

The Effectiveness of a Task Force for Preventing Sexual Exploitation: Evidence from Human Trafficking (Women and Children) in East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

The phenomenon of human trafficking particularly are (women and children) in Indonesia always concern to raise a serious response by the government. One factor causing human trafficking is the lack of economic income, which is inversely proportional to the skills of the community. Based on the International Organization for Migration (IOM) data from 2017, human trafficking involved 970 girls and 5907 women. The Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection in 2019 identified 70% of victims of trafficking as women and children. East Nusa Tenggara (NTT) Province is the region with the highest level of human trafficking in Indonesia. The Task Force for Preventing Sexual Exploitation is the government's effort to stop this crime. Furthermore, the government needs to increase responsiveness through policies to prevent human trafficking. The purpose of this article is to analyze how effective the task force is in preventing sexual exploitation in human trafficking in NTT. This research used qualitative descriptive. Data were collected from the literature and to investigate the phenomena in complex ways through validation and analysis. The results of this study found 1) human trafficking can practically exploit human sexuality; 2) the government is still unresponsive in preventing human trafficking; 3) the need for ongoing monitoring and evaluation to the public and government in implementing policies. The government needs to review the Criminal Act of Trafficking in Persons to the prevention policies of parts of government and non-government agencies, accompanied by strict supervision by law enforcement officials.

Keywords: Policy, Task force, Sexual exploitation, Human Trafficking, East Nusa Tenggara.

1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, world threats are not just about military confrontation, territorial conquest, and nuclear weapons. The threat of human trafficking also become an issue that needs attention, especially in Southeast Asia [1]. The issue of human trafficking has become a complex global issue. According to the International Labor Organization (ILO) data, which notes there are around 40 million men, women, and children trapped in a horrendous web of forced labor, sexual exploitation, human trafficking, and coerced marriage [2]. Several studies also shown that countries in the ASEAN region have experienced an increase in cases of human trafficking and sexual

violence [3] for instance, Malaysia[4]; Vietnam [5]; Myanmar; Laos PDR and including Indonesia.

Previous studies on human trafficking and sexual exploitation were mostly discussed at the State level [6]. The phenomenon of human trafficking (women and children) in Indonesia is a concern to raise a serious response in the form of government policy. Indonesia as a developing country has always been a great opportunity for human trafficking activities. people with low levels of resources will be indifferent to some syndicates of human trafficking mode. Bernat & Zhilina (2010) explains some of the factors causing of local issues that can cause human trafficking. One of the factors causing human trafficking is the economic

income [7], which is inversely proportional to the people's skills and low educational factors. Low education makes the space to getting a job dwindling. So their needs are difficult to meet. The difficulty of working to meet these needs is used as an opportunity for human trafficking perpetrators to provide a mode in the form of offering fast jobs with high salaries. In fact, the people who were supposed to get jobs were actually trafficked. The IOM noted that, in June 2017 there were 6,940 victims of human trafficking in Indonesia, including 970 girls and 5,907 adult women [8] with mostly women and children trafficked in various modes. The dominant purpose of trafficking in persons leads to sexual exploitation, which can prevent the victim from continuing a good regeneration process. Victims trafficked for sexual exploitation suffer physical injuries from forced sexual activity, as well as premature sex for child victims. This potential sexual exploitation activity represents work often experienced by women. Many marginalization activities are found for women with commit immoral crimes. Some victims will suffer injuries to their psychic and reproductive organs.

