hospital. I was asked to accompany an activist from Cimanis who was employed as a local part-time coordinator of the International Organization for Migration (hereafter IOM). At the centre, Lina was given freedom to meet and talk to me. When I met her, Lina's first words to me were in Japanese: 'The Japanese police were so stupid! They caught me and made me come home. I wanted to remain working there.' She was really cross at being 'rescued' by the Japanese authorities.

From August 2006 Lina continued her education at an upper secondary school not far from her village; her school fee was paid by the IOM.⁵ But she often skipped school and frequently did not go home. In late January 2007 Lina sent texts to Udin, YKB's representative in Cimanis, asking him to help free her from a massage parlour in Mangga Besar. She was taken home by an operation arranged by the IOM social worker, James, in charge of Lina's case. It was soon after this that she told me why she had stopped attending school and ended up in the nightlife. She did not like her school because she was embarrassed and was shunned after her teacher insensitively mentioned to her classmates that Lina was a returnee from the Japanese sex sector. At home she was being chivvied by her mother (who was eight months pregnant at the time) and stepfather to earn money away from home. Her running away to the sex sector was a provisional solution to mitigate her personal predicament—the alienation at school and the problems at home.

Lina had some expectations of her own for her future: 'I desperately want to move out from my village. I just can't bear staying there. Attending secondary school is not my priority but I am hoping to take a Japanese language course somewhere.' Her demands and disobedient behaviour made the staff of both IOM and YKB edgy. Lina complained to me about IOM's Social Reintegration Assistance Programme (which included a twice weekly cookery class) which she found unappealing; but reluctantly attended from late January through March 2007.⁶ Early in April she suddenly disappeared from home again. In mid April she sent Udin a text message asking him to help coordinate with James to rescue her from Dolly—the largest official brothel complex in Surabaya, the provincial capital of East Java. A week later she was picked up and taken home; but after another few weeks she left the village yet again.

Early in May she called me to help coordinate IOM and YKB to rescue her from a nightclub in West Jakarta. I forwarded the message to James but his response was rather cold: 'Lina can leave her workplace herself. She has kept lying and using us to give backing to her own plan.' He suggested I could pick her up from the establishment and escort her to his office on his behalf. When I let Lina know about his proposal she boldly replied: 'Then can you come to my workplace tomorrow? And, please, bring police officers with you so they can negotiate with my boss [the pimp] about my exit, okay? Do you see what I mean?' This request was not one which I could fulfil alone, personally, so I asked James if the case could be handled by IOM. He reported it to the Jakarta Metropolitan Police Department, and a few days later they picked her up and returned her to her home. Within less than ten days, however, she had returned to the trade. In mid-May she sent me texts from one of the high-class sex establishments in Kelapa Gading area (North Jakarta) telling her plight there and seeking help: 'I wish to go home but how can it be done? My problem here is debt; I owe the pimp. Without settling it I cannot get out from here. If you could help get me out this time I will do what IOM wants of me'. By this point IOM had terminated the provision of social reintegration assistance for her, because apparently Lina had no intention to continue schooling or take a vocational skills training programme. When she realised no further help would be forthcoming from IOM she turned to me to ask if I could contact Mrs Asih (the female police officer who heads the Protection Unit for Women and Children of Indramayu District Police and who had met Lina several times after her repatriation from Japan). I forwarded the message to the officer, along with Lina's mobile number. Several days later she was again 'rescued'.

It was unknown which establishments she actually worked for until Lina contacted me again on 6 July 2007 from one in Jembatan Tiga (North Jakarta). The message was the same as previous ones: 'I want to go home... Can you help me out? Can you forward me the mobile number of Mrs Asih?' In fact the officer had already received text messages and phone calls from Lina but ignored them all, because she was fed up with rescuing Lina and had reached the conclusion: nobody could offer her any real, viable assistance. Lina was seemingly frustrated about no help materialising and expressed annoyance with me on the phone and in texts.

During six months she had drifted from one sex establishment to another—a dozen—from which she was ‘rescued’ by IOM and the police five times. In fact Lina was making a sum of money in running to and being ‘rescued’ from the sex industry. She first received an advance payment in cash, called *kasbon*, from the pimp who was to employ her, but after having arrived at his establishment she contacted staff of IOM and police officers to rescue her. She was aware that anybody below the age of eighteen in the sex trade has a right to claim protection from authorities, so she took advantage of her position as a minor to withdraw herself from the work despite owing the pimp some *kasbon*. Because the authorities had become involved the pimp was unable to reclaim the money Lina still owed.

Despite or because of all that had gone on, Lina remained in Jakarta’s night world for another two years or so, and eventually (in mid 2010) became—and has so far remained—the mistress of one of her customers. As a result of her earnings the family house back in the village has been renovated and markedly improved. Lina, aged twenty, says she intends to apply for a job as a flight attendant.

Lina’s story exemplifies an adolescent girl’s rather aggressive coping behaviour in the face of varying circumstances and pressures. There are moments when young girls in such situations might find themselves helpless, but simultaneously they display a degree of agency beyond what is imagined among those involved in anti-trafficking activities. The fact that girls do not always passively submit to inescapable circumstances and may actively respond to the situation is some evidence that moments of victimhood and of agency can intersect one another in their experiences of placement into and involvement in the sex sector.

Although Lina’s initial decision to (re-)enter the sex trade was shaped by circumstances basically beyond her control, she did not completely lose power over her own life but learned to cope with the oppression she faced. Her forceful actions—extracting some profit by tricking both pimps and authorities—may be viewed as an extreme form of coping behaviour, but suggest that resilience and agency can be brought to bear by adolescents in the face of harsh and oppressive conditions. As Lina’s narrative reveals, some girls are capable of coping in difficult circumstances, and taking bold actions to mitigate the problems they face. When young women develop and exercise agency which does not conform to the normative expectation of what ‘trafficked’ minors are sup-

posed to do, as Lina experienced, they may be denied the types of support they need and even abandoned by social service providers.

The next story is about a young woman who experienced various ups and downs in the sex trade from her teenage years and eventually grew to operate as a madam of an establishment.

Yenny: elevating one's position within the sex sector

Yenny worked as a masseuse at a Jakarta sex establishment for some years before moving to one of the red-light sections of Batam in Riau Islands province, where she made an important breakthrough, eventually becoming one of the 'madams' of a nightclub. She is the third child of five, brought up by parents who made a living as seasonal farm labourers. She had a sister, one year younger, who died of a drug overdose (in 2005) some years after becoming a part of the nightlife sector in Jakarta.

Yenny left to work in the Jakarta massage parlour before even completing the 2nd grade of secondary school. The establishment is one of the workplace 'hubs' not only for young women from Cimanis and nearby villages who operate as 'massagers' but also for young adults from the same rural communities who are otherwise employed in the sex business. Yenny had been there nearly six years. She had catered to regular customers who asked her from time to time to be their mistress in exchange for money and lodging. During the time in Jakarta she was the 'backbone' (*tulang punggung*) of the family, regularly sending money home. Her earnings were spent on appliances and modern furniture, renovating the family house and even financing a lavish wedding ceremony for her eldest brother. She once paid off a debt on behalf of her younger sister, who had run away from the pimp who had provided her with a ten million rupiah (US\$1,000) loan (*kasbon*). When the sister got arrested on suspicion of drug usage Yenny went to bail her out of a police holding cell, paying out some twenty-five million rupiah (US\$2,500). Yenny was sometimes content but at other times overwhelmed by feelings of anxiety which often diverted her from thinking about the needs of her family back home. She recalled:

I sometimes lost my sense of responsibility. The time I was in deep in love with a man who frequented me at the establishment I did whatever pleased him—recklessly buying new mobile phones, clothes and things for him. When he left me I fell in love with another man and I was tempted to do the same thing again, and then again. But by think-

ing of my parents back home I regained my sense of responsibility to them.

In July 2005 Yenny married a middle-aged Chinese Indonesian, as a second wife and without the knowledge of his first wife. He left her at the point she became pregnant. After giving birth to a baby boy she went to Batam, leaving the baby with her parents, to join a friend who also had her origins near Cimanis, and who was already working in Batam's sex sector. Yenny herself then sometimes engaged in escort service at the request of her customers (mostly Singaporean or Malaysian tourists), even travelling with them to Singapore. The money she occasionally sent back home was insufficient even to cover the amount spent for buying powdered milk needed for the little son. She soon had two regular customers proposing marriage. One of them, in his late twenties, had once in a while sent packs of powdered milk for her son. He suggested Yenny should leave the job in the nightlife sector. But she did not want to rush into remarriage in case her next marriage should also soon collapse.

Yenny went home from Batam twice a year or so. During her return in March 2007 she had a quarrel with her parents because they did not want her to go back to Batam; they prompted her to make money in Jakarta. In the end she left home without saying anything and for nearly half a year had no contact with her family. Her parents were apparently frustrated with the situation because they were unable to track her down nor were they receiving money from her. It later became clear she had indeed gone back to Batam and for a few years operated as a sex worker there until she was promoted to be the level of 'madam' in the establishment.

Yenny's story is an illustration of the ups and downs of life typically experienced by young women operating in the sex sector for quite a number of years. Some may temporarily move out from the trade by having a longer-term cohabitation arrangement with particular customers; others may break out from it through marriage. But, as with Yenny, the marriages rarely last. Options for their livelihood are then greatly narrowed: they return to their previous occupation. Not all of them get stuck in the trade; an opportunity may come to move out and up from 'worker' status to a managerial position such as a madam—either by gaining trust from club owners/pimps or by marrying them. For some adolescent girls who end up in the sex trade, there are such possibilities to raise their social standing within the sex sector.

Resilience and vulnerability in the processes of migration for sex work

The above seven narratives illustrate various ways in which adolescent girls have entered commercial sex work, and how they have reacted to their placement: diverse situations in which their lives were constrained and conditioned. Their stories also present the experience of being marginalised and vulnerable while in a position of uncertainty. This section analyses what is common to, and what is different between, the experiences of these girls, dividing their life trajectories into three phases: life before their entrance, during their time in the work, and the exit from the trade.

As can be seen in the seven stories, the status and conditions of victimhood and of agency are both changeable. Being vulnerable and exposed to unfavorable conditions does not always mean agency in completely effaced.

Ria's and Icha's experiences of entry into the nightlife sector initially appear to be quite different. While Ria was tricked by brokers to travel to Bali and work for the nightclub there, Icha made a conscious decision to become involved in Jakarta's nightlife sector. They also experienced different degrees of autonomy and restrictions at their workplaces: Ria was bonded to the club where her working and living conditions were determined by the madam whom she owed some money; Icha was less restricted and took the initiative to seek out working conditions which she could more easily accept.

The movement and entry of girls into the sex trade takes various forms, fitting four broad patterns. Firstly there are those who make an autonomous decision to leave home for employment but are deceived by sex-trade brokers about the actual nature and conditions of the work. They are girls, like Ria, who are frustrated with their situation—neither being able to continue education nor having decent job prospects, yet wishing (and having a strong sense of obligation) to fulfil filial duty; this sometimes compels them to make hasty decisions and take actions regarding uncertain job opportunities. In such circumstances girls even convince their parents to support their intent to leave home for the sake of earning an income. They might have an ability to negotiate with their parents regarding the direction they take in life, although this may expose them to unforeseeable vulnerable conditions. Their narratives also

demonstrate how agency and vulnerability exist side-by-side in the lives of these girls and young women.

The second pattern to be distinguished is where a girl consciously takes a course in her life into the trade through the assistance of peers, or persons probably known to them who operate as brokers. Like those in the first pattern the prime drive behind their decision to go is a measure of frustration with their home life. They are also influenced by factors such as encouragement from peers who flaunt their success in the night-life sector, as well as by procurers who give an image of lucrative work. In this pattern parents are usually less likely to influence their daughter's decision-making. Some girls do obtain consent from their parents for working in the sector; others, like Julia, attempt to hide the real facts from them. Some are able to express clearly their expectations to the parents and continuously seek out better options open to them; others are not able to adapt to the conditions of work and then find their way into different types of work.

The third pattern to be seen is among those who enter knowingly, but unwillingly, out of necessity and having too little power to resist parental pressures. The reluctant entry is the outcome of parents' expectations regarding fulfilment of filial duties, and the daughter's awareness of her moral obligation to meet parental or family needs and expectations.

The fourth pattern involves those who are pushed into the trade by parental coercion. Though none of the seven narratives fits neatly into this pattern, my field evidence suggests that the forms of abuse Filza underwent were typical. Various forms of cruelty are used to bring the daughter under their control, curbing her autonomy and willpower and specifically requiring her to accept the proffered employment.

The progress of the girls' lives after entering the trade varies greatly and their experiences of becoming a part of the industry differ one from the other. The conditions and circumstances they face at their workplace are determined by a combination of various factors: how and by whom their recruitment and movement is facilitated; whether or not the girls themselves or their parents are in debt to the recruiters and the employer; the geographical site of the place of work; which actual segment of the trade they enter, and under what terms and conditions.

Regardless of how girls enter the sex industry they are nonetheless exposed to various kinds of power relationship at the workplace—

whether with employer, supervisors, customers or fellow workers. Some may experience overwhelming power differentials which heavily constrain their working and private lives; others may keep a level of individual autonomy regarding their own mobility, selection of customers or types of service they provide. Wiwit's narrative illustrates how (when she re-entered the Japanese sex sector) she found herself under the absolute power and control of a madam at an establishment because she was made to believe she owed that madam a huge debt. When Icha, on the other hand, took her first job as a hostess at a Jakarta nightclub she was able to maintain her autonomy to negotiate with her employer and customers regarding whether or not to let herself be available for penetrative sex.

The levels of vulnerability of girls to exploitation and abuse in work relations within the sex industry can to some extent vary according to the socio-cultural contexts of their workplace. Some may find a familiar cultural environment and even familiar faces at the workplace; kin members and friends from their community of origin may already operate there. The latter may not only offer necessary knowledge and skills to handle the situation but also provide support in times of difficulty. Others may find themselves having to assimilate into a completely unfamiliar and foreign environment, especially in respect of language and customs, and without any social support network.

The ways and point at which girls quit a particular establishment, or altogether stop working in the sex sector, vary. In whatever manner girls have entered the trade, most do not have much freedom or the option to leave the work at any time they wish to. Among girls who operate in the Jakarta sex sector and in other major urban areas, (contract) marriage or the establishing of a long-term intimate relationship with a man—through cohabitation or a concubinage arrangement—is one of the typical ways to break away. Some may marry a man from their home village; others may marry a steady customer (as first or later wife) or just become a kept mistress. In the case of marriage or established concubinage their husbands/partners will settle any debts owed to a pimp.

There are various turns which life takes for those girls (or by now adults) after leaving the job. Those who marry a man from their home village are likely to become a housewife and/or set up a small business with their family members. Some turn to operating as sex-trade brokers themselves. There are various patterns among those who marry or be-

come a mistress of a former customer: living in a lodging arranged by the partner; living in their natal home and visiting him from time to time; or living and running a business together with the partner in the city. Yenny is one who became the partner of a pimp of the establishment and—as is often the case—continued up the career ladder within the sex sector, finally becoming the Madam (see Montgomery 2001: 93).

It should be noted that marriage or other partnering arrangements do not necessarily give the girls a stable life in the long term. Those who do marry or become mistress of a customer then find themselves in different sorts of financial and gendered power relationships. Some find themselves in situations where a promise agreed upon is not sufficiently fulfilled by the husband/partner; others are deserted once they become pregnant or give birth. Their relationships are usually fragile and can easily collapse. Those who fail to maintain their relationship tend to re-enter the sex sector, sometimes repeating this manner of entry and exit.

Apart from marriage or the other arrangements described above, there are other ways for girls to get away from Jakarta's sex sector. For example, those who are unable to adjust themselves to the circumstances at work move out from it when they themselves have settled the outstanding debts. Some initiate a change in workplace or type of work within the sector which has better working conditions. Others remain debt-bonded, and therefore unable to leave the work, because their parents negotiate another loan (*kasbon*) from the pimp after the previous debt has been settled. Some cannot settle the debt owing to underperformance at work and/or being transferred to another establishment by the pimp they belong to.

6.4 Moving beyond the victimhood—agency dichotomy

By focusing on the interactive relations of ten adolescent girls with parents and others involved in attempting to recruit them into commercial sex work, we have gained some understanding how these young persons have managed their transition to adulthood. Knowing the complexity and diversity of these girls' exposure to and/or involvement in the night-life sector has made it possible to ascertain to what degree, and in what ways, the girls can or do exercise agency. One point which becomes clear is that their agency takes many forms, which in turn means that the question of 'victimhood' is not to be too easily assumed. The stories suggest

that teenage girls in the commercial sex trade navigate multiple, intersecting structures of power (as argued by Jeffrey 2011: 2), even in the generality of their exploitation by adults. Also, in cases where there is a measure of victimhood, it may not be total or continuous. Victimhood does not preclude agency; equally, one cannot assume that girls who exert agency are not in victimhood.

The narratives of these girls reveals that victimhood and agency are not entirely mutually exclusive in their experiences. Regardless of whether and how they enter the sex sector, they have the ability to exercise agency in identifying and seeking solutions in the face of varying restrictions and vulnerable circumstances. Each girl's capabilities, knowledge and behaviours along with family economic situations and parent-daughter power relations as well as wider socio-economic and cultural structures may either facilitate or constrain the exercise of agency. Various degrees and changeable natures of agency have been illustrated, suggesting that it can be enabled, developed, evolved, strengthened and promoted; meanwhile it can equally be constrained, inhibited, reduced and undermined.

Girls' responses to job prospects in the nightlife sector are considerably constrained by the limited options available to them and their own motivations and those of their parents. Some of these manifestations of agency are considered beyond what is appropriate for 'trafficked girls' by those involved in policy-making and intervention on child trafficking; they challenge the normative ideas of victims of child trafficking which inform counter-trafficking policies and programmes. Such actions, however, may provide the girls with solutions to the difficulties they face in improving their own life opportunities.

Finally, the perceptions and experiences of girls suggest the complexity of their placement and involvement in the sex trade cannot be categorised simply or solely as 'child trafficking'.

Notes

¹ See, for example, O'Grady (1992, 1994); Lim (1998); ECPAT (1999); US Department of State (2004); Raymond et al. (2002); Stevens (2005); Rafferty (2007); Lau (2008); IOM Indonesia (2008: 66–8).

² The mother's siblings and extended family are devout Muslims who have a strong connection with the network of Islamic boarding schools in West Java. Her brothers are active in the Islamic teaching of village children.

³ This is a contraction of the title of a pop song (in vogue at that time) which had come into use in the local parlance. The words, *jarang dibelai*, literally mean 'a woman who is rarely given caress/affection' and according to my informants connote a prostitute.

⁴ She found that such experiences were not unique to her. A few of her girlfriends in the same village had also undergone similar pressure and stress. Some of them did eventually enter the sex industry in Jakarta. Village girls are inculcated with the concept of 'dutiful daughter' from pre-puberty. Wiwit learned that the late elementary school years (ages 11–13) are those when daughters must deal directly with the expectations of their parents. She explained that parents seem to have a preference for the birth of a daughter—generally wishing for a girl during pregnancy—because a daughter is regarded as a 'gold mine' (*tambang emas*), meaning a good source of income. If a daughter brings a good sum of money home, her parents will lavish attention and affection on her. A son is relatively spoiled with favouritism during childhood but is less expected to contribute to the family economy.

⁵ IOM was then running a Rescue and Repatriation and Social Reintegration Assistance Programme for the Victims of Human Trafficking in collaboration with YKB in Indramayu.

⁶ Attending the programme was one of the conditions for her to receive IOM's social reintegration fund (about US\$1,000). She was taken to the class by a YKB worker.

7

Anti-Trafficking Interventions in Indramayu: The Interface between Global and Local Politics

7.1 Introduction

Having long been the outstanding source of supply for the domestic and to a lesser extent the international sex market, Indramayu district has attracted international funding for counter-trafficking programmes. During the 2000s the district became literally a ‘testing ground’ in an attempt to stem the flow of young women into the nightlife sector. In Indramayu—as in other hotspot areas for trafficking in Indonesia and other developing countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America—the emergence and more recently the decline of anti-trafficking interventions has been closely linked to the politics of international aid on ‘human trafficking’ (see Lindquist 2008; Ford and Lyons 2011, 2008). When the US Department of State identified Indonesia as one of the worst offending countries in its first annual *Trafficking in Persons Report* published in 2001, the government was put under pressure. It had to make a prompt response by establishing a national taskforce, developing a national plan of action and drafting a counter-trafficking bill, given that it was accepting international funding for counter-trafficking programmes made available by US government organisations (Lindquist 2008: 134). It was under this dynamic international and national policy setting that anti-child trafficking activism emerged and evolved in Indramayu.

This chapter examines the ways in which the problem of ‘child trafficking’ for the sex trade in Indramayu has been perceived and addressed by international donor organisations, collaborating NGOs and the district government. The intention is to clarify (1) how and why particular preventive intervention models have been proposed; (2) the assumptions

on which these measures are based and (3) how these initiatives have affected present-day rural adolescent girls who have grown up in the sex-trade recruitment grounds and are likely to be, in one way or another, exposed to the urban nightlife culture. The approaches and practices of community-based preventative interventions taken by local NGOs are described and analysed.

Given that much of the research dealing with government and NGO counter-trafficking interventions in Indonesia was sponsored by international agencies and foreign government organisations, their findings and argumentation seem more inclined towards the view of donors. These are also in one way or another linked to the promotion of particular points of view on, and approaches to, 'human trafficking' favoured by the donors (see O'Connell Davidson 2005: 64). The literature is also often used for the purpose of policy advocacy and mobilization of civil societies/groups.¹ It appears that in much knowledge mobilisation and many of the policy recommendations in the studies directed to policy-makers and practitioners, NGO activists and the general public are to a greater or lesser extent affected by the political and moral positions of the sponsoring institutions, as well as of the researchers who are sympathetic to the point of view of these funding agencies. This has in turn obscured some important dimensions of the 'human trafficking problem', and prevented us from delving deeper into the actual gaps between the intentions of current interventions and the real difficulties and complex dilemmas of adolescent girls. In other words, these studies have provided only a limited understanding of the disparities between what is being done for the girls on their behalf and the needs and interests of girls in the differing patterns of specific real-life situations.

The first two sections of this chapter discuss the emergence and development of Indonesia's anti-trafficking policy framework and initiatives, and how these have been influenced by international aid: the assistance of inter-governmental organisations, Western governments and international NGOs. It describes how the Indonesian government and local NGOs' viewpoints and approaches to the issue have been shaped since the turn of this century. The next section presents and analyses the strategies and practices of child-trafficking preventive intervention taken at village and district levels. It describes the landscape of NGO activities across Indramayu, and sheds light on the ways in which community-based counter-trafficking programmes have attempted to address the

factors driving those adolescent girls and adult women who become involved in the sex trade. The last considers current 'child trafficking' intervention approaches influenced by prevailing idealised notions of childhood which do not adequately reflect or handle specific needs and diverse situations of adolescent girls exposed to the nightlife sector.

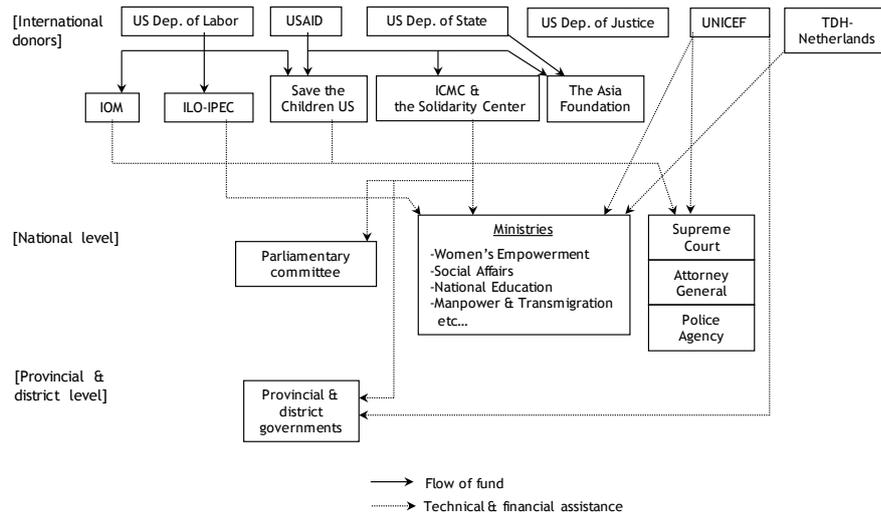
7.2 Development of Indonesia's anti-trafficking infrastructure

7.2.1 Adopting an international human trafficking legal norm and framework of intervention

At the turn of the century 'trafficking in persons' emerged as a worldwide problem, when the US government initiated its fight against trafficking and many UN member states ratified the United Nations' counter-trafficking protocol (Lindquist 2008: 134). Global anti-trafficking sensitivity has driven a number of government organisations, international agencies and NGOs to respond to the issue (Ford and Lyons 2011: 1). As elsewhere in Southeast Asia, Indonesia's anti-trafficking policy and legislative frameworks as well as intervention programmes have largely developed under the influence of international aid organisations (*ibid.*).

Since 2000 more than a dozen aid agencies have directed their resources through both Indonesian state organisations and local NGOs in order to develop what can be called 'anti-trafficking infrastructure' at both national and local levels, as well as to implement counter-trafficking activities. One significant source of funding has been the US Government, namely the Departments of Labor, State, and Justice as well as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) (Figure 7.1). The US funds, particularly from USAID and the Department of Labor, were strategically allocated for their collaborating international NGOs and inter-governmental organisations. The US-sponsored programmes have been run by a number of organisations: the American Center for International Labor Solidarity (the Solidarity Center); the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC); Save the Children US (SC-US); The Asia Foundation (TAF); the International Labour Organisation (ILO); and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM).

Figure 7.1
Donor-government relations



Besides these there are two other important institutions in the anti-trafficking donor circle, namely UNICEF and the Dutch branch of the international NGO Terres Des Hommes (TDH-NL). All organisations other than TDH-NL have developed a close partnership with both central government institutions and selected local governments which has given them varying levels of influence in the country's legislative and bureaucratic bodies. ICMC and the Solidarity Center, ILO and UNICEF have one way or another played strategic roles in setting the anti-trafficking issue firmly on Indonesia's national and local agendas by providing technical and financial assistance. For example, project staff of the Solidarity Center and ICMC gave technical assistance in the drafting of the Anti-Trafficking Bill, working initially through the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and then through the parliamentary committee dealing with this legislation (Rosenberg 2006: 15; Ford and Lyons 2011: 4-5; Wahyningrum 2007: 83). During the time of the formation of local counter-trafficking taskforces at provincial and district levels, mandated in the National Plan of Action for the Elimination of Trafficking in Women and Children (Presidential Decree No. 88 of 2002), project staff were also involved in the process giving assistance to officials from the

Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Coordinating Ministry of Social Welfare (Rosenberg 2006: 15; Ford and Lyons 2011: 4–5).²

A similar strategy was also adopted by UNICEF for the development of local regulations (*Peraturan Daerah*, PERDA) and local plans of action (*Rencana Aksi Daerah*, RAD) on the trafficking issue at district and provincial levels. In the process of drafting a PERDA and a RAD on trafficking women and children for commercial sexual exploitation, senior consultants from the Institute of Child Protection West Java (*Lembaga Perlindungan Anak Jawa Barat*, LPA-Jabar)—a collaborator with UNICEF—worked closely with officials of the West Java provincial government. UNICEF has also played an important role in developing Indramayu district's anti-trafficking framework: technical and financial aid was provided for drafting the PERDA on the Prevention and Prohibition of Trafficking for the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Indramayu (No. 14 of 2005), and assistance given in building up the operational capacity of district officials.

7.2.2 The rise of anti-trafficking NGOs

The advent of the global counter-trafficking drive in Indonesia—along with flows of foreign aid for anti-trafficking activities—has had a profound influence on the development of national and local anti-trafficking interventions and also reshaped the landscape of NGO activism concerning the mobility of rural children and women and their exposure to vulnerable and exploitative circumstances in labour and sex markets. Between 2000 and 2005 no fewer than sixty local NGOs across the country plugged into the anti-trafficking circuit. Some have long-established records in working for the promotion of children's rights and education; others have been leaders in the fields of working-class women's empowerment, workers' rights, sexual health improvement and HIV/AIDS prevention or have been providing legal aid services for disadvantaged citizens. More than half a dozen NGOs have been newly established specifically to engage in the counter-trafficking movement.

During the surge of the counter-trafficking movement after the turn of this century the NGOs engaged in the issue underwent noticeable changes. Some transformed themselves into dedicated anti-trafficking NGOs; others allocated an increasing portion of their resources to such activities. Ford and Lyons (2011: 12), for example, describe changes

which took place among the NGOs operating in the Riau Islands. With the advent of US Government sponsored counter-trafficking projects, well-established NGOs previously involved in the prevention of HIV/AIDS and the improvement of sexual health for brothel-based sex workers in Batam and Tanjung Pinang have shifted their focus of intervention from these activities to the rescue and repatriation of victims of labour trafficking. One remarkable change made through their involvement in the anti-trafficking movement is in the ways to approach and understand sex commerce and females in the local sex industry. All sex workers are homogenously seen as victims of trafficking who need to be helped out from the sector. Intervention activities intending to reduce harm and exploitation in work conditions faced by sex workers are excluded from access to US anti-trafficking funds. The recent adoption of the trafficking framework and the intervention approach endorsed by donor agencies has enabled the NGOs to secure project funds.