In 2017, NTT Province ranked first in areas prone to human trafficking. The Central Statistics Agency also said that in 2014, there were 14 cases human trafficking and this increased in 2018 to 27 cases human trafficking [9]. This correlation of human trafficking is closely related to the needs or job opportunities that cause many people to be trapped in human trafficking, resulting in the practice of sexual exploitation. Previously, the government had tried to prevent this through Law Number 21 Year 2007 concerning the Eradication of the Criminal Act of Trafficking in Persons (ECATP) and it explained in that article that exploitation was an act carried out without the consent of the victim and was not limited to prostitution, labor or forced services. In the case of human trafficking, researchers find focus on one institution, namely a Task Force that functions to prevent human trafficking activities. Regulated in The Presidential Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 69 of 2008 concerning the Task Force on the Prevention and Control of Trafficking in Persons is used as a policy that has been implemented since 2007. The regulation discusses the role of task forces both at the central and regional levels to control and be responsible for the security of indications of human trafficking. But since 2007 has not yet yielded significant results until now. There are still many casualties as a result of this trafficking, which leads to sexual exploitation behavior. Constraints found in the application of this policy are derived from several factors, namely in terms of institutional and implementor factors such as a task

force that is is insufficiently responsive. So it is interesting to study in terms of the application of policies in terms of the condition of society and the government's responsibility.

The existence of this problem certainly requires a more step and responsive policy for the government through revamping the role of the task force, accompanied by the implementation of disciplined policies. This is a big task for a country that is aggressively developing its capital city, but is still faced with the problem of the safety of its citizens. Victims of sexual exploitation need assistance, remedies, and legal protection. This condition is a common challenge for all communities, especially for East Nusa Tenggara (NTT). This article aims to analyze how effective the task force is in preventing sexual exploitation at the local level with a case study of human trafficking in NTT.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research used a qualitative descriptive approach, in which data were collected from literature review. Creswell [10] explains that qualitative research is used to enhance knowledge in the process of understanding and discovery. This approach becomes part of the research process and understanding based on the method used to investigate a social phenomenon. The author also used a literature approach which the keyword is "human trafficking" and "sexual exploitation". In the literature there is a process of validating and analyzing both inductive and descriptive data using library data collection methods. In library research activities, the search of a data library is not only used to prepare research designs but also utilizes several library resources to obtain data on research [11]. The data obtained were received from literature study of several local government reports, research journal (Google scholar and Scopus database) related to preventing of human trafficking, official government data, and government policy especially in East Nusa Tenggara.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Sexual Exploitation in Human Trafficking Cases

According to UNODC human trafficking is defined as the recruitment, transportation, transfer, concealment and acceptance of humans, by means of threats or coercion and other forms of violence such as

kidnapping, embezzlement, fraud, abuse of power or position and the handing over of payments or profits to take control over others with the aim of exploitation. Exploitation is an attitude of arbitrary utilization for the sake of one-sided interests. This exploitation includes sexual exploitation of children and women. Further, in the study Winzer et al., (2019) defined sexual exploitation under such terminology as sexual act, something sexual; forced sexual contact. This is supported by several sexual exploitation studies that have discussed cases in Indonesia [12] ; [13].

Human trafficking is a world class transactional crime issue that is rife in developing countries like Indonesia. This practice relates to prostitution or illegal adoption aimed at women and children in various modes. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) released the 2018 Global Report on Trafficking in Persons stating that 79% of victims experienced sexual exploitation, mostly women and 18% were forced labor victims, included in slavery [14]. Likewise the International Labor Organization (ILO) Human Trafficking Center 2015 said sexual exploitation in the private economy of Indonesia was dominated by women 96%. This condition is exploited by officials who are not responsible for carrying out the human trafficking mode [15].

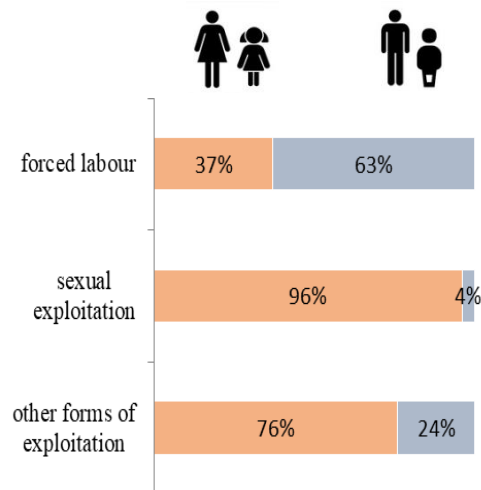
Table 1. Victims of Trafficking in Persons for the Year 2016-2019

No	Year	Victims Of Violence (VOV)	Victims Of Human Trafficking (VOHT)
1	2016	48	317
2	2017	64	464
3	2018	53	343
4	2019	78	370
Total		243	1494

In most of developing countries, women have always been the object of slavery to household clusters or other forms of forced labor [1]. Most of them come from remote and poor areas. They are looking for work to meet their economic needs, but in their journey they are trapped by brokers and are employed in previously undesirable sectors. Then they are traded for sexual purposes in tourist areas [16]. We find many of these cases in several regions in Indonesia.

Table 1. show that the number of victims of human trafficking in persons was dominated by criminal cases of trafficking in persons from 2016 to 2019. This is evidenced by the VOHT chart which still occupies the top position with a total of 1494 people. It is also mentioned by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs related to the 2018. Trafficking in Persons Report (TIP), Indonesia is categorized in the Tier 2 Watch List, is a country that has made an effort to handle the issue but this has not been carried out maximally in eradicating the practice of human trafficking [16]. This practice of trafficking leads to the exploitation of victims' sexuality. As explained by The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

Figure 1. Victim of Trafficking By Sex And Type



The data describe that sexual exploitation is the fastest growing criminal practice in the world and is found in the trade of people. UNODC said the number of victims of trafficking by sex in 2016 was dominated by sexual exploitation of women and girls as much as 96% while men and boys were only 4%. The case of women still revolves around the area of exploitation because these people are still considered as weak.

The province of NTT is an example of the highest case of trafficking in persons in Indonesia. The province of NTT was ranked second nationally in the case of human trafficking (Institute of Resource Governance and Social Change) [17]. Human trafficking in NTT is declared an emergency because many NTT residents, especially women aged 17 years and over, are traded through various modes. Among the number of villages that have experienced human trafficking by province from 2011, 2014 and 2018, NTT occupies the highest number in 2011 where there were seven cases, in 2014 14 cases, and in 2018 it became the peak of all

provinces in Indonesia with as many as 27 cases [9]. In 2015, there were 1,667 women workers from NTT who were victims of human trafficking. Meanwhile, in 2016 from January to July, there were around 726 migrant workers who had problems or indicated the practice of human trafficking [18]. This situation is in line with the condition of the Human Development Index (HDI) based on the gender of NTT Province in 2019; men are in the frame of 69.20 and women 64.16 [19].

There are several factors increasing the number of cases of trafficking in women in NTT: *First*, “poverty, globalization, the sex tourism industry, women’s rights, and general global education levels”. [6]. Victims of trafficking are women with poverty conditions. The poverty factor pushed millions of Indonesians to migrate, domestic, and international, which was seen as a way to obtain a good life for themselves and their families. The NTT provincial poverty line in 2017 semester 1 amounted to 406,973 and increased by 441,625 in 2019 [20]. The poverty factor that supports millions of Indonesians to migrate is seen as providing a better life for the individual economy. In this condition, women in NTT are required to improve economic conditions with minimal standards of soft and hard skills. This condition makes them more depressed and affected by the risk of crime.

Table 2. Percentage of Poor Population by Region 2018

No	Province	Percentage of Poor Population (%)
1	Papua	27.74
2	West Papua	23.01
3	East Tenggara Timur	21.35
4	Maluku	18.12
5	Gorontalo	16.81
6	Aceh	15.97
7	Bengkulu	15.43
8	West Nusa Tenggara	14.75
9	Central Sulawesi	14.01
10	Lampung	13.14

Based on the table 2, it is found that the presentation of the poor population in NTT is very chronic. NTT has indeed experienced a decrease in the percentage of poverty, but this province still occupies the third poor

province nationally. In the last three years, the percentage of poor people in NTT has continued to decline by 22.61% to 21.35%. In addition, poverty also makes traders motivated by money agencies [21].