This shift in focus created an assortment of anti-trafficking activists and specialists (Ford and Lyons 2011; Lyons and Ford 2010). A number of lay persons and community activists collaborated with NGOs in the pilot project areas. Anti-trafficking NGOs and activists have come to concentrate not only in metropolitan areas but also in what are seen to be 'trafficking hubs' in the peripheries of Indonesia.³

7.3 Preventive strategies and practices in Indramayu

The district government of Indramayu was initially somewhat reluctant to get involved in the politics of anti-trafficking initiated by outsiders, and took a relatively passive stance in addressing the problem. But the pressure from outside intervention circles (inter-governmental organisations, international NGOs and collaborating local NGOs) eventually compelled the local authorities to respond to the issue. External pressure and assistance played an important role in developing Indramayu's regulatory and policy frameworks as well as prevention strategies and programmes, as it similarly did in other source and destination areas of Indonesia in respect of sex worker recruitment. The measures cover three interrelated areas: prevention of trafficking; prosecution of traffickers; and support in the rescue, return and social reintegration of 'victims'. The greater effort has been devoted to preventive intervention. The focus of both district and NGO activities has been on the trafficking of children for commercial sexual exploitation.

The historical trajectory of the district's counter-trafficking initiatives can be roughly classified into three periods. The first began in 1997 and took the form of research activities which exposed the extent and nature of procurement of girls for the sex industry. A dozen studies were funded by foreign donors for project development purposes and to gain attention from both government and public.⁴ The second period was 2003–06 during which anti-trafficking activism peaked, with much support being given to building and strengthening the local legislative and policy framework as well as implementing community-based pilot initiatives and district-wide awareness campaign activities. In the last period, 2007 to date, there has been a noticeable reduction in activities owing primarily to foreign aid for programmes in the district having nearly dried up. This is a reflection of what is called 'donor fatigue' stemming from the meagre results achieved by the donor-funded interventions.

7.3.1 District government policies

Counter-trafficking intervention activities implemented in Indramayu have been almost entirely supported by six international donor agencies namely UNICEF, ILO-IPEC, TDH-NL, ICMC, the Solidarity Center and TAF. UNICEF played the major role in assisting the development of an anti-trafficking ordinance and associated policy strategies as well as helping improve the functioning of the local government.

UNICEF has been in partnership with the Indramayu district authorities on education and health issues since the 1980s. Under the Children in Need of Special Protection Programme (2001–05) UNICEF sponsored a research project entitled *Participatory Research on Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Surakarta (Central Java) and Indramayu (West Java), Indonesia* (UNICEF 2004) which was conducted by a team of researchers comprised of university lectures and local NGO activists. A 220-page report published both in Indonesian and English concludes with eleven policy recommendations which influenced the ways in which the Indramayu district government then acted in respect of the recruitment and procurement of children for the sex trade. The study not only produced a set of policy recommendations but also set out a timeframe for local government offices and civil society organisations taking over responsibilities for implementation of these policies. It could be said the study served as a blueprint for the district's anti-trafficking policy and strategies. The Indramayu Regional Agency for Planning and Develop-

ment (*Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Daerah*, BAPPEDA) was UNICEF's collaborating local state agency in both developing the proposals for policies to counter child trafficking and drafting a subsequent counter-trafficking ordinance; and it was while financial and technical assistance was still being provided by UNICEF that the district-level ordinance on the Prevention and Prohibition of Trafficking for the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Indramayu District (PERDA No. 14 of 2005) was enacted. Prior to the introduction of this PERDA the district had enacted ordinances on Prostitution (PERDA No. 19 of 1999 and revised PERDA No. 4 of 2001) which aim to eradicate sex establishments operating in Indramayu. The effectiveness of the regulations has been questioned and they do not deal with the mobility of women and girls for the sex trade outside the district.

PERDA No. 14 of 2005, Indonesia's first district regulation which deals with human trafficking, has firmly linked the issue of trafficking with the commercial sexual exploitation of children, as one of the policy priorities of UNICEF. The interventions are classified into three categories: prevention; care and support for victims; and sanction against offenders, but emphasis is given to preventive intervention in which the main approaches are: (1) tightening criteria for and control of issuance of legal documents by village and sub-district offices for applicants below eighteen; (2) monitoring the recruitment activities of employment agencies; (3) raising public awareness on the risks and harms of trafficking children for the sex trade; and (4) changing families' economic dependency on children's earnings from the sex trade to earnings in more protected employment sectors (by implementing the Family and Community Empowerment Programme). The PERDA also mandates the district government to form Trafficking Prohibition Taskforces (*Satuan Tugas Pelarangan Trafficking*) at district and sub-district levels. These shall take responsibility for implementing counter-trafficking measures in collaboration with related district offices, the judicial authorities and civil groups. The District Taskforce comprises four sub-taskforces: Trafficking Prevention; Cooperation and Coordination (among stakeholders); Law Enforcement against Traffickers; and Rehabilitation and Social Reintegration of Trafficked Victims. The sub-taskforce on Trafficking Prevention is headed by the District Office of Public Order (*Dinas Ketentraman dan Ketertiban*, Trantib) which tackles its mandate by running four programmes: (i) to increase public and secondary school students' awareness

of the risks of trafficking; (ii) to improve access to education and vocational training for women as well as children in order to increase their livelihood options; (iii) anti-trafficking campaigns and (iv) 'socialization' of laws and regulations related to children's rights, and to migrant work, at sub-district and village levels.

There is hardly any literature available which clarifies the entire picture of preventative actions taken by the taskforces at district and sub-district levels, but information obtained from local officials, NGO activists and lecturers at a local university suggests that the budget for the Indramayu district government's counter-trafficking initiatives has mostly been used for holding seminars and workshops.⁵ Many government resources and efforts were spent on these one-off events. In December 2007 a facilitator who often gave a talk at these events told about anti-trafficking measures taken by local governments as follows:

Many seminars, workshops and conferences on child trafficking have been held in these last two years. The participants, local officials, police officers, teachers and activists had been well-informed regarding the problems and how the issue could be tackled but no concrete actions have yet been taken in the recruitment fields. It appears that holding awareness-raising workshops has become the objective of anti-trafficking action *per se*. (Indramayu December 2007)

A police officer who was frequently invited to explain the counter-trafficking measures of the district police in workshops expressed similar frustration:

I got fed up with attending workshops which took place without proper coordination among the related local government agencies. So much money was spent for such events that there was little left for actual prevention activities. (January 2008)

Poverty apart, low levels of education and gender inequality were widely acknowledged in such gatherings not only as being the root causes of child trafficking for sex trade, but also as being left unaddressed by the actual government intervention actions.

The Taskforces were formed in all 31 sub-districts in 2006 but as no budgets had been allocated to them, hardly any action was taken. According to a police officer they were therefore just a squad in name, and in fact they were spoken of as a 'paper squad' (Indramayu January 2008).

The PERDA No. 14 of 2005 has several critical shortcomings and contradictions which can be pointed out as follows. First, there is a disparity between the objective of the PERDA and the actual preventive measures. The regulation aims to prevent ‘child trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation’ but in actual fact its aims are to handle the trafficking of children for a wider range of labour exploitation. There is no mention of sex-trade brokers/recruiters or pimps/madams who should have been identified as objects of the intervention; instead ‘Labour Recruitment Agencies’ (*Perusahaan Jasa Tenaga Kerja Indonesia*) which recruit and place women for domestic work abroad, are targeted as a primary subject. In the second place it essentially concerns the recruitment, transfer and receipt of *minors*; similar incidents experienced by persons over eighteen are not taken into account in this regulation despite the fact that some adults may also be exposed to similar degrees of vulnerability, coercion and exploitation. Thirdly, it does not give any instructions as to how the issue is to be tackled. In short the PERDA is ill-designed, hardly addressing the actual factors behind the movement of young women into the sex trade.

The district-level responses to the issue have certainly brought various changes, but also certain disruptions at village and sub-district levels. Regardless of whether a person’s moves are self-initiated or arranged by labour brokers, the movement of persons below eighteen for domestic work in urban Indonesia or, and particularly, abroad came to be identified as ‘child trafficking’ by officials in some of the villages and sub-districts; some offices became more rigid about issuing legal documents for villagers in order to avoid any administrative sanctions. These developments brought alternative counter responses from adolescent girls and their parents in their decisions and actions regarding migrant work: girls who applied for a job as a domestic worker overseas but who were denied the necessary legal documents turned themselves over to Indonesia’s urban nightlife sector (see Kia’s narrative in Chapter 6); or seekers of jobs abroad took to applying for the necessary legal documents in the sub-district offices which have not imposed tight issuance policies, meaning the supply of labour for abroad has been maintained through the malpractice of those offices. The prevention of wide-ranging mobility caused some trouble between village officials and parents who let their underage daughters leave home to earn an income. This is an example of how the regulation prohibiting temporary movement of young women

for employment outside their villages does not provide the answer to the needy households but, rather, restricts the already limited alternatives open to them.

7.3.2 NGO responses

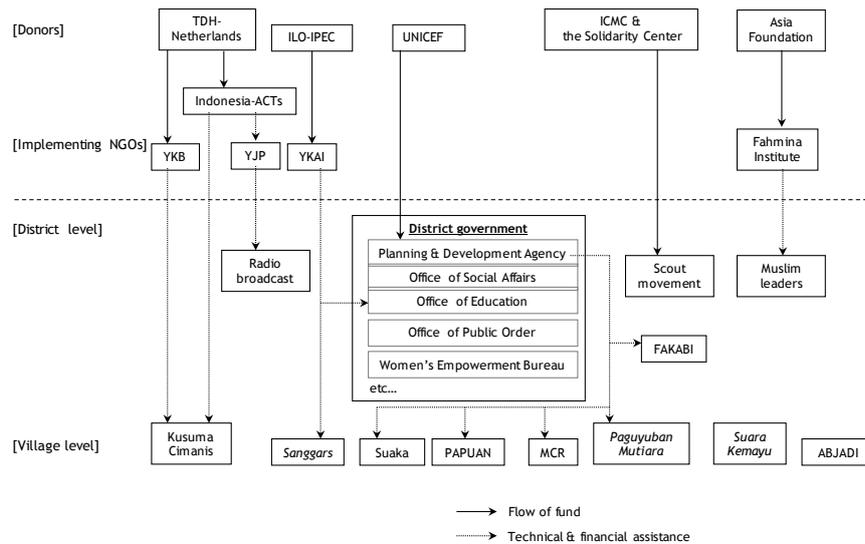
International anti-trafficking projects have played an important role in framing the ways in which local NGOs understand and respond to ‘human trafficking’ in Indramayu. Although a great degree of infamy has long been attached to the source district for sex workers, there were no NGOs directly addressing the issue until the turn of this century. Once foreign funding for preventative initiatives had begun to flow, civil society organisations began to spring up. As many as ten NGOs and community and youth organisations, already existing (but based in urban areas) or those newly-established in the district, began to engage in preventative interventions as from 2000. Their activities were financially and technically supported by international agencies. UNICEF, ILO-IPEC and TDH-NL were principle donors, dividing the project sites between them geographically within the district. It is important to note that, while both ILO and TDH-NL sponsored their collaborating Indonesian (Jakarta-based) NGOs directly, UNICEF supported the initiatives of Indramayan NGOs indirectly by commissioning the Indramayu Regional Agency for Planning and Development (BAPPEDA) to allocate its grants. The intention was to create a financially sustainable mechanism to counter child-trafficking mechanism by working with this Agency, in the expectation that it would allocate a local budget for the NGOs’ anti-trafficking projects once UNICEF sponsorship ended.

UNICEF has dealt with the child trafficking issue by integrating it (since the late 1990s) into its ongoing focus on commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) in Southeast Asian countries—which it began a year or so before the 1996 World Conference on that issue (in Stockholm). It has taken a multi-layered approach by providing assistance in building and strengthening national and local systems which prevent, and protect children from, trafficking for exploitative purposes (Hong and Bride 2007: 2). As discussed in 7.2.1 UNICEF primarily develops a partnership with three levels of state authorities (central, selected provincial, and district governments) to create the necessary legal and policy mechanisms for responding to the issue. It also assists the initiatives taken by local NGOs and youth organisations.

Under the Children in Need of Special Protection Programme (2001–05) and then the Child Protection Programme (2006–10) the grants were allocated (through BAPPEDA) to five civil organisations. Four are Indramayan local NGOs, namely Suaka, Concern for Children and Women (*Peduli Anak dan Perempuan*, PAPUAN), Adolescent Image Partner (*Mitra Citra Remaja*, MCR) and the Pearl Friend's Circle (*Paguyuban Mutiara*); the fifth is a child advocacy group, the Indramayu District Child Forum (*Forum Anak Kabupaten Indramayu*, FAKABI) (Figure 7.2). Suaka, established in 1992 to prevent the supply of women for the sex trade, was transformed into an anti-trafficking NGO in the early 2000s. It has since undertaken preventive actions by providing non-formal secondary education involving training in different vocational skills and income-generating activities for teenage girls at risk of being trafficked.⁶ PAPUAN was also funded to run non-formal lower secondary education and alternative income-generating activities which should target, in two particular villages, the teenage girls at risk of involvement in commercial sex trade. MCR received support to conduct peer education and counselling for youth regarding the possibility of their being trafficked for the sex sector. The *Paguyuban Mutiara*, an adolescent-centred group founded by a community activist based in an east Indramayan village, initiated a project to provide teenage girls with vocational training and lessons in the performing arts. FAKABI was established by a group of secondary school pupils with the assistance of BAPPEDA's Social-Cultural Section in early 2005, and has received a fund by which they are trained for raising awareness among their fellow pupils regarding children's rights and the issue of trafficking.

Both ILO and TDH-NL had primarily sponsored well-established NGOs based in Jakarta to implement preventive intervention measures at village level. ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (ILO-IPEC) which funded a counter-trafficking project in Indramayu is the Indonesian component of the Trafficking in Children in South and Southeast Asia (TICSA Phase II) under the Regional Project to Combat Trafficking in Children for Labour and Sexual Exploitation sponsored by the US Department of Labor in the period 2003–06 (ILO-IPEC 2003; ILO Jakarta Office 2004).⁷ It had partnership with the Indonesian Child Welfare Foundation (*Yayasan Kesejahteraan Anak Indonesia*, YKAI), a representative child-centred NGO founded in 1979 which had run community-based pilot prevention projects.

Figure 7.2
Organisations involved in anti-trafficking activities



While providing open lower secondary education (*SMP-Terbuka*)⁸ and vocational training for teenage girls at risk of being trafficked, as well as carrying out public awareness-raising activity in two rural villages of different sub-districts, YKAI also developed a school-based child trafficking prevention module together with the Indramayu District Office of Education (East Asia and Pacific Regional UNGEI 2007: 71–3; ILO Jakarta Office 2004).

Other than ILO, TDH-NL, a Dutch charity for children's aid, had allocated funds to the Kusuma Buana Foundation (*Yayasan Kusuma Buana*, YKB) to operate a community-based anti-trafficking project in one rural village for the period 2003–10. The projects of both YKAI and YKB were characterised by mobilizing a collaborating anti-trafficking community group they established with the locals in the pilot villages.

Compared with the first three donors (UNICEF, ILO and TDH-NL), ICMC, the Solidarity Center and TAF played a minor role in supporting the district government and NGO responses to the issue in Indramayu. Their interventions have primarily been a matter of awareness-raising activities targeting public and/or local government officials. ICMC and the Solidarity Center teamed up to implement a district-wide anti-

trafficking campaign through the Indramayu branch of the Scouting organisation of Indonesia (*Gerakan Pramuka Indonesia*, Pramuka) in 2004–05. ICMC/the Solidarity Center trained some 300 facilitators in the local scouting organisation who then provided anti-trafficking education to 25,000 students in 116 public schools across the district (US Department of State 2006: 36). ICMC also provided a grant to YKAI for awareness-raising activity in one sub-district in 2006. TAF, one of the longest-serving American NGOs in Indonesia, financed an anti-trafficking campaign project (2004–09) initiated by Fahmina Institute, a Muslim faith-inspired NGO located in a city of Cirebon. The institute conducted anti-trafficking training for Muslim preachers (*kyai*) in four sub-districts of Indramayu in order to raise awareness on the issue among rural communities (Chemonics International Inc. 2009: 47).⁹ Overall both ICMC/the Solidarity Center- and TAF-sponsored activities were characterised by one-off events, so long-term institutional collaborations with local Indramayu NGOs or civil groups did not develop.

There are four other NGOs and community organisations which are primarily engaged in anti-trafficking awareness-raising activities. Indonesia Against Child Trafficking (Indonesia-ACT's) funded by TDH-NL, a consortium of 12 national NGOs involved in anti-trafficking activism, worked with YKB and its local collaborating group to conduct a sub-district-wide awareness raising project in 2004–10. The Women's Journal Foundation (*Yayasan Jurnal Perempuan*, YJP), a Jakarta-based woman rights NGO, conducted anti-trafficking awareness-raising campaigns through a radio broadcast programme which covered Indramayu (2005–06). The Voice of Kemayu (*Suara Kemayu*), a community radio station established in 2002, aired a weekly radio programme to raise awareness about dangers of trafficking in a rural village of west Indramayu. The last organisation is ABJADI Foundation, an independent community-based child-centred association founded and financed by a well-to-do activist living in eastern Indramayu, which has expanded its focus from assistance to adolescent drug users to the prevention of teenage girls at-risk from trafficking by providing scholarships and shelter service.

7.3.3 Community-based interventions: strategies and practice

The various NGOs and community/youth organisations mentioned above can be classified into two types based on the mode of preventive intervention measures: the first is a comprehensive community-based

pilot project which covers only one or two specific villages and operates for a period of three to seven years; the second is a more widely spread awareness-raising project which produces and distributes leaflets, posters, newsletters and comics, and also trains anti-trafficking facilitators at village, sub-district or district levels. The activities of four NGOs (SUAKA, PAPUAN, YKAI and YKB) are of the first type; those of nine NGOs and community/youth organisations (FAKABI, MCR, Scouts, the Fahmina Institute, Indonesia-ACTs, YJP, Suara Kemayu radio station, *Paguyuban Mutiara* and ABJADI) are categorised as the second.

Community-based schemes for preventing trafficking take a variety of forms but with the common intention to create and strengthen support systems or institutions which are able to address the root causes of the practice. The core focus of the approaches taken by the NGOs are: (1) improvement of access to secondary education; (2) provision of technical and vocational training for teenage girls at risk of being trafficked; (3) public awareness-raising and community policing activities and (4) improvement of household economies. A greater emphasis is given to the creation of systems and circumstances which enable and ensure needy girls attend school, and provision of vocational training opportunities, aiming to increase the employment and income-earning opportunities open to them. Such activities are carried out by the NGOs either on their own, or together with newly-formed collaborating groups, providing them with technical and financial assistance. Suaka and PAPUAN adopted the first mode; YKAI and YKB the latter.

Although the word 'children' is used for the titles of all anti-trafficking projects it implicitly signifies 'girl children' as their primary beneficiaries. Of girls below eighteen, priority is given to those aged 12–15 because this age group is considered to be the most vulnerable to trafficking. The parents/guardians of teenage girls living in poverty, and young/teenage boys in poverty, are also included as intended targets.

Although the NGOs recognise that girls can be traded for both general and specifically sexual labour purposes, their projects focus entirely on 'sex trafficking'; thus a great deal of prevention effort was devoted to stem the mobility of girls into the sex sector. It should be mentioned that although procurement of girls and women for the sex industry has widely been an open secret in rural Indramayu, taking action against such practice, and thus openly recognising its existence, is considered to be unacceptable. So it was presumed by the NGO activists that disclosing

an anti-trafficking agenda might potentially put local people off from participating in the projects. The primary objective was therefore kept hidden from the general public, potential beneficiaries and even the local collaborators during the first years of their intervention. Instead, the projects were introduced as aiming to improve children's access to school and livelihood opportunities. Those informed about the real intention were the heads of village and sub-district offices as well as headmasters of public schools in order to obtain permission to run the projects and draw on the necessary support. The 'hidden agenda' in the projects was gradually made known to the potential beneficiaries in the course of gaining trust from the local people.

SUAKA

SUAKA is an Indramayan NGO founded and run by a pious middle-aged Muslim couple, focusing on the issue of commercial exploitation of women since the 1980s. They were initially based in Jakarta but moved into Indramayu district in the early 1990s to set up activities aiming to address young women's entry into the sex sector. The organisation is family-owned; the couple have managed and developed the projects almost entirely themselves; but day-to-day operations have been carried out by them together with public school teachers living in the adjacent areas.

The main way in which the issue is handled is the development of vocational skills among young women, the basic premise being that this helps improve their future economic standing. The initial scheme was a course in needlework for teenage school dropouts. The organisation evolved from a mere sewing class to a more comprehensive vocational education centre during the years 2002–06 when UNICEF's counter-trafficking funding was available to SUAKA. There were three notable developments. The courses were diversified to include embroidery, cookery and computing for females; and mushroom cultivation, woodwork and carving for males. Then the training courses became linked to income-generating activities: for example a group of trainees who had completed the sewing course were helped to sell their products (such as school uniforms) in the district. Non-formal secondary education 'packages' (*Kejar Paket B* and *C*) were later introduced. Being in touch with international anti-trafficking activism and the global norms of childhood had an important impact in altering the understanding and responses of

SUAKA to the trafficking problem. Such exposure transformed the organisation into an anti-trafficking NGO.

SUAKA identifies poverty or precarious livelihood as one of the classic causes of 'sex trafficking'. It is premised that this factor combines with other causes such as low levels of education, the influence of those who demonstrate wealth or success gained from their engagement in the sex trade, the absence of social sanctions against the practice and an entrenched parental attitude which perceives daughters as 'assets'. Given the reality that the vast majority of girls and young women who end up in the nightlife sector nearly always have an impoverished, less educated and unskilled background, the development of vocational skills is considered crucial for redressing the situation. Training in appropriate skills should improve livelihood options for them and thereby reduce the likelihood of their proceeding into the sex market. SUAKA not only provides a vocational course (lasting 6–12 months) but also offers post-training services such as assisting, for example, in job placement in the garment sector or in the establishing of their own business.

The project primarily targeted girls aged 12–15, but girls above sixteen and young adult women and also teenage boys and young adult men participated in the programme. The idea is that the provision of vocational training for boys has twofold importance since skilled youngsters might not only make a contribution to their family economy but may well build up and maintain a level of income by which there will be no need to exploit any daughter when they become a father.

More than half the participants now are young adults. There are no clear indicators to say whether or not these young participants were actually facing the risk of being brought into the sex sector. It was recorded that nearly 3,150 persons completed the vocational courses (needlework or cookery) through the years between 1992 and 2006 but no follow-up survey was conducted, so it is not clear what proportion of alumni made a breakthrough in their livelihood through the skills they acquired.

A couple of shortcomings of the project are to be noted. The project is primarily designed to interact with young people who take courses in SUAKA; it does not reach into the rural areas. Except for some ten teenagers who have stayed in living quarters owned by SUAKA almost all participants have to commute from outlying villages and sub-districts. The project therefore may not have had immediate influence on the so-

cio-cultural situations and livelihoods back in their home villages. Given that the project site is located close to the district capital—where procurement of girls for the urban sex sector is insignificant—the impact of the intervention may be geographically limited.

Concern for Children and Women (PAPUAN)

PAPUAN is a child-focused NGO, established relatively recently (in 2003), which has the sole objective of preventing girls from being trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation. It also was founded by a couple in middle age (one of whom is a civil servant of BAPPEDA Indramayu) when UNICEF funding became available in 2003. The project was carried out in two villages in eastern Indramayu in collaboration with public school teachers and student volunteers from a local university. There are three types of course: a non-formal lower secondary education package (*Kejar Paket B*); vocational training which includes needlework and food processing (dried-salted fish and fishball); and an income-generating class (duck farming and the production of salted duck eggs). The intention was that the major beneficiaries should be girls under eighteen who would be likely to enter the sex industry; but teenage boys also participated in the activities.

Comprehensive information on the project was unavailable from PAPUAN's representatives because the organisation was itself already inactive at the time of my inquiries (December 2007) and also they were reluctant to disclose the actual results of their intervention. Piecing together evidence gleaned from other informants who had also been involved in UNICEF-funded anti-trafficking activities in the district, it became clear that PAPUAN's project had not resulted as intended. The vocational courses offered brought no alternative job openings for the young participants. The income-generating initiative collapsed when roughly eight out of ten of the 1,000 ducks bought for the project were stolen (anon, personal communication in Indramayu, December 2007). The aspirations of some young participants were not adequately attended to for a useful re-designing of the project. It should be noted that both villages selected for the project are not in fact recruiting grounds for sex work but for domestic work abroad, so one may suggest that the selection of the pilot areas was inappropriate. With the end of the UNICEF grant in 2006 this anti-trafficking NGO failed to survive.

Kusuma Buana Foundation (YKB)

YKB, a public health NGO established in 1980, has been long engaged in improving the reproductive health of working-class youth and adults in the Greater Jakarta area. One aspect which YKB gives attention to is counteracting HIV/AIDS. Every year YKB makes contact with a few hundred sex workers in the major red-light districts. For YKB, as with many other NGOs active in anti-trafficking, the actual issue of child trafficking was new to them; but their long experience connecting with sex workers put the organisation in line for being funded.

When YKB was involved in HIV/AIDS prevention activities in the Kramat Tunggak official brothel complex during the 1990s, staff became aware that a large number of young sex workers came from rural Indramayu. This realisation evolved into a joint research project conducted 1997–98 by YKB together with the Center for Social Development Studies of Atma Jaya University under sponsorship of ILO-IPEC. The research further clarified the process of procuring adolescent girls from Indramayu for the urban sex establishments (see Irwanto et al. 1998). Social workers and researchers shared the idea of initiating preventative action in the supply area and thereby reducing the flow of girls into the trade; but there were no funds available to materialise such a plan. At the turn of the century and under the growing global attention to trafficking in children for sexual exploitation, TDH-NL was interested in directing funds towards projects focussing on prevention activities in girls' communities of origin. It sponsored YKB's community-based scheme in one particular village of western Indramayu.

'The Programme for the Prevention of Child Prostitution through Community-Based Education' was developed out of a baseline survey conducted in Cimanis by YKB in early 2003.¹⁰ It was a pilot initiative which aimed to reduce the scale of teenage girls' entry into the commercial sex trade by creating and strengthening 'tailored' community-based education and vocational training systems. The long-term goal is to replicate this intervention model more extensively with Indramayan civil organisations operating together with local authorities. In order to ensure the sustainability of such initiatives a local community group, called Kusuma Cimanis, was established by YKB and plays a central role in implementing day-to-day operations of the counter-trafficking programme.¹¹ The members of Kusuma Cimanis are of particular help for the work 'at ground level'.

The programme was supported by TDH-NL during roughly an eight-year period (January 2003 to December 2010). It was conducted in three phases. Phase one (2003–05) was a baseline survey by which to develop intervention strategies, form a local collaborating group and provide training for them, and initiate the school-based activities. Phase two (2006–08) was a period given to consolidating the entire programme: training the local persons involved in improving the quality of school-based activities, and increasing local participation. The final phase (2009–10) was designed to assist in transforming Kusuma Cimanis into an autonomous organisation which would then continue to run the counter-trafficking activities.¹²

The primary group intended as beneficiaries is girls aged 12–15 living in poverty or vulnerable family situations; landless households with teenage children (daughters or sons) are secondary targets.

YKB cites half a dozen or more factors as root causes of ‘sex trafficking in girls’: high levels of poverty; low levels of education plus high rates of school dropouts; a local cultural attitude which views daughters as an ‘asset’ (that is, a source of income); the practice of marriage at young ages; a high divorce rate; the spending of large amounts of money for feasts; a tacit acceptance of sex work as a source of income; and peer influence from young women already earning large incomes in the sex sector. The lack of alternative income among land-poor households and the high rate of school dropouts were identified as the underlying factors which first needed to be tackled by the programme.

The primary objectives of the project are to improve accessibility of lower secondary education to needy girls and also boys; to increase parents’ awareness of the importance of education for their children and of the potential risks and harms associated with the sex trade; and to improve livelihood opportunities for low-income families. The project consists of: (1) school-based activities; (2) community awareness-raising and monitoring activities and (3) income-generating activities.