Second, the level of education is still low. Its influence is at a minimal level of education, graduating from elementary school or not even going to school. Minimal knowledge makes people easy to be deceived and tricked so that they easily become victims of human trafficking. This makes women vulnerable to exploitation, slavery, and trafficking. Not to mention the economic conditions of the community that afford no opportunities for girls going to school to improve the quality of human resources. According to the report of the Indonesian Women's Union (Seruni), the high unemployment rate is one of the triggers for the exodus of migrant workers from NTT. In this condition, NTT is in an alarming position with the unemployment rate reaches 88 thousand people [22]. *Third*, is the looseness of the law. There is a view that the rampant trafficking of people in NTT stems from the habits of the city government officials.

3.2. Analysis of Government Policy (Task Force)

Although there are many strategies used by various countries to fight human trafficking, the number of victims of human trafficking is always increasing every year [23]. Generally, according to Cho (2011), national policies combating human trafficking contain three points: 1. Criminalize trafficking in persons and punish perpetrators; 2. Conduct education and prevention of human trafficking (Prevention); 3. Protect and help victims of trafficking (Protection) [24]. However, in this study, we focus more on efforts to formally prevent human trafficking. The prevention includes educational programs, national action plans, exchange of information among authorities and cooperation with NGOs and other government agencies [21].

Nowadays, trafficking in persons is still considered normal because of the synergy of government efforts in preventing trade practices. It was explained that certain elements incited people in remote areas of NTT and were employed abroad. NTT is the largest sender of workers in Indonesia. National and regional governments are synergizing to take steps through the national Anti-Trafficking policy through Law Number 21 Year 2007 concerning the Eradication of the

Criminal Act of Trafficking in Persons. Regulated in Chapter VI Article 58 paragraphs 1-7 that the government forms a task force consisting of representatives of local governments, law enforcement, and academics. The task force is a coordinating institution spread across the center and in each region whose task is to coordinate prevention, monitor the Eradication of the Criminal Act of Trafficking in Persons and report implementation. The current condition of the task force is that there are still weaknesses due to inadequate budget and human resources. It can be seen that the government is trying to deal with trafficking in persons without looking at the quality of its implementer HR.

Betz [6] categorizes the causes of human trafficking in universal and specific forms. Universal cause related to poverty and globalization. Meanwhile, every individual in the region is unique so that the growth of human trafficking varies greatly. Anti-Human trafficking only regulates in a universal scope, so that the policy is somewhat unsuccessful to reduce the amount of human trafficking. *"Countries must make policies that directly address the unique combination of causes, universal and specific, to effectively combat the challenging problem of human trafficking (Betz, 2009)"*. Betz opinion reflects that a mature country must make policies that can be applied to the regional order. Betz's categorization almost does not apply in Indonesia because it does not contain consideration of the causes of anti-trade policies, either universally or specifically. The government still relies on outside organizations to carry out rehabilitation and forgets to recognize the existence of socioeconomic gaps in each region. [6]. Indonesia has acknowledged the work of trafficking, but actual action taken by the government is non-existent. The policy of human trafficking is only a cover, but there is no strong content in overcoming this problem.

The Indonesian Child Protection Commission says it is difficult to eradicate this issue; they only have report-based data, not survey-based, so they cannot present all cases of trafficking in Indonesia. [25]. The Indonesian Child Protection Commission stated that victim who do not want to report made the process difficult. So, according to Indonesian Child Protection Commission, the victim must report first so that the process runs, then attention is paid by the state organizer [25]. It does not stop there, the task force that originally demanded in the case of trafficking in persons and facilitated victims that the police should investigate bribed officials or those who facilitate

trafficking and they should be subject to criminal law. The fact is that they are only given administrative punishment or transfer of duties