The school-based approach is used as a way to prevent teenage girls from leaving for the sex trade. Two types of educational institutions were set up: after-school reading rooms (*taman bacaan*); and an open lower secondary school (*SMP-Terbuka*). The intention of providing the after-school reading rooms was to motivate primary school children to continue learning; and to enhance the prospect of doing so. Classes in the use of computer and handicrafts were offered. Some 200 children at-

tended these reading rooms of whom over 150 at 5th and 6th grade levels (and seen as being most likely to leave school) received a monthly subsidy of Rp 5,000 (US\$0.56) through the 2003/04 school year. But the scheme was phased out after *SMP-Terbuka* was established for making secondary education more accessible to primary school diploma-holders with no financial means, by subsidizing their school fees (Harkness 2004: 25–26). In addition to the subjects taught at regular secondary school it also provides extra-curricular skill-oriented classes in activities such as cookery, needlework and traditional textile printing techniques (*sablon*). Promotion of secondary education with a full focus on skills training is premised upon attendance at school and the idea that acquiring basic occupational skills may not only reduce the vulnerability of adolescent girls leaving the village to earn money, but will more likely provide better job and earning opportunities when they complete their schooling. Given that most of the girls who become involved in the sex trade do so immediately they leave school, non-attendance at school is a crucial indication of the likelihood of them ending up in the nightlife sector.

Community sensitization activities by YKB have taken the form of peer education conducted by a group of twenty mothers who have been recruited as volunteers from the village. They were schooled in relevant knowledge regarding the rights of the child and the problems of trafficking for the sex trade. Each member then played a role in making other mothers and sometimes fathers living in her neighbourhood aware of the issues and the reason for them to keep their children in school, and keeping an eye on those pupils who will most likely become a part of the sex trade on leaving school (Harkness 2004: 26). The intention was to redress parents' permissive attitude towards their daughters' involvement in the trade.

Promotion of alternative income-generating activities was primarily targeted at poor landless households with teenage children attending *SMP-Terbuka*. Groups of three, four or (at the most) five women received training in various skills and then micro-credit loans (an equivalent of US\$50–100) for setting up a micro-scale business. Some initiated a cooperative business (for example, production of cassava crackers, fried soybeans and even detergent); others took a hairdressing course. The activities were predominately operated by mothers. The basic assumption underpinning these activities is that improved livelihood opportunities in the pilot village would mitigate pressure on needy girls thus

preventing their engagement in the sex trade or other exploitative forms of work. It also presumed that economic betterment would reduce the financial burden of bringing up children and thus, possibly, may even enable parents to send children on to higher levels of education.

The challenges, constraints and dilemmas YKB and Kusuma Cimanis experienced can be summarised as follows. There were disagreements and dissatisfactions between TDH-NL, YKB and Kusuma Cimanis regarding the programme design and operation. TDH-NL had initially proposed that YKB run a prevention project in two villages in different sub-districts. Negotiation between them resulted in the pilot project being initiated only in one village given the budget limitation and operational feasibility. YKB had also to handle some gaps between the original plan and the actual needs of the beneficiaries. For example: although TDH-NL allocated a certain budget for the provision of financial subsidy for children at primary school, in the course of running the programme it became clear that the actual situation of villagers was changing to make secondary education more accessible; so YKB put forward a proposal to the donor to approve the reallocation of the funds for the establishment and operation of *SMP-Terbuka*. With regard to bi-monthly monitoring of the activities performed by YKB in the pilot village, the project manager of TDH-NL suggested that twice a month was surely insufficient; but the level of funding YKB received had meant them having to cut down on their regular check-up visits. With regard to rapport building between YKB and Kusuma Cimanis some disparity was noted. YKB's intention was to develop an equal partnership with Kusuma Cimanis; the latter had thought it would be a patron-client relationship. The managerial staff in Kusuma Cimanis tended to comply with what they were asked by the project officers of YKB so as not to cause tension between them; as a result it seems that Kusuma Cimanis's insight into the local circumstances and opinions was not adequately brought over to their funder. The mentality of a patron-client relationship was notable in what some teachers said when microfinance lending was not made available to them: 'Boss [YKB] should have taken care of his henchmen [the staff of Kusuma Cimanis] if the latter are facing a hard time'. (Individual conversation in Cimanis, 30 May 2007)

Developing individual and organisational expertise in Kusuma Cimanis has been an ongoing issue. Since the principle of YKB was to assist in establishing and strengthening a community organisation which

should then autonomously plan and operate counter-trafficking activities (in respect of children) after the end of the YKB project, much effort was devoted to human resource development. In addition to regular monitoring visits a group training course was given. Though Kusuma Cimanis's managerial staff did have a certain level of project operational ability, they lacked the skill or sufficient knowledge to produce proposals themselves for potentially fundable projects.

Another challenge was developing synergy among the members of Kusuma Cimanis. Midway through the project a few core members and volunteers withdrew from the activities. One cadre concocted gossip about the project, and even set up his own learning centre in the village which virtually divided Cimanis into two factions during the first years of the programme.¹³

Maintaining a high level of motivation among the managerial and teaching staff was not easy; a feeling of being underpaid prevailed among them (an equivalent of US\$50–70 was paid as monthly wage). The sense of 'ownership' regarding the project remained a key issue. There had been constant concern about how funding for the project could be secured after TDH-NL sponsorship came to an end, because most members were making their living from it. There were a couple of misappropriations of project funds and also, unfortunately, of savings made by the school administration for pupils' later use. Attempts to cover up these wrongdoings were not entirely successful; suspicion and distrust grew among the pupils and their parents. The operation of the project was affected after one of the dedicated YKB project officers was recruited by IOM Indonesia in 2006 at the time when funding for rescue, repatriation and reintegration of trafficked victims was made available by the US government.

After-school reading rooms established in two locations in 2003 initially attracted many primary schoolgirls but two years later they became nearly inactive for two reasons. A shift of focus to *SMP-Terbuka* activities reduced the budget for maintaining it. Then the district government introduced a new ordinance making attendance at an afternoon Arabic language and Koran class at the Islamic school (*madrasah*) compulsory for primary school children. This, unfortunately, stopped them being able to go to the after-school reading rooms.

From *SMP-Terbuka*'s initial year (2004) between thirty and forty pupils entered the school each year for what was a three-year course; but owing

to the introduction of free compulsory education (grades 1–9) and the establishment of a new public lower secondary school in an adjacent village the number of pupils did not increase at the rate initially expected.¹⁴ This school has certainly increased access to lower secondary education for needy children. Half those who completed it continued on to upper secondary school; and a few girls who completed their upper secondary education became employed in formal labour markets, as factory workers or shop assistants for example. YKB's interventions increased access to secondary education and, therefore, for girls from the poorest backgrounds to the possibility of employment opportunities other than sex work or migrant domestic work. It should be mentioned that those who made such a breakthrough in their lives were few in number. The course which life took for the majority of those first beneficiaries can be summarised as follows: dropping out from *SMP-Terbuka* and then ending up in the sex sector; leaving the village (after completing *SMP-Terbuka*) for sex work or migrant domestic work abroad; or getting quickly married owing to premarital pregnancy.¹⁵ It was confirmed that more than two dozen girls between twelve and fifteen who either were unable to enrol in regular lower secondary education or who dropped out before completing it, ended up in the nightlife sector. Both the staff of Kusuma Cimanis and the mother volunteers acknowledged the fact of primary school leavers and secondary school dropouts but neither these children nor their parent(s) were approached in any effective way. It turned out that the vocational training offered did not appeal to *SMP-Terbuka* pupils. The courses certainly gave them some experience of potential occupations, but the programmes were clearly under-funded and also ill-designed for fostering keenness for the skilled work. The period of training is brief, facilities are incomplete, curricula not appropriate and instructors not well qualified. The acquired vocational skills do not necessarily meet the actual labour market's requirements.

There is no clear indicator by which to measure to what extent the sensitization activities organised by the group of mothers increased awareness or changed the attitudes and minds of other parents. The residences of these twenty mothers were spread across the village, covering the ten administrative neighbourhoods (*Rukun Tetangga*, RT), but the majority of households reached were those located nearby the house of a volunteer. In other words the rest of the households within each neighbourhood had little or no interplay with the volunteers. Initially they had

done their part in helping cases of school dropouts, teenage marriages and girls who were highly likely to leave for the urban sex sector. But it appears that such monitoring and 'policing' was in fact unable to prevent them from dropping out, marrying or leaving home because YKB and Kusuma Cimanis could offer them hardly any viable options. Then it became clear that their 'busybody-ness' and/or interventions were tending to cause tension in the neighbourhoods; some volunteers had to turn a blind eye in some cases despite their knowledge of what was going on. Approximately three years after the formation of the group, the number of volunteers had halved owing to a loss of their interest and/or having left for work abroad. The remaining members carried on the activities but the level of their commitment became low. Consequently the volunteer group became inactive in 2008.¹⁶ It is unlikely that their efforts have brought changes in the entrenched norms and social attitudes of their generation.

The income-generating activities for the parental generation have in effect yielded very little of their intended outcomes. Despite parents with children attending *SMP-Terbuka* being told they would receive priority for these, in the event nearly all recipients of vocational training and micro-credit loans were the mother volunteers. In other words such opportunities were not taken up by the needy parents with teenage girls attending either *SMP-Terbuka* or other regular public schools. Vocational training courses may have equipped them with some skills but these did not evolve into viable, sustainable income-earning activity. Training in hairdressing for example did not lead to earnings because the intention to establish a cooperative hair dressing and beauty salon could not materialise owing to the loan allocated for setting up such a business being insufficient. Planning and management skills among the participants were critically lacking. The original idea of the loan provision scheme was to promote small-scale businesses; the money, however, was not always used for investment purposes but spent for example on monthly instalments for electronics, payment for utility costs and even the purchase of groceries. A few mothers used the loan to set up a stall but were then confronted with the difficulty of maintaining their trade since their profits were used for daily necessities or pocket money for their children, leaving nearly no money for stocking their stalls. The loan scheme worked only in the first years, after which most recipients had fallen behind with their scheduled repayment and the scheme could not be sus-

tained.¹⁷ The loan scheme was terminated by YKB before the collapse of the women's volunteer group. Some of the participating mothers and staff of Kusuma Cimanis made clear mention of the fact that the scheme did not provide sufficient answers to the problem of poverty in the village at large.

The Indonesia Child Welfare Foundation (YKAI)

YKAI is a child-centred NGO for working children established in 1979 by the late wife of President Suharto (his period of presidency was 1967–98). It has been a major recipient of ILO-IPEC's funding since 1993. YKAI's project in Indramayu, entitled 'the Prevention of Child Trafficking for Labour and Sexual Exploitation', received a grant of US\$70,000 from the US Department of Labor via ILO-IPEC for the period 2003–06 (ILO-IPEC 2003; Hermann 2005).¹⁸ Similar to YKB's anti-child trafficking initiative the project focused on prevention of trafficking in girls through community-based education and sensitization activities.

Indramayu was proposed as a pilot district by ILO-IPEC since it has long been a source area of sex workers, and the results of earlier studies on the issue were available. Two villages in different sub-districts were chosen as the project sites.¹⁹ As was the case with YKB, YKAI did not disclose the primary objective of the project to villagers, but only informed the village chiefs and sub-district offices. A baseline survey entitled *A Rapid Assessment of Socio-Cultural Dynamics of Child Trafficking in Indramayu* carried out in late 2003 was followed by a 24-month project (March 2004–February 2006). The bulk of the effort was given to the development of community-based education systems which aim to effectively address and respond to the problems of traffic in girls for the sex and labour markets. The goal is to replicate the pilot prevention models not only in other sub-districts of Indramayu but also in other districts.

The project was conducted by YKAI together with two local collaborating organisations: (1) newly-established community learning centres, named *sanggar*, which offer a set of alternative education courses for needy children; (2) the District Office of Education which provides school-based anti-trafficking training for teachers of public schools in two pilot sub-districts.

'Trafficking in girls' for the sex trade is identified by YKAI as a historically and culturally rooted practice which requires comprehensive strategies to tackle. Five factors are cited as the root causes which first

need to be handled in the pilot project: rural poverty; lack of access to quality education; the prevalent social attitude of regarding daughters as contributor to the family economy; an absence of social control over the trading of sex; and the recent influence of a global consumer culture (ILO Jakarta Office 2004; Sudrajat 2005). The main objectives of the project are: (i) to increase the retention rate of girls and boys at primary and lower secondary school levels in two sub-districts and to improve the quality of the nine years of compulsory education; (ii) to provide vocational training to bridge the transition from schooling to wage-employment; (iii) to promote entrepreneurship through the provision of training in selected skills along with microfinancing; (iv) to alter the entrenched social attitudes of parents and the entire community in respect of encouraging daughters to make money by working in the sex sector and (v) to train public school teachers to be able, with sensitivity, to handle pupils at risk of dropping out or who have recently already dropped out, and to be cognisant with the issue of child trafficking (ILO 2004: 5 cited in Sudrajat 2005: 143–4; East Asia and Pacific Regional UNGEI 2007: 71). In fact YKAI produced a 106-page Handbook for teachers on this whole subject matter, entitled *Module on Training Teachers for Prevention of Child Trafficking*, which was used for three-day workshops in which a hundred teachers from elementary and lower secondary schools took part in two pilot sub-districts, in 2005.

The prevention initiatives implemented through *sanggars* in the two selected villages can be grouped into three main activities. The first is a threefold set of alternative education programmes for needy girls and boys under fifteen: (i) ‘Catch-Up Education’ offered for recent dropouts (from primary or lower secondary schools);²⁰ (ii) payment of the school fees for two hundred girls at primary and lower secondary schools (Rp 150,000/US\$15 per year);²¹ (iii) establishment of *SMP-Terbukas* in 2005 for children unable to attend regular public school. A total of 100 children attended.

The other initiatives implemented by *sanggars* to improve livelihood opportunities within rural communities involved a fund invested in cattle breeding, extra needlework classes given for those interested, and community radio stations established at *sanggars* run by young persons for both education and awareness-raising purposes among the listeners. The third basic activity has been promotion of awareness among parents of those attending *SMP-Terbukas* conducted every semester. The im-

portance and benefits of their children's education is stressed and success stories told of.

YKAI also developed a partnership with the International Garment Training Centre (IGTC) based in the Bogor district of West Java. A six-month vocational course at IGTC was offered for lower secondary school diploma holders aged 16–22 to equip them with skill and knowledge and also help them find jobs in the garment industry. Four of these courses were given through 2004/2006 and a total of about a hundred young persons (roughly 80 per cent females, 20 per cent males) benefited from them. It is reported that 80–90 per cent of those who completed them were taken on as garment workers in Bandung, Cianjur or Tangerang (Sudrajat 2005: 145; East Asia and Pacific Regional UNGEI 2007: 81–2, 84; YKAI undated).