Efforts to prevent human trafficking are indeed very difficult to be realized in Indonesia, unlike the case with the US. Zilina (2010) in [26] said the US categorizes countries to determine the origin or source of trade and where the trade will go. Indonesia's central government has not been serious in taking action, so that each region specifically also experiences difficulties. Strong collaboration needs to be built between traded academics and social support [27] ; [28]. The division of categories as explained by Betz has not been able to progress the prevention of human trafficking in Indonesia, even in NTT. Why? because it clear that the Indonesian government knows that the main cause is poverty [29]. However, the government is remaining quiet because it does not have a progressive strategy to reduce the poverty rate. In 2017, the NTT Central and Regional Governments carried out preventive programs such as the existence of a set of rules and inclusive law enforcement [22] so, that the perpetrators of the crime are dealt with firmly and security is guaranteed for the victims. Everd Scor said that in 2017, the institution or organization collaborated with the social service, psychologist, psychiatrist and also the involvement of the Central Government (Ministry of Social Affairs, National Human Rights Commission) as stakeholders who play an institutional role to strengthen service capacity, advocacy, empowerment for perpetrators and victims in solving the problem of human trafficking in NTT [22]. Worse, the government does not have exact numbers because of the many cases that are hidden.

The NTT Government also seeks to address the issue through the Regional Regulation of the Province of NTT No. 14/2018 concerning Prevention and Handling of Victims of Trafficking in Persons carried out by the task force as well as the NTT Governor Decree No. 357/KEP/HK/2018 concerning the Anti-Trafficking and Prevention Task Force as well as Handling of Prospective Indonesian Workers / Troubled Indonesian Workers / Non-Procedural NTT Province [30]. Likewise, with the existence of a sub-task force that is escorted by the Office of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection of NTT Province in having the task to: 1. carry out a mapping of cases of trade involving people who are involved in sexual exploitation. 2. developing a prevention model and providing education to the community for family resilience. 3. facilitate the emergence of women's and

children's participation to participate in preventing the crime of trafficking in persons.

Although the Governor has issued a decree, the implementation of the tasks of the sub-task force is still not running optimally and is not yet directed. This happened because of a problem with the local law that did not include a funding system, so that each of them had difficulty implementing programs and activities. Similarly, prevention efforts have not been able to hold remote communities. Therefore, the target in prevention activities from among the village community is still very vulnerable to become victims because they still do not understand about the mode and trade syndicates. Regarding the role of the task force, there are limitations that have a suboptimal impact on the Eradication of the Criminal Act of Trafficking in Persons data collection mechanisms, poor coordination of central and regional sub-task forces, and police and prosecutors have not been maximized [31]. There is falsification of documents related to the number of cases and a number of government officials have been found to be involved in trafficking practices [32]. This situation makes trade practices more widespread because the government's slow and complex work pattern needs to be trimmed so that its handling can be carried out in a responsive manner. There are weak efforts to prevent trade malpractice, therefore the program to eradicate trafficking in persons must be taken seriously by the task force and local government as a form of protection for its citizens.

4. CONCLUSION

Prevention of human trafficking practices has not been taken seriously by the central and local governments. It is proven by the not yet optimal prevention, especially the prevention mechanism has not yet reached the lower levels of society. The existence of the task force also does not improve the situation because there is still miscommunication with government agencies that are not one-way. The government's response has increased the number of victims of human trafficking. Victims are helpless because many officers are not responsible for their workload. Therefore, the government needs to tighten the flow of surveillance across regions or countries, and unite the community to help prevent human trafficking.

The government needs to have legal recruitment provisions for migrant workers. The government which sends Indonesian workers (TKI)

abroad, needs to make a legal agreement to ensure that its citizens there receive security protection, especially avoiding the practice of human trafficking. Because human trafficking can be profitable, a policy is needed to target assets effectively, namely by confiscation of assets from traffickers to help victims recover. Furthermore, the government must immediately strengthen the HR of the task force, so that it can function properly and be multidisciplinary. From the institutional function, the task force needs to be provided with effective communication and coordination space through follow-up activities in the form of field monitoring. The central government comes and visit the task forces in the regions periodically or every four months to communicate what obstacles are happening in the field and what needs need to be improved.

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