Overall the YKAI effort contributed to educating and equipping underprivileged children and youngsters with vocational skills in the pilot villages, but there is no objective indicator to measure the impacts of the various projects on the recruitment and placement of teenage girls into the sex industry. One measurement YKAI project officers used was the overall retention rate of girls in compulsory education and the continuance rate for higher levels of education. There was evident increase in secondary schooling rates in the pilot villages and this was believed to indicate that the number of girls leaving the village for work declined.²² Unfortunately the total number who completed regular lower secondary school and two *SMP-Terbukas* in the pilot areas was not properly monitored by the project staff. The only available information is that 15 out of 23 (12 boys and 11 girls) who enrolled in one of the *SMP-Terbukas* completed the course; of them nine continued to upper secondary school, financially supported by their own parents.

In the design of the programme for teaching adults new skills for bringing in extra money there was a point of contention between ILO-IPEC and YKAI. The original idea proposed by ILO-IPEC was to provide needy parents with capital (Rp 300,000 (US\$33) per household) for setting up supplementary income-generating activity, but YKAI suggested that such investment might bring no actual return owing to prevailing cases of misappropriation of state-sponsored lending schemes in rural Indramayu, and instead put forward the idea of the cattle breeding. Four cows bought were kept by staff of one of the *sanggar* but the profits were primarily used for the operation of the *sanggar*. It is clear that the

activity brought no direct improvement in the livelihoods of underprivileged households. The various training activities and the needlework course offered at *sanggar*s were unappealing to the younger participants; they made it known their interest was in learning skills related to entertainment activities such as musical performances and video-taping and editing techniques. But owing to the budget constraint such expectations could not be met within the programme.

The community radio broadcasts may have increased awareness of young people and adults in the villages on the trafficking issue; but, without the provision of alternative means of livelihood, attitudes are unlikely to have changed. Project officers of YKAI and a social worker at *sanggar* who were interviewed gave a remarkably clear account of how (nearly) impossible it was to alter the minds of the parents who already had the idea of making quick money by letting their daughter into the sex trade; so priority was given to those impoverished parents who were still eager to send their daughters to higher levels of education. It was also stressed by YKAI's project officers that the activity had contributed to bolstering those children who participated, making them more confident to express their own aspirations and negotiate with their parents or those close to them. But there is no empirical evidence to verify to what extent the inter-generational power balance was redressed through the means of the project. It should be noted that the survival of the radio stations was undermined due to two reasons: the gradual loss of interest in the activity among the participants and lack of (full) support by the local authorities given that it could interfere with the existing commercial radio stations which shared the same airwaves (UNGEI 2007: 77). Changing the behaviour of village officials remained a challenge. Despite efforts to increase their awareness of the illegality of issuing falsified legal documents for girls below eighteen, the practice has persisted. The local officials resort to the fact that they will be blamed if the parents who want to get such documents for their daughters are refused and therefore remain unwillingly poor. ' "Who will feed us if those documents aren't made out?" is what they will say to us', said a project officer of YKAI (November 2007). Such attitudes suggest that awareness-raising by the local authorities alone cannot provide the answer to how they should actually handle the pressing requests of needy families.

The offer of the vocational training opportunities at IGTC is a unique example of partnership between an NGO and the corporate sector in the

setting up of arrangements for rural young women in industry; but the scheme faced various constraints. One block was the difficulty of sending unmarried young women for training outside Indramayu because of the objection from parents who had a preference for having them work in more prosperous areas or overseas (East Asia and Pacific Regional UNGEI 2007: 82). It is reported that 80–90 per cent of the trainees were employed in the garment sector after completing the training (YKAI website; Sudrajat 2005: 145–6; East Asia and Pacific Regional UNGEI 2007: 84) but no monitoring system was established to follow up on their progress. Circumstantial evidence provided by a social worker of the *sanggar* suggests that more than half of them left the factory within one year for various reasons. One of the frequently mentioned explanations is there was hardly any money left to send home since most earning was spent for their own survival. It is therefore difficult to assess, given such claim, whether or not this opportunity is regarded as a viable option among the girls themselves or their parents. The sustainability of the training scheme is also in question. Though expenses for the six-month training, lodging and meals were basically covered by YKAI and IGTC, once the ILO-IPEC fund came to an end it was not possible to continue this. In the first year IGTC accepted those with lower secondary school diploma but then the educational criterion was raised to require the holding of an upper secondary school diploma resulting in a dearth of appropriate applicants. In rural Indramayu those who are able to complete upper secondary education are still mostly from well-to-do families. In this respect the training scheme has not fulfilled its intentions in respect of the present generation of young women.

The Teacher Training project was an innovation in that it aims to change the prevailing passive stance of teachers towards the incidence of (likely) dropouts, and has the potential to create a school-based trafficking prevention system; but it faced some limitations. There was no pre- and post-training assessment of teachers' attitudes with regards to the training objectives, so it was not possible to evaluate how much knowledge teachers had acquired or to what extent their thinking had been positively changed (East Asia and Pacific Regional UNGEI 2007: 84). The project took the form of one-off events; follow-up activities and the project replications will largely depend on the commitment and interests of the District Office of Education.

In the YKAI project no action was taken to target sex-trade brokers operating in the pilot areas. The project officers and social workers did in fact know who were operating as brokers but the latter's recruitment activities were not intercepted because they took a clear stance that such interventions should be handled by judicial authorities.

Other than the partnership with IGTC, some activities in the YKAI project were supported by private companies under Corporate Social Responsibility programmes. But such contributions were given rather incidentally; obtaining long-term support is challenging. As with most anti-trafficking activities (which are run by NGOs) the survival of the YKAI project is almost wholly determined by the continued availability of funding. With the end of IPEC's sponsorship in February 2006 one of the *sanggar*s was closed down and five out of the six social workers left the project. The life of another *sanggar* has been somehow prolonged by making it a branch office of YKAI but no regular operational funds have been allocated; it depends only on incidental funds made available or the profits gained from the cattle breeding. No financial contribution was provided by the local governments or other private donors. So education (specifically the Catch-Up Education) and vocational training activities at IGTC can no longer be offered. Three years after the funding dried up a dedicated voluntary social worker was still struggling to maintain a particular *sanggar* but it is in a state of near-collapse. It is clear that the replication of the prevention models in neighbouring areas, as originally anticipated, is most unlikely to materialise.

Teenage girls' views on the intervention programmes

So far, we have not explored the direct experiences and opinions of teenage girls themselves on the prevention activities described above. Information on the experiences and perceptions of the beneficiaries on the preventive intervention activities is rather incomplete, since I did not have the opportunity for a comprehensive study on this dimension. The views described were derived only from those who participated in YKB's programme. Several girls whom I was able to ask about their experiences expressed their opinions quite openly. Since the girls interviewed had primarily participated in school-based activities (i.e. the alternative secondary school [open lower secondary school] and vocational skills train-

ing), the advantages and shortcomings of the interventions which they pointed out were primarily related to these.

The provision of the alternative secondary education was, in general, highly valued and appreciated by the girl pupils. One of the advantages emphasised was that it creates and expands schooling opportunities for economically disadvantaged children who have few options to continue their education at a regular lower secondary school. Several girls told that they would have already entered labour markets either in urban Indonesia or in foreign countries if the alternative school were not introduced in their village. Comparing this type of school with the regular one, two advantages of attending the former were pointed out. First is that the former offers more technical and vocational skills oriented education; pupils might become better prepared for job search. Second is that pupils might be better protected from being recruited into the sex trade or other uncertain labour markets because they are trained to become more cautious about brokers and aware of potential risks associating with labour migration.

While they expressed many words of thanks and appreciation of the programmes, particularly in front of the NGO workers involved, behind their back those girls whom I interviewed expressed their dissatisfaction at the programmes. They explained that some particular teachers frequently came late to school and sometimes even failed to show up for classes; the pupils were demoralised by such behaviour. Another source of their dissatisfaction was the poor school infrastructure. The pupils often showed they felt inferior or ashamed for their classes taking place in the public primary school building after school hours; so a strong aspiration to have their own school building was frequently expressed. Though the idea of providing the education with focus on basic occupational skills training was favoured, the pupils found training courses were less appealing. Those pupils who were nearly completing lower secondary school (but had little opportunity to continue their education) showed their expectation of (affordable) upper secondary education programme provided by the NGOs involved. Another expectation was that the NGOs involved should play a more important role in job placement service to help mediate school leavers entering formal, protected labour markets. A few girl pupils [in the third year of lower secondary school], who were at that time under great pressure from their parents to earn

money in the nightlife sector, urgently appealed they need to be protected, by being rescued and placed into a protection centre.

Two former pupils who eventually became employed with a Jakarta upper-class massage parlour and worked as supervisors of young sex workers told that the education programme itself hardly prevents girls from being recruited into the nightlife sector; the procurement activities would be reduced only if other promising earning opportunities become available for village girls and the demand for commercial sexual service could be diminished (re-interviewed in Jakarta, January 2013).

7.4 Challenges and dilemmas for donors, local government and NGOs

7.4.1 The international concept of child trafficking and its local relevance

The Indramayu government's anti-trafficking interventions have been influenced by the actions and requirements of international aid organisations. Prior to these interventions the recruitment and movement of adolescent girls and adult women into the sex sector was perceived variously. There was no clear borderline between those below and above eighteen years of age. Sex-related work has long been viewed as a means of livelihood rather than a violation of the rights of women and girls and a crime. Involvement was not problematized based on the legal ages of adults and minors, but rather justified by socio-cultural reasons. For instance, the older generation differed in their view towards married teenage girls. One group saw them as adults in the rural context while the other did not. Likewise views on the entry of divorced adolescent girls into the sex trade were divided as to whether it should have been condemned or not. Some were inclined to show a tolerant attitude towards the involvement of divorced young women in the trade. Such a view is still held by some village elders and even some local collaborators of anti-trafficking projects; they are of the opinion that it is irrelevant to separate the phenomenon of underage and adult sex workers. Nevertheless the general notion that this distinction was irrelevant is no longer explicitly used among the local officials and the local collaborators who have taken part in the foreign-sponsored anti-trafficking activities and the intensive awareness-raising campaigns.

During the spread of the ideal notion of childhood promoted by global donor agencies, international NGOs and collaborating local NGOs through workshops, seminars and media campaigns, the tolerance of teenage sex work has been marginalised on the surface. Childhood as normatively described in the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) has had an important influence in reshaping local plural views on childhood but is unlikely to have overridden them. For example, the current young generation (particularly those adolescents who continued to secondary education) appear to have been imbued with both the universalised notion and the local notions of childhood. Those youngsters, who were considered to have been ‘enlightened’ by anti-trafficking campaigns about the universalised notion in one way or another, tend to use either the global or the local ideas of childhood interchangeably by picking up their elements according to given contexts. So the notions used by such young people are often fused.

The universalised notion of childhood as being a time for play, for education and for being protected from exploitation and abuse has heavily influenced and constrained the exploration and development of intervention to address the problem of ‘child trafficking’. Nearly all NGO activists and their local collaborators operating in Indramayu have acceded to the notion that minors are ‘immature and vulnerable’, unable to make rational judgement nor able to handle potential risks or actual harm once exposed to the sex trade. Adult women, on the other hand, are implicitly seen as ‘agents’ who should have the freedom to involve themselves in the trade.

From this it can be inferred that the concept of child trafficking introduced by international organisations has reshaped the way local officials and NGO activists look on the movement of adolescent girls into the sex trade. This globalisation of the international notion of trafficking has resulted in any type of mobility of minors which fits the definition of trafficking being dubbed ‘child trafficking’—not only by the well-intended international organisations but also, now, among the Indramayan villagers themselves; the term is now indiscriminately used in connection with girls who leave home for making money in the sex trade. They rarely if ever question its true local relevance, even though this simplistic, standardised, definition of the phenomenon is clearly of no help to them in understanding the complexity and diversity of the whole business.

7.4.2 The shortcomings of interventions and the assumptions which underpin them

Girls between twelve and fifteen are considered most vulnerable for 'sex trafficking' and are in theory considered to be the major beneficiaries of the interventions. Earlier studies and recent field evidence confirmed that there are indeed cases of girls in this age group becoming involved in the sex trade, but the fact is that the majority of young women entered the trade after turning fifteen. This evidence suggests that preventative activities should also be directed to young women of sixteen and above.

Current efforts to curtail the sex trade tend not to address the brokers on the spot, that is to say in the villages of origin of 'their' girls. Even though such brokers were known to be active in the villages under investigation, local counterparts of the NGOs turned a blind eye to their activities. When the broker who brought Kia into Bali's nightclub was arrested by the police (see Chapter 6), a local collaborator of Kusuma Cimanis described why he was reluctant to intercept sex-trade brokers:

I do have a capacity to help rescue girls brought into the nightlife sector and apprehend the brokers by collaborating with the police. Intercepting them once or twice would do no damage but my family and I will be in trouble if I challenge them more than that. (Cimanis, November 2007)

Such opinion was widely shared among the local anti-trafficking activists. The recruitment activities therefore have remained 'untouchable' in the intervention projects.

In Chapter 5 it was explained that not all girls are brought into the trade by brokers; some become involved because their decision and action is influenced by those of their peers already operating as sex workers. The findings presented in previous chapters suggest that current interventions do not take into account the recruitment role of young sex workers in their home neighbourhood.

In this chapter we have seen how the approaches and measures adopted in community-based Preventive Intervention projects have been to a greater or lesser extent grounded on this insufficient understanding of 'trafficking', its root causes and underlying premises. A number of these underlying assumptions can be challenged. To begin with, the low levels of education or high dropout rates were cited as root causes of 'trafficking' in girls for the sex trade. Such premise does not, however, explain the scale of their entry into the trade during the 1980s and 1990s

when the overall school enrolment rates (at primary school level) of rural Indramayu in fact increased. If the levels of education reached were an affecting factor there should have a decline in the number of girls entering the trade. Another contradiction (mentioned in Chapter 5) is that the flow of young women into the trade before the 1970s were insignificant despite nearly all rural young women those days being unable to attend school. These facts suggest there are other factors which caused the increase in the scale of movement of young women after 1980. Marriage at early ages and frequent divorces were mentioned as a further factor behind mobility but the fact is that the increase in the numbers in the trade has been paralleled by a rise in the average age of marriage through the last five decades. Poverty or lack of alternative livelihoods was also identified as an underlying cause and therefore considered girls brought up in landless, underprivileged households as ones at risk for trafficking. NGOs apparently did not look into why not all girls in poor households enter the sex trade. Paying close attention to the differences in the family/household situation between girls who get involved in the trade and those who do not may help generate approaches which address the issue at household level more effectively.

Reflecting further on the character and shortcomings of government and NGO interventions, it may be concluded that anti-trafficking activities tend to frame problems by 'rendering them technical' (Li 2007: 7-12); that is, identifying the 'problem' in ways linked to the availability of a (technical) solution: education, vocational/life skill training, microenterprise and so on, with an emphasis on changing the capacities and values and 'managing' the behaviours of these teenage girls (and/or their parents) rather than on addressing wider class, gender, generational and transnational sexual politics. The latter approaches, which focus on oppressive structures rather than malleable individuals, are too difficult to deal with for the donor and implementing organisations, even though the front-line staff of these organisations may be quite well aware of their importance. The resulting interventions are based on the rather narrowly-conceived desire to curtail trafficking activities, primarily by isolating or immunising girls at risk from morally and physically harmful occupations by keeping them in school or in training, without addressing other aspects of the complex realities they face.

7.4.3 Sustainability of good intentions and activities

The sustainability of anti-trafficking programmes depends first on the availability of funding, and second (but related) on the appropriateness of the assumptions and strategies which define and guide the programmes and in turn influence the results. When meagre results are achieved, as already noted, ‘donor fatigue’ sets in.

The survival of anti-trafficking activities at national and local levels is, thus, basically determined by the interests and political commitment of international donor agencies. Indramayu is no exception. When a high level of attention is paid by donors, the programmes run with a momentum fuelled by funding and facilities brought in from elsewhere. Once the amount of funds declines or funding is terminated, the rate of prevention activities slows; in some cases the project itself comes to an end. Some anti-trafficking NGOs or civil groups which have tried to concentrate on the anti-trafficking issue have totally failed to survive.

The state of affairs of NGOs and civil organisations at the time of my last field visit (July 2010) can be described as follows. YKB activities supported by Terres Des Hommes Netherlands have been handed over to and run by its local collaborating organisation (Kusuma Cimanis) since the funding ended; but the extent of their interventions has been significantly reduced. YKB has continued to devote itself primarily to public and sexual health in the Greater Jakarta area. Indonesia Against Child Trafficking has pledged to provide additional funds for Kusuma Cimanis to run an awareness-raising project in western Indramayu. After ILO-IPEC sponsorship ended YKAI withdrew staff from the project sites but has maintained the operations of one of the local collaborating organisations (*sanggar*) by providing some incidental financial support though the activities have been drastically downsized. YKAI’s joint project with the Office of Education to train public school teachers was discontinued at the end of ILO-IPEC-support. Public awareness-raising activities taken on by ICMC/the Solidarity Center, the Women’s Journal Foundation and the Fahmina Institute were all short-lived; and their counterpart organisations failed to carry them on.

Given that international donors’ inputs have always been at national level and the district governments only rarely, and irregularly, contributed small amounts, even the later-established NGOs/civil groups such as PAPUAN, *Paguyuban Mutiara* and FAKABI have disappeared from lo-

cal/district anti-trafficking circles in recent years. Suaka has continued to run the informal education package and vocational training by securing some state grants made available through its close relationship with Government and the private sector. *Mitra Citra Remaja* became inactive for a time when UNICEF support ended, but subsequently resumed its activity by attracting a grant from the local office of the Women's Empowerment Bureau.

It is an open fact that NGOs and their counterpart civil organisations in Indramayu have been finding it difficult to ensure funding sources. As with many other anti-trafficking activities elsewhere in Indonesia, the sustainability of these preventive programmes remains a constant concern and a challenge.

Notes

¹ At least two dozen studies have been financed by inter-governmental, foreign governments and international NGOs. The studies sponsored by ILO, UNICEF, ICMC, the Solidarity Center, and Terres Des Hommes are widely made available for policy-makers and practitioners, academics, journalists, NGO activists and even general public. For example, Farid (1999), UNICEF (2004), and Manik (2002, 2004a, 2004b) were sponsored by UNICEF, while Irwanto et al. (1998), Irwanto (2001), Irwanto et al. (2001), Utami and Putranto (2002), and ILO-IPEC (2004a, 2004b) were supported by ILO. The US-supported ICMC and the Solidarity Center funded some influential policy- and advocacy-oriented research such as Rosenberg (2003), Rusmil and Roediono (2003), Venny (2003), Darmoyo and Adi (2004), Sugiarti et al. (2006), and Sirait et al. (2007); while Terres Des Hommes financed Amiruddin (2004), Sagala and Rozana (2007) and Venny (2007). Some other institutions also funded studies below: Suyanto (2002), Putranti and Casmiwati (2004), Mulyanto (2004) and Nuh (2005) by Ford Foundation; Darwin et al. (2003) by The Rockefeller Foundation; Lopian and Geru (2006) by the New Zealand Agency for International Development; and Situmorang (2006) by UNFPA.

² USAID sponsored a series of joint anti-trafficking projects implemented by ICMC and the Solidarity Center over a period of nine years (2001–09); they sought to assist the Indonesian government with anti-trafficking legislation and strategies, helped in development of anti-trafficking initiatives taken by government and NGOs (Chemonics International Inc. 2009: 44–5). Their assistance was given to three projects: 'Creating an Enabling Environment Project to Overcome

Trafficking of Women and Children' (CTP) in 2001–04; 'Strengthening the Initiatives of Government and Others Against Human Trafficking' (SIGHT) in 2004–06; 'Anti-Trafficking in Persons Program' (ATP) in 2007–09 (*ibid.*).

³ Much anti-trafficking funding was made available not only to NGOs based in major urban areas (such as Jakarta, Bandung, Solo, Surabaya, Medan and Bandar Lampung) but also to those based in places such as Indramayu, Karawang, Sukabumi, Pontianak and Batam.

⁴ See, for example, Irwanto et al. (1998); Wutun and Martini (1998); Sapardjaja (2002); Budiono (2002); Utami and Putranto (2002); Sanie et al. (2003); Rosenberg (2003); YKB (2003); YKAI (2003) in Herman (2005: 25); UNICEF (2004); Sagala and Rozana (2007); Mulyani (2007).

⁵ More than a dozen workshops and seminars were held during 2005–07 by local government agencies take part in the District Taskforce such as BAPPEDA, the Office of Social Welfare and Manpower, the Office of Public Order and the Women's Empowerment Bureau. Some events took a few days; much money was spent on the cost of a conference room, accommodation, food, transport, pocket money for participants and the honorariums for speakers.

⁶ *Kelompok Belajar Paket B* and *Paket C*, (widely called *Kejar Paket*) is a non-formal education specially designed for working persons who did not complete either elementary or secondary education (see White and Tjandraningsih 1998: 60). It provides three levels of education (*Paket A*, *B*, and *C*) being the equivalent of elementary, lower secondary and upper secondary education respectively. Those who completed the schooling and passed a national examination obtain a diploma equivalent to having completed regular schooling. *Kejar Pakets* are usually offered every weekend at authorized community-learning centres.

⁷ ILO-IPEC initiated the TICSA in 2000 in Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka; it expanded in 2003 to include other three countries, Indonesia, Pakistan and Thailand, under the US\$3 million TICSA Phase II in 2003–06 (ILO Jakarta Office 2004).

⁸ *SMP-Terbuka* is a lower secondary education offered for primary school diploma holders who are unable to continue on to regular school owing to economic constraint, long distance and/or time constraint. It is recognized as a formal education institution which is run and managed under the auspices of a regular public lower secondary school. For more detailed discussion on this particular type of school, see Saidiman and Rahardjo (1997). Regular public schools give their classes between 07.00 and 13.30 on six days of the week. The *SMP-Terbuka* is able to use the buildings and facilities and also employ the regular school teachers though it is for fewer hours. Children of poor families who are needed to help bring in extra income are likely to be more able to attend school in an afternoon and at least on three days of the week.

⁹ The project was primarily carried out in Cirebon but it also covered nearby districts which included Indramayu. The Institute has a wide network of Muslim leaders throughout rural West Java.

¹⁰ The village was selected for two reasons. It has been one of the major sources for urban sex establishments and was therefore the locus of previous research conducted together with the Center for Social Development Studies. YKB could have benefited from their familiarity with the local contexts and relationships with local figures for designing and implementing the programme.

¹¹ Kusuma Cimanis has three units, namely project managerial staff (former sex-trade brokers and local figures), teaching staff (regular primary and secondary school teachers) and outreach volunteers (a group of mothers).

¹² Apart from running the community-based programme YKB also initiated two other anti-trafficking projects. One was a sub-district-wide anti-trafficking awareness-raising campaign entitled 'the Programme for Prevention of Trafficking in Children and Women' funded by Indonesia-ACTS through 2005–09. The other was a social reintegration programme for 'trafficked' Indramayan girls and women who were repatriated through IOM's assistance. Funding was provided by IOM on a case-by-case basis.

¹³ This cadre is a son of a wealthy landowner who had worked as a temporary teacher at a local public school. After he left Kusuma Cimanis he made some of his relatives attending *SMP-Terbuka* transfer to a public secondary school in a nearby village. His community learning centre offers *Kejar Paket B* and *C*, a computing class and runs a community radio station which involves young persons in production of the programme.

¹⁴ *SMP-Terbuka* has continued to operate since TDH-NL sponsorship ended in December 2010. It has been managed by Kusuma Cimanis in partnership with a regular public secondary school which also runs a large scale *SMP-Terbuka* in a nearby sub-district.

¹⁵ Some pupils (and their parents) who were apparently unable to continue education to upper secondary education said they had expected YKB could also help get them into proper employment.

¹⁶ Several of the volunteers told how they were feeling they had already been forgotten by YKB; others confessed they were too lazy to participate in the activities arranged by YKB.

¹⁷ A total of eight million rupiah (US\$873) was credited for income-earning purposes, 80 per cent of which was well behind schedule when finally repaid.

¹⁸ Apart from ILO-IPEC-sponsorship, grants to a total of US\$18,000 were provided by private companies through their corporate social responsibility scheme (East Asia and Pacific Regional UNGEI 2007: 73).

¹⁹ The two villages were selected for three reasons: they have been major recruiting grounds of young sex workers; village and sub-district offices were amenable to developing the partnership; and there had already been feelers put out by persons in contact with YKAI regarding the possibility of operating the project there.

²⁰ The Catch-Up Education offers two-hour tuition three times a week for a period of three months. A total of 340 girls participated in the course in three phases.

²¹ A few private companies such as Indofood, Freeport Indonesia and Bank Niaga gave from their Corporate Social Responsibility fund to support YKAI's scholarship scheme.

²² A total of 340 primary school girls participated in the Catch-Up Education course, of whom about 55 per cent then enrolled in formal or non-formal secondary education and there was a 40 per cent increase in primary school diploma holders enrolling in lower secondary school in the two villages (East Asia and Pacific Regional UNGEI 2007: 83).

8

Conclusion: Re-conceptualising and Redefining the Lives of Adolescent Girls in the Sex Sector

8.1 Introduction

As has been noted earlier, in the dominant discourse on girls in the sex trade being a ‘victim’ and being an ‘agent’ are seen as mutually exclusive and opposing categories. This study, hopefully, has shown how adherence to these mutually exclusive social categories hinders our understanding of the actual existence and conditions of victimhood and agency in the experiences of teenage girls exposed to commercial sex. It has treated victimhood and agency not as mutually exclusive states, but coexisting and intersecting and as a process, in which there are moments of victimhood and moments of agency in young girls’ transition from childhood to youth and adulthood. This continuum of victimhood and agency of teenage girls in the sex trade has not received adequate attention from policy-makers and practitioners engaged in anti-trafficking efforts.

Moving away from the stereotypical concept of ‘child trafficking’ as a modern day form of slavery, this study has looked into the theoretical and empirical gulf between this notion and the experiences and perceptions of those teenage girls who do become involved in—and also sooner or later exit from—sex commerce. It has analysed the dominant notions and prevailing understanding of child trafficking which inform and shape global and local counter-trafficking initiatives, finding them to be a social construct influenced by universalised normative models of childhood and adolescence. The empirical study aimed to understand how far the premises underlying such models—for example, that all girls below eighteen are incapable of making effective decisions or of reacting to

structural socio-cultural forces and undesirable circumstances—do either represent or contradict the lives of adolescent girls in a notorious sex-trade recruitment area of West Java. By highlighting the aspects of both vulnerability and autonomy, a picture has emerged of the coexistence of two aspects in the lives of girls who are exposed to the trade: being a victim and exercising agency.

In order to clarify the contexts and processes in which young women being part of the nightlife sector, the study has described the supply mechanism and the operational structure of particular types of sex establishments in Jakarta and Japan. They have been presented in relation to the development and implementation of international counter-trafficking regulations and national policy responses towards ‘sexual trafficking’ of women and children.

The study examined how international anti-trafficking policies and programmes have been adopted and implemented in Indramayu (for preventative purpose), and what the consequences—intended or unintended—have been for the lives of adolescent girls, their families and the targeted communities, as well as others involved in sex-trade recruiting activities.

This chapter summarises, with further reflection, the main findings of the study in relation to the research questions posed in Chapter 1 and concludes by reflecting on both theoretical and empirical implications and challenges which might be taken into account for future policies and research regarding the recruitment, movement and engagement of young people in sex commerce.

8.2 Reflection on the empirical findings

8.2.1 Victimhood and agency

The narratives suggest that when victimhood and agency are treated as an interconnected process rather than a binary and normative construct, then one is able to better understand the range of agency exercised and inhibited as a transition between different moments of awareness about the self, gender and generational and class relations.

The use of the international legal definition of child trafficking and its underlying assumptions (used in the UN Trafficking Protocol) might be convenient for well-intentioned policy-makers, practitioners and academics to analyse and respond to the involvement of girls in the sex trade.

Simplified stereotypical portrayals, however, do not help enhance better understanding of how the dimensions of victimhood and agency interact. The legal definition of child trafficking regards non-adults in the sex trade as passive victims in broader power structures and inter-generational relations, denying the possibility of agency, autonomy and resilience in the face of adversity and uncertainty. Such an approach neither notices nor accepts the possibility of young people making their own efforts to mitigate and overcome the difficulties they encounter. Adolescents who have and show the capability of thinking, deciding and acting for themselves in the face of adversity may well have been looked upon as inconvenient for mainstream policy-makers and practitioners; the institutionalisation of the definition of child trafficking actually restricts the agency of such young persons.

Chapters 3 and 6 have given evidence of how labelling and treating adolescent girls who have become involved in the trade as miserable victims may make them socially alienated and even deprive them of the already limited social space they have. As the narratives tell: objections implicitly and explicitly expressed by adolescent girls are generally little taken into account and even written off by those involved in support and protection activities. They have few means or opportunities to have their own say, even though the Convention on the Rights of the Child (on which many or most intervention agencies claim to base their programmes) enshrines their right (in Article 12) ‘to express [their] views freely’ and for their views to be given ‘due weight’. As currently defined, the idea of ‘child trafficking’—however well-intended—circumscribes and obscures the possibility of the involved youths’ capability to think, decide and act for themselves. This study, therefore, suggests that one of the factors which obscure a full and proper understanding of the circumstances and problems the girls face derives from adults themselves who insufficiently take into account the voices and perceptions of these intended young beneficiaries.

Organisations and activists with the best intentions of giving support and protection seem to determine and perpetuate what they think right regarding approaches to the involvement of adolescent girls in question, and in doing so to favour the ‘rendering technical’ approach. Persons with no involvement in the trade tend to think more from the perspective of their own lives rather than trying to understand the real situations and problems of those involved.

Regarding the concept of the trafficking of girls for the sex trade, two main problems were discerned. One is that the prevailing notion is based essentially upon ideological assumptions about childhood which ignore pluralities of conditions and experience of variously-aged non-adults. This universal approach assigns them all as passive victims of exploitation and abuse, overemphasising the aspects of hopelessness and vulnerability—along with the brutality and ill-treatment which these girls suffer. Another is that the legal definition of trafficking is clearly premised upon girls in the trade being devoid of autonomy and agency.

The complexities and pluralities shown through the depiction of personal narratives of teenage girls suggest there are no definite ways to define or conceptualise the process and outcome of their recruitment for, movement into and involvement in the sex trade. The idea of child trafficking victimises vulnerable or disadvantaged children in migrant sex work without taking into account how they themselves perceive their circumstances. Being labelled as victims of child trafficking does not always mean they develop and retain a victim identity, even should they develop a sense of helplessness. Though the process of involvement in the sex trade certainly involves these girls in various forms of unpleasantness and degradation, current approaches to their circumstances often do not help them but, indeed, socially isolate them in ways which can even harm them.

The empirical evidence suggests that stereotypical victim portrayals of teenage girls who are tricked or deceived into sex trading are not wholly untrue, but that they incorrectly represent pluralities in the experiences and perceptions of these disadvantaged young people. Such depictions are likely to deflect attention from the status, vulnerabilities and capabilities of the variously aged girls with their different needs and interests. The field evidence has shown that these girls can indeed be vulnerable to oppressive power relations and to harm in exploitative labour systems; their exposure to the sex trade can weaken their ability to exert their willpower and to act effectively. Such a greatly circumscribed state-of-living can indeed be described as victimhood. But what is important is that they should not automatically then be seen as 'helpless victims' of slavery-like conditions owing to their assumed powerlessness and inability. Resilience, resistance and autonomy are not entirely absent in such disadvantaged girls. They may find themselves powerless to change their undesirable circumstances but still maintain and sometimes exercise

forms of agency. Even in the face of the most degrading experiences their ability to cope, act and adapt can be exerted and even developed; some degree of autonomy and control over their life and immediate circumstances can be and, as evidenced, sometimes is regained. We may infer, then, that teenage girls are not totally helpless, leading inexorably miserable lives, but active agents—or, it could be, ‘active victims’—in their own development.

The development and exercise of agency in girls can also bring undesirable consequences for the girls themselves and persons closely related to them—implying that they are, as we would expect, neither purely victims of structures nor purely free agents. In other words, the elements of victimhood and agency are not completely separate states but, rather, coexist and variously intersect.

The theoretical approaches to agency of children and youth discussed so far foster a new level of understanding and assumptions: the nature and form of young people’s agency can be various when interacting with social structures in ways which both inhibit and enable the choices and actions they make; and elements of both victimhood and agency coexist and intersect in their experiences.

As described in Chapters 4 and 6, whatever reasons and factors may have influenced adolescent girls’ entry into and involvement in the commercial sex trade, a feeling of dislike, alienation and discrimination is felt, to a greater or lesser extent, but mostly not explicitly shown by these girls. Although some of the girls appear to deal with difficulties they face in the trade and achieve material success to a degree which can hardly be achieved by involvement in other jobs, the line of work is not necessarily seen as desirable. However one needs to take into account the fact that not all girls develop and maintain a victim identity. Experiencing helplessness in the trade does not necessarily mean sensing ‘victimhood’.

The choices and actions of these girls are taken in highly restricted social and cultural contexts. Yet though their decisions and actions are heavily influenced and constrained by given social settings, to a greater or lesser extent they act for themselves and directly and indirectly influence the persons surrounding them through their experiences—be they victim or agent. Agency takes various forms; their capacity to choose and act based on their circumstances should be understood in the context specific to the individual. Even experiencing conditions of extreme degradation, some of them regain certain levels of control: those who find

themselves helpless do still hold to the idea of agency to change their situation. With the limited resources available to them, an ability to adopt to and cope with dire conditions is manifest.

One prevalent theorised notion of child/adolescent agency takes a simplified form which tends to emphasise girls' resilience and coping ability when confronted by intensely difficult intense circumstances, such as involvement in the sex trade. That theory focuses on individual agency itself, in isolation from the various structures and relationships in which individuals are involved. The present study has described multiple dimensions of agency, interplaying with various structural and institutional forces: intergenerational relations of household and community, networks of sex-trade brokers, those running the sex business, intervention organisations and practitioners.

Agency is inhibited by internal and external structural factors which intersect and coexist with various levels of victimhood, and takes various forms—which can also actually be destructive. Agency should be understood as a multi-interacting and transformative process.

8.2.2 Reflections on generational relations

The study has shown that (re)entry of teenage girls into the nightlife sector basically occurs as an outcome of the (processes or) web of intergenerational tensions and negotiations. Daughters are essentially dependent on a patriarchal family structure which, one way or another, internalises in them attitudes towards and expectations of parents. Within these intergenerational structural power relations some (step-)parents take advantage of their authority over daughters to escape from poverty and even ensure better social and economic standing through capitalising on the young one's sexuality. This can be described as a form of abuse and exploitation of daughters undertaken for promoting 'family' (or possibly more correctly, parental) welfare. In other words, daughters function as a system of family-based welfare in the communities and societies where little residual social welfare support is provided by the state. The decisions and actions which teenage girls take are greatly influenced and shaped by direct or indirect social pressures created within household and rural community. For some girls their entry into the sex trade can be a way of escape from the heavy pressures and unavoidable effort to fulfil and meet the needs and expectations of their parents. Complex intergen-

erational power relations are exacerbated by frequent divorces and remarriages of their parents.

Entrance into the sex trade can also be caused through an indirect form of inter-generational relations. The ideas of settling a debt of gratitude to parents or practising filial piety are most often the leading factors which influence teenage girls to direct themselves into the trade even when there is little or no parental pressure; but motivation can be inadvertently strengthened by *intra*-generational pressures. Visible/tangible success materialised by peers who become involved in the trade stimulates young women to direct the course of their life relatively boldly.

8.2.3 Reflections on anti-trafficking interventions

Anti-trafficking activities are legitimated by the use of narrowly portrayed discursive models highlighting the highly coercive elements, deceptive and/or forceful recruitment processes, and horrifying outcomes to which some girls are subjected (Molland 2012:19). But as already argued above, the normative construction of childhood/youth and trafficking which inform anti-child trafficking policies and programmes are often partial at best, not reflecting the much more complex reality faced by the girls in question.

The currently prevailing legal definition of ‘child trafficking’ cannot be fully justified as a basis for policy making and practice. Contrary to mainstream ideas, many girls spoken with in this study, with or without adult or organisational support, did show coping ability, resilience and competitiveness in the face of varying hardships. There are definite notional discrepancies between those who extend support and those who receive it, regarding their perception of what should best be done.

It is clear that anti-trafficking projects in Indramayu were essentially designed, run and then discontinued by the political interest and logic of the international donor agencies, rather than by the interests and needs of the disadvantaged young people. Local government agencies and NGOs became involved in these projects because funding was made available by international donors. When funding became unavailable as a result of ‘donor fatigue’, anti-trafficking activism declined sharply despite the problems of girls in the sex trade being unresolved.

Through the course of actions implemented in Indramayu over the last decade, the globally promoted notion of ‘child trafficking’ has be-

come instilled in the minds of those involved in such activism, as well as those living in rural communities. International donor agencies have essentially brought their pre-formed ideas about what constitutes trafficking and how it should be approached. In other words, local government organisations and NGOs in Indramayu have been imbued with what can be called the ‘trafficking mentality’, formed through donor-driven research and publication, and anti-trafficking workshops and campaigns. Such thinking has potential drawbacks not only for those involved in anti-trafficking activities but also for intended beneficiaries. Anti-trafficking activists and workers who have been imbued with such ideas are prevented from critically seeing and questioning the disparities between theoretical conceptions and the diverse and complex realities experienced by girls themselves. It appears to be taboo to question whether those adolescent girls might be autonomous and exert agency in remaining and directing themselves in commercial sex work. It is ironic to see that when such global notions of ‘trafficking’ have been instilled and activated among the inhabitants/population of Indramayu, funding for counter-measures based on these ideas has now dwindled.

This generic framework for preventive intervention is basically a donor-driven process which should be open for debate. Current intervention measures appear to reflect the moral concerns of donors and intervening organisations rather than the immediate needs and interests of the intended young beneficiaries, and provide no leeway for intended beneficiaries to take their own stand and initiatives to resolve the problems they face in the ‘participatory’ spirit which child-rights-based approaches are supposed to foster.

I hope that this study has shown the value of conducting research with young people themselves as source of information crucial for redressing the adult-centric portrayals of child trafficking. It has emphasised that interventions should view these young people as social agents who are capable of understanding and responding to their circumstances and problems (see Bourdillon et al. 2010: 207). Taking into account their perceptions does not necessarily mean that their understanding always mirrors reality, but does suggest the premises underlying the concepts of child trafficking and intervention approaches should be more thoroughly debated in light of realities.

The study has also shown that current anti-trafficking activities are unlikely to address the social and structural factors promoting the re-

cruitment and involvement of girls in the sex trade, nor mitigate the problems faced by them. Village-level interventions such as providing opportunities to attend secondary school, providing tuition in vocational skills and giving small sums of credit for setting up business and also raising awareness regarding trafficking do not much help adolescent girls and young women who are pushed out from their rural homes to bring in money. Under such structural forces the sexual labour sector offers a prospect of immediate solution to the economic problems faced by families in the village. Without addressing these structural dimensions, counter-trafficking measures in source areas are unlikely to bring about the intended outcomes.

The study also suggests that a simplistic dichotomous and artificial division between under-eighteen 'children' and eighteen-and-above 'adults' is not helpful, for either analytical or policy purposes. It is, therefore, suggested that there is a need to put aside the idea of non-adults as powerless victims devoid of willpower and ability—or equally, of adults as autonomous agents devoid of victimhood and oppression. Children need to be valued and treated as social agents who not only are influenced by but themselves influence their circumstances and the persons surrounding them. This is not to say that they are never victims of mistreatment or exploitation where assistance is required, but to emphasise that approaches or interventions for children should include the perspectives of both victimhood and agency.



Appendices

Appendix 1

A typical example of 'trafficked' girl's narrative

Noi came from a poor community in rural Thailand. At 15, seeking to escape rape and sexual abuse in her foster family, she found a foreign labor agent in Bangkok who advertised well-paid waitress jobs in Japan. She flew to Japan and later learned that she had entered Japan on a tourist visa under a false identity. On her arrival in Japan, she was taken to a karaoke bar where the owner raped her, subjected her to a blood test and then bought her. 'I felt like a piece of flesh being inspected', she recounted. The brothel madam told Noi that she had to pay off a large debt for her travel expenses. She was warned that girls who tried to escape were brought back by the Japanese mafia, severely beaten, and their debts doubled. The only way to pay off the debt was to see as many clients as quickly as possible. Some clients beat the girls with sticks, belts and chains until they bled. If the victims returned crying, they were beaten by the madam and told that they must have provoked the client. The prostitutes routinely used drugs before sex 'so that we didn't feel so much pain'. Most clients refused to use condoms. The victims were given pills to avoid pregnancy and pregnancies were terminated with home abortions. Victims who managed to pay off their debt and work independently were often arrested by the police before being deported. Noi finally managed to escape with the help of a Japanese NGO. (US Department of State 2004: 13–4)

Appendix 2

*Six guiding principles for the ethical and safe conduct of interviews,
particularly with minors*

- (1) Informed consent to be obtained from respondents; if minors are involved consent must be sought from both the children themselves and their parents/guardians.
- (2) Respondents to be made aware of their right to withdraw from the interview at any point.
- (3) Confidentiality of respondents and their information to be ensured.
- (4) Respondents to be assured of no harm coming to them as a result of the research and activities involved.
- (5) Avoidance of questions which may cause emotional distress to the respondents.
- (6) Readiness to give assistance to interviewees should this be requested or judged to be necessary.

Sources: Mann and Tolfree 2003: 34, 40 and 41; Zimmerman 2004: 565

Appendix 3

List of organisations involved in the anti-trafficking initiatives under study

- (1) Central government agencies:
 - Coordinating Ministry for People's Welfare
 - State Ministry of Women Empowerment
 - Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration
 - National Police Agency
 - National Commission on Violence against Women
 - National Commission on Child Protection
- (2) Multilateral development organisations:
 - UNICEF
 - ILO
 - USAID
- (3) International NGOs:
 - Save the Children US;
 - Terre Des Hommes the Netherlands
 - The Asia Foundation
 - American Center for International Labour Solidarity (ACILS)
 - International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC)
 - International Office for Migration (IOM)
- (4) Local Development NGOs based in Jakarta:
 - Yayasan Kusuma Buana* (YKB: Kusuma Buana Foundation)
 - Yayasan Kesejahteraan Anak Indonesia* (YKAI: Indonesian Child Welfare Foundation),
 - Indonesia Against Child Trafficking (Indonesia-ACTs)
 - Kapal Perempuan* (*Lingkaran Pendidikan Alternatif untuk Perempuan*, Alternative Learning Centre for Women)
 - Indonesia-Action against Child Trafficking
 - Yayasan Jurnal Perempuan* (Women's Journal Foundation)
 - Bandung Wangi Foundation, *Yayasan Anak dan Perempuan* (YAP,

Foundation for Children and Women)

(5) Indramayu district government agencies:

- District Office of Education
- Regional Agency for Planning and Development (*Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Daerah*, BAPPEDA)
- District Office of Social Welfare and Manpower
- District Police Station

(6) Local NGOs/Civil Groups based in outside Jakarta:

In Indramayu:

- Suaka
- Concern for Children and Women (PAPUAN, *Peduli Anak dan Perempuan*)
- the Voice of Kemayu (*Suara Kemayu*)
- the Indramayu District Child Forum (FAKABI, *Forum Anak Kabupaten Indramayu*)
- ABJADI Foundation
- Paguyuban Mutiara*
- Adolescent Image Partner (MCR, *Mitra Citra Remaja*)

In Cirebon:

- the Fahmina Institute

In Bandung:

- Bhatra
- Institute Perempuan Bandung* (IPB)
- LAHA



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